

August First week Current Affairs

National News

National News

Union Home Minister Amit Shah lays the foundation stone of the Uttar Pradesh State Institute of Forensic Sciences in Lucknow

- Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** laid the foundation stone of the **Uttar Pradesh State Institute of Forensic Sciences in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**.
- He laid the foundation stone for the **Vindhyachal Corridor Project** and inaugurated a ropeway in **Mirzapur**.

Uttar Pradesh

- Capital: **Lucknow**
- Chief Minister: **Yogi Adityanath**
- Governor: **Anandiben Patel**
- National Park: **Dudhwa National Park (Tiger Reserve)**
- Zoological Parks: **Shaheed Ashfaq Ullah Khan Prani Udyan (Gorakhpur), Kanpur Zoological Park, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Garden**

Hindustan Zinc signs an MoU with Normet group oy to introduce EVs in underground mining

- **Hindustan Zinc Limited** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **Normet Group Oy** for sustainable operations for healthier mining & greener tomorrow by introducing a fleet of **battery-powered service equipment** in underground mining.
- Through this partnership, **Hindustan Zinc** aims to reduce carbon emissions, by enabling the mine operations to become more environmental friendly with the help of **Normet SmartDrive Vehicles (NSDVs)**.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches a digital payment solution 'e-RUPI'

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** virtually launched an e-voucher-based digital payment solution, '**e-RUPI**'. This initiative is a **QR code** or **SMS** string-based **e-voucher**, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries.
- It was developed by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** on its UPI platform, in collaboration with the **Department of Financial Services**, Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and **National Health Authority (NHA)**.

Union Minister Meenakshi Lekhi participates in the G20 Culture Ministers Meeting

- Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture **Meenakshi Lekhi** participated in the **G20 Culture Ministers Meeting** hosted by **Italy**. She addressed participants of the

meeting and presented India's perspective on the topic 'Culture and creative sectors as drivers for growth'.

- She highlighted various measures taken by **India** to develop culture and creative sectors like the 'One District One Product' scheme of the Uttar Pradesh Government, tourism circuits and promotion of **Yoga and Ayurveda**.

NABARD sanctions Rs. 445.89 crores for drinking water projects in Punjab

- The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** has sanctioned **445.89 crores** for drinking water projects in **Ferozpur, Fazilka, Hoshiarpur** and **Rupnagar** districts of **Punjab**. This fund was sanctioned under the **Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)**.
- These projects envisaged providing **70 litres** per capita per day potable **drinking water** at the consumer-end through functional household tap connections covering a rural population of **39 lakhs** in **700 villages**.

Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF):

- The **Government of India** had created **RIDF** in **1995–1996** and is maintained by **NABARD**. At present, there are **37** eligible activities under RIDF which are approved by the Government of India.
- The main objective of RIDF is to provide Loans to State governments and state-owned corporations to enable them to complete ongoing **rural infrastructure projects**.

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

- Headquarters: **Mumbai, Maharashtra**
- Formation: **12 July 1982**
- Chairman: **Chintala Govinda Rajulu**

US-based First Solar is set to invest \$684 million in Tamil Nadu

- US solar technology company **First Solar** will invest **\$684 million** in a new, fully vertically and integrated photovoltaic thin-film solar module manufacturing facility in **Tamil Nadu**.
- This facility is projected to have a capacity of **3 gigawatts** and will commence operations in the second half of **2023**.

Tamil Nadu

- Capital: **Chennai**
- Chief Minister: **M.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**

Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik launches the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' across Odisha

- **Odisha** Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** has virtually launched the '**One Nation, One Ration Card**' (ONORC) policy across Odisha to facilitate the **food security scheme** beneficiaries to avail subsidised food grains from ration shops in any part of **India**.
- Beneficiaries under the **National Food Security Scheme** can avail the facility at around 10,578 fair price shops in **Odisha**.

Odisha

- Capital: **Bhubaneswar**
- Chief Minister: **Naveen Patnaik**
- Governor: **Ganeshi Lal**
- Festivals: **Dhanu Yatra, Budi Thakurani Yatra, Magha Saptami, Chhau, Dola Purnima**
- Lakes: **Kanjia Lake, Chilika Lake, Ansupa Lake, Pata Lake**
- Folk Dances: **Chhau, Gotipua, Ghumura, Ranappa, Chaiti Ghoda, Sambalpuri**
- Dams: **Hirakud Dam, Indravati Dam, Rengali Dam, Jalaput Dam, Mandira Dam, Patora Dam**
- National Parks: **Bhitarkanika National Park, Simlipal National Park, Nandankanan Zoological Park**

India's largest 3 GWh Li-ion battery factory is set to be built in Noida

- **Lohum**, a lithium-ion battery maker and a battery recycling solutions company, is set to build **India's largest 3 GWh Li-ion battery** manufacturing factory as well as a recycling plant in **Noida, Uttar Pradesh**.
- The total installed capacity of this integrated facility will be **3 GWh/3000 MWh** Li-ion batteries per annum. More than **300 crores** will be invested in this facility.

Uttar Pradesh

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JICA signs an agreement with IIT Hyderabad for technical cooperation project 'FRIENDSHIP'

- **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** has signed a Record of Discussions with the Indian Government to further strengthen its technical cooperation project '**FRIENDSHIP**' with the **Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IIT-H)**.

- The aim of the project, ‘Future Researchers at IIT-H to Enhance Network Development with Scholarship of Japan’ (FRIENDSHIP) Phase 2, is to establish a sustainable platform for academic and industrial cooperation between India and Japan at IIT-H

Rajasthan Government launches the "Mission Niryatak Bano" to foster exports from Rajasthan

- The **Industries Department** of the **Rajasthan Government** and the **Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation (RIICO)** have launched the ‘**Mission Niryatak Bano**’ campaign to promote aspiring exporters in Rajasthan.
- This campaign is aimed at registering and handholding the **local traders** willing to expand their business to **foreign countries**, in six steps.

Rajasthan

- Capital: **Jaipur**
- Chief Minister: **Ashok Gehlot**
- Governor: **Kalraj Mishra**
- National Parks: **Desert National Park, Keoladeo Ghana National Park, Mukundra Hills National Park, Ranthambhore National Park, Sariska National Park**

J&K Government inks an MoU with JSW Foundation for the restoration, conservation of Shalimar and Nishat Gardens

- The **Jammu and Kashmir** Government signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Mumbai-based **JSW Foundation** for the restoration and conservation of **Shalimar and Nishat Gardens** in **Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir**.
- JSW will assist the J&K Government both financially and technically in preserving the heritage gardens under **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**.

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**

Bangalore International Airport Limited partners with IBM for digital and IT transformation

- **International Business Machines (IBM)** and **Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL)**, operator of **Kempegowda International Airport – Bengaluru**,

announced a ten-year partnership under which IBM and Kyndryl will provide the best of breed IT solutions to create a new “**Airport in a Box**” platform.

- This platform will support to transform the **end-to-end** travel experience for passengers at the Bangalore Airport.

Karnataka

- Capital: **Bengaluru**
- Chief Minister: **Basavaraj Bommai**
- Governor: **Thaawarchand Gehlot**
- National Park: **Anshi National Park, Kudremukh National Park, Bandipur National Park, Bannerghatta National Park, Rajiv Gandhi (Nagarahole) National Park**

Kerala Police launches ‘Pink Protection’ project for safety and protection of women

- **Kerala Police** has launched a new project called ‘**Pink Protection**’ aimed at the protection and safety of **women** in public, private and digital places. This project will focus on **dowry-related issues, cyberbullying and humiliation** in public places.
- Kerala CM **Pinarayi Vijayan** flagged off **10 cars, 40 two-wheelers**, including bullet bikes and **20 bicycles** as a part of the ‘**Pink Protection**’ project.

Kerala

- Capital: **Thiruvananthapuram**
- Chief Minister: **Pinarayi Vijayan**
- Governor: **Arif Mohammed Khan**
- National Parks: **Anamudi Shola National Park, Eravikulam National Park, Mathikettan Shola National Park, Pambadum Shola National Park, Periyar National Park, Silent Valley National Park**

Indore becomes the first Indian city to be selected for the International Clean Air Catalyst Programme

- **India’s** cleanest city, Indore became the only city to be selected from India for the **International Clean Air Catalyst Programme**. This project will be operated for **5 years** for clean and pure air in Indore with the cooperation of **Indore Municipal Corporation** and **Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board**.
- Clean Air Catalyst is a new flagship programme launched by the **US Agency for International Development (USAID)** and a global consortium of organisations, led by the **World Resources Institute (WRI)** and **Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)** to accelerate clean air solutions in low and middle-income countries.

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**

NSDL e-Governance develops world's first cab-hailing platform on open-source tech

- **NSDL e-Governance Infrastructure Limited** has developed the **world's first cab-hailing platform**, which is enabled by **open-source specifications**.
- This project is distinct from the **private cab-hailing platforms** already in the market, such as **Uber** and **Ola**. (National Securities Depository Limited) NSDL's platform allows various enterprises, cab companies and individual players to access the platform on their own accord using **open-source technologies**.

Madhya Pradesh Government announces AYUSH-based economic upgradation scheme 'Devaranya Yojana'

- **Madhya Pradesh** Government has announced the AYUSH-based economic upgradation scheme '**Devaranya Yojana**' with the twin objectives of improving people's health and livelihood of tribals.
- This scheme is to bring together **AYUSH** and **tourism** to boost employment opportunities in **tribal areas**.

Madhya Pradesh

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International News

Myanmar Military Chief Min Aung Hlaing was appointed as the interim Prime Minister

- Myanmar's military leader Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing** declared himself as the interim Prime Minister of **Myanmar**.
- He is also the Chairman of the **State Administration Council (SAC)** which has been performing the duties of the Government in **Myanmar**.

Myanmar

- Capital: **Naypyitaw**
- President: **Win Myint**
- Currency: **Burmese Kyat**

World's largest star sapphire cluster found in Sri Lanka backyard

- The **world's largest star sapphire cluster** was found in **Sri Lanka**. The stone was found by a group of men who were digging a well in a gem trader's home in the Ratnapura area.
- The pale-blue stone has an estimated value of up to **\$100 million** in the international market. It weighs around **510 kilograms** or **5 million carats**.

Sri Lanka

- Capital: **Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte**
- Currency: **Rupee**
- Prime Minister: **Mahinda Rajapaksa**
- President: **Gotabaya Rajapaksa**

India and the US are set to co-host the 4th Annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum in October 2021

- **India** and the **US** will virtually co-host the 4th Annual **Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF)** in October 2021 in partnership with the US Chamber of Commerce, the **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**, the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)**, and the **US-ASEAN Business Council (USABC)**.
- This forum is to promote **commerce, funding** and **financial cooperation** between the United States and its companions all through the **Indo-Pacific area**.

NASSCOM partners with UK-India Business Council to address the digital skills gap in the UK

- **National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM)** has collaborated with the UK Government's **Department for International Trade (DIT)** and the **UK-India Business Council (UKIBC)** to address the digital skills gap in the **UK**.
- This covered several of the UK's top universities such as the **University of Nottingham**, **University of Glasgow** and **Durham University**.

National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM)

- Headquarters: **New Delhi, India**
- Chairman: **Rekha M Menon**
- Founded: **1 March 1988**

FTCCI enters into an agreement with the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce & Investment for trade promotion between Telangana and Afghanistan

- The **Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI)** entered into an agreement of cooperation with the **Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce & Investment (ACCI)** to promote business between **Afghanistan** and **Telangana**.

FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry):

- Headquarters: **New Delhi, India**
- Secretary-General: **Dilip Chenoy**
- President: **Sangita Reddy**

UN Food Systems Pre-Summit 2021 was held in a hybrid mode in Rome, Italy

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) **Narendra Singh Tomar** participated in the **UN Food Systems Pre-Summit 2021** held in a hybrid mode in **Rome, Italy**.
- Under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General **António Guterres**, the Pre-Summit is a **“People’s Summit”**.

Italy

- Capital: **Rome**
- President: **Sergio Mattarella**
- Prime Minister: **Mario Draghi**

Union Minister of State for External Affairs Rajkumar Ranjan Singh inaugurates the BRICS Civil Forum 2021

- **Minister of State** in the Union Ministry of External Affairs **Rajkumar Ranjan Singh** had virtually inaugurated the **BRICS Civil Forum 2021** organised by the **Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)**.
- The two-day event was organised by **India**, as BRICS Chair, with an apt focus on **‘technology’** and **‘sustainability’**. BRICS Civil Forum is a recognised and influential **People-to-People platform** under the BRICS cooperation framework.

Global Education Summit begins in London

- The **United Kingdom** and **Kenya** are co-hosting a **two-day Global Education Summit** in **London** to raise \$5 billion for the **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)**, which funds public education in up to **90 countries** and territories. These countries are home to more than **80 per cent** of the world’s out-of-school children.

United Kingdom

- Capital: **London**
- Currency: **Pound Sterling**
- Prime Minister: **Boris Johnson**

Kenya

- Capital: **Nairobi**
- Currency: **Kenyan Shilling**
- President: **Uhuru Kenyatta**

Pham Minh Chinh was re-elected as the Prime Minister of Vietnam

- **Pham Minh Chinh** was re-elected as the **Prime Minister** of **Vietnam** for the **2021–2026** tenure during the first session of the 15th National Assembly in **Hanoi**.

Vietnam:

- Capital: **Hanoi**
- Currency: **Vietnamese Dong**
- Prime Minister: **Pham Minh Chinh**

Banking and Economy

SBI launches 'SIM Binding' feature in YONO & YONO Lite

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** has launched a new and enhanced security feature '**SIM Binding**' in **YONO** and **YONO Lite** to protect customers from various frauds.
- This feature will provide enhanced security to all our customers and help them with a convenient and safe **online banking experience**.

State Bank of India (SBI)

- Headquarters: **Mumbai, Maharashtra**
- Chairman: **Dinesh Kumar Khara**
- Tagline: "**The Banker to Every Indian**"

PhonePe launches UPI-based AutoPay functionality for mutual fund SIP investments

- Digital payments platform **PhonePe** has introduced a Unified Payments Interface (UPI)-based **AutoPay feature** for its mutual fund investment offerings. **PhonePe** became the first digital investment platform in **India** to introduce such a feature.
- This feature will enable customers to set up automatic **Systematic Investment Plan (SIP)** payments for their mutual fund investments.

PhonePe

- Headquarters: **Bengaluru, Karnataka**
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO): **Sameer Nigam**

Paytm Payments Bank becomes the first bank in India to cross the 1-crore FASTags mark

- **Paytm Payments Bank** became the **first bank** in **India** to achieve the milestone of issuing **1 crore FASTags**. According to NPCI, over **47 crore** FASTags were issued by all banks together till the end of **June 2021**.

Paytm

- Headquarters: **Noida, Uttar Pradesh**
- Founder: **Vijay Shekhar Sharma**
- Founded: **2010**

Indian Bank signs an MoU with SINE and IIT Bombay for funding Start-ups and MSMEs

- **Indian Bank** has signed an MoU with **Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE)** and **IIT Bombay** for extending exclusive credit facilities to Startups and MSMEs through its loan product '**IND Spring Board**'.
- **SINE** and **IIT Bombay** provide support to the **MSME sector** by providing joint research and development arrangements and **technical & financial support** for incubation and acceleration of high-end technology products.

Indian Bank

- Headquarters: **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**
- MD and CEO: **Padmaja Chunduru**
- Establishment: **1907**
- Tagline: **"Your Own Bank"**
- **Allahabad Bank** was amalgamated with the **Indian Bank** on **1 April 2020**.

DBS partners with Temasek to launch debt financing platform 'EvolutionX' in Asia

- **Development Bank of Singapore (DBS)** has partnered with **Temasek** to launch a **\$500 million** growth stage debt financing platform named '**EvolutionX**' Debt Capital.
- EvolutionX will provide non-dilutive financing to growth stage technology-enabled companies across **Asia**, with a focus on **China, India** and **Southeast Asia**.

Development Bank of Singapore (DBS)

- Headquarters: **Singapore**
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO): **Piyush Gupta**

RBI fines Axis Bank Rs. 5 crores for non-compliance with certain rules

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has imposed **Rs. 5 crores** fine on **Axis Bank** for **non-compliance** with certain provisions of RBI norms on **payment ecosystem** between banks as a **corporate customer, cybersecurity** and **financial inclusion norms**.
- The penalty has been imposed for **"contravention of/non-compliance"** with certain provisions of directions issued by the RBI.

Axis Bank

- Headquarters: **Mumbai, Maharashtra**
- MD & CEO: **Amitabh Chaudhry**
- Tagline: **"Badhti Ka Naam Zindagi"**

Yes Bank and Indiabulls Housing Finance sign a co-lending agreement for home loans

- **Yes Bank** and **Indiabulls Housing Finance** have entered into a co-lending agreement for **home loans**. This partnership aims at synergising capabilities to provide an efficient and seamless experience to retail **home loan customers**.
- The **Reserve Bank of India's** co-lending framework provides a collaboration tool to benefit from the **low-cost funding model** of a bank and the cost-efficient sourcing and servicing capabilities of a non-bank.

YES Bank

- CEO: **Prashant Kumar**
- Founder: **Rana Kapoor**
- Headquarters: **Mumbai**
- Tagline: **“Experience our Expertise”**

RBI cancels the licence of Goa-based Madgaum Urban Co-operative Bank

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has cancelled the licence of **Madgaum Urban Co-operative Bank Limited, Goa**, as it does not have adequate capital and earning prospects.
- The RBI has assured that about **99 per cent** of the depositors will receive full amounts of their deposits from **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC)**.

Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC)

- Headquarters: **Mumbai, Maharashtra**
- Chairman: **Michael Debrata Patra**

IFC acquires Federal Bank's 4.99% stake for Rs. 916 crores

- **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, along with two investment funds managed by **IFC Asset Management Company** (IFC Financial Institutions Growth Fund and IFC Emerging Asia Fund), acquired 4.99 per cent stake in **Federal Bank** for **Rs. 916 crores**.

Union Cabinet approves DICGC Bill ensuring Rs. 5 lakhs for depositors in 90 days

- The **Union Cabinet** has approved an amendment to the **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) Act, 1961**, to provide account holders access to up to **Rs. 5 lakhs** funds within **90 days** of a bank coming under moratorium to ensure timely support to depositors.
- Union Cabinet also approved amendments to the **Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Act, 2008**, including decriminalising **12 offences** under the law.

FamPay partners with VISA to launch India's first doodle card 'FamCard Me'

- **FamPay**, a fintech startup focused on online and offline card payments for teenagers, has launched **India's first VISA** prepaid card 'FamCard Me', for **teenagers** with personalised doodles on it.
- FamPay is a numberless prepaid card. Teens can make online and offline payments using the **FamCard** and the **FamPay app** without the need to set up a bank account.

RBI allows non-banks to participate in central payment systems RTGS and NEFT

- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has allowed authorised **non-banks** payment system providers, including **prepaid payment issuers, card networks** and **white label ATM operators** to be eligible to participate in central payment systems like **Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)** and **National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT)**.

SWIFT launches fast and cost-effective service 'SWIFT GO' for low-value cross-border payments

- **Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT)** has launched the '**SWIFT Go**', a transformative new service that enables small businesses and consumers to send fast, predictable, highly secure and competitively priced **low-value cross-border payments** anywhere in the world, direct from their bank accounts.

ICICI Lombard partners with SVAAS Wellness Limited to launch a cashless digital health solution

- **SVAAS Wellness Limited**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Limited** and **ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited**, have announced a partnership for the pilot launch of a first-of-its-kind **cashless digital health solution** in India.
- This partnership marks the launch of Dr. Reddy's digital health solution '**SVAAS**' and demonstrates ICICI Lombard's deeper foray into the wellness space.

State Bank of India tops the list of PSBs writing off NPAs in FY21

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** topped the list of public sector banks **writing off loans** in **FY21**, followed by **Union Bank of India**.
- As per the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**, the **State Bank of India (SBI)** removed Rs. 34,402 crores from its balance sheet, the **Union Bank of India (UBI)** wrote off Rs. 16,983 crores and **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** wrote off Rs. 15,877 crores during FY21.

Amazon India partners with InCred to offer credit to e-commerce retailers

- **InCred** has entered into a strategic partnership with **Amazon India** to provide collateral-free, working capital loans of up to **Rs. 50 lakhs** to **Amazon merchants** via its seller portal.

- This program enables sellers on the marketplace to avail themselves of **affordable credit** to meet their growth and **working capital requirements**.

Science and Technology

Ordnance Factory in Tamil Nadu launches high-tech carbine 'TriCa'

- A high-tech, low sound carbine named 'TriCa' with a range more effective than a typical **submachine gun** and small enough to be packed in the jacket of security personnel was unveiled at the **Ordnance Factory in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu**.
- The lighter and compact weapon, the **7.62×39 mm** carbine **TriCa** is designed for the infantry combat vehicle, helicopter crew and security personnel for operations that call for a compact and relatively powerful **individual automatic weapon**.

ESA launches the world's first commercial re-programmable satellite 'Eutelsat Quantum'

- The **European Space Agency (ESA)** has launched the **world's first** commercial fully re-programmable satellite named '**Eutelsat Quantum**'. The world's first commercial fully re-programmable satellite lifted off from Europe's spaceport in **Kourou, French Guiana**.

Indian scientists discover materials that self-repair mechanical damages

- **Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Kolkata** has collaborated with **IIT Kharagpur** and developed **piezoelectric molecular crystals** that repair themselves from **mechanical damages** without the need for any external intervention.
- **Piezoelectric crystals** are a class of materials that generate electricity when it undergoes a mechanical impact.

Intel partners with CBSE to launch 'AI For All' initiative

- Chipmaker **Intel** has collaborated with the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** to launch the '**AI For All**' initiative', aimed at creating a basic understanding of **artificial intelligence (AI)** for people in **India**.
- Based on Intel's '**AI For Citizens**' programme, '**AI For All**' is a 4-hour, self-paced learning programme that inclusively demystifies AI

IIT Hyderabad develops India's first rapid electronic COVID-19 RNA test kit 'COVIHOME'

- The **Indian Institute of Technology – Hyderabad (IIT-H)** researchers have developed **India's** first rapid electronic **COVID-19 RNA test kit**, '**COVIHOME**'.
- This test kit is available at an **affordable cost** and the test can be conducted easily from your home.

Appointments

Mini Ipe was appointed as the Managing Director of LIC

- **Mini Ipe** was appointed as the **Managing Director** of **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)**.
- **Mini Ipe** is a post-graduate in Commerce from **Andhra University** and joined LIC in **1986** as a direct recruit officer. She was the first woman zonal manager (in-charge) of LIC and headed SCZO, Hyderabad.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)

- Headquarters: **Mumbai, Maharashtra**
- Founded: **1 September 1956**
- Chairman: **MR Kumar**
- Managing Director: **Mini Ipe**

Deepak Das takes charge as the new Controller General of Accounts

- **Deepak Das** took charge as the new **Controller General of Accounts (CGA)**. He is the **25th** officer to hold the position of Controller General of Accounts (CGA). He succeeded **Soma Roy Burman**.
- **Deepak Das** is a 1986-batch **Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS)** He served as the Principal Chief Controller of Accounts in the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)**.

Lieutenant General Tarun Kumar Chawla takes charge as the Director-General of Artillery

- Lieutenant General **Tarun Kumar Chawla** took charge as the Director-General of Artillery. He succeeded Lt. **K. Ravi Prasad**, who served for thirty-nine years of distinguished service in the **Indian Army**.
- He served as an Army observer on the **United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL)**.

Vice-Admiral SN Ghormade takes charge as the new Vice-Chief of the Indian Navy

- Vice-Admiral **SN Ghormade**, a navigation and direction specialist, assumed charge as the new Vice-Chief of the Indian Navy. He succeeded Vice-Admiral **G Ashok Kumar**, who retired after 39 years of service.
- He has had extensive operational tenures onboard **frontline warships** of the **Indian Navy** that included commanding guided missile frigate INS Brahmaputra, submarine rescue vessel **INS Nireekshak** and minesweeper **INS Alleppey**.

Noopur Chaturvedi was appointed as the new CEO of Bharat BillPay System

- **Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS)**, NPCI's flagship bill payments platform, has appointed former **PayU** and **Airtel Payments Bank** executive **Noopur Chaturvedi** as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Rakesh Asthana was appointed as the Delhi Police Commissioner

- Director-General of the **Border Security Force (BSF)** **Rakesh Asthana** was appointed as the Commissioner of the **Delhi Police**.
- He is a 1984-batch **Indian Police Service (IPS)** officer from the Gujarat cadre.

Awards and Recognitions

DBS clinches global accolade for innovation in digital banking; Financial Times publication

- **Development Bank of Singapore (DBS)** was honoured as the global winner for **2021 Most Innovative** in Digital Banking by the **Financial Times publication report**.
- The bank was also recognised as the **Asia-Pacific winner** and won in the **Cyber Security category** for its Secure Access and Remote Working Solution.

Development Bank of Singapore (DBS)

- Headquarters: **Singapore**
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO): **Piyush Gupta**

Serum Institute founder Cyrus Poonawalla is set to receive the Lokmanya Tilak Award 2021

- Founder and Chairperson of the Pune-based **Serum Institute of India (SII)**, **Cyrus Poonawalla**, was named as a recipient of the prestigious **Lokmanya Tilak National Award** for 2021.
- He was honoured for his work during the COVID-19 pandemic by manufacturing the **COVISHIELD vaccine**.

Indian-origin author Sunjeev Sahota among 13 contenders in the longlist for fiction's 2021 Booker Prize

- Indian-origin British author **Sunjeev Sahota** is among the **13 authors** longlisted for the prestigious **2021 Booker Prize for fiction** for his novel '**China Room**', alongside Nobel laureate **Kazuo Ishiguro** and Pulitzer Prize winner **Richard Powers**.
- The 2021 longlist or "**The Booker Dozen**" of 13 novels was unveiled after judges evaluated **158 novels** published in the UK or Ireland between 1 October 2020 and 30 September 2021.

Veteran singer Asha Bhosle was selected for the prestigious "Maharashtra Bhushan Puraskar"

- The **Maharashtra Bhushan Selection Committee**, chaired by Chief Minister of Maharashtra **Uddhav Thackeray**, unanimously selected legendary playback singer **Asha Bhosle** for the prestigious "**Maharashtra Bhushan Puraskar 2021**".

- Maharashtra Cultural Affairs Minister **Amit Deshmukh** announced that the **Maharashtra Bhushan Puraskar** will be given to legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle for the year **2021**.

Mumbai-based illustrator Anand Radhakrishnan wins the prestigious Will Eisner Comic Industry Award

- Mumbai-based graphic artist **Anand Radhakrishnan** has won the prestigious **Will Eisner Comic Industry Award**, considered the Oscars equivalent of the **comics world**.
- The Indian artist won the **Best Painter/Multimedia Artist** (interior art) Award for his work in UK-based author **Ram V's** 145-page graphic novel **Blue in Green**. Radhakrishnan shared the award with another UK-based colourist **John Pearson**.

Satpura Tiger Reserve wins the NatWest Group Earth Heroes Award for best management

- **Madhya Pradesh's Satpura Tiger Reserve** has received the **Natwest Group Earth Heroes Award** in the **Earth Guardian category** for best management. The Satpura Tiger Reserve has also been included in the potential list of **World Heritage**.

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**

Brazil landscape garden Sitio Burle Marx earns UNESCO world heritage status

- A landscape garden **Sitio Burle Marx** in **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**, was recognised as the **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. This site was named after architect **Roberto Burle Marx**.
- The **Sitio Burle Marx** in western Rio features more than **3,500 species** of plants native to Rio and is considered a laboratory for botanical and landscape experimentation.

Three Indian SMEs Among UN's Winners of the Best Small Business of 'Good Food for All'

- **Three** India-based small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have won the **United Nations (UN) Food Systems Summit** competition **Best Small Business of Good Food for All**.
- It aims to showcase innovative solutions in improving access to **healthy and sustainable food**.

- The 3 Indian SMEs are **Edible Routes Private Limited**, **Oorja Development Solutions India** and **Taru Naturals**.

Books and Authors

A new book titled “The Most Incredible Olympic Stories” was authored by Luciano Wernicke

- Argentinian writer **Luciano Wernicke’s** new book titled “**The Most Incredible Olympic Stories**” was released. This book was published by **Niyogi Books**.

Novelist Kunal Basu’s new book titled “In An Ideal World” is set to be released in 2022

- A new book titled “**In An Ideal World**” was authored by renowned novelist **Kunal Basu**. This book will be published by the Penguin Random House India (PRHI) in **2022**.

A new book titled ‘India Versus China: Why They Are Not Friends’ was authored by Kanti Bajpai

- **Kanti Bajpai’s** new book titled ‘**India Versus China: Why They Are Not Friends**’ was released. This book was published by **Juggernaut Publications**.

Rankings

Haryana Police secures the first position in the CCTNS system

- **Haryana Police** has secured the first position in the **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network System (CCTNS)** system with **100 per cent** marks in India.
- **Haryana Police** was followed by **Gujarat Police** and **Himachal Pradesh Police**.

Sports News

Alexander Zverev beats Karen Khachanov to win men’s singles tennis at Tokyo Olympics

- **Alexander Zverev** won **Germany’s** first-ever gold medal in men’s singles win over Russian **Karen Khachanov**.
- World no.5 has joined **Steffi Graf** (Seoul 1988, women’s singles) and **Boris Becker** and **Michael Stich** (Barcelona 1992, men’s doubles) as the nation’s only gold medallists since the sport returned to the Olympic stage in **1988**.

Belinda Bencic beats Marketa Vondrousova to become 1st Swiss woman to win Olympic tennis gold

- **Belinda Bencic** won **Switzerland’s** third Olympic tennis gold by defeating **Marketa Vondrousova** of the **Czech Republic**.

PV Sindhu becomes the first Indian woman to win two Olympic medals

- **PV Sindhu** became the **first Indian woman** athlete to win two individual **Olympic medals**. She defeated China's **He Bing Jiao** to win the bronze medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. She had won the **silver medal** at the **2016 Rio Olympics**.
- Besides Sindhu, wrestler **Sushil Kumar** is the first Indian men athlete to win **two individual medals** (Silver and Bronze) at the Olympic Games.

Australia swimmer Emma McKeon becomes the first woman to win seven medals at a single Olympics

- Australia's **Emma McKeon** became the **first woman swimmer** to win seven medals (4 gold and 3 bronze) at a single **Olympic Games**. McKeon also won **four medals** at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games.
- **McKeon** joins **Michael Phelps, Mark Spitz** and **Matt Biondi** as the only swimmers with seven medals at a single Olympic Games. Russian gymnast **Maria Gorokhovskaya** is the only woman to have won seven in any other sport in **1952 in the Olympic Games**.

Sri Lankan all-rounder Isuru Udana retires from international cricket

- The 33-year-old **Sri Lankan** left-arm seam bowling all-rounder **Isuru Udana** has announced his retirement from international cricket. He had played **21 ODIs** and **35 T20 Internationals** with **45 wickets**.

Esteban Ocon won the 2021 F1 Hungarian Grand Prix

- French racing driver **Esteban Ocon** won the **2021 Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix**.
- **Lewis Hamilton (British)** came at the second position and **Carlos Sainz (Spain)** at the third position.

A 19-year-old Pakistani climber Shehroz Kashif becomes the world's youngest person to scale K2 mountain

- A 19-year-old Pakistani climber **Shehroz Kashif** became the **youngest person** in the **world** to reach the summit of **K2**, the second-highest peak in the world, after **Mount Everest**.
- He achieved the feat of scaling the 8,611-metre-high peak with the aid of bottled oxygen. Before Shehroz, **Muhammad Ali Sadpara** was the youngest person to have climbed K2 at the age of

Turkmenistan wins first-ever Olympic medal as Polina Guryeva wins a silver medal in weightlifting

- Weightlifter **Polina Guryeva** won a silver medal for **Turkmenistan** (Central Asian nation) at the **2020 Tokyo Olympics Games**. Turkmenistan has won its **first-ever Olympic medal** with this since its independence from the Soviet Union.

- She won the silver medal in the women's **59 kg category in weightlifting**. Taiwan's **Kuo Hsing-Chun** won the gold medal in this category.

Vantika Agarwal wins the women's national online chess title

- **Vantika Agarwal** of Delhi won the **women's national online chess title**. She defeated **Arpita Mukherjee** of West Bengal. **Sreeja Seshadri** of Tamil Nadu took the third place.
- Tamil Nadu's **B Savitha Shri** defeated Delhi's **Vantika Agarwal** in the Armageddon game to become the **national junior girls' online chess champion**.

Important Days

World Breastfeeding Week – (1–7) August

- **World Breastfeeding Week** is celebrated annually from **1 to 7 August**. This week is celebrated to encourage **breastfeeding** and improve the **health of babies** around the world.
- 2021 Theme: “**Protect Breastfeeding: A Shared Responsibility**”

World Lung Cancer Day – 1 August

- **World Lung Cancer Day** is observed globally on **1 August** every year. This day is observed to raise awareness about the causes and treatment of **lung cancer** and to highlight the issues that a lack of sufficient research funding can create.

World Ranger Day – 31 July

- **World Ranger Day** is celebrated globally on **31 July** every year. This day is celebrated to commemorate **Rangers** who have been injured or killed in their line of duty.
- The first World Ranger Day took place in **2007**. The date represents the 15th anniversary of when the **International Ranger Federation (IRF)** was founded.

World Day against Trafficking in Persons – 30 July

- **World Day against Trafficking in Persons** is observed on **30 July** every year to raise awareness of the plight of **human trafficking victims** and to promote and protect their rights. This day was established by the **UN General Assembly** in **2013**.
- 2021 Theme: “**Victims' Voices Lead the Way**”

International Tiger Day – 29 July

- **International Tiger Day** is observed on **29 July** every year to raise awareness about **tiger conservation**. This day was first celebrated in **2010** at the St. Petersburg Tiger Summit in **Russia**. The objective of this Tiger Summit was to double the number of tigers by **2022**.
- 2021 Theme: “**Their Survival is in our hands**”

Obituary

World Masters gold medal winner Man Kaur passed away at 105

- Multiple World Masters Championship Gold medallist and multiple Asian Masters Championship medallist athlete **Man Kaur** passed away at the age of **105**. She was known as the “**Miracle Mom from Chandigarh**”.
- She won her first medal in **Chandigarh Masters Athletics meet** in 2007 before she won the gold in **100 m** as well **200 m** race in the National Masters Athletics meet in **2011**.

Former England fast bowler Mike Hendrick passed away at 72

- Former England pace bowler **Mike Hendrick** passed away at the age of 72. He took 26 of his 87 Test wickets against **India** during the **1974** and **1979** series and held the **world record** for most Test wickets without a five-wicket haul.
- Hendrick took **770 wickets** in **267** first-class matches and **35 wickets** in **22 ODIs**. He was also the first professional coach of **Ireland**.

Indian badminton legend Nandu Natekar passed away at 88

- Indian badminton legend **Nandu Natekar** passed away in Pune, Maharashtra. He was the first Indian badminton player to win an international event back in **1956**.
- He was the first recipient of **Arjuna Award** for sporting excellence in **1961**.

US Nobel-Prize-Winning physicist Steven Weinberg passed away at 88

- The US physicist **Steven Weinberg** passed away at the age of 88. He shared the 1979 Nobel Prize equally with **Sheldon Glashow** and **Abdus Salam** for Physics for his theoretical contributions to the **standard model of particle physics**.

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