

August 3rd Week Current Affairs

National News

Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates world's second-largest refurbished gene bank

- The Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, **Narendra Singh Tomar** has inaugurated the world's second-largest **National Gene Bank** at the **National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), Pusa, New Delhi**.
- The refurbished state-of-the-art National Gene Bank provides the facility for germplasm, to secure the heritage of seeds for years in minus **20 degrees Celsius temperature**.
- The new facility will help in the conservation of the diversity of indigenous crops in the country, as well as benefit the farmers by making them self-reliant and providing a source of increasing their income. A National Gene Bank is a facility to preserve the seeds of Plant Genetic Resources (PGR) for future generations.

Venkaiah Naidu laid foundation stone of Innovation and Development Centre

- The Vice President of India, **M Venkaiah Naidu** laid the foundation stone of the **Innovation and Development Centre of Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru**.
- The JNCASR Innovation and Development Centre will be developed into a facility where laboratory inventions will be taken forward for scale-up and technology transfer, and in turn help in meeting the missions of **“Make in India”** and **“Aatmanirbhar Bharat”**.
- Scientists will be provided with state-of-the-art processing and prototyping tools to enable the translation of inventions. JNCASR is established by the Department of Science and Technology at Jakkur, Bangalore.

75th Indian Independence Day 2021

- **India** is celebrating the **75th Independence Day** on **15th August 2021** to mark the country's freedom from nearly two centuries of British colonial rule. India is marking its 75th Independence Day as **“Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav”**.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** is leading the celebrations from Red Fort in New Delhi and is addressing the nation from Red Fort in New Delhi. This is his **eighth** address as the prime minister.
- The Indian Independence movement began during World War I and was led by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. On August 15, 1947, India got its freedom, ending an almost 200-year British rule.
- India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru raised the Indian national flag above the Lahori Gate of Red Fort in Delhi on August 15, 1947. It is a tradition that has since been followed by the incumbent Prime Minister, followed by an address to the country.

Union Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar flags off ‘Operation Blue Freedom’

- The Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment **Dr Virendra Kumar** has flagged off a pioneering world record expedition named ‘**Operation Blue Freedom**’ from Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi on the occasion of 75th Independence Day.
- The Operation Blue Freedom expedition comprise of a team of people with disabilities from across the country to reach **Siachen Glacier**, to create a new World Record, for the largest team of people with disabilities reaching the world’s highest battlefield.

PM Modi sets India’s target to become ‘energy independent’ by 2047

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has set the target of becoming an ‘**energy independent country by the year 2047**, the year when India will celebrate the **100th year of Independence**.
- For this, PM has announced a ‘**Mission Circular Economy**’ that will replace petroleum with other forms of energy to make India achieve self-reliance in energy production by 2047.
- Mission Circular Economy would include a mix of electric mobility, gas-based economy, doping ethanol in petrol and making the country a hub for hydrogen production.
- Modi government has decided to set up the **National Hydrogen Mission** to make India a new global hub and the exporter of green hydrogen.

Ministry of Social Justice launches an e-study platform “TAPAS”

- **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment** has launched an online portal named **TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services)** to provide filmed lectures/courses and e-study material in the field of social defence.
- TAPAS is the initiative of the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The course can be taken up by anyone and is free of cost.
- TAPAS seeks to provide access to lectures by subject experts, study material and more, but in a manner that it supplements the physical classroom without compromising on the quality of teaching.
- The main objective of introducing the course modules, is to impart training and enhance the knowledge and skills for the capacity building of the participants. It can be taken up by anyone who wishes to enhance his or her knowledge on the topics and there is no fee for joining.

MoHUA launches brand and logo for urban SHG products ‘SonChiraiya’

- Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has launched ‘**SonChiraiya**’, a brand and logo for marketing of the urban **Self-Help Group (SHG)** products. To make urban SHG products popular, the ministry has signed MoUs with e-Commerce Portals like Amazon and Flipkart, with an underlying narrative of women empowerment.

- Due to this partnership, more than 2,000 products of nearly 5,000 SHG members have been onboarded on the e-commerce portals. This initiative is a significant step of increasing visibility and global access for the products made by urban SHG women.
- Under the initiative, a variety of professionally packaged and hand-crafted ethnic products will reach the doorsteps of customers worldwide.

75 new Vande Bharat trains to connect all 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**.

AIIMS Delhi becomes first Indian hospital to house fire station inside premises

- The **All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), New Delhi** has become the **first hospital of India** to house a **fire station** inside the hospital premises, to meet any emergency.
- For this, AIIMS has collaborated with **Delhi Fire Service (DFS)**. The fire station, meant for quick response in case of fire emergency, will have its infrastructure developed by the AIIMS, while the fire tender, equipment, and manpower will be managed by the DFS.
- Having a total of 61 fire stations and 3,616 personnel, including 3,280 firefighters, the DFS attends to nearly 22,000 fire and rescue calls on an average in a year.

4 more sites in India added to Ramsar list

- Four more wetlands from India have been added to the list of Ramsar sites, giving it the status of '**Wetland of International Importance**'.
- With this, the total number of Ramsar sites in India have reached 46, covering a surface area of **1,083,322 hectares**.
- The sites have been recognised as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. Two of these sites are in **Haryana**, while the other two are in **Gujarat**.

These sites are:

- Thol, Gujarat
- Wadhvana, Gujarat
- Sultanpur, Haryana
- Bhindawas, Haryana

India's first Cattle Genomic Chip "IndiGau" released by Jitendra Singh

- **Dr Jitendra Singh** has released India's first cattle genomic chip 'IndiGau' for the conservation of pure varieties of indigenous cattle breeds like, Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal, Ongole etc.
- The chip has been developed by scientists of **National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NAIB), Hyderabad**, an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology.
- The chip will help in achieving the goal of conservation of our own breeds with better characters and help towards doubling farmers' income by **2022..**

Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur launches nationwide Fit India Freedom Runs 2.0 programme

- Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur launched the **Fit India Freedom Runs 2.0 programme** from Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi.
- This initiative aims to encourage people to take up fitness activities such as running and sports in their daily lives and get freedom from obesity, laziness, stress and other diseases.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches a vehicle scrappage policy

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a **vehicle scrappage policy** to phase out unfit and polluting vehicles in an environment-friendly manner.

The number of billionaires in India drops from 141 to 136 in the current fiscal year from the past year

- The number of billionaires in India dropped to **136** in FY21 from **141** in FY20 as per a statement issued by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Rajya Sabha.

Parliament passes the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill 2021

- **Parliament passes the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill 2021.** The aim of this Bill is to permit privatisation of state-run general insurance companies.
- The Bill gets rid of the mandatory provision of **51 per cent** shareholding of the Union Government in **General Insurance Corporation of India, National Insurance, New India Assurance, Oriental Insurance and United India Insurance** companies.

Union Minister of State for External Affairs Raj Kumar Ranjan Singh inaugurates the 7th IBSA Academic Forum

- Union Minister of State for External Affairs Raj Kumar Ranjan Singh inaugurated the two-day-long **7th IBSA Academic Forum**, which was held virtually.

- The two-day event was hosted by the **Research and Information System** for Developing Countries.
- India is the incumbent Chair of IBSA.
- This Forum focuses on strengthening IBSA development cooperation projects.

Union Government announces Rs. 1000 crores for new national highways in Uttarakhand

- Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari announced **1000 crores** for new national **highways in Uttarakhand** and an additional **Rs. 300 crores** for the **Central Road Infrastructure Fund**.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Annual Meeting 2021

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** addressed the **Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Annual Meeting 2021** through video-conferencing.
- Theme of the meeting: **'India@75: Government and Business working together for AatmaNirbhar Bharat'**.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participates in the 'Atmanirbhar Narishakti se Samvad'

1. Rs. 1625 crores to over four lakh SHGs
 2. Rs. 25 crores seed money for 7500 SHGs
- Rs. 4.13 crores for 75 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)

LG Manoj Sinha inaugurates "Bungus Awaam Mela" in J&K

- **Jammu and Kashmir** Lieutenant Governor, **Manoj Sinha** has inaugurated the **Bungus Awaam Mela** with grand arrangements for village games, exhilarating local performances, and other activities to celebrate the **75th year of Independence at Bungus valley in Kupwara district**.
- While inaugurating the fair, the Lt Governor paid tributes to the great revolutionary, freedom fighter Khudiram Bose, on his death anniversary. He also remembered countless others who made sacrifices and invaluable contributions towards achieving the Independence of the country.

State News

Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel announces 4 new districts

- **Chhattisgarh** Chief Minister **Bhupesh Baghel** has announced the creation of four new districts and 18 new tehsils in the state.
- The four new districts are: **Mohla Manpur, Sarangarh-Bilaigarh, Shakti, Manendragarh**.
- With the creation of four new districts, the total number of administrative districts in the state have reached **32**.

Hockey star Vandana Katariya made U'khand Women & Child Development ambassador

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister **Pushkar Singh Dhama** has announced that Indian women's hockey team player **Vandana Katariya** will be the brand ambassador of the state's Department of **Women Empowerment and Child Development**.
- The announcement came at a program organized to felicitate the recipients of awardees of the Tilu Rauteli Award and the Anganwadi Workers Award.
- Earlier, Dhama had announced a cash reward of **Rs 25 lakh** to Indian women's hockey team player **Vandana Katariya** for her brilliant performance at the Tokyo Olympics.

India's first Drone Forensic Lab comes up in Kerala

- India's first **Drone Forensic Lab and Research Center** has come up in **Kerala**. The Chief Minister of Kerala, **Pinarayi Vijayan** was inaugurating the State police department's 'Drone Forensic Laboratory' at the **Kerala State Police CyberDome**.
- Cyberdome is a technological research and development centre of the Kerala Police Department.
- The centre will help in keeping a watch over unauthorized drones and also for the production of drones for the use of the police force. This lab-cum-research centre will look into both utility and threat aspects of a drone.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- Kerala CM: Pinarayi Vijayan;
- Kerala Governor: Arif Mohammad Khan.

Kaziranga becomes India's first national park 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.
- 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.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- Assam Governor: Jagdish Mukhi;
- Assam Chief Minister: Himanta Biswa Sarma;
- Assam Capital: Dispur.

Jammu and Kashmir Government launches the 'PROOF' app to monitor the timely completion of projects

- **Jammu and Kashmir** Government launched the **Photographic Record of On-site Facility (PROOF) app** to bring more transparency and accountability in the governance system.
- This app will help in monitoring and timely completion of projects.
- It will also help in uploading geo-tagged photographs while preferring bills in the concerned treasuries against the budget allotted through the BEAMS

Jammu and Kashmir

- Capital: Srinagar (Summer), Jammu (Winter)
- Lt. Governor: Manoj Sinha
- National Parks: Hemis National Park, City Forest (Salim Ali) National Park, Dachigam National Park, Kishtwar National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary, Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary, Jasrota Wildlife Sanctuary, Baltal-Thajwas Wildlife Sanctuary, Karakoram (Nubra Shyok) Wildlife Sanctuary
- Lakes: Mansar Lake, Nagin Lake, Wular Lake, Surinsar Lake, Dal Lake

Indore in Madhya Pradesh was declared as the first water plus city of India

- Madhya Pradesh's **Indore** was declared as the first 'water plus' city of India under the Swachh Survekshan 2021.
- is given for maintaining cleanliness in rivers and drains.

Madhya Pradesh

- Capital: Bhopal
- Chief Minister: Shivraj Singh Chauhan
- Governor: Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel
- National Parks: Bandhavgarh National Park, Dinosaur Fossils National Park, Fossil National Park, Pench National Park, Kanha National Park, Kuno National Park, Madhav National Park, Panna National Park, Sanjay National Park, Satpura National Park, Van Vihar National Park

The Finance Minister of the Tamil Nadu Government presented the state's first budget after the party coming into power

- The Finance Minister of the Tamil Nadu Government Palanivel Thiaga Rajan presented the revised budget of Tamil Nadu for 2021–2022.
- '**Singara Chennai 2.0**' project will be rolled out soon, under which three more flyovers will come up in Chennai — Ganeshapuram Subway, Konnur Highway and South Usman road.
- Metro rail service from Kodambakkam to Poonamalle will start its operation by

- Chennai will be made a 'wall-poster-free' city. Flood and drain systems are going to be inbuilt Kosasthalai river for Rs. 87 crores to prevent flooding in Chennai.
- Tamil Nadu Government has announced that tax on petrol will be reduced by Rs. 3 per litre.

Tamil Nadu

- Capital: Chennai
- Chief Minister: K. Stalin
- Governor: Banwarilal Purohit
- National Parks: Mukurthi National Park, Guindy National Park, Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park, Indira Gandhi (Annamalai) National Park, Mudumalai National Park

Tamil Nadu Government and Germany will sign an MoU to procure 2500 buses for public transport

- The **Tamil Nadu Government** is in consultation with **Germany** to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to procure 2,500 buses for public transport.
- An additional allocation of Rs. 150 crores was allocated for the Tamil Nadu Transport Department.

Maharashtra Government announces a new award named after Rajiv Gandhi

- The Maharashtra Government announced an award named after former Indian Prime Minister **Rajiv Gandhi** for firms that excel in the **Information Technology (IT) sector** in Maharashtra.

Maharashtra

- Capital: Mumbai
- Chief Minister: Uddhav Thackeray
- Governor: Bhagat Singh Koshyari
- National Parks: Chandoli National Park, Gugamal National Park, Nawegaon National Park, Pench (Jawaharlal Nehru) National Park, Sanjay Gandhi (Borivilli) National Park, Tadoba National Park

Indore declared India'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**.
- Indore carried out a survey and halted 7,000 outfalls of greywater that went in rivers, drains.
- Moreover, 30 per cent 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.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

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

International News

Afghanistan Prez Ashraf Ghani steps down, as Taliban forces takes power

- **Afghanistan** President **Ashraf Ghani** will shortly tender his resignation, as the government has surrendered to the **Taliban forces**, which entered **Kabul** and sought the unconditional surrender of the central government.
- Following this, a new interim government has been announced, which is likely to be headed by **Ali Ahmad Jalali**, a US-based academic.
- President Ashraf Ghani fled the country as the Islamist terrorists entered the city, he wanted to avoid bloodshed, while hundreds of Afghans desperate to leave flooded Kabul airport.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- Afghanistan Capital: Kabul.
- Afghanistan Currency: Afghan afghani.
- Afghanistan Official languages: Pashto, Dari.

WHO forms Advisory Group named “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**.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- President of the World Health Organisation: Tedros Adhanom.
- Headquarters of WHO: Geneva, Switzerland.
- WHO founded: 7 April 1948.

Pakistan successfully test-fires nuclear-capable 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.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

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

Seventh Oxygen Express arrives in Bangladesh from India

- The **seventh Oxygen Express** from India reached Bangladesh with **29 tonnes** of liquid medical oxygen.
- The first Oxygen Express was sent to Bangladesh from Tatanagar on 24 July to help the supply of oxygen for the treatment of COVID-19 patients in Bangladesh hospitals.

Bangladesh

- Capital: **Dhaka**
- Currency: **Taka**
- Prime Minister: **Sheikh Hasina**
- President: **Abdul Hamid**

Banking News

RBI cancels license of Raigad based Karnala Nagari Sahakari Bank

- The **Reserve Bank of India** has cancelled the license of **Raigad based Karnala Nagari Sahakari Bank Limited** in Maharashtra.
- As informed by the Reserve Bank of India, the license of Karnala Nagari Sahakari Bank was cancelled due to insufficient capital and earning prospects and its continuance would have adversely affected depositors.

RBI imposes ₹1 crore penalty on Cooperatieve Rabobank U.A

- **RBI** imposed a monetary penalty of **₹1 crore** on **Cooperatieve Rabobank UA**. Its Mumbai Branch is a part of the **Netherlands-based Rabobank Group**. The penalty has been imposed for contravention of certain provisions of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949** and directions related to 'transfer to reserve funds'.
- The RBI said it conducted a statutory **Inspection for Supervisory Evaluation (ISE)** of the bank with reference to the bank's financial position as on 31 March last year.
- Examination of the risk assessment report pertaining to the same revealed contravention of the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act and the directions issued by the central bank.

HDFC unveils 'Green & Sustainable' fixed deposit

- **HDFC Bank** has announced the introduction of '**Green & Sustainable Deposits**' to safeguard the environment from **climate change**. These fixed deposits will be directed towards financing green and sustainable housing credit solutions and services.
- With a deposit period of **36-120 months**, both residents and NRIs can invest in this instrument that will offer interest rates up to **6.55% p.a.**
- Senior citizens will be eligible for an additional **0.25% p.a.** on deposits up to **₹2 crores**.
- Additional ROI of **0.10% p.a.** will be applicable on these deposits up to **₹50 lakh** per calendar month per customer if placed/renewed through our online platform.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- Headquarters of HDFC Bank: Mumbai, Maharashtra;
- MD and CEO of HDFC Bank: Sashidhar Jagdishan;
- The tagline of HDFC Bank: We understand your world.

India organises the IBSA Tourism Ministers' Meet Virtually

- **India** organized the **IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) Tourism Ministers' meeting** through the virtual platform. The Union Minister of Tourism of India, **Shri G. Kishan Reddy**, chaired the meeting.
- The Minister of Tourism of the Federative Republic of Brazil, **Gilson Machado Neto** and the Deputy Minister of Tourism of the Republic of South Africa, **Fish Amos Mahlalela**, attended videoconferencing under India's IBSA Chairship.
- The meeting provided a platform to promote tourism cooperation among the member states and recognized the importance of strengthening cooperation in tourism to overcome the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the tourism sector.
- The meeting ended with the adoption of the **IBSA Tourism Ministers Joint Statement**- a document on cooperation and promotion for the speedy recovery of travel and tourism.

Narendra Singh Tomar addresses 6th SCO Meet of Agriculture Ministers

- The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, **Narendra Singh Tomar** has addressed the **6th** meeting of Agriculture Ministers of the member countries of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)**, through videoconferencing. The meeting was organized under the chairmanship of **Tajikistan in Dushanbe**.
- During the meeting, Narendra Singh Tomar highlighted the taking several steps being taken by the Government of India to develop innovative technologies and their dissemination from Lab to Land to empower rural youth, farmers and farm women.
- Apart from Tomar, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare **Shobha Karandlaje** also attended the meet.

HCL Technologies becomes 4th IT firm to hit Rs 3 trillion market-cap

- **HCL Technologies'** market capitalisation (market-cap) touched **Rs 3 trillion** for the first time. HCL becoming 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.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- HCL Technologies CEO: C Vijayakumar.
- HCL Technologies Founded: 11 August 1976.
- HCL Technologies Headquarters: Noida.

IDFC First Bank signs an MoU with the Indian Navy to offer Honour First Banking solutions

- **IDFC First Bank** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Navy** to offer **Honour First**, a premium banking solution to serving personnel and veterans of the Indian Navy.

Reserve Bank of India empanels South Indian Bank as an 'agency bank' for general banking business

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has empanelled **South Indian Bank** to act as an "agency bank" to undertake general banking businesses of the Union and state governments.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Formation: 1 April 1935
- Governor: Shaktikanta Das
- Deputy Governors: MK Jain, MD Patra, M Rajeshwar Rao and T Rabi Sankar
- Subsidiaries: Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran (BRBNM)

IndusInd Bank launches its mega currency chest in Chandigarh

- **IndusInd Bank** launched its mega currency chest at **Chandigarh** to service 218 branches across **Punjab and Haryana** along with branches of other banks in those states.

Number Of Billionaires In India Dropped From 141 to 136

- In the pandemic-hit financial year of 2020-21, the number of billionaires in India dropped from **141 in FY20 to 136 in FY21**, as per a statement issued by Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** in the Rajya Sabha.
- The count is based on the gross total income declared in the income tax returns. In FY 2018-19, the number of individuals with a gross total annual income of more than **Rs 100 cr is 77**.
- As per the information available with the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)**, there is no legislative or administrative definition of the term billionaire under direct taxes. Wealth tax has been abolished with effect from 01.04.2016 and, therefore, CBDT does not any more capture information about the complete wealth of an individual taxpayer.

Appointments News

Adi Godrej to step down from Godrej India board

- **Adi Godrej** will step down as the chairman of **Godrej Industries** on October 01, 2021. He will be replaced by **Nadir Godrej**, his younger brother. Godrej Industries (GIL) is the holding company of the Godrej group.
- Presently Nadir Godrej is the Managing Director of Godrej Industries. However, Adi Godrej will continue to serve as the **Chairman of Godrej Group**.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- Godrej Industries Founded: 1963;
- Godrej Industries Headquarters: Maharashtra.

Sudhir Kumar Saxena was appointed as the Secretary of the Cabinet Secretariat

- According to the Union Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, senior IPS officer **Sudhir Kumar Saxena** was appointed as the **Secretary of the Cabinet Secretariat**.

Noopur Chaturvedi was appointed as the CEO of NPCI Bharat Billpay

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) appointed **Noopur Chaturvedi** as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd (NBBL)**.

Kamlesh Kumar Pant was appointed as the Chairman of the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)

- **Kamlesh Kumar Pant** was appointed as the new **Chairman** of the **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** by the Appointments Committee of the Union Cabinet.

Zeya By Kundan ropes in Vaani Kapoor as their brand ambassador

- Jewellery brand **Zeya By Kundan** announced **Vaani Kapoor** as their brand ambassador.
- With this association, Zeya By Kundan aims to create high decibel visibility and connect with its target customers.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla gets a one-year extension

- The Union Government has extended the tenure of the Union Home Secretary **Ajay Kumar Bhalla**.
- His tenure was extended till **22 August**.

Science and Technology News

HCL Foundation launches 'My e-Haat' portal to empower artisans

- **HCL Foundation**, the corporate social responsibility arm of HCL Technologies has launched an online portal, '**My e-Haat**', to empower artisans and strengthen the value chain of the handicraft sector in the country.
- The platform will enable artisans and primary producers to conduct their business, by listing and showcasing their products directly to customers, thereby minimising the informal intermediaries and the long supply chains. Currently, more than 30 partners from eight states with over 600 products are listed on the portal.
- The My E-Haat initiative will be a one-of-a-kind model (A2C) where artisans will directly connect with the customer for years to come. This portal would help in bringing the talent of skilled craftsmen from across the country to the world. It will also increase their recognition, appreciation and remuneration.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- HCL Technologies CEO: C Vijayakumar.
- HCL Technologies Founded: 11 August 1976.
- HCL Technologies Headquarters: Noida.

Chandrayaan-2 orbiter detects water molecules on lunar surface

- India's **Chandrayaan-2** moon mission may have made a hard landing on the lunar surface in 2019, but the orbiter accompanying it has been providing useful information to scientists back on Earth.
- A research paper revealed that the **Chandrayaan-2 orbiter** confirmed the presence of **water molecules (H₂O) and hydroxyl (OH)** on the surface of the moon. The findings were published in the journal Current Science.
- The Chandrayaan-2 mission was launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) in July 2019. But Vikram lander on-board the mission crash-landed on the lunar surface just 2.1 km from its destination in September that year.

- Chandrayaan-2 was launched with the aim of mapping the variations in lunar surface composition, as well as locating and studying the surface of the Moon for the presence of water.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

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

ISRO's GSLV-F10 fails to launch earth observation satellite in orbit

- ISRO's **GSLV rocket** failed to inject into orbit, India's latest earth observation satellite, **EOS-03**, due to a failure to ignite the cryogenic stage of the launch vehicle.
- The GSLV-F10 was a three-stage engine rocket, with the first being solid fuel and the four strap-on motors by liquid fuel; the second was liquid fuel and the third a cryogenic engine.

CSS Corp launches a cloud-based digital customer experience transformation platform 'CSS EDISON'

- CSS Corp announced the launch of **CSS EDISON**, a cloud-based intelligent **customer experience (CX)** transformation platform for accelerated digitalization of end-to-end CX and technology support ecosystems.

Awards News

President Ram Nath Kovind confers 144 Gallantry awards in 2021

- President Shri **Ram Nath Kovind**, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, has approved **144 Gallantry awards** for armed forces, police and paramilitary personnel on the occasion of **Independence Day 2021**.
- Besides, President Kovide also approved 28 Mention-in-Despatches to the army personnel for their significant contributions in different military operations.

The 144 Gallantry awards include:

- **Ashok Chakra:** Babu Ram (posthumously), ASI, Jammu and Kashmir Police.
- **Kirti Chakra:** Altaf Hussain Bhat (posthumously), Constable, J&K Police.

4 Indian airports find place 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 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

Indian Team Wins US Innovation Award

- **SoftWorthy** has been conferred the prestigious **National Science Foundation Innovation-Corps (NSF I-Corps) Teams Award** in the **United States**.
- SoftWorthy's award-winning project focuses on developing **state-of-the-art computational methods** for 'stochastic modelling, design simulation and sensitivity analysis of electronic devices like **printed-circuit-boards (PCBs)**, which are critical for the growth of novel technological applications like driverless vehicles and energy-efficient smart buildings.

Agreements News

Indian Navy, IDFC FIRST bank bring 'Honour FIRST' banking solutions

- The **Indian Navy** has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC) First Bank** to initiate '**Honour FIRST**'.
- '**Honour FIRST**' is a premium banking solution for serving personnel and veterans of the Indian Navy. Designed especially keeping in mind the needs of the Armed Forces and its veterans, the Honour FIRST Defence Account is supported by a dedicated team of defence veterans.
- The MoU for Honour FIRST was signed at the Naval Headquarters in New Delhi between Commodore Neeraj Malhotra, Commodore – Pay and Allowances, Indian Navy and IDFC FIRST Bank's senior officials.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- IDFC First Bank Establishment: 2018;
- IDFC First Bank MD & CEO: V. Vaidyanathan;
- IDFC First Bank Headquarters; Mumbai, Maharashtra.

The National Health Authority and IIT Delhi sign an MoU to intensify healthcare innovations for low-income groups

- The **National Health Authority (NHA)** and **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to intensify healthcare innovations which will support innovators and entrepreneurs in improving the healthcare facility of India.
- This MoU aims to improve affordable and quality healthcare services for low-income and vulnerable communities, particularly for the beneficiaries of **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY)**.

EdelGive Foundation and FICCI signed an MoU to assist women in the entrepreneurial ecosystem

- **EdelGive Foundation** and the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen and boost up outreach initiatives with respect to women entrepreneurship in India.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and International Air Transport Association extend partnership to facilitate global trade

- **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** and the **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** have extended their collaboration to facilitate **international trade**, especially **e-commerce**.

Defence News

3. Indian Navy takes part in US Navy-led multinational SEACAT exercises

- 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.
- 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.

Government announces 'Prime Minister 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.

Books and Authors News

A book to explore life and works of Jayaprakash Narayan

- A new biography of revolutionary leader and independence activist **Jayaprakash Narayan** will hit the stands on August 23, publisher Penguin Random House India.
- The book, "**The Dream of Revolution: A Biography of Jayaprakash Narayan**", shares anecdotes and never-before-told stories from the life of the man who was known for his "emotional hunger for transformative politics, shunning power and incubating revolutionary ideas".
- According to the publisher, the book, written by historian **Bimal Prasad** and author **Sujata Prasad**, explores "the ambiguities and ironies of a life lived at the barricades, and one man's unremitting quest to usher in a society based on equality and freedom".

Vice President releases book 'Accelerating India: 7 Years of Modi Government'

- The Vice President, **M. Venkaiah Naidu** has released a book '**Accelerating India: 7 Years of Modi Government**' at Upa-Rashtrapati Nivas.
- The book commemorates the achievement and evaluation of two elected terms of PM Modi as the Head of Parliamentary.
- Releasing the book, VP Naidu said that as India will celebrate **75 years of independence**, it was time to study the progress of the constitutional promise of a 'dignified life to the common man.

National best selling author Aditya R. Nighhot released his new book "Unhooked & Unbooked"

- **Aditya R. Nighhot** is known for writing contemporary romance novels and books that have received critical as well as public acclaim.
- He came out with his new book '**Unhooked & Unbooked**' published by **Invincible Publishers**.

Harshit Raja becomes India's 69th Chess Grandmaster

- The 20-year-old Chess player **Harshit Raja** from Pune, Maharashtra has become the **69th Grandmaster of India in Chess**.
- He achieved the feat of becoming the GM at **Biel Masters Open 2021** where he drew his game against **Dennis Wagner** to get his final GM norm with one round to spare.
- Grandmaster (GM) title is awarded to chess players by the world chess organization FIDE and is the highest title a chess player can attain.

Indian Bank signs MoU with Paralympic Committee

- Public sector **Indian Bank** has signed an MoU with the **Paralympic Committee of India (PCI)** as one of the banking partners of the Paralympic Games scheduled to commence from **August 24 in Tokyo, Japan**.
- The bank, through its year-long association with PCI, will provide financial assistance to paralympic athletes. The President of the Paralympic Committee of India is **Deepa Malik**.
- In a year-long association, the bank will provide financial assistance to Paralympic athletes to prepare for the coveted sporting events in the domestic arena as well as global platforms. Timely financial aid provided to these sportspersons will encourage them to focus their efforts on the game and win laurels for the country.

Important takeaways for all competitive exams:

- Indian Bank Headquarters: Chennai;
- Indian Bank CEO: Padmaja Chunduru;
- Indian Bank: 1907.

World Cup winning U19 India captain Unmukt Chand announces retirement

- World Cup-winning U19 India captain, **Unmukt Chand** has announced his retirement from cricket in India. He had made an unbeaten 111, leading a tense victory over Australia in the **2012 U-19 World Cup final in Townsville, Australia**.
- The 28-year-old, who also led India A as well as Delhi and Uttarakhand in domestic cricket, had represented **Mumbai Indians, Delhi Capitals and Rajasthan Royals in the IPL**.
- Since his debut in 2010, Chand played in 67 First-Class matches, scoring 3379 runs with an average of 31.57. In 120 List A matches, Chand amassed 4505 runs at an average of 41.33. In 77 T20s, he made 1565 runs at an average of 22.35.

India sends largest ever contingent for Tokyo Paralympic Games

- The upcoming **Tokyo Paralympics** will witness the largest ever Indian contingent being send, with **54 para-sportspersons** participating across 9 sports disciplines.

- The **54-member Indian** contingents were given a formal and virtual send-off on August 12, 2021, by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag.
- The 2020 Summer Paralympics Games are scheduled to be held in Tokyo, Japan from **August 24 to September 05, 2021**.

World Athletics Rankings: Neeraj Chopra ranks the second spot

- Olympic Gold medallist **Neeraj Chopra** was ranked **second** in **World Athletics Rankings** with a score of 1315 behind Germany's Johannes Vetter.

Durand Cup makes re-entry with 130th edition to be held at Kolkata

- **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.

Shakib Al Hasan, Stafanie Taylor voted ICC players of the month for July

- Bangladesh all-rounder **Shakib Al Hasan** and West Indies skipper **Stafanie Taylor** were named the **ICC Player of the Month for July** in men's and women's categories respectively.
- Shakib, who was nominated alongside West Indies' Hayden Walsh Jr and Australia's Mitchell Marsh. Shakib's contributions in all three formats of the game helped Bangladesh win their series against Zimbabwe last month.
- Taylor was the standout performer for West Indies in the limited-overs series against Pakistan.

Important Days

PM Modi declares August 14 as 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day'

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has declared that, **August 14** will be observed as '**Partition Horrors Remembrance Day**' or '**Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas**', in memory of people's struggles and sacrifices during the partition of the country in 1947.
- The day aims to inspire us to eliminate the poison of discrimination, animosity and ill-will, as well as strengthen unity, social harmony and human sensibilities. Pakistan celebrates August 14 as its Independence Day.

World Organ Donation Day – 13 August

- **World Organ Donation Day** is observed on **13 August** every year to spread awareness about the importance of organ donation and address and debunk myths related to donating organs.

International Lefthanders Day – 13 August

- The **International Lefthanders Day** is observed on **13 August** every year to raise awareness about the importance of acknowledging and appreciating left-handed persons across the globe.

International Youth Day – 12 August

- **International Youth Day** is observed on **12 August** every year.
- The theme for 2021: “**Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health**”

World Elephant Day – 12 August

- **World Elephant Day** is observed on **12 August** every year.
- This day is observed to raise awareness and bring attention to the plight of elephants.

Obituaries News

German Football Legend Gerd Müller passes away

- Former West Germany forward and the Bayern Munich football legend, **Gerd Muller** has passed away.
- At the international level, he represented **West Germany**, scoring 68 goals in 62 appearances, and at the club level, he played for Bayern Munich, with which he scored a record 365 goals in 427 Bundesliga games.
- He was nicknamed “**Bomber der Nation**” (“the nation’s Bomber”) or simply “Der Bomber”, for his scoring prowess.

Former India defender Chinmoy Chatterjee passes away

- Eminent India-international footballer **Chinmoy Chatterjee**, who played for the three Maidan heavyweights in his prime in the 1970-80s, has passed away.
- He was a member of the Indian team at the **1978 Bangkok Asian Games** where they finished fourth in the quarterfinal league.
- **Chatterjee** played for **Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting**, during his domestic career. He also represented Bengal in the Santosh Trophy four times, and became champions in three of them.

Malayalam film and television actor Saranya Sasi passed away

- Malayalam television actor **Saranya Sasi** passed at Thiruvanthapuram Kerala, at the age of 35.