pravahini

Monthly Compendium

SUCCESS MANTRA (GTB Nagar)

PREFACE

It gives us great pleasure to release the monthly edition of the PRAVAHINI - Monthly e-Compendium & Weekly e-Periodicals of Current Affairs. The magazine's members have shown considerable cooperation as well as devotion. We at successmantra.in work tirelessly to create this magazine and bring it to you with a great sense of gratitude.

The PRAVAHINI August-2021 eBook covers the current events that happened in the month of August. Current Affairs is a crucial component of any competitive exams including CLAT, AILET, DU-LLB, HM, CAT, IAS, PCS, SSC, Banking, MBA and various other competitive examinations.

Current Affairs play the bigger role in many competitive and government exams. It holds the power of making or breaking your chance of success. Therefore, the candidates should cover the Current Affairs thoroughly and smartly.

The PRAVAHINI August-2021 eBook is divided into different sections keeping in mind the need of various exams. The sections covered namely International, National, Economy, Ecology and Environment, Science & Technology, Legal Affairs, Sports, States News Makers and few others.

We would also be pleased to receive any suggestion that could assist us with the upcoming editions.

Success Mantra (GTB Nagar, Delhi)

Website: www.successmantra.in

Mail Id: info@successmantra.in

Our Goal

Our goal at Success Mantra is to provide Quality education at rational price and thereby to create an environment that guides students towards the path of the success. Along with designing the curriculum and delivering the lectures, we work upon the ways the students think and approach problems asked.

B. S. Shanti

Success Mantra (Delhi) is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out, for your accomplishment. Delhi, GTB Nagar, branch of SUCCESS MANTRA Coaching is considered as the paramount choice of Law and Management aspirants, across country. Because, at the end of the day, it is our results which speak !

Since a decade, we have delivered thousands of 'Gems Students' to the nation and persistent in doing so. It is the platform where student's ideology is developed and their dreams take the face of reality. This act is splendidly demonstrable on our result chart of applicable courses. Students from numerous junctions of India come to GTB Nagar to avail best coaching classes at rational price. The vision, of making the quality education accessible to all, is furthermore augmented by the launch of EASE VIDYA Mobile application.

While Success Mantra (GTB Nagar) is the epitome to the classroom coaching program, EASE VIDYA Mobile Application (available on Android) is an online podium, available on the web and mobile application both. It is familiarized to ease up the high growing pressure of competition among students preparing for CLAT | AILET | DU-LLB | MHCET | SLAT | BHU | AMU | and other Major Law Entrance Examinations in India. Just in a couple of months of its launch, EASE VIDYA App has been proven to be the best solution for students who are preparing for various academic and competitive entrance examinations.

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SHIKSHAK PARV 2021

Hello,
Greetings from Success Mantra GTB Nagar!

Success Mantra - GTB Nagar (www.successmantra.in) organized an Article Writing Combat - 2021 to celebrate 'Shikshak Parv - 2021'.

Now a good news for you, After taking the micro analysis of all your articles, our judges had decided the final result.

RANK 1 : KANIKA JAIN
Topic : Need Of Education In Nationalism
https://www.successmantra.in/blog/view/need-of-education-in-nationalism

RANK 2 : CHARU KOHLI
Topic : 'Education For All' Campaign - Reality or a Myth
https://www.successmantra.in/blog/view/education-for-all-campaign-reality-or-a-myth

RANK 3 : DIKSHA VERMA
Topic : Teacher - Root Of Development
https://www.successmantra.in/blog/view/teacher-root-of-development

Thank you so much to all of you for participating in this memorable event. We will organize more interesting events in future.

Regards,
Success Mantra GTB Nagar
www.successmantra.in

1
NEED OF EDUCATION IN NATIONALISM

By Kanika Jain

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"
-Nelson Mandela

Education plays a very vital role in a human being's life. Also in school & colleges students also get the knowledge of society, social behaviour that run the society. They start exploring it with every passing minute. Knowledge provides us wisdom to think, respond and do action.

In India the wave of Nationalism came with the independence struggle. For sum Nationalism is to love and praise our country unconditionally while for some it's a way to keep reforming the past deed for the better future. It's necessary to obey our values, morals, heritage but follow them blindly in the wave of nationalism bads to fragile it. The nationalism that we follow is very vague. We make our mind with the piece of news and social media content. We all want to be nationalistic but there's difference between nation and government. If some one ask so many of us become dumb. The lack of Education regarding the true fact and basics of country, turn our nationalism into jingoism.

India is a land of full diversity. It requires a great deal of knowledge to understand the cultural monstrosity of it. Education is not an intellectual factor. It's meant to liberate one's mind. Knowledge opens up horizons of imagination, creativity and freedom but w/o education the mind is but a constrained territory of limited inhabitants. Every human by birth is entitled with certain rights that protect humans from 'State of nature'. Evolution of humans needs to have organization from family, friends to the wider sense with state. This evolution leads to the nation where people have cultural & historical bonds with each other feeling of Togetherness that is known as Nationalism.

Even after the 75th year of Independence, political freedom in India is lacking. still we are facing the problem of certain class exclusiveness with the main water of society. They are out of the halo of Education that leads them to cut off from the socio political issues of the country. As a good citizen it's needed for one to know about the country, it's living documents (constitutions), foundation stone like equality, justice, freedom but the root of it's knowledge lay beneath the education system of our country from where we get the true knowledge.

As a young country where more than half of citizens belong to any educational institute shows the need for an education curriculum where we get to know about the Vedas & Upanishads. Our rich history of liberalism, assimilation of various religions, since the past but unfortunately in modern day life is a list. We follow what we are shown to follow in the shine of Nationalism. The dark of government ideology get hide. We still follow the British legacy in our education that alienate us from the sprite of India. So the great need of time is to have a comprehensive curriculum that teaches spiritual awakening, composite culture and patriotism.

2
'EDUCATION FOR ALL' CAMPAIGN - REALITY OR A MYTH

By Charu Kohli

*E*very human has the right to live! But what is living? Is existing and merely having a piece of paper telling you that you are a citizen of a nation enough? No, living means the freedom to be something, to know all the world has to offer and maybe find the unknown, that is the right to live freely! Knowledge is not something we are born with; rather it is something we acquire while living on this blue planet and one can trace the roots of knowledge in education. Education is not merely a tool to get skilled human resources rather it is to get empowered humans.

Education is just freedom in its true sense. Of course we had hindrances when we were fighting off the Britishers to get our homeland back but what if all our nationalists and freedom fighters thought that 'Freedom' is just a myth and a dream which is too far fetched for Indians, we would not be free today. Similarly, quoting something which is achievable but just needs a bit more effort than the rest do you think is right to term it a myth? The answer sits on our lips "NO."

We Indians have turned so many myths and realities, be it in the past or the present, so why not keep Josh high and say yes to attaining education for all? Just doing one's own part is enough cause that will bring a very big change in the society. Also looking back in the past, we will notice we are already reaching the goal, and we will achieve it! One day every boy, girl, man, woman will be educated and literate!

'She sat with a pen in hand.
Using it as a magical wand,
She wished to be heard.
And soar the skies like a bird !'

Every little girl in the nook and corner of our nation will have a magical wand and will open the wings to be the golden bird!! Education for all is a right and will be a reality in the near future.

3
TEACHER - ROOT OF DEVELOPMENT

By Diksha Verma

It has been rightly said that a teacher doesn't teach books but life. That a teacher can change who you are, what you are and what you become. A teacher is itself a remarkably powerful thing that not everyone can handle this responsibility. A teacher is the root of development, as we all know we come in this world full of happiness without knowing the real meaning of happiness but what makes us understand it is a teacher, someone who teaches you, who answers your questions that you are too hesitant to ask. A teacher who paints the child's experiences in a fantasy, who makes them aware of what they truly are, who tells them that knowledge is love and light and vision. As the most important day of a student's life is the one on which they meet their teacher. The day when there shall be no room for darkness of what is unknown but the light of knowledge. Every student remembers their first day of school where one comes across their teachers, friends, supervisors. Even though my first day of school was great, there was a teacher of mine that used to teach us literature, the most crucial thing about her teaching was that she never dismissed us, she always answered our questions and her patience and politeness still sticks with me to this day. It shaped me in a way like a river shapes a rock. Everyone needs an outstanding teacher like Anne Sullivan in their life. It was her and Helen Keller's uncommon relationship that made Helen write an amazing and world's best selling autobiography. It was a teacher that made Helen realise that if it's a million to one she is going to be that one, if it's a shot in the dark she is going to be the sun. And we all know the famous story of Bill Gates and his teacher Mrs. Caffiere. Bill Gates who is today an American business magnate, software developer, investor, author, and philanthropist was a typical nerdy and introvert who always did his best to keep to himself. He had some big deficits, like dysgraphia and comically messy desk, he used to hide the things that he liked to read. But it was Mrs. Caffiere who took him under her wing and helped him out. She pulled him out of his shell by sharing her love for books, she genuinely listened to what he had to say. It was Bill's two great drama and maths teachers that shaped him to be a great philanthropist and to be remarkably humble and a kind person. Even Bill Clinton, who served as the 42nd president of the United States of America, is not just a good leader but also has an artistic side to him. Bill Clinton is also a saxophone player for which he thanks his high school band director Virgil Spurlin who instilled the confidence in him to achieve what he wants if he learns to run and organise things. We all have heard of Chandra Gupta Murya the founder of the Mauryan Empire in ancient India. He built one of the largest empires on the Indian subcontinent but do you know the real hands and mind behind him, his name is Acharya Chanakya the mastermind behind the Mauryan Empire, an ancient Indian teacher, philosopher, economist, jurist and royal advisor. Author of the world's greatest book Arthashastra, an ancient political treatise, he is considered the pioneer of the field of political science and economics in India, and his work is thought of as an important precursor to classical economics. Chanakya who proved to be one of the greatest teachers that he believed in Chandra Gupta he guided him showed him the real meaning of truth and freedom, who played a pivotal role in constructing and making Chandra Gupta, a great ruler to be remembered.

During the Corona virus outbreak while all the schools, colleges and other educational institutions were shut it was our teachers that came forward to provide us education even in the pandemic. While we all were surrounded with negativity and hopelessness our teachers gave us hope and positivity. They came forward on an online platform to educate us to make sure that nobody feels left alone or devoid of education. It was our teacher's true dedication that made the situation easy. Even students were unable to go to school or colleges but it never felt like that as a teacher was always there to guide us to, to listen to us, to answer and to open doors for our imaginations and dreams to made us realise that pen is mightier than a sword, who

through knowledge, patience and love gave us a strong shape and ray of hope while sitting in our own houses. While we were apart it always felt like we were a part.

A teacher plays a cardinal and predominant role in making us what we are, who we are today. They made us explore the world, made us see things in a different manner, and always welcome our curious minds. A teacher is truly the root of development, a beautiful gift given by god to every student. The greatest thing about a teacher is whenever a student feels like drowning, whenever one is in despair they can always look up to their teacher who always has your back.

One of the world's greatest and most respected profession is a teacher, the doctors you go to for your treatment are also students of some great teachers, the Engineers who built our nation were sitting in a school somebody getting their lectures from a teacher, A lawyer or a judge that you visit to provide you justice were someday taking classes from their law professors, a child's first alphabet to a complete sentence is taught by a teacher. Neeraj Chopra who won a gold medal in the Tokyo Olympics did this because his coaches Klaus and Uwe Hohn believed in him and guided him. And today if i am writing this it is because of my teachers who always inspired me, believed in me and told me that i can do it.
Hence, a teacher is indeed the root of development and a profession that deserves the highest respect and someone who's debts one can never pay back.

Teacher(Guru) is the creator, Teacher(Guru)n is the preserver, Guru is destroyer, Guru is the absolute Lord himself, Salutations to that Sri Guru.

' Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu, Gurur Devo Maheshwaraha
Guru Saakshaat Para Brahma, Tasmai Shri gurave Namaha'

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1ST STATE TO ISSUE ORDER IMPLEMENTING NEP 2020

Karnataka has become the first state in the country to issue the order with regard to the implementation of the **National Education Policy-2020.**

The state government has issued an order on the implementation of NEP-2020 with effect from the current academic year 2021-2022.

About the policy: **This policy seeks to entirely overhaul the system through various reforms**:

A single regulator to oversee higher education; no more MPhil courses before PhD; fixed fees for public and private institutions; students can choose between three and four-year undergraduate courses; multiple entries and exit points in degree courses.

PM MODI LAUNCHED E-RUPI DIGITAL PAYMENT SOLUTION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch e-RUPI, **an e-voucher-based digital payment solution, via video conferencing.**

The e-RUPI initiative will be one of the programmes launched over the years to limit touchpoints between the government and the beneficiary and "ensure that the benefits reach its intended beneficiaries in a targeted and **leak-proof manner".**

About the e-RUPI: **e-RUPI is a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payments. It acts as an e-voucher based on a QR code** or SMS string, which is delivered to the mobile phones of the beneficiaries.

e-RUPI connects the sponsors of the services with the beneficiaries and service providers in a digital manner without any physical interface.

It also ensures that the payment to the service provider is made only after the transaction is completed.

Being prepaid in nature, it assures timely payment to the service provider without the involvement of any intermediary. The one-time payment mechanism of e-

RUPI will allow users to redeem the voucher **without a card, digital payments app or internet banking access, at the service provider.**

The e-RUPI platform has been developed by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on its UPI platform**, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and National Health Authority.

1ST CITY TO ACHIEVE 100% COVID VACCINATION

Bhubaneswar has become the first Indian city to achieve **100 percent COVID-19 vaccination**. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) had launched a massive vaccination drive against Covid-19.

This milestone is credited to the BMC running 55 centres at all times for vaccines. BMC has a record of around **nine lakh people who are above 18 years of age in the city.**

Which includes around 31 thousand healthcare workers, 33 thousand front-line workers. 5 lakh 17 thousand people are in the age group of 18 to 44 years. **Three lakh twenty-five thousand people are above 45 years of age.**

BRO CONSTRUCTS WORLD'S HIGHEST ROAD IN LADAKH

Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed and black-topped the **highest road in the world at Umlingla Pass in Eastern Ladakh.**

The **highest motorable road in the world** is situated at an altitude of 19,300 feet.

This is higher than the **base camps of Mount Everest.** The road itself is a 52-km long tarmac stretch through Umlingla Pass, connecting important towns in the Chumar sector of Eastern Ladakh.

Infrastructure development in **places like Umlingla Pass** is difficult due to the harsh and tough terrain coupled with extremely low temperatures.

In winters, the temperature dips 40 degrees below zero. The **oxygen level at this altitude is almost 50 per cent less than at normal places.**

INDIA & UAE NAVAL EXERCISE 'ZAYED TALWAR 2021'

The Indian Navy and UAE Navy conducted the bilateral naval exercise 'Zayed Talwar 2021' on August 07, 2021, off the coast of Abu Dhabi.

The main objective of the 'Zayed Talwar 2021' **naval exercise was to enhance interoperability and synergy between the two navies.**

Indian Navy participated with **INS Kochi, with two integral Sea King MK 42B helicopters, deployed in the Persian Gulf.**

From UAE, UAES AL – Dhafra, a Baynunah class guided missile corvette and one AS – 565B Panther helicopter took part in the exercise.

PM MODI LAUNCHED NATIONAL EDIBLE OIL MISSION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a Rs 11,000 crore **National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)** to make India self-sufficient in cooking oils, including palm oil.

The government will ensure that farmers get all the facilities, from **quality seeds to technology under the mission.**

While India has **become self-sufficient in rice, wheat and sugar**, it was not enough as the country is hugely **dependent on imported edible oils.**

The Centre has already been running a **National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm** to boost oilseeds and palm oil production in India for the last few years with an aim to lower imports.

GOVT. ANNOUNCED PM GATISHAKTI SCHEME

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a Rs 100 lakh crore **Pradhan Mantri Gatishakti scheme** while addressing the nation on the 75th Independence Day from Red Fort.

The **Pradhan Mantri Gatishakti scheme** aims to adopt a holistic and integrated approach in **infrastructure growth and create employment opportunities** for the youth of the country.

The government will soon announce the Master Plan for the scheme, to help boost the productivity of industries, and boost the economic growth of the country, **besides creating job opportunities for hundreds of thousands of youths.**

About the scheme: Gati Shakti will be a national infrastructure master plan for our country that will lay the foundation of holistic infrastructure and will lead to an integrated and holistic pathway to our economy.

The **PM Gati Shakti scheme** is aimed at breaking the silos **between road, rail, air and waterways to reduce travel time,** improving industrial productivity, making manufacturing globally competitive, facilitating future economic zones and creating employment.

COUNTRY'S FIRST WATER PLUS CERTIFIED CITY

India's cleanest city, Indore in Madhya Pradesh, has achieved another feat of being declared as the **country's first 'water plus' certified city,** under the Swachh Survekshan 2021.

Swachh Survekshan is an annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation in cities and towns across India launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission.

The parameters on which **Indore achieved the 'water plus' status:**

Indore carried out a survey and halted 7,000 outfalls of greywater that went in rivers, drains.
Moreover, 30 percent of the city's sewage water was recycled and reused.

This **recycled water was used by people in their gardens and some construction sites.** Seven sewerage treatment plants were constructed in the city and about 110 million litres per day (MLD) treated water from them is being used.

What is the 'Water+' city certificate?

A **Water Plus city certificate** is provided to a city that maintains **cleanliness in rivers and drains under its administration.**

According to protocol and the toolkit provided by the Union ministry of housing and urban affairs, **a city can be declared as Water Plus** only after all wastewater released from households, commercial establishments, and the like is treated to a satisfactory level before releasing the treated wastewater to the environment.

- Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh: **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**
- Governor: **Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel.**

75 VANDE BHARAT TRAINS TO CONNECT PARTS OF INDIA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation on the occasion of 75th Independence Day and announced that **75 'Vande Bharat' trains** would connect different parts of the country in 75 weeks of the celebration of **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.**

The **75 Vande Bharat trains will connect every corner of the country,** in 75 weeks of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', which is being celebrated from March 12, 2021, upto August 15, 2023.

Presently two **Vande Bharat Express** trains are operating in the country by the Indian Railways.

The first Vande Bharat Express operates between **Varanasi and New Delhi** and the other Vande Bharat Express **operates between Katra and New Delhi.**

NATIONAL AWARDS UNDER VAN DHAN YOJANA SCHEME

Nagaland has been conferred with **seven national awards on the first Van Dhan Annual Awards** 2020-21, during the celebration of the 34th foundation day of the **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED).**

The awards were presented by **Union tribal minister, Arjun Munda** through a Zoom webinar.

In which category Nagaland received awards:

Meanwhile, the state has received seven national awards, such as 1st positions in – **'Best Survey State',** **'Best Training', and 'Most number of VDVKC's established'.** It has attained 3rd position for 'Best Sales Generated', and 'Best Innovation & Creativity.

The state has also received Awards for Innovative & Creative Product Ideas for commodities like – Gooseberry Wine (Supplier: Toka Multipurpose Society Ltd.); Mushroom Cultivation (Supplier: NBHM).

MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI LAUNCHED 'SUJALAM CAMPAIGN'

Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched a '100 days campaign' **named SUJALAM** to create more and more Open Defecation Free (ODF) Plus villages by undertaking wastewater management at the village level.

The Campaign would help in the management of the wastewater and in turn, would help to revive the water bodies through the creation of 1 million Soak-pits and **also other Greywater management activities.**

The campaign started on August 25, 2021, is part of the **'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations**.

The three focus areas of the SUJALAM campaign are:

- Construction of 1 million soak pits;
- Retrofitting of toilets and
- Access to toilets for new households.

INDIA'S EVACUATION MISSION 'OPERATION DEVI SHAKTI'

The **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** has given a name to India's complex mission of evacuating its citizens from **war-torn Afghanistan, as 'Operation Devi Shakti'.**

The name of the operation was known when **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar** mentioned it in a tweet on August 24 while referring to the arrival of a fresh batch of 78 evacuees in Delhi.

India began the complex evacuation mission by airlifting 40 Indians from Kabul to Delhi on August 16, a day after the **Taliban seized control of the Afghan capital city.**

So far, India has evacuated over 800 people amid a deteriorating security situation in Kabul and scramble by various nations to rescue their citizens.

UNION FINANCE MINISTER LAUNCHED EASE 4.0

Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman has unveiled the fourth edition of the Public Sector Bank (PSB) Reforms Agenda **'EASE 4.0' for 2021-22.**

The major theme for EASE 4.0 is "Technology-enabled, simplified, and collaborative banking." **EASE stands for Enhanced Access & Service Excellence (EASE).**

What is the aim of EASE 4.0?

EASE 4.0 aims to further the agenda of customer-centric digital transformation and deeply embed digital and data **into PSBs' ways of working.**

EASE 4.0 sets the agenda and roadmap to transform all PSBs into digital-attacker banks working hand-in-hand with key constituents of the financial services ecosystem to offer industry-best customer experience.

Important Initiatives under EASE 4.0:

- Smart Lending for Aspiring India
- New Age 24×7 banking with resilient technology
- Collaborative banking for synergistic outcomes
- Tech-enabled Ease of Banking
- Institutionalizing Prudent Banking
- Governance and Outcome Centric HR

GOVT. REPLACES UNMANNED AIRCRAFT RULES 2021

Ministry of Civil Aviation has repealed the Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Rules, 2021 and replace the same with the liberalized Drone Rules, 2021.

The step has been taken as the earlier **UAS Rules 2021 was perceived by academia, Startups, end-users and other stakeholders** as being restrictive in nature as they involved considerable paperwork, required permissions for every drone flight and very few "free to fly" green zones were available.

Some important features of liberalized Drone Rules 2021:

Quantum of fee reduced to nominal levels and delinked with the size of the drone. For instance, the **fee for a remote pilot license fee has been reduced from INR 3000 (for large drones) to INR 100** for all categories of drones; and is valid for 10 years.

No permission is required for operating drones in green zones. **Green zone means the airspace up to a vertical distance of 400 feet or 120 metres** that has not been designated as a red zone or yellow zone in the airspace map; and the airspace up to a **vertical distance of 200 feet or 60 metres** above the area located between a lateral distance of 8 and 12 kilometres from the perimeter of an operational airport.

Interactive airspace map with green, yellow and red zones shall be displayed on the digital sky platform within 30 days of publication of these rules.

The yellow zone was reduced from 45 km to 12 km from the airport perimeter. **The maximum penalty for violations is reduced to INR 1 lakh.**

Drone promotion council to be set up by the Government with participation from academia, startups and other stakeholders to facilitate a growth-oriented regulatory regime.

Nano and model drones **(made for research or recreation purposes)** are exempt from type certification. No restriction on foreign ownership in Indian drone companies.

MAHARASHTRA GOVT. LAUNCHED 'MISSION VATSALYA'

Maharashtra government launched a special mission called "**Mission Vatsalya**" in order to help women who lost their husbands to COVID-19. Mission Vatsalya will provide several services and some **18 benefits under one roof to those women.**

It been designed for widows, with a special focus on widows coming from rural areas, poor backgrounds and deprived sections. Under this mission, schemes like **Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana and Gharkul Yojana will benefit those for women.**

About the scheme: Under this scheme, 8,661 women have applied for the **Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Anudan Yojana,** 405 for the **Shravanbal Seva State Pension Scheme and** 71 for the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme.

Applications have been received from 1,209 women for the **Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme.**

The Department has received three applications for the **Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme.** So far10349 applications have been received from the women contacted by the department of women and child development.

PM MODI LAUNCHED PROJECTS IN SOMNATH, GUJARAT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects in **Somnath, Gujarat on** August 20, 2021, via video conferencing.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Minister of State (MoS) for Tourism **Shripad Naik** were also present at the event through video conferencing.

Projects inaugurated:

Somnath Promenade: This project is developed under **PRASHAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive)** Scheme, at a cost of over Rs. 47 crore.

Somnath Exhibition Centre: This centre has been developed on the premises of 'Tourist Facilitation Centre'. It displays the exhibits from dismantled parts of the **old Somnath temple and its sculptures** having Nagar style temple architecture of old Somnath.

Reconstructed temple precinct of Old (Juna) Somnath: This temple is also known as Ahilyabai Temple because it was built by **Queen Ahilyabai of Indore.** The reconstructed project has been completed by Shree Somnath Trust with a total outlay of Rs 3.5 crore.

Foundation Stone: The project for which the foundation stone was laid was Shree Parvati Temple. Total outlay of the project is Rs. 30 Crore. The project includes the construction of the temple in Sompura Salats Style, development of Garbha Griha and Nritya Mandap.

KEJRIWAL INAUGURATES COUNTRY'S 1ST SMOG TOWER

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will inaugurate the country's first smog tower on August 23, 2021, at **Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Connaught Place.**

The smog tower will clean 1,000 cubic metres of air every second and reduce PM 2.5 and PM 10 levels in Delhi.

The smog tower will work with full force after the monsoon season. The scientists of the **Delhi Pollution Control Committee** will accordingly assess the performance of the tower and present a monthly report.

RAJNATH SINGH COMMISSIONED ICGS 'VIGRAHA'

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh has dedicated to the nation, the indigenously built **Coast Guard Ship 'Vigraha' in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.**

According to the defence ministry, the 98-meter vessel will be based in **Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam (Vizag) and will be operated by a company of 11 officers and 110 sailors.**

The ship has been designed and built indigenously by **Larsen & Toubro Ship Building Limited.** With the joining of this ship, the Indian Coast Guard now have 157 Ships and 66 Aircraft in its inventory.

About the ICGS Vigraha: The ICGS Vigraha, is the seventh and final ship in the series of **Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs), the agreement for which was signed in 2015.**

The Vigraha is equipped with advanced radars, the latest in navigation and communication technology. The sensors and machinery present in the ship make it capable of operating in tropical sea conditions.

Moreover, in a significant boost to the defence capabilities of the armed forces, **the Vigraha indigenous vessel has also been designed to carry one twin-engine helicopter and four high-speed boats** for the purpose of boarding operation, search and rescue, law enforcement, and maritime patrol

INDIA'S LARGEST FLOATING SOLAR PV PROJECT

NTPC has commissioned the largest floating solar PV project in India of 25MW power on the **reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.**

This is also the first solar project to be set up under

the Flexibilisation Scheme. **This scheme was notified by the Government of India in 2018.**

NTPC is also planning to set up a hydrogen-based **micro-grid system** on a pilot basis at Simhadri.

About the floating solar PV project: NTPC's floating solar installation covers 75 acres of the Simhadri reservoir's surface.

It will produce power from more than a lakh of solar PV modules for lighting 7,000 households. The project will annually save 46,000 tonnes of CO_2 emission and 1,364 million litres of water, which is adequate to meet the requirement of 6,700 households in a year.

INDIA PAVILION INAUGURATED AT ARMY 2021

The **International Military and Technical Forum 'ARMY 2021' has been organised in Moscow**, Russia from August 22 to 28, 2021, at Patriot Expo, Kubinka Air Base and Alabino military training grounds.

The ARMY 2021 is the **7th edition of the annual International Military-Technical Forum.**

About the forum: The forum is being organised by the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation since 2015.

The **International Military and Technical Forum 'ARMY'** is the world's leading exhibition of armament and military equipment and the authoritative platform for discussing innovative ideas and developments for the armed forces by various foreign exhibitors, delegations and visitors.

PRAVAHINI

TOP PERFORMERS OF SUCCESS MANTRA IN CLAT 2020/21

NLU Hyderabad	AIR 542	NLU Delhi	NLU Delhi	NLU Bangalore	NLU Raipur	NLU Raipur
Shujat R Bhat	Aditya Pratap	Yashendra	Aditya Singh	Sumit Gupta	Jass Kaur Bindra	Tejaswini Kaushal
Classic Program	Classic Program	Foundation Program	Classic Program	Foundation Program	Leap Program	Classic Program

	NLU Lucknow	NLU Lucknow	AIR 990	NLU Lucknow	NLU Patna	AIR 1763
	Megha Jain	Anshuman Sharma	Nakshatra Gujrati	Naman Yadav	Kunal Jha	Kritika Joshi
	Leap Program	Leap Program	Foundation Program	Classic Program	Foundation Program	Classic Program

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

PM MODI LAUNCHED PMUY II OR UJJWALA SCHEME 2.0

Recently, the **Prime Minister launched the second phase of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)** or **Ujjwala 2.0 Scheme**. He mentioned plans to promote "gobar dhan" – tapping cow dung for energy on the occasion of **World Bio Fuel Day (10th August).** Ujjwala is part of the ambitious agenda for behavioural change that will help India transit to a $5 trillion economy by 2024.

- **PMUY-I:** Launched in May 2016 to provide LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) connections to poor households.

- **PMUY-II:** It is aimed to provide maximum benefit to the migrants who live in other states and find it difficult to submit address proof. Now they will only have to **give "Self Declaration" to avail the benefit**.

Objectives: Empowering **women and protecting their health.** Reducing the number of deaths in India due to unclean cooking fuel. Preventing young children from a significant number of **acute respiratory illnesses caused due to indoor air pollution by burning fossil fuel.**

FEATURES & TARGET OF THE SCHEME

Features: The scheme provides a financial support of **Rs 1600 for each LPG connection to the BPL households.** Along with a deposit-free LPG connection, Ujjwala 2.0 will provide the first refill and a hotplate free of cost to the beneficiaries.

Target: Under Ujjwala 1.0, the target was to **provide LPG connections to 50 million women** from the below poverty line (BPL) households, by March 2020. However, in August 2018, women from seven other categories were brought under the purview of the scheme: SC/ST, those under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), beneficiaries of the Antyoday Anna Yojana (AAY),** Forest Dwellers, most backward classes, tea gardens and Islands. Under Ujjwala 2.0, an additional **10 million LPG connections** will be provided to the beneficiaries. Government has also fixed a target of **providing piped gas to 21 lakh homes in 50 districts.**

Nodal Ministry: **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)**

Achievements: In the first phase of the PMUY, 8 crore poor families, including from the Dalit and tribal communities, were given free cooking gas connections. The **LPG infrastructure has expanded manifold in the country.** In the last six years, more than 11,000 new LPG distribution centres have opened across the country.

ASSOCIATED CHALLENGES

- **Low Consumption of Refills:** Encouraging the sustained usage of LPG remains a big challenge, and low consumption of refills hindered **recovery of outstanding loans disbursed under the scheme.** The annual average refill consumption on 31th December 2018 was only 3.21.

- **System Anomalies**: There are deficiencies such as the issuance of connections to unintended beneficiaries, and **problems with the software of the state-run oil marketing companies** for identifying intended beneficiaries and inadequacies in the deduplication process.

PRADHAN MANTRI UJJWALA YOJANA (PMUY) 1.0

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) is a government scheme launched in 2016 **by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.** The scheme originally envisaged the distribution of 50 million LPG connections to women below the poverty line. Later, it aimed to provide **LPG connections to eight crore women by March 2020**. However, this target was achieved seven months prior, in September 2019.

BENEFITS OF PRADHAN MANTRI UJJWALA YOJANA

The unclean cooking fuel causes deaths which are mostly **due to non-communicable diseases including heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and lung cancer.** Providing LPG connections to families below the poverty line ensures universal coverage of cooking gas in the country. The scheme can be a tool for women empowerment in that LPG connections and clean cooking fuel can reduce cooking time and effort, and in most of India, cooking is a responsibility shouldered solely by women. The scheme also employs the rural youth in the supply chain of cooking gas. A **relief package worth Rs 1.70 lakh crore was also announced by the government** to tackle the financial difficulties arising from the Covid-19 outbreak **under the PM Garib Kalyan Scheme.**

Some of the major benefits provided by Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana are:

It provides five crore **LPG connections to families below the poverty line.** Financial support of **Rs 1600 is provided by the scheme** for each LPG connection for BPL households. The administrative cost of this support is borne by the Government. This subsidy is meant for the security fee for the cylinder, pressure regulator, booklet, safety hose, and other fitting charges. Under the scheme, oil marketing companies also provide interest-free loans for refilling and purchasing stoves. The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana covers all the **BPL families that come under all forms of distributorship and distributes various sizes of cylinders (14.2 kg, 5 kg, etc.)** as per the field situation. The benefits of this scheme are also available for the people of all Hilly States including the NE States (who are treated as 'Priority States'). The scheme effectively addresses several difficulties faced by the people in the States of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Tripura in accessing LPG for cooking purposes.

OBJECTIVES OF PRADHAN MANTRI UJJWALA YOJANA

The **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana** was launched for providing clean fuel to women below the poverty line. The use of **unclean cooking fuel is harmful to human health.**

The aims of the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana are given below:**

To **empower women and protect their health**. To minimize health issues arising from the use of unclean fossil fuel and other fuel while cooking. To control indoor pollution from the use of fossil fuel **which causes respiratory issues**. To prevent degradation of the purity of the environment that is compromised by widespread usage of unclean cooking fuel. Any applicant who fulfils the below-mentioned criteria is eligible to apply for the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana.

CONCLUSION

The scheme **should be extended to poor households in urban and semi-urban slum areas**. There is a need for achieving a higher LPG coverage of the population by providing connections to households that do not have LPG. **Entering Aadhaar numbers** of all adult family members of existing as well as **new beneficiaries to make deduplication** effective and appropriate measures in distributors' software to **restrict issuance to ineligible beneficiaries.**

75TH INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY 2021

Commemorating the 75th Independence Day, Prime Minister announced a slew of measures/initiatives and called for **making the next 25 years a glorious one for India.** A day before Independence day, the Prime minister also declared 14th August would now be observed as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day.

INITIATIVES ON 75TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Gati Shakti Master Plan: It is a Rs.100 lakh-crore project for **developing 'holistic infrastructure'**. It will help raise the global profile of local manufacturers and help them compete with their counterparts worldwide. It also raises possibilities of new future economic zones. It will be a source of employment opportunities for the youth in future.

National Hydrogen Mission: The **National Hydrogen Mission and the green hydrogen sector** will give India a quantum jump in meeting its climate targets. Green hydrogen is produced by **splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen using an electrolyzer powered by electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind and solar**. It will also help India to become energy independent. Today India spends over Rs 12 lakh crore on importing energy.

Rice Fortification Plan: The rice distributed under various government schemes will be fortified by 2024. It includes the **Public Distribution System (PDS)**, Mid-Day Meals in schools and **Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS).** It is a significant initiative as the country has high levels of malnutrition among women and children. According to the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution,** every second woman in the country is anaemic and every third child is stunted. India ranks 94 out of 107 countries and is in the 'serious hunger' **category on the Global Hunger Index (GHI).** Six states, including Maharashtra and Gujarat, have started distributing fortified rice as part of the pilot scheme. Food fortification or enrichment is the process of adding micronutrients to food.

Vande Bharat Trains: 75 Vande Bharat' trains will connect different parts of the country in 75 weeks to mark the ongoing 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'. Vande Bharat, the indigenous semi-high speed train set, is being given a boost, with the Railways gearing to roll out at least 10 of them, linking around 40 cities, **by August 2022 to commemorate 75 years of Independence.**

Sainik Schools for Girls: All Sainik Schools in the country will now be open for girls also. At present, 33 Sainik schools are operating in the country. Sainik schools are run by the Sainik Schools Society which is **under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence.** The aim of establishing Sainik schools was to prepare the students from an early age for their entry into the Indian armed forces.

E-commerce platform for Self-Help Groups: This digital platform will connect the **products of women Self-Help Groups** with people in far flung areas of the country as well as abroad and it will have far-reaching consequences. **The government will create an e-commerce platfor**m to ensure a huge market in the country and abroad for their products.

Partition Horrors Remembrance Day: 14th August would now be observed as **Partition Horrors Remembrance Day.** This day will remind Indians of the need to remove the poison of social divisions, disharmony and further strengthen the spirit of oneness, social harmony and human empowerment.

THEME OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY 2021

The **theme of India's Independence Day 2021 celebrations at the Red Fort is 'Nation First, Always First'.** The Prime Minister will address the nation on 15th August, 2021. Special invitations have been sent to the Olympians who won medals at the 2020 Tokyo Games. This year's event will also be restricted for the public like 2020 and no cultural performance will be staged by children. No doubt it was not easy for India to get freedom from British rule. But our political leaders, freedom fighters, and people together participated in the freedom struggle and were determined to gain independence. On **15 August i.e. Independence Day is a gazetted holiday** that means the national, state, and local government offices, post offices, and banks remain closed. Even stores and other businesses and organisations reduced their opening hours or may be closed.

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY: HISTORY

In **1757, British rule began in India which was followed by the victory of the English East India Company** at the **Battle of Plassey** and gained control over the country. East India Company took control in India for almost 100 years and then the British crown replaced it via **Indian Mutiny in 1857-58.** During World War I, the Indian Independence movement was started and **it was led by Mahatma Gandhi** who advocated the method of nonviolent, non-cooperation movement which was followed by the Civil Disobedience movement. In 1946, the **Labour Government, the exchequer of Britain** thought of ending their rule over India because of their capital loss during World War II. Then, the British Government in early 1947 announced to transfer all powers to the Indians by June 1948. **But the violence between Hindu and Muslims** was not decreased basically in Punjab and Bengal. In fact, in June 1947 several leaders like **Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Abul Kalam Azad, B.R Ambedkar, etc**. agreed to the partition of India. Millions of people from different religious groups started finding places to reside. And due to this approx 250,000 to 500,000 people died. On 15 August, 1947 at midnight India got independence and was concluded by the **Jawahar Lal Nehru speech "Tryst with destiny".**

WHAT IS THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE ACT 1947?

The **British Prime Minister Clement Atlee** on 20 February, 1947 declared that the British rule in India would end by 30 June, 1948 after which the powers would be transferred to responsible Indian hands. This announcement was followed by the **agitation by the Muslim League and the demand for the partition of the country.** Then, on 3 June, 1947, British Government declared that any Constitution framed by the Indian Constituent Assembly which was formed in 1946 cannot apply to those parts of the country which were unwilling to accept it. And so on the same day that is on 3 June, 1947, **Lord Mountbatten, the viceroy of India put forth the partition plan** which is known as Mountbatten Plan. Congress and the Muslim League accepted the plan. The immediate effect was given to the plan enacting the Indian Independence Act 1947. On 14-15 August, 1947, midnight, the British rule came to an end, and power was transferred to the two new independent Dominions of India and Pakistan. Lord **Mountbatten became the first governor-general of the new Dominion of India.** Jawahar Lal Nehru became the first prime minister of Independent India. The Constituent Assembly that was set up in **1946 became the Parliament of Indian Dominion.**

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1ST INDIAN PM TO CHAIR A UNSC DEBATE

Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi has chaired the **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** open debate, via video conferencing.

With this, **PM Modi has become the first Prime Minister** of India to chair a UNSC open debate. It must be remembered that **India has assumed the Presidency of the UNSC** for August 2021, taking over from France.

The theme of the high-level open debate was **'Enhancing Maritime Security – A Case for International Cooperation'.**

India will organize two more meetings during its presidency, on peacekeeping and counterterrorism. During the debate**, PM Modi also underlined five principles** that need to be followed in terms of maritime trade and security, which included:

- **free maritime trade sans barriers,**
- peaceful settlement of maritime disputes,
- combating maritime threats,
- encouraging responsible maritime connectivity and
- preserving maritime environment and resources

EBRAHIM RAISI SWORN-IN AS IRAN'S PRESIDENT

Ebrahim Raisi was officially sworn in as the new president of Iran on August 05, 2021. **He won the 2021 Iranian presidential election in June, with 62 per cent of the vote.**

The 60-year-old Raisi succeeds **Hassan Rouhani to begin** his four-year term. He is also been the Chief Justice of Iran since March 2019.

Raisi's inauguration comes at a pivotal time, with **Iran currently in indirect negotiations with the United States** over how to revive the 2015 nuclear agreement.

Raisi will also face the task of reviving his country's economy, which has been battered in recent years by the previous US administration's "**maximum pressure**" campaign of sanctions.

Tensions in the region are also high following a string of maritime provocations blamed by the **West on Tehran.**

GERMANY BECAME 5TH NATION TO SIGN ISA AGREEMENT

Germany became the 5th country to sign the **International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement** after amendments to it entered into force on 8th January 2021, opening its Membership to all Member States of the **United Nations.**

Ambassador of Germany to India Walter J. Lindner deposited signed copies of the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement with the Ministry of External Affairs, the depositary of the Agreement.

Membership to the ISA was earlier limited to 121 countries, which were partially or entirely located within the tropics.

This didn't allow major solar energy economies such as Germany to join the alliance that is being increasingly seen as a foreign policy tool.

The initiative was launched by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the India Africa Summit** and a meeting of member countries ahead of the 2015 **United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris in November 2015.**

The framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance opened for signatures in **Marrakech, Morocco in November 2016.**

INDIA TOOK OVER FRANCE TO ASSUME UNSC PRESIDENCY

India took over from France to assume the presidency of the **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** for the month of August 2021.

This is the first presidency for India during its 2021-22 tenure as a non-permanent member of the UNSC. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the first Indian PM to preside over a meeting of the UNSC.**

As the president of the top UN Body, India will decide the agenda for the month, coordinate important meetings and other related issues. India will focus on three priority areas during its presidency. **These include maritime security, peacekeeping, and counter-terrorism.**

MYANMAR'S MILITARY CHIEF DECLARED HIMSELF AS PM

The **Chief of the Myanmar military, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing** has taken over as the interim prime minister of the country.

He is also the **Chairman of the State Administration Council (SAC)** which has been performing the duties of the government in Myanmar, after the February 01, 2021 coup, which overthrew Aung San Suu Kyi's ruling party.

This **SAC has been reformed as the caretaker government of Myanmar** in order to perform the country's duties fast, easily and effectively.

Min Aung Hlaing is also been the **commander-in-chief of Defence Services of Myanmar** since March 2011. Hlaing has pledged to hold elections by 2023.

US NAVY LED 'SEACAT' MILITARY EXERCISE

The Indian Navy participated in the U.S. Navy-led **Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training (SEACAT) military exercise** in Singapore, to demonstrate its maritime manoeuvres.

The **main objective of SEACAT 2021** was to enhance the interoperability and shared maritime security concerns and preserve rules-based international order. The exercise comprised approximately 400 personnel and 10 ships.

The **20th edition of the exercise was organised by the U.S. Navy, in Hybrid format**, and included 20 other partner nations from the Indo-Pacific region, including India.

Other countries participating in the exercise include Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

About the SEACAT: SEACAT was held for the first time in 2002. The exercise aims to foster enhanced cooperation between Southeast Asian countries by incorporating standardized training, tactics and procedures when faced with crises, contingencies or illegal activities in the maritime domain.

QUAD NAVIES TO UNDERTAKE EX-MALABAR EXERCISE

The **Quad country navies including, India, the US, Japan and Australia,** will be conducting the annual Malabar naval exercises, from August 21, off the coast of Guam, in the Indo-Pacific.

The **harbour phase of the Malabar naval exercises** will take place from August 21 to 24, 2021. The sea phase of the exercise will be held on August 25 to 29, 2021.

About the exercise: Indian Navy will be represented by two surface combatants led by **Guided Missile Destroyer INS Ranvijay and Frigate INS Shivalik** along with maritime reconnaissance aircraft P-8I, ASW helicopters and Special Forces (Marine Commandos-MARCOS).

The objective of the Malabar series of Exercises is to increase the **interoperability of naval powers of the four QUAD countries.**

AL-MOHED AL-HINDI NAVAL EXERCISE 2021

India and Saudi Arabia are all set to conduct their **first-ever naval exercise Al-Mohed Al-Hindi 2021**. To participate in the exercise, India's guided-missile destroyer INS Kochi reached Saudi Arabia.

The joint naval exercise will showcase the reflection of **growing defence and military cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia.**

About the exercise: The exercise is taking place amid rising tension in the Gulf region after a drone attack on a merchant tanker off **Oman killed a British national and a Romanian citizen.**

The **UK and the US pointed fingers at Iran** for the attack on MV Mercer Street, operated by an Israeli-owned firm.

In December 2020, **Army Chief Gen MM Naravane visited the UAE and Saudi Arabia** in a first-ever visit ahead of the Indian Army to the two important Gulf countries.

GREATER MALE CONNECTIVITY PROJECT (GMCP)

The **Government of India and Maldives** inked the contract for the mega **Greater Male Connectivity project (GMCP).**

The **Greater Male Connectivity project (GMCP)** is the largest-ever civilian infrastructure project in the Maldives.

The Government of India is funding the implementation of GMCP through a USD 400 million Line of Credit (LoC) and USD 100 million grant. **The USD 400 million LoC will be provided by the Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank).**

About the project: The project will be developed by Indian construction and engineering firm, AFCONS, based in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

The **Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) comprise of 6.74 km long bridge** and causeway link that will connect the national capital Male with three neighbouring islands namely: Villingili, Gulhifahu and Thilafushi.

INDIA-KAZAKHSTAN JOINT EXERCISE KAZIND-21

The **5th edition of Indo-Kazakhstan Joint Training Exercise, "KAZIND-21"** will be held from August 30 to September 11, 2021, at Training Node, Aisha Bibi, Kazakhstan.

The joint training exercise will boost the bilateral relations **between India and Kazakhstan Armies**.

The **Exercise is also a platform for the Armed Forces of India & Kazakhstan** to train for Counter Insurgency/ Counter-Terrorism operations in the mountainous, rural scenarios under UN mandate.

The Indian Army contingent represented by a battalion of the Bihar Regiment consists of a total of 90 personnel led by a **Contingent Commander.**

The **Kazakhstan Army** will be represented by a company group.

The **scope of Joint Exercise includes professional exchange, planning & execution** of the operation in counterterrorism environment at sub-unit level and sharing expertise on skills at arms, combat shooting and experiences in Counter Insurgency/ Counter-Terrorism operations.

- Kazakhstan PM: **Askar Mamin,**
- Capital: Nur-Sultan, Currency: Kazakhstani Tenge.

WEF'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPACT SUMMIT

The **World Economic Forum's annual Sustainable Development Impact Summit** will take place on September 20-23, 2021 in Geneva, Switzerland. This year's event will focus strongly on inclusively revitalizing economies.

The **United Nations General Assembly**, the summit convenes under the theme "**Shaping an Equitable, Inclusive and Sustainable Recovery".**

It will welcome almost all leaders from government, business and civil society who will work together to drive action and **build momentum for a more sustainable and inclusive future.**

The meeting will examine four interdependent areas and bring together communities of purpose to advance ongoing project work. **Impact sessions and briefings will focus on:**

- Revitalizing economies
- Advancing an inclusive recovery
- Scaling up climate action
- Shaping future food systems

ZAIR-AL BAHR NAVAL EXERCISE B/W INDIA & QATAR

The second edition of the joint naval exercise, Zair-Al-Bahr, between the **Indian Navy and Qatar Emiri Naval Force (QENF)** was conducted between August 9 and 14

in the Persian Gulf.

This edition of the exercise included a three-day harbour phase followed by a two-day sea phase.

The sea phase is comprised of tactical maritime exercises **involving surface action, anti-piracy exercises, air defence, maritime surveillance, boarding operations and SAR exercises.**

In the sea phase of the exercise, the **Indian Navy's Stealth Frigate INS Trikand,** QENF's missile boats of Barzan and Damsah class, fast-attack crafts of MRTP 34 class and Rafale fighter aircraft participated.

- Qatar Capital: **Doha.**
- Currency: **Qatari riyal.**
- Prime Minister of Qatar: **Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdelaziz Al Thani.**

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

ASHRAF GHANI STEPS DOWN AS TALIBAN TAKES CONTROL

Kabul has fallen! Afghanistan government collapsed on August 15, 2021 after **Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani** fled to Tajikistan and Afghan military troops surrendered the capital city, Kabul. **Taliban leader Abdul Ghani Baradar** is likely to be the new President of Afghanistan. Ghani said in a statement after his escape, "In order to avoid the bloodshed, I thought it was best to get out." This was followed by complete chaos in Kabul with shots sounding in the Kabul airport amidst efforts by other countries to evacuate their citizens from Afghanistan. Civilians were seen fleeing Kabul the moment it became clear that the Taliban is taking over the capital. India also started the process of evacuation of its nationals from Afghanistan with **Air India flight AI-243 taking off from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport** for Kabul on the morning of August 15th. The flight returned without 129 stranded passengers. Nations such as the **US, UK, Germany and Canada** are using their troops to evacuate their nationals from Afghanistan. The **US Embassy in Kabul** has suspended all operations and told Americans to take shelter in the place.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO AFGHANISTAN NOW?

Taliban leaders declared on August 16, 2021 that **"the war is over."** Taliban Commander Abdul Ghani Baradar is likely to become the new President of Afghanistan. **Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar is the co-founder of the Taliban insurgent group.** The Taliban has taken control of Afghanistan nearly 20 years after the US-led coalition marched into Kabul. Baradar had said in a statement earlier that the Taliban's victory that saw all cities of the country fall to them in just 10 days was unexpectedly swift and had no match in the world.

WHO IS ABDUL GHANI BARADAR?

Abdul Ghani Baradar is the co-founder of the Taliban in Afghanistan. He was the deputy of Mullah Mohammed Omar. While Haibatullah Akhundzada is the Taliban's overall leader, Baradar is the political chief and most public face. He had been captured in Pakistan by a team of **Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officers** in February 2010. He was released at the request of the United States three years ago on October 24, 2018. Baradar has not only emerged as a victor of Afghanistan's 20-year war but his return to power **embodies Afghanistan's inability to escape the bloody shackles of its past**. Baradar was born in Uruzgan province in 1968 and raised in Kandahar, the birthplace of the Taliban. He had served the Afghan mujahideen during the **war against the Soviet-backed Afghan government in the 1980s.** The Russians were driven out in 1992. He helped his **former commander and brother-in-law Mohammad Omar** found the Taliban in southern Afghanistan in 1994. Baradar had played various military and administrative roles in the five-year regime of the Taliban in Afghanistan. He was **deputy minister of defence when the Taliban** was ousted by the US and its Afghan allies.

WHO ARE THE TALIBAN: The Taliban is a Deobandi Islamist movement, which is led by young Islamic scholars who are dedicated to the religious purification of the country and the creation of an emirate. **Mawlawi Hibatullah Akhundzada** is reportedly the leader of the Taliban since 2016.

LATEST UPDATES FROM AFGHANISTAN

The **Taliban fighters have entered the presidential palace in Kabul,** while Ashraf Ghani and his close aides have fled to Tajikistan. There is a complete collapse of the government, which has triggered panic and chaos in the capital, Kabul. **The Kabul airport** is a scene of complete chaos with nations scrambling to evacuate their citizens. **Many of the frantic Afghans** are also searching for a way out of the fallen nation. The United States has been airlifting its embassy personnel to the Kabul airport to evacuate them from the city. The **Pentagon is sending additional 1000 US troops to Kabul** to help with the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan's capital city.

COMPARISON WITH FALL OF SAIGON

The **fall of Kabul has drawn comparison to the fall of Saigon in 1975.** The Fall of Saigon refers to the capture of Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, by the People's Army of Vietnam in 1975. Saigon's capture had marked the end of the Vietnam War and the start of a transition period to the **formal reunification of Vietnam into the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.** The US withdrawal from Kabul has been compared with the US withdrawal from Saigon. In fact, a photo comparison is making the rounds **that show US evacuation from Kabul in 2021** and US evacuation from Saigon in 1975. The **US Secretary of State Antony Blinken** has, however, insisted that the Afghan mission to be 'successful' and has rejected the comparison between Kabul and Saigon.

WHAT IS SAIGON?

Thousands of Afghans fleeing Afghanistan, especially evacuation by the United States, have brought back ghosts from the past like Saigon, which also witnessed similar evacuations as North Vietnamese troops overran the city. **Phnom Penh** was also similar when the US ambassador had fled the city with some 200 other **Americans just five days before the city fell to fanatical Khmer Rouge.** Saigon is another name for Ho Chi Minh City, which is the largest city in Vietnam, situated in the south. The Fall of Saigon **was the capture of Saigon**, the capital of South Vietnam by the **People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN)** on April 30, 1975. The capture of Saigon marked the end of the Vietnam War and the beginning of a transition period that led to the formal reunification of Vietnam into the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The **People's Army of Vietnam under the command of General Văn Tiến Dũng** had begun their final attack on Saigon on April 29, 1975. The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces commanded by **General Nguyễn Văn Toàn suffered** a heavy artillery bombardment. The People's Army of Vietnam finally occupied the important points of the city and raised their flag over the South Vietnamese presidential palace. The government of unified **Vietnam renamed Saigon as Hồ Chí Minh City,** to honor late North **Vietnamese President Hồ Chí Minh**. The capture of Saigon was preceded by Operation Frequent Wind, which comprises evacuation of almost all American civilian and military personnel in Saigon. **Thousands of South Vietnamese civilians** were also evacuated. The capture of Saigon followed a similar pattern to the capture of Kabul, as the Taliban increased its advances in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of US troops. Similarly in Saigon, the **US ground combat units had left South Vietnam** two years before the fall of Saigon and were not available to defend Saigon or assist in the evacuation. The evacuation from Saigon is known to be the **largest helicopter evacuation in history.**

WHY IS SAIGON-KABUL COMPARISON RELEVANT NOW?

The **biggest question now** is that what will happen to **Afghanistan under Taliban rule.** Will the Taliban return to its old ways and act like the **Vietnamese communists,** who ordered mass executions. Will the women in Afghanistan be seen again as possessions of male members and be forbidden from gaining access to education, or will there be a more **liberal approach, as promised by the Taliban.**

ABDUL GHANI BARADAR DECLARED AFGHAN PRESIDENT

The Taliban asked the Afghan citizens not to come out of their homes or leave the country. **The US-led NATO forces** are still in control of the **Hamid Karzai Airport in Kabul** and it is being used by countries to evacuate their citizens. The Afghanistan government collapsed on August 15, 2021 after **Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani fled to Tajikistan** and Afghan military troops surrendered the capital city, Kabul. **Taliban leader Abdul Ghani Baradar is likely to be the new President of Afghanistan.** Ghani said in a statement after his escape, "**In order to avoid the bloodshed, I thought it was best to get out.**" This was followed by complete chaos in Kabul with shots sounding in the Kabul airport amidst efforts by other countries to evacuate their citizens from Afghanistan. Civilians were seen fleeing Kabul the moment it became clear that the Taliban is taking over the capital. **India also started the process of evacuation of its nationals from Afghanistan with Air India flight** AI-243 taking off from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport for Kabul on the morning of August 15th. The flight returned without 129 stranded passengers. **Nations such as the US, UK, Germany and Canada are using their troops to evacuate their nationals from Afghanistan.** The US Embassy in Kabul has suspended all operations and told Americans to take shelter in the place. Taliban leaders declared on August 16, 2021 that "the war is over." Taliban Commander Abdul Ghani Baradar is likely to become the new President of Afghanistan. **Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar is the co-founder of the Taliban insurgent group.** The Taliban has taken control of Afghanistan nearly 20 years after the US-led coalition marched into Kabul.

The insurgent group retook control after the capital city fell following the surrender of Afghan troops and escape of Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani to Tajikistan. **The Taliban's advances became bolder with the complete withdrawal of the US troops,** marking an end to America's 20-year-long war.

IDEOLOGY OF TALIBAN INSURGENT

The Taliban refers to itself as the **Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan**. The Taliban is a Deobandi Islamist movement and military organization in Afghanistan. **The Taliban had first emerged in 1994 as one of the prominent factions in the Afghan Civil War. Mullah Mohammed Omar, a local imam, had founded the Taliban and** Abdul Ghani Barabar was the co-founder. Mullah Mohammad Omar had led the Taliban militants until his death in 2013. **The Taliban then largely consisted of students (talib) from the Pashtun areas of eastern and southern Afghanistan who had been educated in traditional Islamic schools**. Under the leadership of Mohammed Omar, the Taliban movement spread throughout most of Afghanistan during the Afghan-Soviet war and successfully drove out the Russians in 1992 after the fall of the Soviet-backed regime of Mohammad Najibullah. The Soviet Union had intervened and occupied Afghanistan in 1979. **Following this the Islamic mujahideen fighters had engaged in war with those Soviet forces.** The Taliban had held power over roughly three-quarters of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. The Taliban had established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in 1996 and the **Afghan capital was transferred to Kandahar**, the birthplace of the Taliban. The military goal of the Taliban during the period was to return the order of Abdur Rahman (the Iron Emir) by the re-establishment of a state with Pashtun dominance within the northern areas. They held control of most of the country until they were overthrown during the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in December 2001 after the September 9/11 attacks. After the invasion, the Taliban regrouped as an insurgency movement to fight the US-backed Hamid **Karzai administration and the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in the War in Afghanistan.** Only four countries had formally recognised the Taliban's government in Afghanistan previously and they included **Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan and Turkmenistan.**

WHY ARE THE TALIBAN SO FEARED?

During their previous rule, the Taliban had introduced strict punishments in line with their strict interpretation of the **Sharia law** and this included **public executions of convicted murderers and adulterers** and amputations for found guilty of theft. Under the Taliban's rule, the men in Afghanistan were required to grow beards and women were required to cover themselves fully with a burqa. **The Taliban have also been accused for various human rights violations and cultural abuses.** They had enforced brutal repression of women, which invited widespread international condemnation. They had forbidden women from being educated, forcing young girls to leave schools and colleges. The Taliban had discouraged girls aged 10 and above from going to school. **They had also banned music, cinema and television**. Women were required to be accompanied by a male relative while leaving their homes and had to wear an all-covering burqa. **The women who were found to be disobeying these strict rules were**

publicly beaten. Male medics were also prohibited from treating women and girls. **There was also a ban on the employment of women.** This had also led to the widespread closure of primary schools, as most of the primary school teachers before the Taliban's rise were women. The period is considered as the worst for the women in Afghanistan, as they were largely restricted to the boundations of their homes. Hence, it is a common fear that with the Taliban's return to power, history will repeat itself and the women in Afghanistan will be subjected to such brutal suppression yet again. **The Taliban was also accused of providing safe haven to Islamist militants such as al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden,** which is what led to the US invasion of Afghanistan to remove the Islamist group from power.

WHAT DOES THE TALIBAN WANT IN AFGHANISTAN NOW?

The Taliban have clarified that they want to form an "**inclusive, Islamic government**" in Afghanistan along with other factions. They are currently holding negotiations with senior politicians, including leaders from the former government. **The Taliban have pledged to enforce Islamic law** but have assured that they will provide a secure environment to enable return to normalcy in the nation after decades of war. The Taliban insists that under their latest regime, **women would be allowed to work and go to school and foreign journalists would be safe**. They have announced 'general amnesty' for government officials and have urged them to return to work. **The Taliban want to rename Afghanistan as Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan,** which is what they had called it the last time they ruled. This has raised more fears and the country descended into total chaos after the Taliban took over Kabul. People are scared that the Taliban like earlier will carry out revenge attacks against those who worked with the Americans or the government.

HOW TALIBAN FUNDS ITSELF?

Taliban was listed as the **fifth richest with an annual turnover of $400 million among the top 10 'Terrorist Organizations' by Forbes in 2016**. Another report by NATO reported a **$1.6 billion annual budget of the Taliban in 2019-20.** The NATO report further mentioned that the Taliban is on its way to become an **independent military and political entity by becoming self-sufficient.** On August 15, 2021, the Taliban captured Afghanistan's capital Kabul. In fact, the Taliban has captured most of the territories in war-torn Afghanistan as the US and North-Atlantic Treaty Organization have pulled their military forces out of the country.

Maintaining this level of military control and insurgency requires a hefty amount of funding and support as well. Here is how the Taliban group funds itself, recruits its fighters, controls, and enjoys support on the ground. As per a report by NATO cited by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Taliban earned an estimated $1.6 billion in the fiscal year ending March 2020. **The group expanded its profits through illegal mining, illicit drug trade, and exports**. The report further gave a breakdown of how the Taliban funds itself.

- Mining: **$464 million**,
- Drugs: **$416 million**,
- Foreign Donations: **$240 million**,
- Export: **$240 million**,
- Taxes: **$160 million**,
- Real Estate: **$80 million**

Over the years, the group has also reduced its dependency on foreign donations to 15 per cent by 2020. The group had reportedly received $500 million or a half of its total funding from foreign donations in 2017-18. **A UN report in June 2021 further stated that Opium trading represents the most significant source of income for the Taliban**, estimating a total of approximately $460 million in 2020 from illicit heroin supply worldwide. Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of Opium.

TALIBAN: BACKGROUND

Formed in the 1990s, the hardcore Islamist group Taliban has between 55,000 to 85,000 full-time fighters. The group's capabilities have grown exponentially over the last 20 years of fighting, as per a **Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) report.** Experts further state that the group has a well-organized recruitment network inside Afghanistan and it closes approximately 2 million **Afghan refugees in neighboring Pakistan to grow its strength**. A report by the Combating Terrorism Centre at the US Military Academy stated that the Islamic group has approximately 60,000 core fighters, plus or minus 10 to 20 per cent. The estimates back in 2017 suggested that the total manpower of the group exceeds

200,000 individuals apart from the core fighters. The group also includes another 90,000 members of local militias and tens of thousands of support elements.

HOW IT ENJOYS CONTROL OVER AFGHANISTAN?

The Taliban group is made of primarily the Pashtuns, the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. After the withdrawal of the Soviet Union troops from Afghanistan, the group expanded its support base among Afghans. The group to date enjoys support from Pashtuns in the country. The group with such massive support and funding controls approximately a fifth of the total of 400 districts in Afghanistan, cited the CFR report. With the **US troops withdrawing from the region, the group is expected to increase its control over the country.**

TALIBAN: ROLE OF PAKISTAN

As per **UNODC reports**, the Taliban group draws a major chunk of manpower from various refugee camps in Pakistan. It is also common knowledge that the Taliban has found refuge in Pakistan for the past two decades. **There have been extensive reports about Pakistan's support towards the Taliban relating to logistical, medical, and weapons.**

CHALLENGES FOR INDIA

- **Issue of Indian Security:** The restoration of Taliban rule in Afghanistan presents some very serious potential challenges for Indian security.
- The challenges range from securing its development infrastructures to safely evacuating Indians stranded in troubled Afghanistan.

- **Spread of International Terrorism: For India, a bigger challenge will be about the Taliban's renewed support for international terrorism** and Pakistan's re-direction of jihadi groups that have allegedly fought with the Taliban towards India.

- **Religious Fundamentalism: Like all radical groups, the Taliban will have trouble balancing its religious ideology with the imperatives of state interests.**
- India faces a challenge to deradicalise the region
- for long lasting peace and stability.

- **New Regional Geopolitical Developments:** There can be new regional geopolitical alignments (**such as China-Pakistan-Taliban**) which may go against the interests of India. Meanwhile, the US withdrawal compels the creation of a new balance of power system in and around Afghanistan. **Moreover, the US and the West will try to shape the international attitudes towards the new regime.**

- **No Contiguity With Taliban:** Unlike Pakistan, China and Iran, India has no contiguity with Afghanistan. **Russia has a security treaty with Tajikistan, for instance, and has deployed more troops** there to prevent a destabilising spill over from the turmoil in Afghanistan into Central Asia. India has no such security responsibilities and no direct access to Central Asia. **This may give reasons to the Taliban to hit back at India through Pakistan in J&K, given that LeT and Jaish are operating in Afghanistan alongside the Taliban.**

INDIA'S OPTIONS

- **Broader Diplomatic Engagement**: India should consider appointing a special envoy dedicated to Afghanistan. **The envoy can ensure that Indian views are expressed at every meeting, and broaden engagement with the Taliban.**

- **Decoupling of Taliban-Pakistan:** Although Pakistan's leverage over the Taliban is real, it may not be absolute. **The Taliban is bound to seek a measure of autonomy from Pakistan.** India will have to wait a while before the current issues between India and the Taliban can be overcome.

- **Balancing the Opportunities in Afghanistan:** Structuring the internal balance of power within Afghanistan has always been hard. **A deeper Sino-Pak partnership in Afghanistan will inevitably produce**

countervailing trends. However, for a patient, open-minded and active India, there will be no dearth of balancing opportunities in Afghanistan.

- **Leverage Indian Infrastructural Developments:** Indian USD 3 billion assistance to Afghanistan is in concrete projects that serve its population and have earned it their goodwill that will endure. **The need today is to not stop the development work in Afghanistan and continue the good work.**

- **Global Cooperation:** There is a lot less global acceptance of terrorism today than in it was in the 1990s. No major power would like to see Afghanistan re-emerge as a global sanctuary of terror. The world has also imposed significant new constraints on Pakistan's support for terror through mechanisms like the **Financial Action Task Force.**

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

NPCI TO LAUNCH UPI FACILITY IN UAE

NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL) has partnered with Mashreq Bank to launch the payment system facility of **Unified Payments Interface (UPI), in the UAE.**

Mashreq Bank is the oldest privately owned bank in the United Arab Emirates.

This step will benefit the Indian tourists and who travel to UAE for business or leisure purposes to pay for their purchases using UPI-based mobile applications across shops and merchant stores in the UAE.

This partnership will enable over two million Indians who travel to UAE for business or leisure purposes every year to pay for their purchases seamlessly using UPI-based mobile applications across shops and merchant stores in the UAE.

- National Payments Corporation of India MD & CEO: **Dilip Asbe.**
- National Payments Corporation of India Headquarters: **Mumbai**.
- National Payments Corporation of India Founded: **2008**.

UBHARTE SITAARE FUND LAUNCHED BY FIN-MIN

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has launched an ambitious **'Ubharte Sitaare Fund' - USF** for export-oriented firms and startups in a program at Lucknow.

The Fund aims at arranging funds for the promotion of micro, small and medium companies. The fund has been set up by Exim Bank and SIDBI.

This scheme will be successful in Uttar Pradesh as the state has the highest number of MSMEs.

About the programme: **India Exim Bank's Ubharte Sitaare Programme (USP) identifies Indian companies that** have the potential to be future champions in the domestic arena while catering to global demands.

The fund is a mix of structured support, **both financial and advisory services through investments** in equity or equity-like instruments, debt (funded and non-funded) and technical assistance (advisory services, grants and soft loans) to the Indian companies.

ALLOCATION OF $650 BN IN IMF SPECIAL DRAWING RIGHTS

The **Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)** have approved a record general allocation of **$650 billion in IMF Special Drawing Rights (SDR),** to help boost global liquidity.

The **$650 billion SDR allocation** aims to support member countries, especially emerging and developing nations, battling the coronavirus pandemic and the economic downturn it has caused.

This allocation is the largest-ever distribution in the **IMF's 77-year history**, in terms of monetary reserves assets.

The allocation will become effective from August 23, 2021. The **newly created SDRs will be credited to member countries** in proportion to their existing quotas shareholding in the Fund.

WORLD BANK & INDIA SIGNED USD 250MN PROJECT

The World Bank has approved a USD 250 million projects in India for a long-term dam safety program and improving the safety and performance of existing dams across various states of India.

The Second **Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP-2)** agreement was inked on between the World Bank, the Government of India, the Central Water Commission, and government representatives from 10 participating states.

The project will be implemented at the national level through the **Central Water Commission (CWC).**

At the state level, approximately 120 dams will be undertaken across the states of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu. Other states or agencies may be added to the **project during project implementation.**

Other important measures that **DRIP-2 will support include flood forecasting systems and integrated reservoir operations that will contribute to building climate resilience;** the preparation and implementation of Emergency Action Plans to enable vulnerable downstream communities to prepare for and enhance resilience against the possible negative impacts and risks of climate change; and the piloting of supplemental revenue generation schemes such as floating solar panels.

RBI LAUNCHED BANKING FRAUD AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has started a **public awareness campaign to warn people against digital banking frauds.**

For the new campaign, **RBI has roped in Olympic Gold medalist Neeraj Chopra**. The central bank has asked people to be a little cautious as doing so can protect them from a lot of troubles. A little caution takes care of a lot of trouble.

The campaign sees Chopra urging users to not **divulge details like OTP, CVV number and ATM PIN in front of anyone.**

The users should keep changing their online banking passwords and PIN numbers frequently and immediately block **ATM card, credit card, debit card and/or prepaid card if one loses it**. Block your card if stolen, lost or compromised.

4TH IT FIRM TO HIT 3 TRILLION MARKET CAP

HCL Technologies' market capitalization (market-cap) touched **Rs 3 trillion** for the first time. HCL becomes the fourth Indian information technology (IT) firm to achieve this milestone after Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys and Wipro.

Shares of HCL Tech hit a fresh record high of Rs 1,118.55, up 2 per cent on the BSE in intra-day trade, surpassing its previous high of Rs 1,101 touched on 12th Aug in intra-day deal.

HCL Tech is the third-largest Indian IT services company by revenue, after TCS and Infosys. The company has a strong globally diversified presence and provides comprehensive IT services to an established customer base.

It has strong expertise in engineering and R&D services and its **end customers are spread across industry segments.**

APPOINTMENTS

NAKUL CHOPRA APPOINTED AS CEO OF BARC INDIA

Television monitoring agency **Broadcast Audience Research Council (Barc)** has announced the appointment **of Nakul Chopra** as its chief executive officer (CEO) effective 25 August 2021.

Former CEO Sunil Lulla has resigned to pursue his ambition as an entrepreneur. **This announcement comes as Sunil Lulla has decided to resign from the position of CEO to pursue his entrepreneurial ambitions.**

Chopra had joined the BARC India Board in 2016 and had been elected as the Chairman during 2018-19. **In January 2020, he was appointed as a member of BARC's Oversight Committee.**

The media and advertising industry veteran had earlier served as the CEO, India and South Asia of Publicis Worldwide for over a decade.

- Broadcast Audience Research Council Founded: **2010**.
- Broadcast Audience Research Council Headquarters: **Mumbai**.
- Chairman of Broadcast Audience Research **Council: Punit Goenka.**

STOP TB PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Mansukh Mandaviya has taken over the charge as the **Chairperson of Stop TB Partnership Board.**

He has replaced Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, **Dr Harsh Vardhan as the chairman. India aims to end TB by 2025** while the UN aims to end TB by 2030.

The **Stop TB Partnership is a United Nations-hosted partnership program** that aims to fight against tuberculosis collectively.

The Stop TB Partnership also welcomed the incoming Board Vice-Chair Austin Arinze Obiefuna. **He will take over as the Board Vice-Chair** from 1 January 2022 for a period of three years.

SN GHORMADE AS VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF

Vice Admiral **SN Ghormade** has assumed charge as the Vice Chief of Naval Staff at a formal ceremony in New Delhi.

He succeeds Vice Admiral **G Ashok Kumar who retired on July 31, 2021, after more than 39 years of illustrious service.**

The Flag officer SN Ghormade was commissioned in the Indian Navy on January 01, 1984.

He was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) on January 26, 2017, and Nausena Medal (NM) in 2007 by the President of India, and a **Commendation by the Chief of the Naval Staff in 2000.**

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

APPOINTMENT OF 9 SUPREME COURT JUDGES

Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana administered **the Oath of Office to nine new Judges, including three women Judges**, of the Supreme Court. This is the first time in the history of the apex court that nine judges took the oath of office to the **Supreme Court in one sitting.** With the swearing-in ceremony, the strength of the Supreme Court has reached 33 including the CJI against the sanctioned strength of 34. This year, the venue for the swearing-in ceremony was held in the auditorium of the Supreme Court's additional building complex due to COVID-19 protocols. Till now, the new judges took the oath of office in the CJI's courtroom. Three out of these **nine new judges, Justice Vikram Nath, Justice B V Nagarathna, and Former Additional Solicitor General P S Narasimha** are in line to become the Chief Justice of India in 2027. Of these, **Justice B V Nagarathna could become the first woman Chief Justice of India in 2027.** The Central Government had cleared the names of nine new judges, including three women judges, recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium headed by **Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana** on August 18, 2021. All nine names were sent to the President of India for issuance of the warrant of appointments. The swearing-in ceremony was expected to be held within the week once the names got approved by the President.

The Supreme Court Collegium consisting of 5 senior-most judges, has been led by the **Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, Justice Dr Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud, Justice A M Khanwilkar, and Justice L Nageswara Rao.**

Here are the names of nine new judges of the Supreme Court:

- **Justice Vikram Nath:** Justice Nath, who was the **chief justice of the Gujarat High Court,** is in line to become the CJI upon the retirement of sitting top court judge Justice Surya Kant in February 2027.

- **Justice BV Nagarathna**: Justice Nagarathna was a judge of the **Karnataka High Court**. Justice Nagarathna is in line to become the first woman CJI in September 2027.

- **Justice PS Narasimha:** Justice Narasimha was a senior advocate and **former additional solicitor general.** Justice Narasimha would succeed Justice Nagarathna as the CJI and would have a tenure of over six months.

- **Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka:** Justice Oka was the **chief justice of the Karnataka High Court**).

- **Justice Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari:** Justice Maheshwari was the chief justice of the Sikkim High Court.

- Justice Hima Kohli: Justice Kohli was the **chief justice of the Telangana High Court**

- **Justice CT Ravikumar:** Justice Ravikumar was a judge of the Kerala High Court

- **Justice MM Sundresh:** Justice Sundresh was a judge of the Madras High Court

- **Justice Bela M Trivedi:** Justice Trivedi was a judge of the Gujarat High Court

Since the inception of the Supreme Court, only 8 women judges have been appointed over the past 71 years. **Justice M Fathima Beevi was the first woman judge who was appointed in 1989**. Prior to the appointment of the 3 new women judges to the Supreme Court, **Justice Indira Banerjee has been the only woman judge in the country's apex court** since her elevation on August 7, 2018.

JUSTICE B V NAGARATHNA OF KARNATAKA HC

Justice B V Nagarathna of Karnataka High Court could become the next and first woman Chief Justice of India (CJI) in 2027 if SC Collegium's recommendations of names are considered by the Union Government. **Justice Nagarathna is currently a Judge in the Karnataka High Court.** She began as a lawyer in 1987 in Bengaluru practicing in constitutional law and commercial law including administrative and public law, arbitration and conciliation, land and

rent laws, insurance law, family law, conveyancing & drafting of contracts and agreements, etc. In February 2008, **she got appointed as an additional judge in the Karnataka High Court.** Later in 2010, she became a permanent judge.

Justice Nagarathna's father ES Venkataramiah was the Chief Justice of India for 6 months in 1989. In 2012, Justice Nagarathna ruled that regulation of electronic media is needed thereby emphasizing **curbing sensationalism of news through 'Breaking News', 'Flash News', or any other way of sensationalized presentations**. In 2019, Justice Nagarathna ruled that a temple employee will be entitled to gratuity benefits under the Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowment Act and not under the Payments of Gratuity Act deeming that a temple is not a 'commercial establishment'.

JUSTICE HIMA KOHLI OF TELANGANA HC

Justice Hima Kohli of Telangana High Court is the first woman Chief Justice of the state. She was sworn in as the **Chief Justice of Telangana High Court.** Earlier, she was serving as a Judge of the Delhi High Court. In 2006, Justice Kohli was appointed as an Additional Judge on the Delhi High Court, and later in 2007, she was made a **permanent Judge on the Delhi HC.** Justice Kohli had enrolled **with the Bar Council of Delhi in 1984**. She has served as a legal advisor to many Delhi and Central government bodies such as the National Co-operative Development Corporation, the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India, and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee. In 2020, a judicial committee formed to monitor Delhi Government's response during the COVID-19 pandemic was led by Justice Kohli.

JUSTICE BELA TRIVEDI OF GUJARAT HC

Justice Bela Trivedi has been serving as a Judge of the Gujarat High Court since February 9, 2016. Earlier from February 2011 to June 2011, Justice Trivedi served as the Additional Judge of the Gujarat HC. Before getting transferred to Gujarat HC, Justice Trivedi was serving as an Additional Judge of the Rajasthan High Court. **Justice Trivedi has been a member of the General Council of Gujarat National Law University.**

RELATED CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution provides that the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the **Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States** as the President may deem necessary for the purpose. **Article 217 of the Indian Constitution** states that the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the **President's consultation** with the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the State, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the **Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court.**

AWARDS & HONOR

KHEL RATNA AWARD NAMED AFTER MAJOR DHYAN CHAND

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced that the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award will be renamed as the **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.**

The Prime Minister said the move was based on the numerous requests he received from across the nation.

Dhyan Chand, whose birthday is celebrated as **National Sports Day, won three Olympic golds for the country in Hockey.**

About the award: The award was inaugurated in 1991-92, **the award comprises a medallion, a certificate, and a cash prize of ▢ 25 lakh**.

The first recipient of the Khel Ratna was chess legend, **Viswanathan Anand.** Some of the winners in recent years include cricketer Rohit Sharma, wrestler Vinesh Phogat, women's hockey team captain Rani Rampal, among others.

C.R. RAO CENTENARY GOLD MEDAL AWARD

The **Indian Econometric Society (TIES) Trust** has selected two renowned economic scholars for the **Prof. C.R. Rao Centenary Gold Medal award**.

Renowned economists Jagdish Bhagwati and C Rangarajan have been conferred with the inaugural **Prof CR Rao Centenary Gold Medal (CGM).**

Bhagwati is a professor of economics, law and international relations at Columbia University while C Rangarajan is the former chairman of the **Economic Advisory Council of the Prime Minister and former governor of the Reserve Bank of India**.

About the award: TIES Trust had constituted a jury to shortlist the awardees. Based on the jury's recommendations, it announced that **inaugural award to two distinguished scholars.**

The medal is presented once in two years to an Indian or Indian-origin scholar for lifetime contributions to the fields of theoretical and applied **aspects of quantitative economics and official statistics.**

MAHARASHTRA ANNOUNCED RAJIV GANDHI AWARD IN IT SECTOR

Maharashtra government has announced a new award named after the former Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi** for outstanding performance in the **Information and Technology (IT) sector.**

The **Rajiv Gandhi Award in Maharashtra** will be given to institutes doing remarkable work in the field of information technology.

The decision to start an award in the state after **former PM Rajiv Gandhi** was taken in a meeting chaired by **Maharashtra Minister of State for Information Technology and Home Satej Patil.**

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that the **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award** will be called the **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.**

- Maharashtra Governor: **Bhagat Singh Koshyari.**
- Maharashtra CM: **Uddhav Thackeray.**

CYRUS POONAWALLA WINS LOKMANYA TILAK AWARD

Dr Cyrus Poonawalla, **Chairman of the Pune-based vaccine maker Serum Institute of India (SII),** has been selected for the prestigious **Lokmanya Tilak National Award for 2021.**

He has been named for his work during the COVID-19 pandemic, by manufacturing the Covishield vaccine.

He will receive the award on August 13. **The award comprises a cash prize of Rs one lakh and a memento.**

About the award: The Lokmanya Tilak national award is given annually since 1983 on August 1, **the death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak, by the Lokmanya Tilak Trust.**

However this year the date has been changed due to the coronavirus situation.

GANDHI TO BE GIVEN US CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

An **influential US lawmaker from New York** reintroduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives to posthumously award the **prestigious Congressional Gold Medal to Mahatma Gandhi** in recognition of his promotion of peace and nonviolence.

The **Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian award in the United States.**

Gandhi would be the first Indian to receive a Congressional Gold Medal, an honour bestowed upon such great figures as **George Washington, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, and Rosa Parks.**

INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL OF MELBOURNE AWARDS

The Family Man 2 actors **Manoj Bajpayee and Samantha Akkineni were among the winners of the** latest edition of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne Awards.

The IFFM 2021 were held virtually on Friday with several stars from various film industries in attendance.

Eminent Indian artists like **Shoojit Sircar, Anurag Kashyap, Thiagarajan Kumararaja, Sriram Raghavan were amongst the presenters,** along with Richa Chadha, Guneet Monga, Onir and others as jury members.

List of winners of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) 2021:

- Best Feature Film: **Soorarai Pottru**
- Best Performance Male (Feature): **Suriya Sivakumar (Soorarai Pottru)**
- Best Performance Female (Feature): **Vidya Balan (Sherni)** & Honourable mention to**Nimisha Sajayan (**The Great Indian Kitchen)
- Best Series: **Mirzapur Season 2**
- Best Actress in a Series: **Samantha Akkineni (The Family Man 2)**
- Best Actor in a Series: **Manoj Bajpayee (The Family Man 2)**

SPORTS

INDIAN BOXER LOVLINA BORGOHAI WINS BRONZE MEDAL

Indian Boxer, Lovlina Borgohain has failed to reach the gold medal final match. She **settles for a bronze medal.**

This is India's third medal of the **ongoing Tokyo Olympics**. She lost to **Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey** by unanimous decision in the women's welterweight (69 kg) semifinal at Tokyo 2020.

Lovlina had already assured India of their first boxing medal at the ongoing Olympic Games when she upstaged **former world champion, Nien-Chin Chen of Taiwan**, to enter the semis.

INDIA HOCKEY TEAM WINS BRONZE AT TOKYO

Indian men's hockey team defeated Germany to win their **first-ever Olympic medal in 41 years.** India wins the bronze medal in men's hockey after **beating Germany 5-4 at Tokyo Olympics.**

Before this podium finish for bronze, India last climbed up the Olympic podium in 1980, when it won its 8th gold at the Games.

Simranjeet Singh scored two goals for India at the Oi Hockey Stadium, along with Hardik Singh, Harmanpreet Singh and Rupinder Pal Singh also adding their names on the scoresheet.

PV SINDHU WINS BRONZE MEDAL IN TOKYO OLYMPICS

Ace Indian badminton player PV Sindhu defeated **China's He Bingjiao to win the bronze medal in the women's singles event at the Tokyo Olympics** on August 01, 2021.

With this win, Sindhu scripted history by becoming the **first Indian woman and the only second Indian athlete to win two Olympic medals in individual events.**

Earlier she won the silver in women's singles badminton at the Rio Olympics in 2016. This is India's second medal at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

NEERAJ CHOPRA CREATES HISTORY AT TOKYO OLYMPICS

Neeraj Chopra has won a Gold medal for India in the **javelin throw event at Tokyo Olympics**. With a throw of 87.03 metres in his first attempt, Neeraj killed the competition.

In his second he improved it to 87.58m and that turned out to be the golden throw. **Except for Viteszalav Veslay of the Czech Republic** who threw 86.67m none of his rivals including world champion Johannas Vetter fell by wayside.

This is India's 7th medal at Tokyo 2020, the best ever medal haul for India at a single edition of the Games.

Neeraj Chopra's Gold is also India's second-ever individual Gold medal at the Olympics, after Abhinav Bindra in Shooting.

TOKYO OLYMPICS 2020 CLOSING CEREMONY

The Tokyo Olympics 2020 came to an end on August 08, 2021. The international multi-sport event was held from July 23 to August 08, 2021, in Tokyo, Japan.

This was for the fourth time that Japan hosted the Olympic Games, after previously hosting the Tokyo 1964 (Summer), Sapporo 1972 (Winter), and Nagano 1998 (Winter) games. Apart from this, **Tokyo is the first Asian city to hold the Summer Games twice.**

Medal Tally: **The United States has topped the overall medal table with 113 medals**, which includes 39 Gold, 41 Silver and 33 Bronze Medal.

Indian Contingent managed to win 7 medals comprising 1 Gold, 2 Silver and 4 Bronze Medals. **The country stood at the 48th position in the medal table out of 86 countries**.

Top Five Nations in the Medal Tally:

- **United States**: 113 (Gold: 39, Silver: 41, Bronze: 33)
- **China**: 88 (Gold: 38, Silver: 32, Bronze: 18)
- **Japan**: 58 (Gold: 27, Silver: 14, Bronze: 17)
- **Great Britain:** 65 (Gold: 22, Silver: 21, Bronze: 22)
- **Team ROC** (the Russian Olympic Committee): 71 (Gold: 20, Silver: 28, Bronze: 23)
- India in the Tokyo Olympics 2020

India finished the Games with its best-ever Olympic medal tally of 7 in Tokyo Games 2020, surpassing the previous best record of 6 medals at the 2012 London Olympics.

MC Mary Kom, and men's hockey team skipper, Manpreet Singh, were flag-bearers for the Indian contingent at the opening ceremony.
Bronze-medalist Bajrang Punia was the flag-bearer at the closing ceremony of the event.

Indian Medal Winners List

Gold: Men's Javelin Throw: **Neeraj Chopra**

Silver: Women's 49kg Weightlifting: **Mirabai Chanu** , Men's Freestyle 57kg Wrestling: **Ravi Dahiya**

Bronze: Women's Welterweight boxing: **Lovlina Borgohain,** Women's Singles Badminton: **PV Sindhu**, Men's 65kg Freestyle Wrestling: **Bajrang Punia,** Men's hockey: **India men's hockey team**

DURAND CUP TO MAKE RE-ENTRY WITH 130TH EDITION

Durand Cup, Asia's oldest and world's third oldest football tournament, is all set to make a comeback, after a year's gap.

The **130th edition of the Durand Cup** is scheduled to be held in and around Kolkata between September 05 to October 03, 2021. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, **the competition was cancelled last season.**

History of Durand Cup: The prestigious tournament was first held in 1888, at Dagshai (Himachal Pradesh) and is named after Mortimer Durand, **who was then the Foreign Secretary in charge of India.**

The tournament was a conscious way to initially maintain health and fitness amongst the British troops but was **later opened to civilians and currently is one of the leading sports events in the world.**

Mohun Bagan and East Bengal are the most successful teams in the history of the Durand Cup winning it sixteen times each.

The winning team is presented with three trophies ie the **President's Cup (first presented by Dr Rajendra Prasad),** the Durand Cup (the original challenge prize – a rolling trophy) and the Shimla Trophy (first presented by citizens of Shimla in 1903 and since 1965, a rolling trophy).

MESSI JOINED PSG AFTER LEAVING BARCELONA

Lionel Messi joined star-packed Paris St Germain after leaving Barcelona, the club where he had begun, after 21 years.

Messi, a six-time **winner of the Ballon d'Or for Europe's best soccer player**, signed a two-year contract with an option for a third year.

Paris Saint-Germain Football Club, commonly referred to as Paris Saint-Germain or PSG.

Messi leaves Barcelona with 672 goals in 778 appearances, a record tally for one club. His **trophy haul includes four Champions Leagues and 10 La Liga titles.**

ICC TO PUSH FOR CRICKET INCLUSION INTO OLYMPICS

The **International Cricket Council** has confirmed it will campaign for the inclusion of the sport at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

The **ICC's bid to end** what will by then have been an absence from **Olympic schedules will include multiple demonstrations of cricket's suitability** for multisport events.

Cricket, till now, has made just one appearance in the Olympics, **way back in 1900 in Paris** when only two teams **competed at the event Great Britain and hosts France** meaning the sport's inclusion in 2028 would mark the end of a 128-year absence.

The **sport will feature in the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games** next year, which shapes as a perfect showcase for what the sport can bring to the

Olympics, as well as being a momentous occasion on its own.

BHAVINABEN PATEL CLAIMED SILVER AT TOKYO PARALYMPICS

In table tennis, Indian paddler **Bhavinaben Patel has claimed the historic silver medal** at the 2020 Paralympic Games at Tokyo, in the women's singles summit clash.

The 34-year-old Patel lost to **Chinese paddler Ying Zhou**, 0-3, in her maiden Paralympic Games. This is the first medal for India at the ongoing Tokyo Paralympic Games.

Patel is the only second Indian woman to win a medal at the Paralympics, **after Deepa Malik,** who claimed silver in shot-put at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

WORLD ATHLETICS U20 CHAMPIONSHIP

Shaili Singh claimed the women's Long Jump silver medal in the **World Athletics U20 Championships.**

Her slight wind-aided effort of 6.59m was only 1cm short of the gold medal jump by **Sweden's Maja Askag** but her silver medal ensured that Indian athletics continues to showcase the progress it has been making.

Shaili Singh's was India's third medal in the World Athletics U20 Championships, coming after the bronze won by the Mixed Team in the 4x400m Relay and the silver by **Amit Khatri in the men's 10,000m Race Walk.**

India finished 21st on the medal table, aware that a gold would have lifted it to the top 15.

1ST INDIAN WOMAN TO WIN GOLD MEDAL AT PARALYMPICS

Shooter Avani Lekhara has scripted history as she became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at the Paralympics, firing her way to the top of the podium in the R-2 women's 10m Air Rifle Standing SH1 event.

The 19-year-old from Jaipur, who sustained spinal cord injuries in a car accident in 2012, finished with a world record-equalling total of 249.6, which is also a new Paralympic record.

Avani is only the fourth Indian athlete to win a Paralympics gold after swimmer Murlikant Petkar (1972), javelin thrower Devendra Jhajharia (2004 and 2016) and high jumper Mariyappan Thangavelu (2016).

NISHAD KUMAR CLINCHED SILVER MEDAL IN HIGH JUMP

India's Nishad Kumar has clinched a silver medal in the men's high jump T47 event at the Tokyo Paralympics 2020.

This is the second medal for India at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

The 23-year-old Nishad made a jump of 2.06m, and in doing so created an Asian record. **He also equalled his jump with USA's Dallas Wise, who also took home silver.**

Another American, Roderick Townsend, won the gold with a world record jump of 2.15m. T47 class is meant for athletes with a unilateral upper limb impairment resulting in some loss of function at the shoulder, elbow and wrist.

DEVENDRA JHAJHARIA WON SILVER AT PARALYMPICS GAME

At the ongoing **Tokyo Paralympics 2020,** India's greatest paralympian, Devendra Jhajharia won the silver medal in the men's javelin throw – F46 final event on August 30, 2021.

The **40-year-old Devendra performed his best throw of 64.35, for the silver.**

In the same event, Sundar Singh Gurjar won the bronze medal, with his best throw of 64.01.

With this, the total medal tally of India at the **Paralympics 2020 Games reaches to seven.**

JAVELIN THROWER SUMIT ANTIL WINS GOLD

India's Sumit Antil has won the gold medal in the men's javelin throw F64 final event at the Tokyo Paralympics**,** and in the process set a new world record throw of 68.55m.

The 23-year-old Sumit hails from Sonepat in Haryana.

Michal Burian of Australia won the silver medal (66.29m), **while Sri Lanka's Dulan Kodithuwakku** won the bronze medal.

This is the second gold medal for India at the ongoing Tokyo Games and now the total medal tally of India has reached 7.

Earlier, the bronze medal won by Vinod Kumar in the discus throw F56 final was declared as ineligible by the classification panel

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Selection Procedure

The candidates will be selected on the basis of overall performance in Aptitude Test (AT) and Personal Assessment (PA)/ Personal Interview (PI) or a Video Based Assessment (VBA).

Schemes of the Aptitude Test (AT)

Section	IIM Indore www.iimidr.ac.in		IIM Rohtak www.iimrohtak.ac.in	
	Number of Q	Duration	Number of Q	Duration
QA (Multiple Choice Q)	40*	30*	40*	40*
QA (Short Answer Q)	40*	30*	NA	NA
VA (Multiple Choice Q)	40*	30*	40*	40*
Logical Reasoning (Multiple Choice Q)	NA	NA	40*	40*

Each question will carry **4 marks.**

There will be a **negative marking of 1 negative mark** for each wrong answer except Quantitative Ability (SA) Section (these questions will not carry any negative marking).

Computation of Composite Score (CS) for Final Merit List

Component	IIM Indore www.iimidr.ac.in	IIM Rohtak www.iimrohtak.ac.in
	Weightage (%)	Weightage (%)
Aptitude Test Score	65	45
QA (Short Answer Q)	35	15
Past Academics (10th & 12th)	NA	40
Composite Score: Sum of Above Scores		

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DATES & DAYS

'PANI MAAH OR WATER MONTH' LAUNCHED IN LADAKH

Pani Maah' or water month has been launched in Ladakh to inform villagers about the importance of clean water. The Ladakh government has also announced a reward of Rs 2.5 million for the first block in each district that achieves the status of **'Har Ghar Jal'.**

'Pani Maah' campaign will adopt a three-pronged approach — focussing on water quality testing, planning and strategizing water supply, and seamless functioning of **Pani Sabha in villages.**

As per the government data:

Only 11.75 per cent of rural households in Ladakh have access to tap water connections. **The Pani Maah campaign is expected to expedite the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission in the union territory.**

During this campaign, village communities will be encouraged to send water samples to water quality laboratories for quality checks and monitoring.

In the first phase of **'Pani Maah', water samples will be collected** from all identified sources and service delivery points for testing. The first phase will also include awareness and sensitisation campaigns.

The second phase will focus on organising the **Pani Sabhas/Gram Sabhas/Block level meetings and door to door visits** for effective communication on water quality and service delivery under the Jal Jeevan Mission, a scheme of the **Ministry of Jal Shakti launched in 2019 to provide safe piped** drinking water to every rural household in the country by 2024.

WORLD BREAST- FEEDING WEEK: 1ST - 7TH AUGUST

The World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is marked every year in the first week of August, between 1 to 7 August**, to raise awareness on the importance of breastfeeding for mothers and infants.**

The theme of the World Breastfeeding Week 2021 is "**Protect Breastfeeding:** A Shared Responsibility". The annual week is organized by **WABA, WHO and UNICEF since 1991**.

About Breastfeeding: **Breastfeeding provides every child with the best possible start in life.** It delivers health, nutritional and emotional benefits to both children and mothers.

And it forms part of a sustainable food system. But while breastfeeding is a natural process, it is not always easy. **Mothers need support – both to get started and to sustain breastfeeding.**

MUSLIM WOMEN'S RIGHTS DAY: 1ST AUGUST

In India, "Muslim Women's Rights Day" is celebrated across the nation on August 01 to celebrate the enactment of the law against **Triple Talaq.**

The first Muslim Women's Rights Day was observed in 2020. **The Government of India enacted the law against Triple Talaq on August 01, 2019** to make the social malpractice of Triple Talaq a criminal offence.

The law is formally called the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019.

It prohibits the practice of instant divorce by Muslim men and any violation of the law is punishable by a jail term of up to three years.

INDIA MARKED 7TH NATIONAL HANDLOOM DAY

India has marked the 7th National Handloom Day to showcase the legacy of the **Indian handloom industry.**

The day is to commemorate the **Swadeshi Movement and to celebrate our country's rich fabrics and colourful weaves.**

The whole nation will mark the day to showcase the legacy of the Indian handloom industry and to honour the weavers across the country. It was first observed in 2015 by the Govt of India.

National Handloom Day seeks to **focus on the contribution of hand-loom to the socio-economic development** of the country and also increase the income of weavers.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The United Nations observes the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples on 09th August every year.

The day is being observed to protect the rights of the world's indigenous population and recognize the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.

The theme for 2021 is "**Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract.**"

The day was recognised by the **General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1994.** The date marks the day of the inaugural session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at the United Nations in 1982.

'HIROSHIMA DAY' OBSERVED ON 6TH AUGUST

Each and every year 6th of August marks the anniversary of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima at some stage in World War II.

The horrific incident took place on 6th August 1945, when the United States dropped an atomic bomb named "Little Boy" on Hiroshima in Japan.

This bomb attack was achieved with the motive to give up the Second World War in 1945. **This day is remembered to promote peace and recognise the chance of nuclear strength and nuclear weapons.**

During the 2nd World War, which was energetic in 1939- 1945, the world's first deployed atomic bomb with more than 9000 kilos uranium-235 was loaded. **US B-29 bomber aircraft, the Enola Gay**, attacked the Japanese metropolis of Hiroshima on sixth August 1945.

The explosion was so large that it right away killed 70,000 humans, wiping 90% of the city and later on, around 10,000 human beings died due to the effect of radiation exposure.

JAPAN COMMEMORATES NAGASAKI DAY: 9TH AUGUST

Japan commemorates the **9th of August** every year as **Nagasaki day.**

On August 9, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki, Japan. It was code-named "**Fat Man**" due to the design of the bomb as it had a wide, round shape. This happened 3 days after dropping an atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

An area of about 5 square miles was completely obliterated and around 65,000 people were killed in the bombing.

Nagasaki and Hiroshima continue to feel the impact of the destructive bombing even today.

7TH AUGUST TO BE CELEBRATED AS 'JAVELIN THROW DAY'

The **Athletics Federation of India** has decided that javelin throw day will be on 7th August every year in honour of Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra.

The **23-year-old Neeraj is India's second individual Olympic gold medallist** after **Abhinav Bindra**. Neeraj bagged the gold medal in men's javelin throw at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics on 7th August 2021.

Neeraj has **scripted the history at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo** when he threw the javelin to a distance of 87.58m to end India's medal drought in athletics at the Olympics.

This is India's first-ever gold medal in athletics in the history of the Olympics. AFI's bid to name **August 7 as Javelin Throw Day** is an attempt to attract more youth towards the sport.

- Athletics Federation of India President: **Adille J Sumariwalla**
- Athletics Federation of India Founded: **1946.**
- Athletics Federation of India Headquarters location: **New Delhi.**

WORLD BIOFUEL DAY OBSERVED ON 10TH AUGUST

World Biofuel Day is observed on August 10 every year. The day is celebrated to raise awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels and highlight the various efforts made by the Government in the biofuel sector.

The development of biofuels is in sync with schemes such as **Swach Bharat Abhiyan and Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.**

World Biofuel Day was first observed by the **Ministry of Petroleum and Gas** in August 2015.

Biofuels are environmentally friendly fuels whose use **would go a long way in reducing carbon emissions.** They are created through renewable biomass resources and therefore make a strong case for sustainable development.

As such biofuels will help meet the energy requirements of the **21st-century world** without **damaging the environment in the process.**

WORLD LION DAY OBSERVED ON 10TH AUGUST

World Lion Day is observed globally on August 10 every year. **World Lion Day is marked to raise awareness about the king of beasts and the efforts undertaken for their conservation.**

Owing to their courage, intelligence, strength, and magnificence, lions often feature on national flags, and royal symbols and emblems to represent command, power or authority across cultures. **World Lion Day was launched in 2013.**

About the big cat: The big cat is listed as an endangered species in the **IUCN Red List.** The majestic animal is the second-largest member of the Felidae (cat family), after the tiger.

There is only one species of the lion in the world whose scientific name is **Panthera leo.**

As per the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN)'s Red List of Threatened Species (2016), the Panthera leo has two subspecies: Panthera Leo and Panthera leo persica, found in Africa and Asia.

- International Union for Conservation of Nature Headquarters: **Gland, Switzerland.**
- International Union for Conservation of Nature CEO: **Bruno Oberle.**
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Founder: **Julian Huxley.**
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Founded: **5 October 1948**.

WORLD ORGAN DONATION DAY: 13TH AUGUST

World Organ Donation Day is celebrated every year on August 13.

The day is celebrated to raise awareness about the **importance of organ donation and motivate people to donate organs after death.**

The day provides an opportunity to all to come ahead and pledge to donate their precious organs because one organ donor can save up to eight lives.

About Organ Donation: Organ donation is retrieving a donor's organ like **heart, liver, kidneys, intestines, lungs, and pancreas** after the donor is deceased and then transplanting into another person who is in need of an organ.

WORLD ELEPHANT DAY OBSERVED ON 12TH AUGUST

World Elephant Day is observed every year on **August 12** worldwide for the preservation and protection of the global elephants.

The **main objective of World Elephant Day** is to create awareness on elephant conservation and to share knowledge and positive solutions for the better protection and management of wild and captive elephants.

The **World Elephant Day was initiated on August 12, 2012,** when **Thailand-based Elephant** Reintroduction Foundation teamed up with Canadian filmmaker Patricia Sims.

This is not just a day but a movement in itself. Since 2012, **Ms Sims has been leading World Elephant Day.**

WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY OBSERVED ON 19TH AUGUST

World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is observed every year on 19 August to pay tribute to humanitarian personnel and those workers who lost or risked their lives while doing **humanitarian service. In 2021 we are celebrating the 12th WHD**.

The theme for 2021 WHD is **#TheHumanRace: a global challenge for climate action in solidarity** with people who need it the most.

Why 19 August?: 19 August marks the day on which the then **Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Iraq, Sérgio Vieira de Mello** and 21 of his colleagues were killed in the bombing of the UN Headquarters in Baghdad.

World Humanitarian Day was commemorated for the first time on 19 August 2009, after it was formally recognised by the **United Nations General Assembly in 2009.**

WORLD MOSQUITO DAY OBSERVED ON 20TH AUGUST

World Mosquito Day is observed on 20 August annually to raise awareness about the causes of malaria and how it can be prevented.

This day is observed to highlight the efforts of **healthcare officials, NGOs, and others in fighting diseases caused by malaria.**

On World Mosquito Day every year, awareness is created around diseases caused by mosquitoes.

This year amid the coronavirus pandemic, the theme of World Mosquito Day 2021 is **"Reaching the zero-malaria target".**

There are several different mosquitoes that act as vectors for different diseases. Aedes mosquitoes cause chikungunya, dengue fever, lymphatic filariasis, rift valley fever, yellow fever, and zika. **Anopheles cause malaria, lymphatic filariasis (in Africa).**

History of the day: The day also commemorates the discovery made by **British doctor Sir Ronald Ross** in 1897 that female mosquitoes transmit malaria between humans. In 1902, Ross won **Nobel Prize for Medicine** becoming the first British person to receive the award.

INDIA OBSERVED SADBHAVANA DIWAS ON AUG 20TH

Every year India observes Sadbhavana Diwas on August 20 to commemorate the birth anniversary of late erstwhile **Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi.**
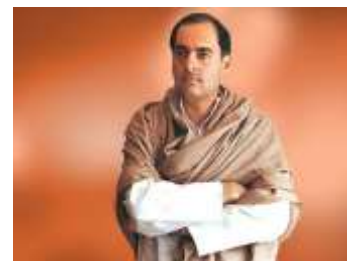
This year on 20th August 2021, we are going to celebrate the **77th birth anniversary** of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

The **Indian National Congress** instituted Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award in 1992, a year after his death.

Every year this day is celebrated in the memory of the late **Rajiv Gandhi who was the youngest Prime Minister of India at the age of 40 years**. In lieu of paying tribute to his vision for India, on this occasion contributions to society betterments are made.

About Rajiv Gandhi: Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister at an age of 40 years after the assassination of his mother Indra Gandhi and served from 1984-89.

To **modernize the education system he came up with a National Education Policy** in 1986 and he founded **Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya System** where he provided free residential education to rural sections from classes 6 to 12.

He always had a dream of a developed nation for which he did **many deeds including the National Education Policy in 1986**, reduced Licence Raj, and included Panchayati Raj.

He was the one whose contribution to the development of the nation is benefiting us at present. For remembering his dreams, his social and economic work for taking the nation towards development, **Sadbhavana Diwas came into existence.**

WORLD WATER WEEK 2021: 23-27 AUGUST

The **World Water Week is** an annual event organized by **Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)** since 1991 to address the global water issues and

related concerns of international development.

The World Water Week 2021 has been organised from 23-27 August, in entirely digital format. The theme for **World Water Week 2021 is 'Building Resilience Faster'.**

World Water Day is observed globally on 22nd March every year. World Water Day celebrates water and raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water.

It is about taking action to tackle the global water crisis. A core focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of **Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.**

INDIA CELEBRATING SANSKRIT WEEK: 19-25 AUGUST

In 2021, **India is observing the Sanskrit Week from August 19 to August 25, 2021,** to promote, popularise and cherish the importance of ancient language.

In 2021, Sanskrit Day will be celebrated on August 22, 2021. The day is celebrated on the **full moon day of the month of Shravan,** which also marks the occasion of Raksha Bandhan each year.

World Sanskrit Day was first declared in 1969, by the **Indian Government on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.**

NATIONAL SPORTS DAY OBSERVED ON 29TH AUGUST

Every year, 29th August has been observed as National Sports Day in India. **The first National Sports Day was celebrated on 29th August 2012, on the birth anniversary of Major Dhyan Chand** who was the star of hockey team of India.

The day is used as a platform to launch various sports schemes as well as organise various sporting events and seminars to spread awareness about the importance of physical activities and sports in life.

History of National Sports Day

National Sports Day is also called with the name **Rashtriya Khel Divas in some parts of India. In 1979,** the Indian Postal Department paid tribute to Major Dhyan Chand after his death and renamed the National

Stadium of Delhi as Major Dhyan Chand Stadium, Delhi.

In 2012, it was announced that a day must be celebrated as National Sports Day with the motive of spreading awareness about the spirit of sportsmanship and propagating the message of various sports.

And for this again a tribute was given to Major Dhayan Chand on his birth anniversary and announced 29th August as National Sports Day in India.

About Major Dhyan Chand: Major Dhyan Chand was born on 29th August 1905, in Allahabad and was a great hockey player of his time.

He was known as the star or wizard of a hockey player as during his period, his team gained hat-trick of gold medals in Olympics during years- 1928, 1932, and 1936. He played internationally for 23 years from 1926 to 1949. He total played 185 matches in his career and scored 570 goals.

He was so passionate about hockey, that he used to practise for the game at night in the moonlight which led him to the name, Dhyan Chand. **In 1956, Dhyan Chand was awarded Padma Bhushan Award, he was the third civilian to get the honour.**

Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced that Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award will be renamed as **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.**

INT. DAY AGAINST NUCLEAR TEST: 29TH AUGUST

The International Day against Nuclear Tests is observed globally on 29th August.

The day aims to increase awareness about the effects of nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means of achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

History of International Day against Nuclear Tests:

On 2 December 2009, **the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly declared 29 August the International Day against Nuclear Tests** through the unanimous adoption of its resolution 64/35.

2010 marked the inaugural commemoration of the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

REPORT & INDEXES

WORLD'S 2ND MOST POLLUTED CITY 2020: GHAZIABAD

Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad was adjudged the second most polluted city out of the 50 'most polluted cities' in the world in 2020 by a report prepared by British company HouseFresh.

Ghaziabad reported an **average Air Quality Index (AQI)** of 2.5 particulate matter (PM) in 106.6μg/m3.

Preceding Ghaziabad, the Chinese city of Hotan in Xinjiang province has been named the most polluted city with a PM2.5 of 110.2μg/m3. The report attributed the air pollution in Hotan to sandstorms resulting from its closeness to the Taklimakan Desert, which is the **largest shifting sand desert in the world.**

Bangladesh, China, India and Pakistan contribute to 49 out of the 50 most polluted cities worldwide. According to the report, Bangladesh was the most polluted country across the world in 2020, followed by Pakistan, India and Mongolia.

Meanwhile, Judbury in Australia bagged the top position in the list of cities with the cleanest air with a PM2.5 level of 2.4μg/m3. Kailua Kona in America's Hawaii and Muonio in Finland with PM2.5 concentrations of 2.6μg/m3 and 2.8μg/m3 respectively were the next top cities of 2020 with clean air.

GLOBAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2020

India is ranked 122nd on a new Global Youth Development Index 2020 measuring the condition of young people across 181 countries, released by the Commonwealth Secretariat in London.

Singapore ranked topmost followed by Slovenia, Norway, Malta and Denmark. Chad, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Afghanistan and Niger came last respectively.

The triennial **rankings of youth development found India among the top five risers on the index between 2010 and 2018,** alongside Afghanistan and Russia, advancing their score on average by 15.74 per cent across areas such as education and employment.

About the index: The index ranks countries between 0.00 (lowest) and 1.00 (highest) according to the developments in youth education, employment, health, equality and inclusion, peace and security, and political and civic participation.

It looks at 27 indicators including literacy and voting to showcase the state of the **world's 1.8 billion people between the age of 15 and 29.**

The 2020 **Global Youth Development Index** reveals that the conditions of young people have improved around the world by 3.1 per cent between 2010 and 2018.

Overall, the index shows advances in youth's participation in peace processes and their **education, employment, inclusion and health care since 2010.**

4 INDIAN AIRPORTS IN SKYTRAX'S TOP 100 AIRPORT LIST

The **Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport** in New Delhi has found place among **world's top 50 best airports in the 2021 Skytrax World Airport Awards**. Delhi airport has improved its overall ranking by five places.

In 2020, it **was placed at 50th spot.** With this, it has also become the first Indian airport to be placed among the top 50 list. The **Hamad International Airport in Doha, Qatar,** has been named the "Best Airport in the World".

Other Indian Airports in the list are:

- Hyderabad: 64 (placed at 71 in 2020)
- Mumbai: 65 (placed 52 in 2020)
- Bengaluru: 71 (placed 68 in 2020)

Top Five Airports in the World:

- Hamad International Airport in Doha, Qatar
- Haneda Airport in Tokyo
- Changi Airport in Singapore
- Incheon International Airport in Incheon, South Korea
- Narita International Airport (NRT) in Tokyo

About the Skytrax World Airport Awards: The **Skytrax World Airport Awards** list is complied by UK-based Skytrax, a consultancy firm that runs an airline and airport review and ranking site, featuring 100 airports.

The **Skytrax World Airport Awards** are voted for by customers in a global airport customer satisfaction survey.

INDIA RANKED 2ND IN TERMS OF CRYPTO ADOPTION

India has ranked second in terms of crypto adoption worldwide behind Vietnam, but ahead of countries such as the **US, UK, and China, according to the 2021 Global Crypto Adoption** Index by blockchain data platform Chainalysis.

This **comes even as worldwide crypto adoption grew by 880**% between June 2020 and July 2021, according to the report.

About the report: A report by US-based research platform Finder released this month corroborated that the top five countries in **terms of crypto adoption were all from Asia.**

The **company surveyed 47,000 users** worldwide and 30% of those surveyed in India said they owned cryptocurrencies. **Bitcoin is the most popular coin in India**, followed by **Ripple, Ethereum and Bitcoin Cash,** according to the report.

Crypto adoption in India has also been led by smaller towns in the country. The largest crypto exchange in the country by trading volume, WazirX, said last week that it had seen more than 2,648% growth in user sign-ups from tier II and tier III cities in India.

TOP 100 QS BEST STUDENT CITIES RANKING

Mumbai and Bengaluru are out of the global top-100 list and are currently ranking at 106 and 110, respectively in the **latest edition of the QS Best Student Cities Ranking.**

While Mumbai **lost 29 places**, Bengaluru fell by 21 places in the ninth edition of the rankings brought out by **global higher education analysts QS Quacquarelli Symonds.**

Globally, the results, which enable students to **compare 115 premier educational destinations,** see London retain its status as the **world's best student city for the third consecutive edition.**

It is **followed by Munich**, which rises from 4th to 2nd. Seoul, which jumps from 10th to joint-3rd, shares the **bronze-medal position with Olympic hosts Tokyo.**

About the QS rank cities: QS rank cities with a population of at least 250,000 and with at least two universities placing in the **QS World University Rankings.**

The ranking offers a powerful lens into the sentiments of both prospective and former students, with over 95,000 survey responses contributing to the **Desirability (prospective students) and Student View (former students) indexes.**

As part of its methodology, QS covers metrics like university rankings, student mix, desirability, employer activity, and affordability, among others.

HURUN GLOBAL 500 MOST VALUABLE COMPANIES LIST

Apple is the world's most valuable company (USD 2,443 billion) according to the Hurun Global 500 Most Valuable Companies list 2021.

The **world's top six valuable companies** remained unchanged as Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Facebook and Tencent.

Globally, the US-led with 243 companies, up by one; followed by China 47, down by four, Japan was third with 30 and the UK was fourth with 24. While India is ranked 9th with 12 companies.

Reliance Industries **(USD 188 billion) ranked at 57 is the top Indian company in the list.**

As many as 12 Indian companies found a place among the Hurun Global 500 for 2021 as Wipro Ltd, Asian Paints Ltd and HCL Technologies Ltd made it to the list of 500 most valuable firms in the world, while ITC Ltd dropped out.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISRO-NASA JOINT MISSION 'NISER'

The **ISRO-NASA joint mission NISER (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) satellite,** aimed at making global measurement of land surface changes using advanced radar imaging, is proposed to be launched in early 2023.

It is a **dual-band (L-band and S-band) radar** imaging mission with the capability of full polarimetric and interferometric modes of operation to observe minor changes in land, vegetation and cryosphere.

NASA is developing L-band SAR and associated systems while ISRO is developing S-band SAR, spacecraft bus, the launch vehicle and associated launch services.

The major scientific objectives of the mission are to improve understanding of the impact of climate change on **Earth's changing ecosystems, land and coastal processes, land deformations and cryosphere.**

NISER is one of the **crucial collaborations of the ISRO and NASA.** India and the U.S. had agreed upon this mission during then-President Barack Obama's visit to India in 2015.

- ISRO Chairman**: K.Sivan.**
- ISRO Headquarters: **Bengaluru, Karnataka.**
- ISRO established: **15 August 1969**.
- NASA administrator: **Bill Nelson.**
- Headquarters of NASA: **Washington D.C., United States.**
- NASA Founded: **1 October 1958**.

EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITE TO BE LAUNCHED BY ISRO

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is ready to launch an Earth Observation Satellite on 12th August.

The satellite is set to be launched from the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota.** Satellite referred to as **EOS-03 will be carried onboard the 14th flight of the GSLV celled GSLV-F10.**

GSLV-F10 will be a satellite in the **Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit.** EOS-03 will attain the remaining geostationary orbit using its onboard propulsion system.

In this GSLV flight, a 4-metre diameter Ogive-shaped payload fairing will be flown for the first time. This will be the 14th flight of GSLV.

INDIA TO LAUNCH GEO-IMAGING SATELLITE (GISAT-1)

India will finally **launch its most advanced geo-imaging satellite (GiSAT-1),** which will allow better monitoring of the subcontinent, including its borders

with Pakistan and China, by imaging the country 4-5 times a day.

The satellite will be launched on August 12 from Sriharikota. **Isro's GSLV-F10 rocket** will finally put the 2,268-kg Gisat-1, codenamed EOS-3, into the geo-orbit. This will be India's first launch of a primary satellite this year.

Once placed 36,000 km above the earth in the geostationary orbit after space manoeuvres, the advanced 'eye in the sky' can constantly monitor areas of interest **(the satellite will move in sync with the rotation of the Earth and hence would look stationary)** and will give real-time information about a large area unlike other remote sensing satellites placed in lower orbits that come to a spot only at regular intervals.

EOS-3 will also enable quick monitoring of natural disasters, **episodic and short-term events.**

DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRED NIRBHAY MISSILE

The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has successfully test-fired **medium-range subsonic cruise missile Nirbhay** from

the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, off Odisha coast.

Nirbhay is India's **first Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile (ITCM).**

About the Missile: ITCM Nirbhay was successfully test-launched with a Made-in-India Manik turbofan engine.

This was the first successful test-firing of the missile with the indigenous booster engine. It can use both **conventional and nuclear weapons of 200 to 300 kilograms.**

The missile can be launched from multiple platforms. ITCM Nirbhay can travel at a speed of 0.7 to 0.9 Mach, or 4 to 7 times faster than the speed of sound.

PAKISTAN TEST-FIRED BALLISTIC MISSILE 'GHAZNAVI'

The **Pakistan Army successfully test-fired** a nuclear-capable surface-to-surface **ballistic missile Ghaznavi.**

The **Ghaznavi missile can strike targets up to 290 kilometres** and is capable of carrying both nuclear as well as conventional warheads.

The training launch was aimed at ensuring the operational readiness of **Army Strategic Forces Command (ASFC)** and re-validating technical parameters of the weapon system.

-

- President of Pakistan: **Arif Alvi.**
- Prime Minister of Pakistan: **Imran Khan.**

ISRO CHIEF INAUGURATED HEALTH QUEST STUDY

ISRO chief, Dr K Sivan has formally inaugurated the **Health QUEST study (Health Quality Upgradation Enabled by Space Technology of ISRO)** which will be undertaken by 20 private hospitals across India.

The event was co-organised by the **Association of Health Care Providers India (AHPI)** and the Society for Emergency Medicine in India (SEMI).

Objective: The objective of the study is to strive towards reducing human errors and achieve zero defect and quality service in the emergency and intensive care units of the hospital.

The study aims to **upgrade healthcare standards in line with ISRO** quality standards and best practices. The quality assurance mechanism in vogue in ISRO will be shared with the study team to **establish the parameters for healthcare quality standards.**

- ISRO Chairman: **K.Sivan.**
- ISRO Headquarters: **Bengaluru, Karnataka.**
- ISRO established: **15 August 1969**.

MISCELLANEOUS

WORLD'S YOUNGEST MOUNTAINEER TO SCALE K2

A **19-year old Pakistani climber Shehroze Kashif** became the youngest person in the world to **reach the summit of K2, the second-highest peak in the world.**

Shehroze Kashif from Lahore achieved the feat of scaling the 8,611-metre high peak with the aid of bottled oxygen. **Before Kashif, Sajid Sadpara**, the son of the **legendary climber Muhammad Ali Sadpara**, was the youngest person to have climbed K2 at the age of 20.

Kashif also **scaled the world's 12th-highest mountain, the 8,047-meter Broad Peak**, at the age of 17. In May this year, he became the **youngest Pakistani to scale Mount Everest.**

Pakistan, Nepal, and China are home to the 14 highest peaks in the world, also known as the 8,000ers. Five 8,000-metre peaks, including K2 and Nanga Parbat, are in Pakistan.

INDIA'S NUCLEAR CAPACITY TO REACH 22,480 MW BY 2031

India's nuclear power capacity is expected to reach 22,480 Mega Watts by 2031 from the current 6,780 MegaWatts.

There are presently **22 reactors with a total capacity of 6780 MW** in operation and one reactor, KAPP-3 (700 MW) has been connected to the grid on January 10, 2021.

Ten (10) nuclear power reactors with 8000 MW capacity (including 500 MW PFBR being implemented by **Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited {BHAVINI})** are under construction.

Additionally, the Government has accorded administrative approval and financial sanction of ten (10) **indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) of 700 MW each to be set up in fleet mode.**

WORLD'S HIGHEST MOBILE ATC TOWERS IN LADAKH

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has built one of the world's highest mobile air traffic control **(ATC) towers at the Advanced Landing Ground in Ladakh.**

The ATC controls operations of the fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters operating in the eastern Ladakh region.

Meanwhile, India has been considering multiple options of developing airfields in **eastern Ladakh including Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO),** Fukche and Nyoma which are at a distance of few minutes from the **Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China**.

The Air Force also has deployed the Igla man-portable air defence missiles to tackle any aerial incursion by any adversary aircraft.

The **Indian Air Force** has been regularly deploying fighter aircraft including the **Rafale and MiG-29s to carry out operations in eastern Ladakh** where there has been disengagement of troops at two locations including Pangong Tso and Gogra heights but both sides have not de-escalated.

WHO CREATED NEW ADVISORY GROUP 'SAGO'

World Health Organization (WHO) has created a new advisory group named, The International Scientific Advisory Group **for Origins of Novel Pathogens, or SAGO.**

The **function of SAGO** will be to systematically study the emergence of future emerging pathogens with pandemic potential, and advise the development in this regard to WHO.

WHO has made an open call for nominations to SAGO from the member countries, thus providing a **transparent foundation for the new scientific advisory group.**

The group will also work **towards finding the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.**

- President of the World Health Organisation: **Tedros Adhanom.**
- Headquarters of WHO: **Geneva, Switzerland.**

1ST NATIONAL PARK TO BE EQUIPPED WITH SATELLITE PHONES

Kaziranga National Park (KNP) in Assam has become the first national park in India to be **equipped with satellite phones.**

Assam Chief Secretary Jishnu Barua handed over 10 satellite phones to the forest personnel of the Kaziranga National Park.

The satellite phones will boost the anti-poaching measures in the park. **BSNL will be the service provider of these phones.**

Significance: The park which has been spread over a massive 430 sq km area and divided into six ranges in upper Assam, has certain areas with poor to no connectivity.

The satellite phones, **given to the officials of Kaziranga Parks**, which draw signals from the satellites instead of mobile towers will ensure connectivity in most of the remote locations. The move **will also boost anti-poaching measures undertaken by the park.**

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

4 NEW WETLANDS ADDED UNDER RAMSAR CONVENTION

Recently, **four more Indian sites - two each from Haryana and Gujarat -** have been recognised as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. Further, according to recent estimates by Wetlands International South Asia, **nearly 30% of the natural wetlands in India** have been lost in the last three decades. Majorly, the loss of Wetlands is more prominent in Urban areas. Wetlands International South Asia was established in 1996, with an office in New Delhi, as a **part of Wetlands International network to promote conservation and sustainable development** of wetlands in the South Asia region.

ABOUT WETLANDS

Wetlands are ecosystems saturated with water, either seasonally or permanently. They include mangroves, marshes, rivers, lakes, deltas, floodplains and flooded forests, rice-fields, coral reefs, marine areas no deeper than 6 metres at low tide, as well as human-made wetlands such as waste-water treatment ponds and reservoirs. **Though they cover only around 6% of the Earth's land surface, 40% of all plant and animal species live or breed in wetlands.**

ADDITION OF NEW RAMSAR SITES

Recently, the **Ramsar Convention has designated four new wetlands in India,** as wetlands of global importance. It is an international treaty for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- **Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary**, the largest wetland in **Haryana** is a human-made freshwater wetland.
- **Sultanpur National Park from Haryana** supports more than 220 species of resident, winter migratory and local migratory waterbirds at critical stages of their life cycles.
- **Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat** lies on the Central Asian Flyway and more than 320 bird species can be found here.
- **Wadhwana Wetland from Gujarat** is internationally important for its birdlife as it provides wintering ground to migratory waterbirds, including over 80 species that migrate on the Central Asian Flyway.

These wetlands are home to endangered bird species like **Egyptian Vulture, Saker Falcon, Sociable Lapwing, and the near threatened Dalmatian Pelican.** With this, the number of Ramsar sites in India are 46.

ROLE OF URBAN WETLANDS

- **Historical Importance:** The value of wetlands, especially in urban settings, is evidenced through our history. In southern India, the cholas, **the Hoysalas built tanks all over the state.**

- **Multi-layered Role**: Wetlands not only support high concentrations of biodiversity, **but also offer a wide range of important resources and ecosystem services** like food, water, fiber, groundwater recharge, water purification, flood moderation, storm protection, erosion control, carbon storage and climate regulation.

- **Liquid Assets of Cities:** They serve as special attributes contributing to the cultural heritage, and have deep connections with a city's ethos. The value of wetlands in securing local livelihoods through activities such as fishing, farming and tourism, is incomparable.

MAJOR THREATS TO WETLANDS

- **Urbanization:** Wetlands near urban centres are under increasing developmental pressure for residential, industrial and commercial facilities.

- Anthropogenic activities. **Due to unplanned urban and agricultural development, industries, road construction, impoundment, resource extraction and dredge disposal,** wetlands have been drained and transformed, causing substantial economic and ecological losses in the long term.

- **Agricultural activities:** Following the **Green Revolution of the 1970s**, vast stretches of wetlands have been converted to paddy fields. Construction of a large number of reservoirs, canals and dams to provide for irrigation significantly altered the hydrology of the associated wetlands.

- **Hydrologic activities:** Construction of canals and diversion of streams and rivers to transport water to lower arid regions for irrigation has altered the drainage pattern and significantly degraded the wetlands of the region. **Keoladeo Ghana Sanctuary, Loktak Lake, Chilika Lake, Vembanad Kole** are among those severely impacted by dams that affect water and silt flows.

- **Pollution:** Unrestricted dumping of sewage and toxic chemicals from industries has polluted many freshwater wetlands.

- **Aquaculture:** Demand for shrimps and fishes has **provided economic incentives to convert wetlands and mangrove forests** to develop pisciculture and aquaculture ponds.

- **Climate change:** Increased air temperature; shifts in precipitation; increased frequency of storms, droughts, and floods; increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration; and sea level rise could also affect wetlands.

ISSUES IN WETLAND CONSERVATION

Major regulatory bodies like the Central Wetland Regulatory Authority had limited impact as they only have advisory powers. Additionally, existing laws ignore the participation of local communities in governing and monitoring wetlands. Further, cities are unable to cater to the water demand due to a policy vacuum as **there is no well-defined 'National Urban Water Policy' to guide urban water management.** In addition to urbanisation needs, lack of awareness and knowledge on wetlands and their ecosystem services can be blamed for this widespread loss.

GLOBAL WETLAND CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

- **Ramsar Convention:** The **Convention came into force in 1975**. The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".

- **Three pillars of the Convention are:** Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands. Designate suitable wetlands for the **list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List")** and ensure their effective management. Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species. **India has 27 Ramsar Sites which are the Wetlands of International importance.**

- **Montreux Record**: It is maintained as part of the Ramsar List. **Montreux Record is a register of wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance** where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. Two wetlands of India are in Montreux Record: **Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Loktak Lake (Manipur).** Chilka lake (Odisha) was placed in the record but was later removed from it.

- **Cities4Forests global campaign**: It works closely with cities around the world to connect with forests, emphasizes the importance of wetlands and their **multiple benefits to help combat climate change and protect biodiversity in cities.**

CONSERVATION EFFORTS BY INDIA

- National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA)
- Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017
- ISRO carried out the **National Wetland Inventory and Assessment** using remote sensing satellites from 2006 to 2011 and mapped around two lakh wetlands in India.

CONCLUSION

Developing Synergy With Mega Urban Schemes: The ecosystem services of wetlands need to be highlighted in our development policies, urban planning and climate change mitigation. In this context, mega urban schemes **like Smart Cities Mission and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation** need to add the aspects of sustainable management of wetlands.

Enabling People's Participation: The **Delhi Development Authority** invited public comments on Master Plan Delhi 2041 to protect and develop an integrated network of 'green and blue assets' of Delhi to maintain the biodiversity and microclimate of the capital. The **'green-blue policy',** refers to where water bodies and land are interdependent, growing with the help of each other, while offering environmental and social benefits. Similarly, Swamini' self-help group of ten women have been organising 'mangrove safari' for tourists in the Mandavi creek in Maharashtra since 2017. This has been **recognised as a model for community-led conservation through ecotourism.** The multiple benefits and services provided by wetlands are essential to **achieve the ambitious agenda for building resilient cities** to achieve our sustainable development goals, while accommodating further development and eradicating poverty.

MCQ BASED QUESTION - AUGUST 2021

Q.1 Which of these regions in India has got the highest altitude herbal park of the country recently?
A) Shimla
B) Chamoli
C) Dehradun
D) Kinnaur

Q.2 NTPC Ltd. has unveiled India's largest floating solar PV project in which city of India recently?
A) Visakhapatnam
B) Surat
C) Rewa
D) Thiruvananthapuram

Q.3 India's first Solar Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station has been inaugurated at which of these highways?
A) Delhi to Chennai Highway
B) Delhi to Kanyakumari Highway
C) Delhi to Kolkata Highway
D) Delhi to Chandigarh Highway

Q.4 The Cybersecurity Multi-Donor Trust Fund has been launched by which organisation?
A) IMF
B) WEF
C) World Bank
D) UNDP

Q.5 The Hisar Airport is being renamed after which of these rulers?
A) Raja Harishchandra
B) Maharaja Agrasen
C) Ahilyabai Holkar
D) Rani Lakshmibai

Q.6 World Sanskrit Day is observed annually on the occasion of which Indian festival?
A) Raksha Bandhan
B) Diwali
C) Ganesh Chaturthi
D) Independence Day

Q.7 Who has been appointed as the Chairman of the reconstituted Advisory Board for Banking and Financial Frauds (ABBFF) by CVC?
A) Ajay Banga
B) Kris Gopalakrishnan
C) N.r. Narayana Murthy
D) T M Bhasin

Q.8 Ismail Sabri Yaakob has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of which country?
A) Iraq
B) Malaysia
C) Saudi Arabia
D) Maldives

Q.9 Name the AI-enabled chatbot launched by BPCL to provide seamless self-service experience and faster resolution of queries/issues?
A) SHAKTI
B) VED
C) URJA
D) VAJRA

Q.10 Veteran Indian politician Kalyan Singh who has passed away recently was the former Chief Minister of which state?
A) Haryana
B) Uttar Pradesh
C) Bihar
D) Rajasthan

Q.11 The International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief is celebrated every year on_____
A) 22 August
B) 23 August
C) 21 August
D) 20 August

Q.12 When is the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition observed?
A) 20 August
B) 21 August
C) 22 August
D) 23 August

Q.13 The SAMRIDH programme has recently been launched by which ministry to boost the start-up ecosystem in India?
A) Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology
B) Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
C) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
D) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Q.14 Which Ministry has launched a '100 days campaign' named SUJALAM?
A) Ministry of Food Processing Industries
B) Ministry of Jal Shakti
C) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
D) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

Q.15 India's first green hydrogen electrolyzer manufacturing unit has been unveiled in which city?
A) Visakhapatnam
B) Chennai
C) Hyderabad
D) Bengaluru

Q.16 The world's largest and tallest observation wheel is set to be launched in which city?

A) Dubai
B) London
C) Wellington
D) Singapore

Q.17 What is the rank of India in the 2021 Global Manufacturing Risk Index?
A) 6th
B) 3rd
C) 5th
D) 2nd

Q.18 The "12% Club" app has been launched by which fintech firm?
A) PhonePe
B) BharatPe
C) Policybazaar
D) Paytm

Q.19 India recently hosted the 11th Meeting of the BRICS High Representatives Responsible for National Security. Name the National Security Advisor of India who chaired the meeting?
A) Samant Goel
B) Nripendra Misra
C) Bipin Rawat
D) Ajit Doval

Q.20 RBI has approved the appointment of Sandeep Bakhshi, as the MD & CEO of which bank?
A) ICICI Bank
B) HDFC Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank
D) Yes Bank

Q.21 Tech firm Infosys has become the _____ company in India to touch a market capitalization (m-cap) of USD 100 billion?
A) 3rd
B) 4th
C) 5th
D) 6th

Q.22 The India – Kazakhstan Joint Training Exercise, "KAZIND-21", is which edition of the annual bilateral military exercise?
A) 4th
B) 3rd
C) 5th
D) 7th

Q.23 Which Indian para-athlete was the flag bearer at the opening ceremony of Tokyo Paralympics 2021?
A) Tek Chand
B) Soman Rana
C) Nishad Kumar
D) Sandeep Choudhary

Q.24 Which country has topped the 2021 Global Manufacturing Risk Index?
A) France
B) Australia
C) United States
D) China

Q.25 The Global Manufacturing Risk Index is released by which organisation?
A) Avison Young
B) Cushman & Wakefield
C) JLL
D) Knight Frank

Q.26 Yuktdhara is a portal to plan for new MGNREGA assets using Remote Sensing and GIS based information. The portal has been launched by which organisation?
A) Google India
B) NPCI
C) ISRO
D) BSNL

Q.27 The 'National Monetisation Pipeline' was recently launched by FM Nirmala Sitharaman. The pipeline has been developed by which organisation?
A) IIT Kanpur
B) DRDO
C) ONGC
D) NITI Aayog

Q.28 What is the total corpus of the Ubharte Sitaare Fund (USF), launched recently by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman?
A) Rs 150 crore
B) Rs 300 crore
C) Rs 250 crore
D) Rs 100 crore

Q.29 The Amrit Mahotsav Shri Shakti Innovation Challenge 2021 has been launched by which organisation in partnership with UN Women in India?
A) MyGov
B) NITI Aayog
C) Central Vigilance Commission
D) Competition Commission of India

Q.30 Who has been appointed as the new Governor of Manipur?
A) TK Rangarajan
B) La. Ganesan
C) R. Vaithilingam
D) P. Wilson

Q.31 HDFC bank has recently tied with which company to build comprehensive solutions across payment gateway, point of sale machines and credit products?
A) Facebook
B) Amazon
C) Paytm
D) Google

Q.32 The World Water Week is being observed globally in 2021 from August 23 to 27. The annual celebration is organised by international organisation SIWI. Its headquarter is located at_____
A) Paris, France
B) London, United Kingdom
C) Rome, Italy
D) Stockholm, Sweden

Q.33 India's first smog tower has been set up in which city?
A) Ahmedabad
B) New Delhi
C) Indore
D) Kanpur

Q.34 Which financial body has signed the $500 million loan with theIndian government to expand the metro rail network in Bengaluru?
A) ADB
B) World Bank
C) IMF
D) AIIB

Q.35 Name the Indian UT which has recently launched first of its kind online grievance redressal portal to address the grievances of the migrants in the UT?
A) Ladakh
B) Jammu & Kashmir
C) Chandigarh
D) Lakshadweep

Q.36 NeoBolt is India's first indigenous motorized wheelchair vehicle. The vehicle has been developed by which institution?
A) IIT Hyderabad
B) IIT Delhi
C) IIT Kanpur
D) IIT Madras

Q.37 Name the newly appointed CEO of BARC India.
A) Sandeep Bansal
B) Shashi S. Vempati
C) Nakul Chopra
D) Puneet Goenka

Q.38 What is the estimated monetisation potential of National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP)?
A) Rs 6.0 lakh crores
B) Rs 3.0 lakh crores
C) Rs 4.0 lakh crores
D) Rs 5.0 lakh crores

Q.39 Which organisation will be responsible to manage the Ubharte Sitaare Fund (USF)?
A) EXIM and SBI
B) SIDBI and NABARD
C) SEBI and SBI
D) SIDBI and EXIM

Q.40 What is the theme of the World Water Week 2021?
A) Water, Ecosystems and Human Development
B) Building Resilience Faster
C) Water and Climate Change: Accelerating Action
D) Water for society – Including all

Q.41 East Sikkim has topped the North Eastern Region (NER) District SDG Index 2021-22. The index has been launched by?
A) NITI Aayog
B) Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (M/DoNER)
C) UNDP
D) All the above

Q.42 The Ministry of Labour and Employment has launched e-Shram portal for the unorganised sector, under which the beneficiaries would get an Accidental Insurance cover of Rs_____
A) Rs 1 lakh
B) Rs 5 lakh
C) Rs 3 lakh
D) Rs 2 lakh

Q.43 MANTHAN 2021 is a national hackathon launched by Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) in collaboration with which organisation to address security challenges faced by the intelligence agencies?
A) ISRO
B) AICTE
C) NPCI
D) NABARD

Q.44 S S Mallikarjuna Rao is the MD and CEO of which bank?
A) Punjab National Bank
B) UCO Bank
C) CANARA Bank
D) Union Bank of India

Q.45 India has been elected as the member of Council of Administration(CA) and Postal Operations Council (POC) of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). In which place is the headquarter of UPU located?
A) Rome, Italy
B) London, United Kingdom
C) Bern, Switzerland
D) Paris, France

Q.46 Who has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Stop TB Partnership Board?
A) Harsh Vardhan
B) Mansukh Mandaviya
C) Kiren Rijiju
D) Dharmendra Pradhan

Q.47 The Ministry of Textile has partnered with which institute to develop 'INDIAsize' an Indian size charts based on body measurements?
A) National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Navi Mumbai
B) National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Ahmedabad
C) National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Bhubaneswar
D) National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), New Delhi

Q.48 The first G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment was attended by Smriti Irani on behalf of the Government of India. The conference was hosted by which country through virtual mode?
A) Italy
B) United States
C) India
D) Japan

Q.49 Name the MD & CEO of UCO Bank who has been reappointed to the post by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) ?
A) Chandra Shekhar Ghosh
B) S S Mallikarjuna Rao
C) A S Rajeev
D) Atul Kumar Goel

Q.50 SVEEP Consultation Workshop was recently organised by which organisation?
A) RBI
B) Election Commission of India
C) DRDO
D) Indian Army

Q.51 The Shared Destiny-2021 is a multinational peacekeeping exercise, scheduled to take place in September 2021. Which country will host the exercise?
A) China
B) Thailand
C) Pakistan
D) Malaysia

Q.52 Who has been roped in by the Delhi government as the brand ambassador for its 'Desh Ke Mentors' programme?
A) Virat Kohli
B) Sonu Sood
C) Neeraj Chopra
D) Ranvir Singh

Q.53 Ted Dexter, who has passed away recently was the former cricket captain of which country?
A) England
B) Australia
C) New Zealand
D) Zimbabwe

Q.54 The eSHRAM Portal will generate a unique _____ digit Universal Account Number (UAN) upon registration
A) 11
B) 9
C) 12
D) 15

Q.55 AS Rajeev has been reappointed as the MD & CEO of which bank?
A) Andhra Bank
B) Bank of Baroda
C) Punjab National Bank
D) Bank of Maharashtra

Q.56 Which animal has been named as the state animal by the administration of the Union Territory of Ladakh?
A) Jaguar
B) Red panda
C) Kashmir stag
D) Snow leopard

Q.57 PM Modi inaugurated a special commemorative coin of what value to mark the birth anniversary of ISKCON founder on September 01, 2021?
A) Rs 100
B) Rs 125
C) Rs 200
D) Rs 250

Q.58 RBI has announced to set up a 5-member committee to scrutinize applications and give recommendations on New Umbrella Entity (NUE) licenses. Who will head this committee?
A) P. Vasudevan
B) Mohd. Anwar
C) Vikram Dhanda
D) Debojit Barua

Q.59 The Rural Enterprises Acceleration Programme 'Saath' has been launched by which state/UT for Self Help Group (SHG) women?
A) Chandigarh
B) Rajasthan
C) Uttar Pradesh
D) Jammu & Kashmir

Q.60 Which of these countries have been inducted as the new member country of the New Development Bank (NDB) set up by BRICS nation?
A) Bangladesh
B) UAE
C) Uruguay
D) All of the above

Q.61 How many awardees have been selected for the 2021 Ramon Magsaysay Award?
A) 4
B) 5
C) 3
D) 6

Q.62 Who has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)?
A) JB Mohapatra
B) Anuja Sarangi
C) K.M. Prasad
D) Meera Swarup

Q.63 The 5th BRICS Industry Ministers Meeting was held recently under the chairmanship on India. Who is the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry in GoI?
A) Dharmendra Pradhan
B) Prakash Javadekar
C) Nitin Gadkari
D) Piyush Goyal

Q.64 Which day in the year is celebrated as World Humanitarian Day?
A) 19 August
B) 20 August
C) 18 August
D) 17 August

Q.65 How many National Youth awards (NYA) have been conferred by the Ministry of Sports on the occasion of International Youth Day 2021?
A) 18
B) 10
C) 22
D) 30

Q.66 Which company has roped in Saikhom Mirabai Chanu as its brand ambassador?
A) Patanjali
B) Amway India
C) Bigbasket
D) Modicare

Q.67 The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has inked an agreement with which telecom operator to ensure high quality and high speed internet facility to states in the North Eastern Region of India?
A) Reliance Jio
B) Vodafone/Idea (VI)
C) Airtel
D) BSNL

Q.68 Which actress has been appointed as the chairperson of the Mumbai Academy of Moving Image (MAMI) Film Festival, replacing Deepika Padukone?

A) Priyanka Chopra
B) Sonam Kapoor
C) Anushka Sharma
D) Aishwarya Rai

Q.69 The Indian Navy and Vietnam Navy recently undertook bilateral maritime exercise in which region, where INS Ranvijay and INS Kora participated from Indian side?
A) Indian Ocean
B) Andaman Sea
C) South China Sea
D) Pacific Ocean

Q.70 The World Photography Day is celebrated on which day?
A) August 16
B) August 17
C) August 18
D) August 19

Q.71 What is the theme of the World Humanitarian Day 2021?
A) #TheHumanRace
B) #RealLifeHeroes
C) #Women Humanitarians
D) #NotATarget

Q.72 Who is the current Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports?
A) Prakash Javadekar
B) Anurag Singh Thakur
C) Kiren Rijiju
D) Ramesh Pokhriyal

Q.73 Which city will host the 12th Defence Expo-2022?
A) Bengaluru
B) Gandhinagar
C) Lucknow
D) Indore

Q.74 The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has constituted a Committee to review the existing guidelines of Journalist Welfare Scheme. Who is the head of this committee?
A) Sachidanand Murthy
B) Ravinder Kumar
C) Pankaj Salodia
D) Ashok Kumar Tandon.

Q.75 What is the total Special Drawing Rights (SDR) allocation made by IMF to India?
A) SDR 12.57 billion
B) SDR 19.41 billion
C) SDR 13.66 billion
D) SDR 17.72 billion

Q.76 PM Modi virtually addressed the 6th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) recently. Which country was the host of the EEF Summit 2021?
A) France
B) Russia
C) Germany
D) Australia

Q.77 Name the life insurance company which is acquiring the Exide Life Insurance Company for Rs 6,887 crore in a stock and cash deal?
A) HDFC Life Insurance
B) LIC
C) SBI Life Insurance
D) Max Life Insurance

Q.78 Praveen Kumar has claimed a silver medal in which event at the Tokyo Paralympics Games?
A) Discuss Throw
B) Shotput
C) High Jump
D) Javelin Throw

Q.79 Name the Indian para-athlete who has won two medals at the ongoing Tokyo Games in Shooting event?
A) Mariyappan Thangavelu
B) Sharad Kumar
C) Devendra Jhajharia
D) Avani Lekhara

Q.80 What is the rank of India in the Hurun India Future Unicorn List 2021?
A) 4th
B) 2nd
C) 3rd
D) 6th

Q.81 The Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana has been unveiled by which ministry?

A) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
B) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
C) Ministry of Women and Child Development
D) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Q.82 The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, also called as World Tribal Day, is observed on which day?
A) 8 August
B) 9 August
C) 7 August
D) 6 August

Q.83 The Zayed Talwar 2021 is the bilateral naval exercise of the Indian Navy with which country?
A) Oman
B) Qatar
C) Israel
D) UAE

Q.84 The Government has approved the extension of the term of service of the Cabinet Secretary of India for a period of one-year till August 2022. Who is the incumbent Cabinet Secretary?
A) Pradeep Kumar Sinha
B) Rajiv Gauba
C) Ajay Kumar Bhalla
D) Nripendra Misra

Q.85 Which country has won the most number of medals at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics?
A) Italy
B) Japan
C) United States
D) China

Q.86 The second Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Conference on Range Technology (ICORT-2021) was recently organised by which of these organisations?
A) DRDO
B) NPCI
C) SBI
D) TERI

Q.87 Neeraj Chopra has recently claimed the gold medal for India at Tokyo Olympics in which event?
A) Boxing
B) Shooting
C) Wrestling
D) Javelin Throw

Q.88 The Government of India has renamed the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award after which player?
A) Keshav Dutt
B) K. D. Singh
C) Major Dhyan Chand
D) Milkha Singh

Q.89 In order to expand its reach in rural market, SBI General Insurance has partnered with which platform?
A) SahiPay
B) WePay
C) AmazonPay
D) M-Pesa

Q.90 The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) has appointed first ever female director of the organisation. Name the new Director of ZSI
A) K. G. Emiliyamma
B) Archana Bahuguna
C) Dhriti Banerjee
D) Indu Sharma

Q.91 PM Modi has declared to observe which day as the 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day'?
A) 14 August
B) 15 August
C) 16 August
D) 13 August

Q.92 Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services (TAPAS) is an online portal launched by which ministry?
A) Ministry of Steel
B) Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
C) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
D) Ministry of Minority Affairs

Q.93 Name the Indian national park which has become the first in the country to get equipped with satellite phones?
A) Manas National Park
B) Jim Corbett National Park
C) Kaziranga National Park
D) Gir National Park

Q.94 Recently the government launched brand name and logo for marketing of the urban Self-Help Group (SHG) products. What brand name has been given to these products?
A) SonChiraiya
B) Neelkanth
C) Saras
D) Gauraiya

Q.95 Four new wetlands from India have been added to the list of Ramsar sites. Which of the given options is not true with respect to the location of these wetlands?
A) Thol, Gujarat
B) Sultanpur, UttarPradesh
C) Wadhwana, Gujarat
D) Bhindawas, Haryana

Q.96 What is the name of India's first Cattle Genomic Chip for the conservation of pure varieties of indigenous cattle breeds?

A) BharGau
B) GauDham
C) IndiGau
D) GauLok

Q.97 India's first Drone Forensic Lab and Research Center has been inaugurated in which state?
A) Tamil Nadu
B) Maharashtra
C) Gujarat
D) Kerala

Q.98 What is the name of the new advisory group created by the WHO to study the emergence of future emerging pathogens with pandemic potential?
A) SAGO
B) TAHO
C) HALO
D) PEARL

Q.99 Which Ministry has launched the SAMVAD 2.0 initiative, after the successful completion of phase first?
A) Ministry of Finance
B) Ministry of Women and Child Development
C) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
D) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

Q.100 Adi Godrej has announced to step down as the Chairman of Godrej Industries effective from October 01, 2021, Who will take over Mr Godrej?
A) Ardeshir Godrej
B) Rati Godrej
C) Nadir Godrej
D) Burjis Godrej

ANSWER KEY

1- B	11- A	21- B	31- C	41- D	51- A	61- B	71- A	81- D	91- A
2- A	12- D	22- C	32- D	42-D	52- B	62- A	72- B	82- B	92- B
3- D	13- A	23- A	33- B	43-B	53- A	63- D	73- B	83- D	93- C
4- C	14- B	24- D	34- A	44- A	54- C	64- A	74- D	84- B	94- A
5- B	15- D	25- B	35- B	45- C	55- D	65- C	75- C	85- C	95- B
6- A	16- A	26- C	36- D	46- B	56- D	66- B	76- B	86- A	96- C
7- D	17- D	27- D	37- C	47- D	57- B	67- D	77- A	87- D	97- D
8- B	18- B	28-C	38- A	48- A	58- A	68- A	78-C	88- C	98- A
9- C	19- D	29-A	39- D	49-D	59- D	69- C	79- D	89- A	99- B
10-B	20- A	30-B	40- B	50- B	60- D	70- D	80- C	90- C	100- C

LEGAL AFFAIRS

#SC RULES ON FUTURE RETAIL V. AMAZON DISPUTE

Recently, the **Supreme Court upheld the enforcement of an order by the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC)'s** emergency arbitrator **that puts on hold the Future Group's deal with Reliance Industries Limited.**

Singapore International Arbitration Centre

- It is a not-for-profit international arbitration organisation based in Singapore, which administers arbitrations under its own rules of arbitration and the **United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Arbitration Rules.**

- **Background:** In August 2020, Future Retail Limited (FRL) had announced that it would sell its retail and wholesale business to Reliance Retail.
- Before the deal could be executed, Amazon objected to it, alleging a breach of contract it had with Future Coupons (the promoter firm of Future Retail).
- Amazon said that its agreement with Future Coupons had given it a "call" option, which enabled it to exercise the option of acquiring all or part of Future Retail's shareholding in the company, within three to 10 years of the agreement.
- Subsequently, Amazon took Future Retail into Emergency Arbitration before the SIAC, where an emergency arbitrator barred the latter from proceeding with the deal.
- **Emergency arbitration** is a mechanism which "allows a disputing party to apply for urgent interim relief before an arbitration tribunal has been formally constituted".

Significance of Supreme Court's Order:

- **Dismissed** FRL's argument **that the "Emergency Arbitrator is not an arbitral tribunal" under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1996.**
- It upheld the validity of the EA award. The judgment laid down that the **award is "exactly like an order of an arbitral tribunal" contemplated under Section 17** of the 1996 Act. Hence, an award by the EA was like an order under Section 17(1) (interim measures ordered by an arbitral tribunal) of the Act.
- Section 17 of the Act prescribes the mechanism for parties to an arbitration to seek interim reliefs from the arbitral tribunal during the pendency of the arbitral proceedings.
- The EA orders were **"an important step in aid of decongesting the civil courts and affording expeditious interim relief to the parties".**
- The court **pointed out a recommendation that a High-Level Committee constituted by the Government of India under the chairmanship of Justice B N Srikrishna** (retd) to review the institutionalization of the arbitration mechanism in India and look into the provisions of the Arbitration Act after the 2015 Amendment Act, gave in its 2017 report.
- It said that "given that international practice is in favour of enforcing emergency awards (Singapore, Hong Kong and the United Kingdom all permit enforcement of emergency awards), it is time that India permitted the enforcement of emergency awards in all arbitral proceedings".
- The judgment would serve as **a reminder to the parties to carefully agree to the terms and conditions of the arbitration.**
- **No appeal would lie under Section 37 of the Arbitration Act** against an order of enforcement of an Emergency Arbitrator's order made under Section 17(2) of the Act.
- Section 37 of the Arbitration Act, prescribes for appeals against certain identified orders of the court and/or arbitral tribunal (as the case may be).
- However, Section 37 (unlike Section 34) of the Act is silent on the limitation period for filing an appeal.

Arbitration

- It is a process in which disputes are **resolved between the parties by appointing an independent third party** who an impartial and neutral person is called arbitrator. Arbitrators hear both the parties before arriving at a solution to their dispute.
- **Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2021:**
- It **amends the Arbitration and Conciliation Act (A&C Act 1996)** so as to (i) enable automatic stay on awards in certain cases and (ii) specify by regulations the qualifications, experience and norms for accreditation of arbitrators.
- **A&C Act 1996** is an act to amend and consolidate a law related to domestic arbitration, international commercial arbitration and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards as also to define the law relating to conciliation and for matters connected therewith or incidental therewith.
- **Features of the Act:**
- **Qualifications of Arbitrators:It does away with the qualifications of the arbitrators under 8ᵗʰ Schedule of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996** which specified that the arbitrator must be:
- An advocate under the Advocates Act, 1961 with 10 years of experience, or
- An officer of the Indian Legal Service.
- **Unconditional Stay on Awards:** If the Award is being given on the basis of a fraudulent agreement or corruption, then the court can grant an unconditional stay as long as an appeal under Section 34 of the arbitration law is pending.
- **Benefits:** Would bring about parity among all the stakeholders in the arbitration process.
- Checking misuse of the provisions under Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 would save the taxpayers' money by holding those accountable who siphoned off of them unlawfully.
- **Drawbacks:** India already lags behind when it comes to the enforcement of international contracts and agreements. The Act **can further hamper the spirit of Make in India campaign and deteriorate rankings in Ease of Doing Business Index.**
- India aims to become a hub of domestic and international arbitration. Through the implementation of these legislative changes, resolution of commercial disputes could take longer duration now onwards.

#GOVERNOR'S PARDONING POWERS OVERRIDES SECTION 433A

Recently, the **Supreme Court (SC)** held that the **Governor's power to pardon overrides Section 433A of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).**

- Earlier in January 2021, in a case of **mercy petition**, the SC noted that the **Governor cannot reject the state's recommendation** but **there is no time prescribed** to take a decision.

Pardoning Power Overrides 433A:

- SC held that the **Governor of a State can pardon prisoners,** even **before they have served a minimum 14 years of prison** sentence.
- The Governor's power to pardon overrides a provision in the **CrPC Section 433A** which **mandates that a prisoner's sentence can be remitted only after 14 years** of jail.
- **Section 433A** states that **where a sentence of imprisonment for life is imposed** on conviction of a person **for an offence for which death is one of the punishments** provided by law, or **where a sentence of death imposed on a person has been commuted** under section 433 into one of imprisonment for life, **such person shall not be released from prison unless he had served at least fourteen years of imprisonment.**
- Section 433-A **cannot and does not in any way affect the constitutional power conferred on the President/Governor** to grant pardon under **Articles 72** or 161 of the Constitution.

Power Exercised by State Government:

- The court noted that the sovereign power of a Governor to pardon a prisoner under **Article 161** is actually **exercised by the State government and not the Governor on his own.**
- The **advice of the appropriate government binds the Head of the State.**
- The action of commutation and release can thus be **pursuant to a governmental decision and the order may be issued even without the Governor's approval.** However, under the **Rules of Business and as a matter of**

constitutional courtesy, it may seek approval of the Governor, if such release is under Article 161 of the Constitution.

- The **state government can frame a policy of grant of remissions either under Section 432 of the CrPC or under Article 161** of the Constitution.
- **If a prisoner has undergone more than 14 years of actual imprisonment,** the **state government,** as an appropriate Government, is **competent to pass an order of premature release.**
- **Section 432** of the Code of Criminal Procedure empowers the Government to remit sentence.

Pardoning Power

- Under Article 72 of the Constitution, the **President shall have the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment** or to **suspend, remit or commute** the sentence of any person convicted of any offence where the sentence is a sentence of death.
- **Limitation:** The President **cannot exercise his power of pardon independent of the government.**
- In several cases, the SC has ruled that the **President has to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers** while deciding mercy pleas. These include **Maru Ram vs Union of India in 1980,** and **Dhananjoy Chatterjee vs State of West Bengal in 1994.**
- **Reconsideration:** Although the **President is bound by the Cabinet's advice,** Article 74(1) empowers him to **return it for reconsideration once.** If the Council of Ministers decides against any change, the President has no option but to accept it.

Governor's Pardoning Power:

- **Article 161:** The Governor of a State shall have the **power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment** or to **suspend, remit or commute** the sentence of any person convicted of any offence against any law relating to a matter to which the executive power of the State extends.
- **Difference Between Pardoning Powers of President and Governor:**
- The **scope of the pardoning power of the President** under Article 72 is **wider than the pardoning power of the Governor** under Article 161 which differs in the following two ways:
- **Court Martial:** The **power of the President** to grant pardon **extends in cases where the punishment or sentence is by a Court Martial** but Article 161 **does not provide any such power to the Governor.**
- **Death sentence:** The **President can grant pardon in all cases** where the sentence given is the **sentence of death** but the pardoning power of the **Governor does not extend to death sentence** cases.

Terms

- **Pardon:** It **removes both the sentence and the conviction** and completely absolves the convict from all sentences, punishments and disqualifications.
- **Commutation:** It **denotes the substitution of one form of punishment for a lighter form.** For example, a death sentence may be commuted to rigorous imprisonment, which in turn may be commuted to a simple imprisonment.
- **Remission:** It implies **reducing the period of sentence without changing its character.** For example, a sentence of rigorous imprisonment for two years may be remitted to rigorous imprisonment for one year.
- **Respite:** It denotes **awarding a lesser sentence in place of one originally awarded due to some special fact,** such as the physical disability of a convict or the pregnancy of a woman offender.
- **Reprieve:** It implies **a stay of the execution of a sentence** (especially that of death) for a temporary period. Its purpose is to enable the convict to have time to seek pardon or commutation.

#CRITERION FOR DECIDING CREAMY LAYER

The **Supreme Court of India** recently held that the **economic criterion cannot be the sole basis for deciding the creamy layer from among backward classes for the purpose of excluding it from the purview of providing reservation.**

▪ The SC was hearing a petition challenging two notifications issued by the Haryana government sub-classifying backward classes solely on economic basis while fixing the criteria for creamy layer.

The debate
● 'Creamy layer' denotes relatively forward, better-educated and socially advanced members of OBCs
● The term was introduced by Sattanathan Commission in 1971, which recommended that 'creamy layer' should be excluded from quota benefits
● In Indra Sawhney Judgment (1992), SC directed that 'creamy layer' among OBCs be excluded from quota benefits
● After a constitution bench judgment in 2018, the concept is applicable also to SC/ST communities
● The Centre has defined 'creamy layer' among OBCs as those earning more than ₹8 lakh per annum

SC Verdict:

▪ Recalled the **ruling in the Indra Sawhney-II case**, reported in 2000. **Haryana's notifications have violated the law declared in the Indra Sawhney judgment** by identifying creamy layer only on the basis of income.
▪ The basis of exclusion of 'creamy layer' cannot be merely economic - the **government cannot deny reservation to a person belonging to a backward community solely on the ground that he or she is rich.**
▪ **Social advancement, higher employment in government services**, etc, play an equal role in deciding whether such a person belonged to the creamy layer and could be denied quota benefits.
▪ The SC has illustrated that **'creamy layer' would include "persons from backward classes who occupied posts in higher services like IAS, IPS and All India Services** had reached a higher level of social advancement and economic status, and therefore, were not entitled to be treated as backward".
▪ People with sufficient income who were in a **position to provide employment to others should also be taken to have reached a higher social status** and therefore, should be treated as outside the backward class.
▪ Persons from backward classes who had **higher agricultural holdings or were receiving income from properties, beyond a prescribed limit,** do not deserve the benefit of reservation.

Creamy Layer:

▪ The creamy layer **sets a threshold within which OBC reservation benefits are applicable.**
▪ The creamy layer principle was **based on the fundamental right to equality.** Unless it is applied, the genuinely deserving person would not access the reservation.
▪ The **basis of exclusion should not merely be economic**, unless the economic advancement is so high that it necessarily means social advancement.
▪ While the income of a person can be taken as a measure of his social advancement, the limit to be prescribed should not be such as to result in taking away with one hand what is given with the other.
▪ The income limit must be such as to mean and signify social advancement.

Creamy Layer as defined by the Central Government:

▪ The **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** have listed out various categories of people of certain rank/status/income whose children cannot avail benefit of OBC reservation.
▪ **Income:** For that not in government, the current threshold is an **income of Rs 8 lakh per year.**
▪ The income threshold is supposed to be raised every three years.
▪ It was last revised in 2017 (more than three years now).
▪ **Rank of Parents:** For children of government employees, the threshold is based on their parents' rank and not income.
▪ For instance, an individual is considered to fall within the creamy layer if either of his or her parents is in a constitutional post; if either parent has been directly recruited in Group-A; or if both parents are in Group-B services. There are other criteria as well.

Constitutional Provisions Related to OBCs:

▪ According to the Constitution, **Articles 15(4), 15(5) and 16(4)** confer power on a state to identify and declare the list of SEBCs (Socially and Educationally Backward Classes). As a matter of practice, separate OBC lists are drawn up by the Centre and each state concerned.
▪ The **Rohini Commission** was constituted in October 2017 under **Article 340** of the Constitution.
▪ It had been constituted **to complete the task of sub-categorising 5000-odd castes in the central OBC.**
▪ The **127th Constitution Amendment Bill 2021** restores the power of states to identify SEBCs, usually called OBCs.

- The amendment was necessitated after the Supreme Court, in its Maratha reservation ruling in May, **upheld the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Act**.
- The 102nd Constitution Amendment Act of 2018 **gave constitutional status to the NCBC (National Commission for Backward Classes)**, and empowered the President to notify the list SEBCs for any state or union territory.
- The Amendment Bill **amends Articles 342 A** (clauses 1 and 2) and will introduce a new clause - 342 A (3) specifically authorising states to maintain their state list.

Sub-categorisation of OBCs:

- OBCs are granted **27% reservation in jobs and education** under the central government **but only a few affluent communities** among the over 2,600 included in the Central List of OBCs **have secured a major part** of this.
- Sub-categorisation or creating categories within OBCs for reservation would **ensure "equitable distribution" of representation** among all OBC communities.
- However, sub-categorisation **can be used to appease one vote-bank or the other within the category** and thus a **cause of social justice would end up being politicised.**
- The commission requested for an appropriate budget provision for a **proposed all-India survey for an estimate of the caste-wise population of OBCs.**
- The reason given was the **absence of data for the population of various communities to compare with** their representation in jobs and admissions as the data of the **Socio-Economic Caste Census** (SECC) were not considered reliable.
- In August 2018, it was announced that the data of OBCs will also be collected in **Census 2021** but there have been no other announcements after that.

Commission:

- It took charge in October 2017 with a tenure of 12 weeks ending in January 2018. In **June 2020,** the Cabinet approved a **six-month extension to the commission** up to 31st January 2021.
- **Progress:** It is **ready with the draft report** and would have huge political consequences and is likely to face a **judicial review** as well.
- **Budget:** Until November 2019, the government has spent **over Rs. 1.70 crore** on the Commission including salary and other expenses.
- The budget is being drawn from the **National Commission for Backward Classes** (NCBC) which was given **constitutional** status by the government in 2018.

Indra Sawhney & Others vs Union of India, 1992:

- The Supreme Court while upholding the 27% quota for backward classes, struck down the government notification reserving 10% government jobs for economically backward classes among the higher castes.
- SC in the same case also upheld the principle that the combined **reservation beneficiaries should not exceed 50%** of India's population.
- The concept of **'creamy layer'** also gained currency through this judgment and provision that reservation for backward classes should be confined to initial appointments only and not extend to promotions.

#APPOINTMENT OF 9 SUPREME COURT JUDGES

- **Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana**, administered the Oath of Office to nine new Judges, including three women Judges, of the Supreme Court. This is the first time in the **history of the apex court that nine judges took the oath of office to the Supreme Court in one sitting.**
- With the swearing-in ceremony, the **strength of the Supreme Court has reached 33 including the CJI against the sanctioned strength of 34.**
- This year, the venue for the swearing-in ceremony was held in the auditorium of the Supreme Court's additional building complex due to COVID-19 protocols. Till now, the **new judges took the oath of office in the CJI's courtroom.**
- Three out of these nine **new judges, Justice Vikram Nath, Justice B V Nagarathna, and Former Additional Solicitor General P S Narasimha** are in line to become the Chief Justice of India in 2027.
- Of these, Justice **B V Nagarathna could become the first woman Chief Justice of India in 2027.**

- The Central Government on August 26, 2021, had cleared the names of nine new judges, including three women judges, recommended by the **Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana on August 18, 2021.**

- All nine names were sent to the President of India for issuance of the warrant of appointments.

- The Supreme Court **Collegium consisting of 5 senior-most judges**, has been led by the Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, Justice DrDhananjaya Y Chandrachud, Justice A M Khanwilkar, and Justice L Nageswara Rao.

9 new judges, including 3 women judges appointed to Supreme Court of India:

  - ➢ **Former Additional Solicitor General P S Narasimha** (selected by the Collegium for direct appointment from the Bar)
  - ➢ **Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka** (Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court)
  - ➢ **Justice Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari** (Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court)
  - ➢ **Justice Vikram Nath** (Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court)
  - ➢ **Justice M MSundersh** (also a judge in Kerala High Court)
  - ➢ **Justice C T Ravi Kumar** (a judge in Kerala High Court)

- *New women judges appointed to Supreme Court of India:*

  - ➢ **Justice B V Nagarathna** of Karnataka HC
  - ➢ **Justice Hima Kohli** of Telangana HC
  - ➢ **Justice Bela M Trivedi** of Gujarat HC

- Of the three women judges, Justice **B V Nagarathna of Karnataka HC could become the first woman Chief Justice of India (CJI) in 2027** if SC Collegium's recommendations of names are considered by the Union Government.

- Since the inception of the Supreme Court, only 8 women judges have been appointed over the past 71 years. **Justice M Fathima Beevi was the first woman judge who was appointed in 1989.**
- Prior to the appointment of the 3 new women judges to the Supreme Court, **Justice Indira Banerjee** has been the only woman judge in the country's apex court since her elevation on August 7, 2018.

Justice B V Nagarathna of Karnataka HC

- **Justice B V Nagarathna of Karnataka High Court** could become the next and first woman Chief Justice of India (CJI) in 2027 if SC Collegium's recommendations of names are considered by the Union Government.

- **Justice Nagarathna is currently a Judge in the Karnataka High Court**. She began as a lawyer in 1987 in Bengaluru practicing in constitutional law and commercial law including administrative and public law, arbitration and conciliation, land and rent laws, insurance law, family law, conveyancing & drafting of contracts and agreements, etc.
- In February 2008, she got appointed as an **additional judge in the Karnataka High Court. Later in 2010, she became a permanent judge.**
- **Justice Nagarathna's father ES Venkataramiah** was the Chief Justice of India for 6 months in 1989.
- In 2012, Justice Nagarathna ruled that regulation of electronic media is needed thereby emphasizing curbing sensationalism of news through 'Breaking News', 'Flash News', or any other way of sensationalized presentations.

- **In 2019, Justice Nagarathna** ruled that a temple employee will be entitled to gratuity benefits under the Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowment Act and not under the Payments of Gratuity Act deeming that a temple is not a 'commercial establishment'.

Justice Hima Kohli of Telangana HC

- **Justice Hima Kohli of Telangana High Court is the first woman Chief Justice of the state**. She was sworn in as the Chief Justice of Telangana HC on January 7, 2021.
- Earlier, she was serving as a Judge of the Delhi High Court. In 2006, Justice Kohli was appointed as an Additional Judge on the Delhi High Court, and later in 2007, she was made a permanent Judge on the Delhi HC.
- **Justice Kohli had enrolled with the Bar Council of Delhi in 1984**. She has served as a legal advisor to many Delhi and Central government bodies such as the National Co-operative Development Corporation, the National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation of India, and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee.
- In 2020, a judicial committee formed to **monitor Delhi Government's response during the COVID-19 pandemic was led by Justice Kohli.**

Justice Bela M Trivedi of Gujarat HC

- **Justice Bela Trivedi** has been serving as a **Judge of the Gujarat High Court** since February 9, 2016.
- Earlier from February 2011 to June 2011, Justice Trivedi served as the Additional Judge of the Gujarat HC. Before getting transferred to Gujarat HC, **Justice Trivedi was serving as an Additional Judge of the Rajasthan High Court.**
- Justice Trivedi has been a member of the **General Council of Gujarat National Law University.**

#LOK SABHA PASSED TRIBUNAL REFORMS BILL, 2021

- **Lok Sabha** passed **Tribunal Reforms Bill, 2021**. The bill abolishes as many as nine appellate tribunals, including the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal (FCAT), set up under various acts.
- The latest bill was passed in the Lower House by voice vote without a debate amid the ongoing protests by the opposition parties over the Pegasus row and several other issues.
- The Tribunal Reforms Bill which seeks to replace the T**ribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021**, was introduced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on August 2, 2021, in Lok Sabha.

Tribunal Reforms Bill, 2021

- The bill provides for the abolition of the tribunals or the authorities under various Acts by amending the **Copyrights Act, 1957, Cinematograph Act, 1952, the Customs Act, 1962, the Airport Authority of India Act, 1994, the Patents Act, 1970, and the Trade Marks Act, 1999.**

- The tribunals under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act, 2001, Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, and the Control of National Highways (Land and Traffic) Act, 2002, will also be wound up.

- All the pending cases before such tribunals or the **authorities will be transferred to the High Court or Commercial Court.**
- The **Tribunal Reforms Bill** will also provide for the uniform terms and the conditions of service for Chairperson and members of various tribunals.

#SC RAISED ISSUE ON TRIBUNAL REFORMS BILL

Recently, the **Supreme Court of India** (SC) has challenged the government to produce material showing its reasons for introducing the **Tribunal Reforms Bill of 2021.**

- The Bill replaces the **Tribunals Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance, 2021** which was quashed by the Supreme Court.

Issues Raised by SC:

- **Unconstitutional Legislative Overriding:** There was **lack of discussion** over the bill, and the government has re-enacted the very same provisions struck down by the Court in the **Madras Bar Association case (2021).**
- It amounts to **"unconstitutional legislative overriding"** of the judgement passed by the SC.
- **Repeated Violation of SC Orders:** The Centre is not following the repeated directions issued by the Court to ensure the **proper functioning of the Tribunals.**
- The provisions in the ordinance regarding **conditions of service** and **tenure of Tribunal Members** and **Chairpersons** were struck down by the Supreme Court.
- **Security of Tenure:** The Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021 bars appointments to tribunals of persons below 50 years of age. It **undermines the length/security of tenure.**
- **Undermines the Separation of Powers:** The bill allows the **Central Government to take a decision** on the recommendations made by the selection Committee, preferably within three months from the date of such recommendation.
- **Section 3(7)** of the bill mandates the recommendation of a panel of two names by the search-cum selection committee to the Central Government, violating the **principles of separation of powers and judicial independence.**
- **Vacant Positions in Tribunals:** India now has 16 tribunals including the National Green Tribunal, the Armed Forces Appellate Tribunal, and the Debt Recovery Tribunal among others which also suffer from **crippling vacancies.**
- Existence of large number of vacancies of Members and Chairpersons and the inordinate delay caused in filling them up has resulted in weakening of the tribunals.
- **Detrimental to the Decision-making Process:** These cases will be transferred to High Courts or commercial civil courts immediately.
- **T**he lack of specialisation in regular courts could be detrimental to the decision-making process.
- For example, the **Film Certification Appellate Tribunal (FCAT)** exclusively heard decisions appealing against decisions of the censor board, which requires expertise in art and cinema.
- Further, the **dissolution of certain tribunals** and appellate bodies, and the transfer of their functions to High Courts can be criticized on the grounds that Indian courts are **already overburdened** with their existing caseload.

About the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021:

- **Dissolution of Existing Bodies:** The Bill seeks to dissolve certain appellate bodies and transfer their functions to other existing judicial bodies. For example, the disputes heard by the **Film Certification Appellate Tribunal** will be addressed by the **High Court.**
- **Merging of Existing Bodies:** The Finance Act, 2017 merged **tribunals** based on domain. For example, the **Competition Appellate Tribunal** has been merged with the **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal.**
- **Search-cum-selection Committees:** The Chairperson and Members of the Tribunals will be appointed by the central government on the recommendation of a Search-cum-Selection Committee. The Committee will consist of:
- The **Chief Justice of India, or a Supreme Court Judge** nominated by him, as the **Chairperson** (with casting vote).
- **Two Secretaries** nominated by the central governments.
- The **sitting or outgoing Chairperson,** or a retired Supreme Court Judge, or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court, and
- The **Secretary of the Ministry** under which the Tribunal is constituted (with no voting right).

- **State Administrative Tribunals:** It will have separate search-cum-selection committees with the **Chief Justice of the High Court** of the concerned state, as the Chairman (with a casting vote).
- **Eligibility and Term of Office:** The Bill provides for a four-year term of office (subject to the upper age limit of 70 years for the Chairperson, and 67 years for members).
- Further, it specifies a minimum age requirement of 50 years for appointment of a chairperson or a member.
- **Removal of Tribunal Members:** It states that the central government shall, on the recommendation of the Search-cum-Selection Committee, remove from office any Chairperson or a Member.

Tribunals

- The term **'Tribunal'** is derived from the word **'Tribunes',** which means **'Magistrates of the Classical Roman Republic'.**
- Tribunal is a **quasi-judicial institution** that is set up to deal with problems such as resolving **administrative or tax-related disputes.**
- It performs a number of functions like adjudicating disputes, determining rights between contesting parties, making an administrative decision, reviewing an existing administrative decision and so forth.
- The objective may be to reduce the caseload of the judiciary or to bring in subject expertise for technical matters.
- **Constitutional Provisions related to Tribunals**
- Tribunals were not part of the original constitution; it was incorporated in the Indian Constitution by **42nd Amendment Act, 1976.**
- **Article 323-A:** It deals with Administrative Tribunals.
- **Article 323-B:** It deals with tribunals for other matters.
- **Article 262:** The Indian Constitution provides a role for the Central government in adjudicating conflicts surrounding inter-state rivers that arise among the state/regional governments.

- **Why the bill has been introduced?**

- The bill stated that the analysis of the data of the last three years has shown that the tribunals in various sectors have not necessarily led to faster justice delivery. **These tribunals are also at the considerable expense to the exchequer.**
- The Supreme Court of India had also deprecated the **practice of tribunalisation of justice** and filing of appeals directly from the tribunals to the apex court in many of its judgments.
- Therefore, further streamlining of tribunals was considered necessary. It could save considerable expense to the exchequer and at the same time, also lead to the speedy delivery of justice.

Background:

- The Central Government had started the **process of the rationalization of Tribunals back in 2015.**
- **Seven tribunals were abolished or merged by the Finance Act, 2017 on the basis of their functional similarity. The total number of tribunals was reduced from 26 to 19.**
- **The reason that followed in the first phase was to close down the tribunals which were not necessary and to merge the tribunals with similar functions.**

- Accordingly, the **Tribunal Reforms (Rationalization and Conditions of Service) Bill, 2021**, was introduced in Lok Sabha on February 13, 2021.

- It proposed to abolish the more authorities and tribunals as well as to provide for a mechanism to file a direct appeal to the High Courts and Commercial courts, as the case may be.
- However, the bill could not be passed during the Budget Session in February and the President had promulgated the Ordinance. While introducing the bill on August 2, 2021, **Finance Minister also withdrew the earlier bill introduced in February 2021.**

#INDIA COULD GET FIRST WOMAN CJI

- The **Central Government** cleared all nine names including three women judges recommended by the **Supreme Court Collegium** headedby Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana.
- The files have been sent further to the **President of India** for issuance of the warrant of appointments. The Supreme Court most likely will have 9 new judges sworn in in the next week.
- This will fill up 9 out 10 vacant seats in the SC which is currently functioning with 24 judges against the sanctioned capacity of 34 judges.
- The **SC Collegium headed by CJI Ramana** on August 18 had recommended nine names, including three women judges for appointment as judges in the top court.
- The three women judges recommended by the **SC Collegium are Justice B V Nagarathna of Karnataka HC, Justice Hima Kohli of Telangana HC, and Justice Bela M Trivedi of Gujarat HC.**
- **Of the three women judges**, Justice B V Nagarathna of Karnataka HC could become the first woman Chief Justice of India (CJI) in 2027 if SC Collegium's recommendations of names are considered by the Union Government.
- **Former Additional Solicitor General P S Narasimha** has been selected by the Collegium for direct appointment from the Bar. Among other 8 names recommended are Justices Abhay Shreeniwas Oka (Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court), Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari (Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court), Vikram Nath (Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court), M MSundersh (also a judge in Kerala High Court), and C T Ravi Kumar (a judge in Kerala High Court).
- **The SC Collegium consisting of 5 senior-most judges,** has been led by the Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, Justice DrDhananjaya Y Chandrachud, Justice A M Khanwilkar, and Justice L Nageswara Rao.

Justice B V Nagarathna of Karnataka HC

- Justice B V Nagarathna of Karnataka High Court could become the next and **first woman Chief Justice of India (CJI) in 2027 if SC Collegium's recommendations** of names are considered by the Union Government.
- Justice Nagarathna is currently a Judge in the Karnataka High Court. She began as a lawyer in 1987 in Bengaluru practicing in constitutional law and commercial law including administrative and public law, arbitration and conciliation, land and rent laws, insurance law, family law, conveyancing & drafting of contracts and agreements, etc.
- In **February 2008**, she got appointed as an additional judge in the **Karnataka High Court. Later in 2010, she became a permanent judge.**
- **Justice Nagarathna's father ES Venkataramiah** was the Chief Justice of India for 6 months in 1989.

- In 2012**, Justice Nagarathna**ruled that regulation of electronic media is needed thereby emphasizing curbing sensationalism of news through 'Breaking News', 'Flash News', or any other way of sensationalized presentations.

- In 2019**, Justice Nagarathna**ruled that a temple employee will be entitled to gratuity benefits under the Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowment Act and not under the Payments of Gratuity Act deeming that a temple is not a 'commercial establishment'.

Justice Hima Kohli of Telangana HC

- **Justice Hima Kohli of Telangana High Court** is the first woman Chief Justice of the state. She was sworn in as the Chief Justice of Telangana HC on January 7, 2021.
- Earlier, **she was serving as a Judge of the Delhi High Court**. In 2006, Justice Kohli was appointed as an Additional Judge on the Delhi High Court, and later in 2007, she was made a permanent Judge on the Delhi HC.
- **Justice Kohli had enrolled with the Bar Council of Delhi in 1984.** She has served as a legal advisor to many Delhi and Central government bodies such as the National Co-operative Development Corporation, the National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation of India, and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee.
- In 2020, a judicial committee formed to monitor Delhi Government's response **during the COVID-19 pandemic**

was led by Justice Kohli.

Justice Bela M Trivedi of Gujarat HC

- **Justice Bela Trivedi** has been serving as a Judge of the Gujarat High Court since February 9, 2016.Earlier from February 2011 to June 2011, Justice Trivedi served as the Additional Judge of the Gujarat HC.
- Before getting transferred to **Gujarat HC, Justice Trivedi** was serving as an Additional Judge of the Rajasthan High Court.
- **Justice Trivedi** has been a member of the **General Council of Gujarat National Law University.**

Collegium System:

- It is the **system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the SC,** and not by an Act of **Parliament** or by a provision of the Constitution.
- **Evolution of the System:**
- **First Judges Case (1981)**: It declared that the **"primacy"** of the <u>Chief Justice of India</u> **(CJI)s** recommendation on judicial appointments and transfers can be refused for "cogent reasons."
- The r**uling gave the Executive primacy over the Judiciary in judicial appointments** for the next 12 years.
- **Second Judges Case (1993):** SC **introduced the Collegium system,** holding that "consultation" really meant "concurrence".
- It added that it was not the CJI's individual opinion, but an institutional opinion formed in consultation with the two senior-most judges in the SC.
- **Third Judges Case (1998):** SC on President's reference **expanded the Collegium to a five-member body,** comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.
- The **SC collegium is headed by the CJI** and **comprises four other senior most judges** of the court.
- A **HC collegium is led by its Chief Justice** and **four other senior most judges of that court.**
- Names recommended for appointment by a HC collegium reaches the government only after approval by the CJI and the SC collegium.
- Judges of the higher judiciary are appointed only through the collegium system and the **government has a role only after names have been decided by the collegium.**
- The **government's role is limited to getting an inquiry conducted by the Intelligence Bureau (IB)** if a lawyer is to be elevated as a judge in a High Court or the Supreme Court.
- **Intelligence Bureau (IB):** It is a reputed and established intelligence agency. It is authoritatively controlled by the **Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- It **can also raise objections** and seek clarifications regarding the collegium's choices, **but if the collegium reiterates** the same names, the government is bound, under Constitution Bench judgments, to appoint them as judges.

Related Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 124(2)** of the Indian Constitution provides that the Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose.
- **Article 217** of the Indian Constitution states that the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the State, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court.

#WHY INDIA NEEDS SEDITION LAW: SC ASKS CENTRE

- The **Supreme Court** questioned the centre on why India stills needs the sedition law, a colonial law that was used by the British to silence Mahatma Gandhi, even after 75 years of the country's independence.
- The Supreme Court bench headed by **Chief Justice N.V. Ramana** questioned, **"***It is a colonial law used by the British to silence Mahatma Gandhi, Tilak. Still, it is necessary after 75 years of independence?***"**
- The Court also expressed its concern over the "enormous power of misuse" of the sedition law in India and asked the government why it should not scrap the colonial law. The court ruled over misuse of sedition law by the police against people who speak against the government.

- The Chief **Justice noted that there is no accountability of executing agencies.** The Chief Justice further told **Attorney General K. K. Venugopal** that the government has already taken out several stale laws and questioned why isn't it looking into this law. The Attorney-General replied saying that he completely understands the concern of the top court.

Attorney General on Sedition Law

- **Attorney General KK Venugopal** submitted before the top court that the court could lay down fresh guidelines to restrict the use of the sedition provision only for the protection of the nation and democratic institutions.

Sedition Law Petition

- The top court's observations came on a petition filed by **Army veteran Major-General SG Vombatkere (Retired),** which challenges the constitutional validity of sedition law, calling the usage of sedition clause "vague" and "curb on free speech".
- A bench comprising **Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana and Justices A.S. Bopanna and Hrishikesh Roy** had adjourned the matter on July 12 to July 15 due to glitches in the virtual hearing.
- The apex court had asked the petitioner to serve a copy of the plea on **attorney-general K.K. Venugopal who will address the court during the hearing.**

What does the petition against sedition law state?

- The **petition by Army veteran Major-General SG Vombatkere pleads,** "*Criminalizing expression based on unconstitutionally vague definitions of 'disaffection towards Government' is an unreasonable restriction on the fundamental right to free expression guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) and causes constitutionally impermissible 'chilling effect' on speech.*"
- It further emphasises on the need to take into account the "*march of the times and the development of the law*" **before dealing with Section 124A as there has been a sea of change in the interpretation of fundamental rights.**
- The petitioner has urged the top court to consider afresh the **question regarding the constitutionality of Section 124A.** He stated that when the law was upheld in 1962, there was a restricted definition of fundamental rights which now needs a relook.
- The petitioner further sought a declaration that "all subsisting criminal proceedings before any court" under **Section 124A of IPC** should be closed and all complaints and investigation **reports relating to the offence under Section 124A be quashed.**
- The petition further states, "*No authority including any state or central police must take any step in furtherance of investigation or prosecution of any cases in respect of and to the extent that the accusation is of an offence under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code.*"

- **What does Sedition mean?**

- **Sedition meaning:** Sedition is defined as any action that brings or attempts to bring hatred or contempt towards the government of India. Sedition is illegal in India since 1870.**Sedition falls under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code.**

What is Sedition law?

- **The Sedition law- Section124A of IPC states**-"*Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law in India, shall be punished with imprisonment for life.*"

- The Sedition laws were originally enacted in **17th century England when lawmakers believed that only good opinions of the government should survive.**

- The sedition law was then borrowed and inserted into Section 124A of IPC in 1870, by the British. The sedition law was used in India to convict and sentence freedom fighters. **It was first used to prosecute Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1897.**
- **Sedition Law upheld in 1962: Kedar Nath Singh v State of Bihar case**
- The **Supreme Court** had upheld in the constitutionality of sedition law in 1962 when it was **hearing the Kedar Nath Singh v State of Bihar case.**
- The **supreme court** had but limited the application of the sedition law in India to "acts involving intention or tendency to **create disorder, or disturbance of law and order, or incitement to violence".**
- The supreme court had distinguished these from "very strong speech" or the use of "vigorous words" strongly critical of the government.
- The Supreme Court had again in 1995 held in **Balwant Singh v State of Punjab case** that mere sloganeering which evoked no public response did not amount to sedition.

Background

- The Supreme Court is already hearing a petition and a clutch of applications challenging the **constitutional validity of Section 124A IPC.**
- However, this petition is slightly different as it pleads to quash all complaints lodged under this law and to stop police from further investigating case to the extent that the offence relates to sedition.
- **Another bench of Supreme Court Justices U.U. Lalit and Ajay Rastogi** had sought centre's view on July 12, 2021 on a similar plea made by two journalists from Manipur and Chhattisgarh.

#CENTRAL & STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION

The **Supreme Court** has directed the **Union of India and all States** to file status reports on the latest developments regarding **vacancies and pendency** in the **Central Information Commission (CIC) and State Information Commissions (SICs).**

About Central Information Commission (CIC):

- **Establishment:** The CIC was **established by the Central Government in 2005,** under the provisions of the **Right to Information Act (2005).** It is **not a constitutional body.**
- **Members:** It consists of a **Chief Information Commissioner and not more than ten Information Commissioners.**
- **Appointment:** They are appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee consisting of the **Prime Minister as Chairperson, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.**
- **Jurisdiction:** The jurisdiction of the Commission extends over all Central Public Authorities.
- **Tenure:** The Chief Information Commissioner and an Information Commissioner shall hold office for such term as prescribed by the **Central Government or until they attain the age of 65 years,** whichever is earlier.
- They are **not eligible for reappointment.**

Power and Functions of CIC:

- To **receive and inquire into a complaint from any person** regarding information requested under RTI, 2005.
- It can **order an inquiry into any matter** if there are reasonable grounds (suo-moto power).
- While inquiring, the Commission has the powers of a **civil court in respect of summoning, requiring documents etc.**

State Information Commission:

- It is constituted by the **State Government.**
- It has **one State Chief Information Commissioner (SCIC)** and **not more than 10 State Information Commissioners (SIC)** to be appointed by the **Governor** on the recommendation of the **Appointments Committee headed by the Chief Minister.**

Issues involved

- **Delays and Backlogs:** On average, the CIC **takes 388 days (more than one year)** to dispose of an appeal/complaint from the date it was filed before the commission.
- A report released last year has pointed out that **more than 2.2 lakh Right to information cases are pending** at the Central and State Information Commissions (ICs).
- **No Penalties:** The report found that the Government officials hardly face any punishment for violating the law.
- Penalties were **imposed in only 2.2% of cases** that were disposed of, despite previous analysis showing a rate of about 59% violations which should have triggered the process of penalty imposition
- **Vacancy:** Despite repeated directions from the court, there are still **three vacancies in the CIC.**
- **Lack of Transparency:** The criteria of selection, etc, nothing has been placed on record.

Right to Information Act

- Genesis of RTI law started in 1986, through judgement of Supreme Court in **Mr. Kulwal v/s Jaipur Municipal Corporation** case, in which it directed that freedom of speech and expression provided under **Article 19** of the Constitution clearly implies Right to Information, as without information the freedom of speech and expression cannot be fully used by the citizens
- It has been implemented in order to see that the **Indian citizens are enabled to exercise their rights to ask some pertinent questions** to the Government and different public utility service providers in a practical way.
- The RTI Act replaced the **Freedom of Information Act 2002.**

- The objective of this act was to **help the citizens avail of quicker services from the government agencies** since the act enables them to ask questions like why a particular application or an official proceeding gets delayed.

- Mainly the act aims at achieving a **corruption-free India.**

Information that can be sought

- **Any Indian citizen is free to seek answers** from a Government Authority like applying for a delayed IT refund, driving license or passport, or details of a repair or infrastructure project completed or going on.
- Information sought can also be related to the funds allotted under the different kinds of relief funds in the country.
- The act enables students to get copies of answer sheets from the universities under this act.

#RIGHT TO RESERVATION IN PROMOTION FOR PwDs

The **Supreme Court of India** has recently held that **persons with physical disabilities** have the right to **reservation in promotions** also.

- A disabled particular person can avail the advantage of **reservation** for promotion even when she or he was recruited within the common class or developed the incapacity after gaining employment.

About the Case:

- The case was based on a claim under the **Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.**
- This Act has been **replaced with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.**

- **The Kerala Administrative Tribunal rejected the plea** of applicant stating that the **rule of Recruitment in the State of Kerala, General Rules and other orders** issued by the Government **under Section 32 of the 1995 Act did not provide for any reservation in promotions.**

- The **Kerala High Court set aside the decision** of the Kerala Administrative Tribunal.

Importance of Judgement:

- The **1995 Act recognizes the right to reservation in promotion.**
- **Identification of posts for reservation** as per Section 32 of the 1995 Act is a **prerequisite for appointment;** but appointment cannot be frustrated by refusing to identify posts.
- The **absence of provision for reservation in the recruitment rules will not defeat the right of a PwD** as such right flows from the legislation.
- Reservation to promotion **can be given to a PwD even if the person was not originally appointed in the PwD quota.**
- Further, the **responsibility to provide equal opportunities** to disabled persons **does not end with giving them reservation at the time of recruitment.**
- Legislative mandate **provides for equal opportunity for career progression, including promotion.**
- Thus, it would be negation of the legislative mandate if promotion is denied to PwD and such reservation is confined to the initial stage of induction in service.
- This would in fact result in stagnation of the disabled in a consequential frustration.
- **Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016:**
- It fulfills the obligations to the **United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**, to which **India is a signatory.**
- **Disability has been defined** based on an evolving and dynamic concept.
- The **types of disabilities have been increased from 7 to 21.**

- The Act added mental illness, autism, spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, chronic neurological conditions, speech and language disability, thalassemia, hemophilia, sickle cell disease, multiple disabilities including deaf blindness, acid attack victims and Parkinson's disease which were largely ignored in earlier act.
- In addition, the Government has been authorized to notify any other category of specified disability.
- It **increases the quantum of reservation** for people suffering from disabilities from 3% to 4% in government jobs and from 3% to 5% in higher education institutes.
- Every child with benchmark disability between the age group of 6 and 18 years shall have the **right to free education.**
- Government funded educational institutions as well as the government recognized institutions will have to provide inclusive education.
- Stress has been given to ensure **accessibility in public buildings** in a prescribed time frame along with the **Accessible India Campaign.**
- The **Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities** and the **State Commissioners** will act as **regulatory bodies and Grievance Redressal agencies,** monitoring implementation of the Act.
- A **separate National and State Fund** will be created to provide financial support to the persons with disabilities.

Constitutional Framework for Disabled in India:

- **Article 41 of the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)** states that State shall make effective provision for securing right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, within the limits of its economic capacity and development.
- **State Subject:** The subject of **'relief of the disabled and unemployable'** is specified in the **state list of the Seventh Schedule** of the constitution.

Constitutional Provisions Governing Reservation in India

- **Part XVI** deals with reservation of SC and ST in Central and State legislatures.
- **Article 15(4) and 16(4)** of the Constitution enabled the State and Central Governments to reserve seats in government services for the members of the SC and ST.
- The Constitution was amended by the **Constitution (77th Amendment) Act,** 1995 and a new **clause (4A)** was inserted in **Article 16** to enable the government to provide reservation in promotion.
- Later, **clause (4A)** was modified by the Constitution (85th Amendment) Act, 2001 to provide consequential seniority to SC and ST candidates promoted by giving reservation.
- Constitutional 81st Amendment Act, 2000 inserted **Article 16 (4 B)** which enables the state to fill the unfilled vacancies of a year which are reserved for SCs/STs in the succeeding year, thereby **nullifying the ceiling of fifty percent reservation** on total number of vacancies of that year.
- **Article 330 and 332** provides for specific representation through reservation of seats for SCs and STs in the Parliament and in the State Legislative Assemblies respectively.
- **Article 243D** provides reservation of seats for SCs and STs in every Panchayat.
- **Article 233T** provides reservation of seats for SCs and STs in every Municipality.
- **Article 335** of the constitution says that the claims of STs and STs shall be taken into consideration constituently with the maintenance of efficacy of the administration.
- The **State of Madras v. Smt.ChampakamDorairajan (1951) case** was the first major verdict of the Supreme Court on the issue of Reservation.The case led to the First amendment in the constitution.
- The Supreme Court in the case pointed out that while in the case of employment under the State, **Article 16(4)** provides for reservations in favour of backward class of citizens, no such provision was made in Article 15.
- Pursuant to the Supreme Court's order in the case the Parliament amended Article 15 by inserting Clause (4).
- In **Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (1992) case** the court examined the scope and extent of Article 16(4).
- The Court has said that the **creamy layer** of OBCs should be excluded from the list of beneficiaries of reservation, there should not be reservation in promotions; and total reserved quota **should not exceed 50%.**
- The Parliament responded by enacting **77th Constitutional Amendment Act** which introduced Article 16(4A).
- The article confers power on the state to reserve seats in favour of SC and ST in promotions in Public Services if the communities are not adequately represented in public employment.
- The Supreme Court in **M. Nagaraj v. Union Of India 2006** case while upholding the constitutional validity of Art 16(4A) held that any such reservation policy in order to be constitutionally valid shall satisfy the following three constitutional requirements:
  - ❖ The SC and ST community should be **socially and educationally backward.**

- ❖ The SC and ST communities are **not adequately represented in Public employment.**
- ❖ Such reservation policy **shall not affect the overall efficiency** in the administration.
- In **Jarnail Singh vs LachhmiNarain Gupta case of 2018,** Supreme Court holds that reservation in promotions does not require the state to collect quantifiable data on the backwardness of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
- The Court held that creamy layer exclusion extends to SC/STs and, hence the State cannot grant reservations in promotion to SC/ST individuals who belong to the creamy layer of their community.
- In May 2019 the Supreme Court upheld the **Karnataka law** that allows reservations in promotions for SCs and STs with consequential seniority.

#NEET'S ALL INDIA QUOTA

Recently, the **Union Health Ministry** has announced **27% reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs)** and **10% quota for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)** in the **All India Quota (AIQ) scheme** for undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) medical/dental courses from 2021-22 onwards.

About All India Quota (AIQ) Scheme:

- The **AIQ was introduced in 1986** under the directions of the Supreme Court (SC) to provide for **domicile-free merit-based opportunities** to students from any State to aspire to study in a medical college located in another State.
- It comprises **15% of UG seats and 50% of PG seats in government medical colleges.**
- Remaining chunk of the seats in state medical/dental colleges is **reserved for students domiciled in their respective states.**
- In January, 2007, in **Abhay Nath v University of Delhi and Others,** the SC directed that reservation of **15% for Scheduled Castes** and **7.5% for Scheduled Tribes** be introduced in the AIQ.
- Until 2007, no reservation was implemented within the All India Quota for medical admission.
- When the **Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act became effective in 2007,** providing for uniform 27% reservation to the OBCs, the scheme was implemented in all the Central Educational Institutions.
- However, this was **not extended to the AIQ seats of State medical and dental colleges.**
- The 10% EWS quota under the **Constitution (One Hundred And Third Amendment) Act, 2019,** too, has been implemented in central educational Institutions, but not in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) AIQ for state institutions.
- Now, after this decision, the Reservation for the OBC and EWS categories within the AIQ will be offered in medical colleges from the current academic year.
- This decision will help thousands of students under the given categories.

About NEET:

- The **National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)** is the entrance examination for entry to all undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental courses in the country.
- Until 2016, the **All India Pre-Medical Test (AIPMT)** was the national-level entrance examination for medical colleges.
- While state governments used to hold separate entrance tests for seats that were not contested at an all-India level.
- In 2016, the Supreme Court upheld the newly inserted section **10-D of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956** which provides for a uniform entrance examination to all medical educational institutions at undergraduate level and postgraduate level in Hindi, English and various other languages.
- Now, the **Indian Medical Council Act, 1956** stands repealed after it has been replaced by the **National Medical Commission Act, 2019** that came into existence on 8th August 2019.
- It is conducted by the **National Testing Agency (NTA).**

Issues related to creamy layer: OBC

- Recently, some MPs have raised the issue of defining **Creamy Layer** in the ongoing **Monsoon Session** of Parliament.
- Further, the **Justice Rohini committee** is considering the sub-categorization of OBC quota and if any particular community or group of communities are benefiting most from the OBC quota and how to iron out anomalies.

Background:

- Based on the recommendation of the **Second Backward Classes Commission (Mandal Commission)**, the government in August, 1990 had notified 27% reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBCs) in vacancies in civil posts and services that are to be filled on direct recruitment.
- After this was challenged, the Supreme Court in November, 1992 **(Indira Sawhney case)** upheld 27% reservation for OBCs, subject to exclusion of the creamy layer.
- **Definition:** It is a concept that sets a threshold within which OBC reservation benefits are applicable.
- While there is a 27% quota for OBCs in government jobs and higher educational institutions, those falling within the **"creamy layer"** (various categories based on income and parents' rank) cannot get the benefits of this quota.
- Other **than the income limit, the current definition of the creamy layer remains the same.**

Categories defined under Creamy Layer:

- **Income beyond 8 lakh:** For that not in government, the current threshold is an income of Rs 8 lakh per year. The income threshold is supposed to be raised every three years. It was last revised in 2017 (more than three years now).
- **Parents' rank:** For children of government employees, the threshold is based on their parents' rank and not income.
- For instance, an individual is considered to fall within the creamy layer if either of his or her parents is in a constitutional post; if either parent has been directly recruited in Group-A; or if both parents are in Group-B services.
- If the parents enter Group-A through promotion before the age of 40, their children will be in the creamy layer.
- Children of a Colonel or higher-ranked officer in the Army, and children of officers of similar ranks in the Navy and Air Force, too, come under the creamy layer. There are other criteria as well.

Government's Proposal:

- A draft Cabinet note has stated that the creamy layer will be determined on all income, including salary calculated for income tax, but not agriculture income.
- The government is considering a consensus on Rs 12 lakh, whereas Parliament Committee has recommended to raise upto 15 lakh per year.
- It also **recommended excluding salary and agricultural revenue** while calculating the annual income ceiling for the creamy layer category of OBCs

#ASSAM-MIZORAM BORDER DISPUTE

- **H Lalthlangliana, Deputy Commissioner, Kolasib district, Mizoram** wrote a letter to **Assam's Cachar district administration** alleging human rights violation and atrocities on tribal people by Assam government officials and police during a stand-off on July 10, 2021.
- The **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)** also have received copies of the letter.
- In response, GP Singh, Special Director-General, Assam Police, said that the basic issue is encroachment. There is a **Constitutional boundary for both Mizoram and Assam.**

Mizoram-Assam Border Dispute:

- Without prior notice, on July 10, a road **was constructed from Assam to Buarchep**, and crops belonging to **people of the Mizo tribe** were destroyed by officials of Assam with support from the police. Further, the tribal people who were protesting the damage were forcefully forced out by Assam police personnel.
- On July 11, 2021, around 2.40 am, Mizoram police forces on the **border at Saihapui V village and Buarchep on the Assam border** heard two loud explosions. A criminal case under the Explosive Substances Act was also **lodged at the Vairengte police station, Mizoram.**

Mizoram-Assam Border Dispute: Background

- The **Mizoram-Assam Border Dispute** has been ongoing since Mizoram came into existence, first as a Union Territory (UT) in 1972 and then as a State in 1987.
- **During the British era, Mizoram was called Lushai Hills, a district of Assam.**
- The **Mizoram-Assam Border Dispute** dates to the notifications passed during the British era:
- The **Notification of 1875**, derived from the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) Act, 1873, that demarcated Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) from the Cachar district of Assam.
- The **Notification of 1933** that demarcated **Lushai Hills and Manipur.**
- Mizoram's stance is the demarcation should be based on the 1875 Notification. As per the Mizo leaders, the Mizo society was not consulted hence they are against the 1933 Notification.
- **Assam government follows the Notification of 1933**.
- A 164.6-km inter-state border demarcates Mizoram and Assam. Three Mizoram districts namely Aizawl, Mamit, and Kolasib share a border with three Assam districts namely Karimganj, Hailakandi, Cachar.

Background:

- The boundary issue between present-day Assam and Mizoram dates back to the **colonial era when inner lines were demarcated according to the administrative needs of British Raj.**
- The issue could not be settled once and for all when the **state was created in independent India.** The result is **both states continue to have a differing perception** of the border.
- Mizoram was granted statehood in **1987** by the **State of Mizoram Act, 1986.**
- Assam became a **constituent state of India in 1950 and lost much of its territory to new states that emerged** from within its borders between the early 1960s and the early 1970s.
- The Assam-Mizoram dispute **stems from a notification of 1875** that **differentiated Lushai Hills from the plains of Cachar,** and another of **1933 that demarcates a boundary between Lushai Hills and Manipur.**
- During colonial times, **Mizoram was known as Lushai Hills,** a district of Assam.
- **Mizoram** believes the **boundary should be demarcated on the basis of the 1875** notification, which is derived from the **Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) Act, 1873.**
- Mizo leaders have argued in the past against **the demarcation notified in 1933** because Mizo society **was not consulted.**
- **The Assam government follows the 1933 demarcation,** and that is the point of conflict.
- According to an agreement between the governments of Assam and Mizoram, the **status quo should be maintained in no man's land** in the border area.
- In the Northeast's complex boundary equations, **clashes between Assam and Mizoram residents are less frequent than they are between other neighbouring states of Assam,** like with Nagaland.

Other Boundary Issues in Northeast:

- During British rule, **Assam included present-day Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya besides Mizoram,** which became separate states one by one.
- Currently, Assam has **boundary problems with each of them.**

Assam-Nagaland:

- **Nagaland** shares a **500-km boundary** with Assam.
- It achieved **statehood in December 1963** and was **formed out of the Naga Hills district of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh** (then North-East Frontier Agency).
- **Violent clashes and armed conflicts,** marked by killings, have occurred on the Assam-Nagaland border since 1965.
- The boundary dispute is in the **Supreme Court**.

Assam-Arunachal Pradesh:

- Both states have a **boundary of over 800 km.**
- **Arunachal Pradesh** was granted statehood by the **State of Arunachal Pradesh Act, 1986** in **1987.**
- **Clashes were first reported in 1992** and since then, there have been several accusations of illegal encroachment from both sides, and intermittent clashes.
- This boundary issue is also **being heard by the Supreme Court.**

Assam-Meghalaya:

- The **884-km boundary** between the two states also witnesses flare-ups.
- **Meghalaya** came into existence as an autonomous state within the state of Assam in April 1970 comprising the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills districts. In **1972, it got statehood.**
- As per Meghalaya government statements, today there are **12 areas of dispute between the two states.**

#PROVISIONS OF 97ᵀᴴ AMENDMENT STRUCK DOWN

Recently, the **Supreme Court (SC)** upheld a 2013 judgment of the Gujarat High Court and struck down certain provisions of the **Constitution (97th Amendment) Act, 2011.**

- It gave a major boost for **federalism** as the **97th Amendment shrank the exclusive authority of States** over its **co-operative societies**, a sector considered as a massive contributor to the economy.

Co-operatives

- According to the **International LabourOrganisation (ILO), a cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs** and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.
- There are **many types of cooperatives** such as Consumer Cooperative Society, Producer Cooperative Society, Credit Cooperative Society, Housing Cooperative Society and Marketing Cooperative Society.
- The **United Nations General Assembly** had declared the year **2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives.**
- India is an agricultural country and laid the foundation of **World's biggest cooperative movement in the world.**
- Recently, a separate **'Ministry of Co-operation'** has been created by the Central Government to give a new push to the cooperative movement.
- **Issue:** Part IXB, introduced into the Constitution through the **97th** Amendment, **dictated the terms for running co-operative societies.**
- The provisions in the Amendment, **passed** by Parliament **without getting them ratified by State legislatures** as required by the Constitution.
- It went to the extent of **determining the number of directors** a society should have or their **length of tenure** and even the **necessary expertise required** to become a member of the society.

Other Major Provisions of the 97th Amendment

- The word **"cooperatives" was added after "unions and associations" in** Article 19(1)(c) under Part III of the **Constitution.** This enables all the citizens to form cooperatives by giving it the status of fundamental right of citizens.
- A new Article 43B was added in the **Directive Principles of State Policy** (Part IV) regarding the "promotion of cooperative societies".
- **Central Government's Argument:**
- It justified that the government was **injecting 'professionalism' and autonomy** into the functioning of the societies.
- **Lack of accountability** by the members has **led to poor services and low productivity.**
- Even **elections are not held on time.** Co-operatives **need to run on well-established democratic principles.**

SC's Ruling:

- **Exclusive Legislation of States:** The constitution has been described as **quasi-federal** in that, so far as legislative powers are concerned, though **there is a tilt in favour of the Centre vis-à-vis the States** given the **federal supremacy** principle.
- **Quasi-federalism** means an intermediate form of state between a unitary state and a federation.
- However, within their own sphere, the **States have exclusive power to legislate on topics reserved exclusively to them.**

- **Part IX B,** which consists of **Articles 243ZH to 243ZT,** has "significantly and substantially **impacted" State legislatures' "exclusive legislative power"** over its co-operative sector under Entry 32 of the State List.

- The court pointed out how **Article 243ZI** makes it clear that a **State may only make law on the incorporation, regulation and winding up of a society** subject to the provisions of Part IXB of the 97th Amendment.

Not Ratified by the States:

- It held that the **97th** Constitutional Amendment **required ratification by at least one-half of the state legislatures as per Article 368(2)** of the Constitution, since it dealt with an entry which was an exclusive state subject (co-operative societies).
- Under **Article 368(2),** Parliament can amend the Constitution by passing a Bill with a **special majority.**
- Since such ratification was not done in the case of the 97th amendment, it was liable to be struck down.
- **Upheld the Validity of Provisions related to Multi State Cooperative Societies:**
- It did not strike down the portions of Part IXB of the Amendment concerning **'Multi State Co-operative Societies (MSCS)' due to the lack of ratification.**
- When it comes to MSCS with objects not confined to one State, the **legislative power would be that of the Union of India** which is contained in Entry 44 List I **(Union List).**
- It is declared that **Part IXB of the Constitution is operative only insofar as it concerns multi-State cooperative societies** both within the various States and in the Union Territories.

Lists to Differentiate Legislative Powers

- There are **three Lists** which provide for distribution of legislative powers **(under 7th Schedule to the Constitution):**
- **Union List (List I) -** It contains **98 subjects (originally 97)** and comprises the **subjects which are of national importance** and admit of uniform laws for the whole of the country.
- Only the Union Parliament can legislate with respect to these matters e.g. Defence, Foreign Affairs, Banking, Currency, Union Taxes, etc.
- **State List (List II) -** It contains **59 subjects (originally 66)** and comprises **subjects of local or State interest.**
- It lies within the legislative competence of the State Legislatures, viz. Public Order and Police, Health, Agriculture, etc.
- **Concurrent List (List III) -** It contains **52 subjects (Originally 47)** with respect to which; both Union Parliament and the State Legislature have concurrent power of legislation. The Concurrent List (not

found in any federal Constitution) was to serve as a device to avoid excessive rigidity to a two-fold distribution.

- It is a **'twilight zone',** as for not so important matters, the States can take initiative, while for the important matters, the Parliament can do so.

Procedure for Amendment of Constitution

- **Article 368 in Part XX of the Constitution** deals with the power of parliament to amend the constitution and its procedures.
- **Article 368 provides for two types of amendments,** that is, by a special majority of Parliament and the **special majority of parliament** along with the ratification of half of the states legislatures by a simple majority.
- Amendment of certain provisions of the constitution requires amendment **by a simple majority** of each house present and voting. These amendments are not deemed to be amendments under Article 368.

#SURVEILLANCE LAWS IN INDIA

Recently, a global collaborative investigative effort has revealed that, at least 300 **individuals in India, were potentially identified for targeted surveillance** using sophisticated **spyware called Pegasus.** However, the government has claimed that all interception in India takes place lawfully.

- Communication surveillance in India takes place primarily under **two laws** - the **Telegraph Act, 1885 and the Information Technology Act, 2000.**
- While the **Telegraph Act deals with interception of calls**, the **IT Act was enacted to deal with surveillance of all electronic communication.**
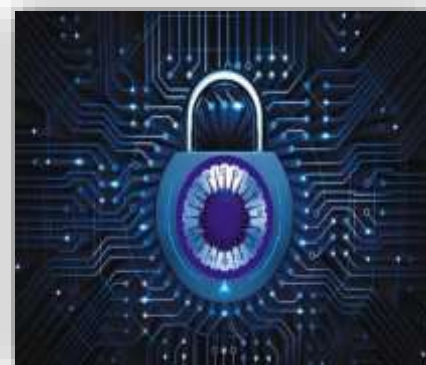
Telegraph Act:

- Under **Section 5(2) of this law**, the government can intercept calls only in certain situations:
- Interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India,
- Security of the state,
- Friendly relations with foreign states or public order,
- Preventing incitement to the commission of an offence.
- These are the same restrictions imposed on free speech under **Article 19(2) of the Constitution.**
- However, these restrictions can be imposed only when there is a **condition precedent** - the **occurrence of any public emergency, or in the interest of public safety.**
- Further, the grounds of selecting a person for surveillance and extent of information gathering has to be **recorded in writing.**
- This lawful interception **cannot take place against journalists.**
- Provided that press messages intended to be published in India of correspondents accredited to the Central Government or a State Government, unless their transmission has been prohibited under this subsection.
- **Supreme Court Intervention:** In *Public Union for Civil Liberties v Union of India (1996)*, the SC pointed out lack of procedural safeguards in the provisions of the Telegraph Act and laid down following observations:
- Tapping is a **serious invasion of an individual's privacy.**
- It is no doubt correct that every Government exercises some degree of surveillance operation as a **part of its intelligence** outfit but at the same time **citizen's right to privacy has to be protected.**
- **Sanction for Interception:** The abovementioned Supreme Court's observations formed the basis of **introducing Rule 419A** in the Telegraph Rules in 2007 and later in the rules prescribed under the IT Act in 2009.
- Rule 419A states that a **Secretary to the Government of India (not below the rank of a Joint Secretary)** in the Ministry of Home Affairs can pass orders of interception in the case of Centre, and similar provisions exist at the state level.

IT Act, 2000:

- **Section 69 of the Information Technology Act and the Information Technology (Procedure for Safeguards for Interception, Monitoring and Decryption of Information) Rules, 2009** were enacted to further the legal framework for electronic surveillance.
- However, the scope of **Section 69 the IT Act** is much broader and vague than the Telegraph Act as the only condition precedent for engaging electronic surveillance is for the **"investigation of an offence".**
- These provisions are problematic and offer the **government total opacity in respect of its interception and monitoring activities.**

Associated Issues with the Surveillance:

- **Legal Loopholes:** According to the Centre for Internet & Society, the **gaps in laws allow surveillance and affect privacy.** For example:
- **Ambiguity on issues** like type of interception, granularity of information that can be intercepted and the **degree of assistance from service providers** helps in bypassing the law and aids surveillance by the state.
- **Affects Fundamental Rights:** The very existence of a surveillance system impacts the right to privacy (held by the SC in **K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India case, 2017)** and the exercise of freedom of speech and personal liberty under **Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution.**
- **Authoritarian Regime:** The surveillance promotes spread of authoritarianism in the government functioning since it allows the executive to exercise a disproportionate amount of power on the citizen and impacts their personal lives.
- **Threat to Freedom of Press:** Current revelations over the use of Pegasus highlights that surveillance was also conducted on many journalists. This affects freedom of press.

#DRAFT DRONE RULES 2021

- The **Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)** on July 15, 2021, issued the updated draft Drone Rules, 2021, for public consultation. The updated draft Drone Rules will replace the **Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Rules, 2021, that were issued on March 12, 2021.**
- The last date for public **consultation on the draft Drone Rules, 2021, is August 5, 2021.**
- As per the updated draft Drone Rules, 2021, drones without unique identification number will not be allowed to be operated, unless exempted. Drone operators will be required to generate a unique identification number of a drone on the Digital Sky platform.

Drone is a layman terminology for **Unmanned Aircraft (UA).** There are three subsets of Unmanned Aircraft- **Remotely Piloted Aircraft, Autonomous Aircraft and Model Aircraft.** Remotely Piloted Aircraft consists of remote pilot station(s), the required command and control links and any other components, as specified in the type design. Besides **combat use,** drones are used for **a range of purposes** like package delivery, in agriculture (spraying pesticides etc), monitoring environmental changes, aerial photography, and during search and relief operations, among others.

What is Digital Sky platform?

- **Digital Sky platform is an initiative by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)** that offers a secure and scalable platform to support drone technology frameworks such as **NPNT (No Permission, No Take-off),** provide flight permission digitally, and manage unmanned aircraft operations and traffic in an efficient manner.
- The platform will be developed as a **business-friendly single-window online system**. Most flight permissions will be self-generated with minimal human interference.

Provisions:

- **Approvals:** Abolish the need for various approvals, including certificate of conformance, certificate of maintenance, import clearance, acceptance of existing drones, operator permit, authorisation of R&D organization and student remote pilot licence.
- Fee reduced to nominal levels. No linkage with the size of the drone.
- **Digital Sky Platform:** The government will be developing a digital sky platform that will have an interactive airspace map dividing the country into **green, yellow, and red zones.**

- It will provide a **secure and a scalable platform** that supports drone technology frameworks, such as NPNT (no permission, no take-off), designed to enable flight permission digitally and manage unmanned aircraft operations and traffic efficiently.
- **Reduced Airport Perimeter:** The draft rules reduced the airport perimeter from 45 km to 12 km.
- The rules state that **no flight permissions would be required to fly** upto 400 feet in green zones and upto 200 feet in the area between 8 and 12 km from the airport perimeter.
- **Pilot License: No pilot licence would be needed for micro drones** for non-commercial use, nano drones and for R&D organizations.
- There would be **no restriction on drone operations by foreign-owned companies** registered in India.
- **Drone Corridor:** The Ministry will also facilitate development of drone corridors for cargo deliveries and a drone promotion council will be set up to facilitate a business-friendly regulatory regime.
- **Safety Features:** The draft rule also provides for safety features such as real-time tracking beacon, and geo-fencing, which are expected to be notified in future and a six-month lead time will be provided for compliance.
- **Increased Coverage of Drones:** The coverage has been **increased from 300 kg to 500 kg and will cover drone taxis,** while the Issuance of Certificate of Airworthiness has been delegated to Quality Council of India and certification entities authorized by it.

Significance of draft Drone Rules, 2021

- The **incident at the Jammu Air Force Station** has put focus on security and safety risks associated with drone operations. The updated draft Drone Rules, 2021, will facilitate investments in drone technology in India. **This aids in simplifying the process of registration.**
- Further, abolishment of restrictive practices and stringent licence regime for UAS by the government offers flexibility to players in the sectors. An airspace map on the digital sky platform provides access to real-time updates for drone operation in various zones.

Drone Attacks and Concerns

- Recently, **Drones** were used for the **first time to drop explosive devices,** triggering blasts inside the Air Force Station's technical area in Jammu.
- Over the past two years, **drones have been deployed regularly by Pakistan-based outfits** to smuggle arms, ammunition and drugs into Indian Territory.
- Drones fly low and therefore **cannot be detected by any radar system.**
- According to government figures, **167 drone sightings were recorded along the border with Pakistan in 2019,** and in **2020, there were 77 such sightings.**
- With the **rapid proliferation of drone technology and exponential growth** of its global market in recent years, the possibility of a drone attack cannot be ruled out even in the safest cities in the world.
- Drones are **becoming security threats particularly in conflict zones** where non-state actors are active and have easy access to the technology.
- **For example: 2019 twin drone attacks** on Aramco crude oil production in Saudi Arabia.
- What makes combat drones in the hands of non-state actors most dangerous is the **threat of them being used to deliver weapons of mass destruction.**
- **Weapons of mass destruction** are weapons with the **capacity to inflict death and destruction on such a massive scale** and so indiscriminately that its very presence in the hands of a hostile power can be considered a grievous threat.
- In certain incidents, the **small drones were also armed with explosive ordnance,** to convert them into potentially lethal guided missiles, thus demonstrating the growing sophistication with which these potent warriors have found relevance in combat zones.

#REFORMS NEEDED IN ANTI-DEFECTION LAW

The **Leader of Opposition** in the Goa Legislative Assembly is **set to move a private member's resolution** to recommend to the Central government to address the various issues associated with the **anti-defection law.**

About Anti-Defection Act:

- The **Tenth Schedule — popularly known as the Anti-Defection Act —** was included in the Constitution via the **52nd Amendment Act, 1985** and sets the provisions for **disqualification of elected members on the grounds** of defection to another political party.
- The **grounds for disqualification** under the Anti-Defection Law are as follows:
- If an elected member **voluntarily gives up his membership** of a political party.
- If he **votes or abstains from voting in such House contrary to any direction issued by his political party** or anyone authorised to do so, without obtaining prior permission.
- As a pre-condition for his disqualification, his abstention from voting should not be condoned by his party or the authorised person within 15 days of such incident.
- If **any independently elected member joins any political party.**
- If **any nominated member joins any political party after theexpiry of six months.**
- As per the 1985 Act, a 'defection' by **one-third of the elected members** of a political party was considered a **'merger'.**
- But the **91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003**, changed this and now at **least two-thirds of the members** of a party have to be in favour of a "merger" for it to have validity in the eyes of the law.
- The **members so disqualified can stand for elections from any political party for a seat** in the same House.
- The decision on questions as to disqualification on ground of defection is referred to the **Chairman or the Speaker of such House, which is subject to 'Judicial review'.**

Issues Related to Anti-Defection Law:

- **Undermining Representative Democracy:** After enactment of the Anti-defection law, the MP or MLA has to follow the party's direction blindly.
- This leaves them with **no freedom to vote** their judgment on any issue and undermines representative democracy.
- **Undermining Legislatures:** The core role of an elected MLA or MP is to examine and decide on a policy, bills, and budgets.
- Instead, the MP becomes just another number to be tallied by the party on any vote that it supports or opposes.
- **Undermining Parliamentary Democracy:** In the parliamentary form, the government is accountable daily through questions and motions and can be removed any time it loses the support of the majority of members of the Lok Sabha.
- Due to Anti-Defection law, this **chain of accountability has been broken** by making legislators accountable primarily to the political party.
- Thus, anti-defection law is acting against the concept of parliamentary democracy.
- **Controversial Role of Speaker:** In many instances, the Speaker (usually from the ruling party) has delayed deciding on the disqualification.
- The Supreme Court has tried to plug this by ruling that the Speaker has to decide the case in three months, but it is not clear what would happen if a Speaker does not do so.
- **No Recognition of Split:** Due to the **91st constitutional amendment 2004,** the anti-defection law created an exception for anti-defection ruling.
- According to this, if two-thirds of the strength of a party should agree for a 'merger' then it will not be counted as a defection.
- However, the amendment does not recognize a 'split' in a legislature party and instead recognises a 'merger'.

Proposed Changes:

- One option is that **such matters be referred directly to the high court or the Supreme Court for an express judgment** -- should be **given within a period of 60 days.**
- The second option is that if **somebody has any difference of opinion with respect to the party** or the party leadership, he **has the option to resign** and seek the fresh mandate of the people.
- These changes **envisage the need for an elected representative to be accountable and responsible** towards the people.

Conclusion

- **Strengthening Intra-Party Democracy:** If government stability is an issue due to people defecting from their parties, the answer is for parties to strengthen their internal part of democracy.
- **Regulating Political Parties:** There is an ardent need for legislation that governs political parties in India. Such a law should bring political parties under RTI, strengthen intra-party democracy, etc.
- **Relieving Chairman/Speaker From Adjudicating Powers:** Chairman/Speaker of the house, being the final authority in terms of defection, affects the doctrine of separation of powers.
- In this context, transferring this power to higher judiciary or to Election Commission (recommneded by 2nd ARC report) may curb the menace of defection.
- **Restricting the Scope of Anti-defection Law:** In order to shield the detrimental effect of the anti-defection law on representative democracy, the scope of the law can be restricted to only those laws, where the defeat of government can lead to loss of confidence.

#STRINGENT NATURE OF UAPA: STAN SWAMY DEATH

Recently, the death of **Father Stan Swamy**, a Jesuit priest and tribal rights activist, while in judicial custody, has brought the stringent provisions of **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act** (UAPA) into the focus.

- **UAPA** is the **India's main anti-terrorism legislation**, but the law makes it more difficult to obtain bail.
- This difficulty in obtaining bail is being seen as one of the principal reasons for **Fr. Swamy's death** as a prisoner in a hospital and **compromises constitutional liberties.**

Background of UAPA:

- In the mid-1960s, in order to **curb the various secession movements**, the Government of India considered enacting a stringent law.
- In March 1967, a **peasant uprising in Naxalbari** imparted a sense of urgency.
- On 17th June, 1966, the President had promulgated the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Ordinance.**
- The ordinance intended to **"provide for the more effective prevention of unlawful activities of individuals and associations".**
- After initial resistance from the Parliament (owing to its stringent nature), the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act was passed in 1967.**
- The Act provided for declaring an association or a body of individuals "unlawful" if they indulged in any activity that **envisages secession or questions or disclaims the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.**
- Prior to the UAPA's enactment, associations were being declared unlawful under the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1952.**
- However, the Supreme Court held that the provision on bans was unlawful because there was **no judicial mechanism** to scrutinise the validity of any ban.
- Therefore, the UAPA included **provisions for a Tribunal** which has to confirm within six months the notification declaring an outfit unlawful.
- After the **Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), 2002**, was repealed, the UAPA was expanded to include what would have been terrorist acts in earlier laws.

Current Status of the Act:

- In its present form, the UAPA has been **amended in 2004 and 2013**, to expand its scope.
- **Expanded Scope of Law:** Punishment for terrorist acts and activities,
- Acts threatening the country's security, including its economic security (a term that covers fiscal and monetary security, food, livelihood, energy ecological and environmental security),
- Provisions to prevent the use of funds for terrorist purposes, including money.
- The ban on organizations was initially for two years, but from 2013, the period of proscription has been extended to five years.
- Further, the amendments aim to give effect to various anti-terrorism resolutions of the **United Nations Security Council** and requirements of the **Financial Action Task Force.**
- In 2019, the Act was amended to empower the **government to designate individuals as terrorists.**

Modus Operandi of UAPA:

- Just like other special laws dealing with narcotic drugs and the now-defunct laws on terrorism, the UAPA also modifies the **Code of Criminal Procedure** (CrPC) to give it more teeth. For example,

- A remand order can be for 30 days instead of the usual 15,

- Maximum period of judicial custody before the filing of a chargesheet is extendable from the usual 90 days to 180 days.

Controversy Regarding UAPA:

- **Vague Definition of Terrorist Act:**
- The definition of a **"terroristact" under the UAPA** substantially **differs** from the definition promoted by the **United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism.**
- UAPA, on the other hand, offers an overbroad and ambiguous definition of a "terrorist act" which includes the death of, or injuries to, any person, damage to any property, etc.
- **Denial of Bail:** The major problem with the UAPA lies in its **Section 43(D)(5)**, which makes it difficult for any accused person to obtain bail.
- In case, if police have filed the chargesheet that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation against such person is prima facie true, bail cannot be granted.
- Further, a Supreme Court judgment on this has clarified that the court considering bail should not examine the evidence too deeply, but must go by the prosecution version based on broad probabilities.
- Thus, UAPA **virtually denies bail**, which is a safeguard and guarantee of the **constitutional right to liberty.**
- **Pendency of Trails:** Given the state of justice delivery system in India, the rate of pendency at the level of trial is at an average of 95.5%.
- **State Overreach:** It also includes any act that is **"likely to threaten"** or **"likely to strike terror in people"**, giving unbridled power to the government to brand any ordinary citizen or activist a terrorist without the actual commission of these acts.
- It gives the state authority vague powers to detain and arrest individuals who it believes to be indulged in terrorist activities.
- **Undermining Federalism:** Some experts feel that it is against the federal structure since it neglects the authority of state police in terrorism cases, given that **'Police' is a state subject** under **7th schedule of Indian Constitution.**

SUCCESS MANTRA
GTB NAGAR

Meet Our Mentors

We strongly endorse and believe in the fact that our faculty is our asset and one of the strong pillars of Success Mantra. This is the reason, we cherry-pick our faculties in order to fulfil the expectations of the students. Each of our faculty is the master of their subject, thus ensuring the best results across the industry.

Mahesh H Singh
Faculty - Constitutional Law (Polity)

I am a commerce graduate and belong to Mumbai. I have been teaching constitution and PSIR to Law and CSE aspirants for the last 4 years.
My role at Success Mantra is to mentor students to understand the constitution through flow charts and fine examples. I believe in 3 C's (i.e. CONTENT, CLARITY of topics and CONNECTION between students and teacher) are the key elements of effective teaching, what I ensure at success mantra.

Shivendra Pratik
Faculty - Logical Reasoning

I'm a Post Graduate Diploma in Management and a Gold Medalist in Finance and Banking. I have a comprehensive experience of around 8 years in the Corporate & Education industry. For the last 6 years, I have been teaching Logical Reasoning to various competitive entrance exam aspirants majorly CLAT, AILET, DU LLB, HM, BBA, Banking, UPSC, DSSSB etc.

Richa Jha
Faculty - Legal Aptitude

I am Advocate Richa Jha. I'm LLB, LLM from Law Faculty, University of Delhi. Law, as a subject, can be taught with the help of legal theories, their practices and applications which can be substantiated with the help of case studies.
I sincerely believe in imparting a legal education which a candidate can relate to his exam and could become a means to achieve success.

Ankit Jha
Faculty - General Knowledge | Service Aptitude

I'm a hospitality professional and a qualified manager. I've diversified experience of more than six years in different industries. I graduated from the prestigious IHM Pusa Delhi.

I mentor the aspirants of Success Mantra as a Faculty for General Awareness & Service Aptitude. I'm dedicated towards providing the best content in terms of quality & relevancy and always eager to assist the students.

Vipin Sharma
Faculty - Quantitative Techniques

I'm an MBA, LL.B. and B.Com (AMU). I have been in association with Success Mantra since 2013. Extensive knowledge of arithmatic mathematics, algebra, geometry, statistics and other areas of mathematics allows me to confidently explain concepts and processes to my students. My lesson plans engage students and help them feel confident in their mathematical abilities.

Deepak Chauchan
Faculty - English Language & Usage

I'm Deepak Chauhan. I'm PG in English. I've more than fifteen years of Experience including teaching experience of eight years. I'm committed to creating a classroom which is stimulating and highly motivated.

I'm highly professional and dedicated towards my work. I've created a huge library of competitive english which I share with my students as and when required. I've passion for English Language and my ultimate goal is to help my students to achieve their goal in life.