

CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL NEWS

Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launches Aahaar Kranti mission

- **Government has launched Aahaar Kranti**, a mission dedicated to spread awareness about nutrition.
- It is designed to address the peculiar problem of hunger and diseases in abundance, being faced by India and the world.
- Studies show that India produces as much as two times the amount of calories it consumes.
- However, many in the country are still malnourished.
- The root cause of this strange phenomenon is a lack of nutritional awareness.
- Keeping this in mind, **Aahaar Kranti has been launched with the motto of Uttam Aahaar- Uttam Vichaar or Good Diet-Good Cognition.**
- Launching the initiative, **Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan** said, when the country is reeling under the onslaught of pandemic COVID -19, a balanced diet serves as a special tool to reduce the impact of the pandemic.
- He stressed on the need to create awareness about the importance of a balanced diet saying it has become more vital than ever before.
- The movement proposes to address the problem by working to rouse **the people to the values and richness of India's traditional diet**, to the healing powers of local fruits and vegetables and to the miracles of a balanced diet.
- **Vijnana Bharati, Global Indian Scientists and Technocrats Forum, Vigyan Prasar, and Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark** have come together to launch this mission.

Law Minister introduces Online Grievance Management Portal of National Commission for Scheduled Castes

- **Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad** launched the **Online Grievance Management Portal** of the **National Commission for Scheduled Castes**.
- Presently the complaints of victims, who are members of Scheduled Caste are processed manually in the commission.
- The new mechanism has been introduced to handle the complaints in online mode from the victim.
- The **National Commission for Scheduled Castes** is an Indian constitutional body established with a view to provide safeguards against the exploitation of Scheduled Castes.
- Speaking on the occasion, Mr Prasad said, this launching of **Online Grievance Management Portal** is especially important as the nation is observing the birth anniversary of one of India's great luminaries **B.R. Ambedkar**.
- Mr Prasad said, Dr. Ambedkar worked for the upliftment of the marginalised and downtrodden sections of the society.
- The Minister opined that digital India needs to be a mass movement in the country.
- Addressing the gathering, **Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Rattan Lal Kataria** said that the portal will make it easier for the Scheduled Castes population to register their complaint from any part of the country.

- He said, the portal will enable them to file their application and other atrocity and services related

Nagaland Governor conducts sensitization-cum-consultation meeting with all tribal hoho leaders of State

- In view of the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic in the country, **Nagaland Governor R. N. Ravi** held a sensitization-cum-consultation meeting with all the **tribal hoho leaders** of the **State at Raj Bhavan in Kohima**.
- A press release from the **PRO Raj Bhavan stated that Governor Ravi** recalled the significant contributions of the tribal leaders and their cooperation with the State Government in combating the **first wave** of COVID-19.
- He observed that cooperation of the **tribal leaders** is crucial as the pandemic cannot be successfully fought by the Government alone.
- Ravi therefore, urged the community leaders to encourage and ensure people to observe COVID-19 appropriate behaviours.
- The Governor also appreciated the valuable practical suggestions given by the tribal leaders based on their experiences and observations.
- He said the suggestions will be conveyed to the State Government for necessary action.
- **The Governor will meet GBs**, Church leaders and leaders of other faith based organizations of the State in the coming days.

77th Anniversary of Flag Hoisting Day observed at Manipur

- The **77th Anniversary of Flag Hoisting Day** was observed at **INA Martyr's Memorial Complex at Moirang of Manipur** with **Chief Minister N. Biren Singh** unfurling the **Indian Tricolour Flag** and led the other in paying floral tribute to the Statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose installed inside the complex.
- It was on **14th April, 1944** that the flag of the **Indian National Army** was hoisted for the first time on Indian soil at Moirang.

Piyush Goyal leads first meeting of National Startup Advisory Council

- **Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal** chaired the first meeting of the **National Startup Advisory Council**.
- The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade** had constituted this Council to advise the Government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country.
- Mr Goyal said that this council will act as the guiding light for many **budding startup** entrepreneurs in India.
- Appreciating the work done by the startups in all sectors, for finding innovative solutions to various problems, Mr Goyal said that India is a hub of innovation and out-of-the-box thinking.
- He said that Startup movement has stirred the entrepreneurial spirit in the last 5 years.
- The Minister described the Startups as the **New Champions of Aatmanirbhar Bharat**.
- He said, India has the potential to become **World's largest and most innovative startup ecosystem**.

Govt planned – 100 new hospitals to have their own oxygen plant under PM-CARES fund

- Union Health Ministry has said that **100 new Hospitals** in the country will have their own **Oxygen plant** under **Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM-CARES) Fund**.
- The decision was taken at a meeting of **Empowered Group 2 (EG2)** which was held to review the availability of essential medical equipment and oxygen during COVID.
- The Ministry said, **Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA)** plants manufacture oxygen and help hospitals become self-sufficient in their requirement for medical oxygen.
- It said, **162 PSA plants** sanctioned under **PM-CARES** are being closely reviewed for early completion of 100 percent of the plants to enhance self-generation of oxygen in hospitals especially in remote areas.
- The **Empowered Group 2** has directed the Health Ministry to identify **100 hospitals** in far flung locations for consideration of sanction for installation of PSA plants.

Secretary MeitY launches three new initiatives of NIXI

- **Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Ajay Prakash Sawhney** inaugurated three path breaking initiatives for **National Internet Exchange of India, NIXI**.
- These initiatives are **IP Guru, NIXI Academy and NIXI-IP-INDEX**.
- The IP Guru is a group to extend support to all the Indian entities who are finding it technically challenging to migrate and adopt **Internet Protocol version, IPv6**.
- In addition to this the group will help in identifying and hiring agency that will help end customer by providing necessary technical support to adopt IPv6.
- The **NIXI Academy** has been created to educate technical and non-technical people in India about technologies like IPv6 which will lead to better management of Internet resources in the country.
- The **NIXI-IP-INDEX portal** has been launched to showcase **IPv6 adoption rate** in India and across the world.

Housing & Urban Affairs Minister unveils EatSmart Cities Challenge and Transport 4 All Challenge

- **Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri** launched the **EatSmart Cities Challenge and Transport 4 All Challenge through video conferencing**.
- **EatSmart Cities Challenge** is an opportunity for India to play a pioneering role in developing the concept of integrating food systems into city planning and development.
- Mr Puri said, this movement will nudge the urban populace to make the **right food choices** and help build a healthier and happier nation.
- The **EatSmart Cities Challenge** is envisioned as a competition among cities to recognize their efforts in adopting and scaling up various initiatives under **Eat Right India**.
- The **challenge** is open to all **Smart Cities, capital cities of States and Union Territories, and cities with a population of more than five lakh**.
- The **Transport 4 All Challenge** aims to bring together cities, citizen groups, and start-ups to develop solutions that improve public transport to better serve the needs of all citizens.
- Mr Puri said that COVID-19 has brought the entire world to a halt with transport being one of the worst-hit sectors.

- He added that the **Transport4All Digital Innovation Challenge** will support cities to recover from this mobility crisis.

Indian Air Force Commanders' Conference 2021 concluded

- The **Indian Air Force Commanders' Conference 2021**, themed '**Reorienting for the Future**' concluded at Air headquarters in New Delhi.
- The three day conference saw detailed deliberations on ways and means to enhance the operational capabilities of the IAF.
- Air Officers Commanding-in-Chief of the seven commands and key appointments from Air headquarters attended the conference.
- The conference was **addressed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh**.
- The Chief of Defence Staff, Navy Chief and Army Chief also addressed the conference and interacted with the commanders on subjects of future war-fighting through joint planning and integration of service capabilities.
- The actions and follow-up plans for implementing the directions given by Prime Minister during the Combined Commanders' Conference were discussed by the participants.
- The **other key subjects** included reorientation of the **Indian Air Force** for future challenges across all threat domains, and the roadmap for effective utilisation of assets and future inductions.
- The contours of the operational philosophy and organizational aspects of Air Defence and Joint Command Structures were also discussed.

World 1st affordable and long-lasting hygiene product DuroKea Series unveiled by Education Minister

- **Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank** launched **World 1st affordable and long-lasting hygiene product DuroKea Series**.
- This next generation **DuroKea antimicrobial technology** starts at 189 rupees, kills 99.99 per cent of germs instantly and leaves behind the long-lasting protective nanoscale coating up to 35 days till next wash.
- Researcher from **Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad** has developed these innovative technologies to combat COVID-19 virus spreading.
- Mr Pokhriyal said that Durokea Product is aligned with the vision of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** to attain self reliance.
- He said, the unique property of **DuroKea range** is to ensure instant killing, within **60 second and prolonged protection** which is an immense necessity during this current pandemic situation.
- The Minister said, this revolutionary antimicrobial property of DuroKea products has been tested and certified by Indian Government accredited lab and field-tested at the **IIT Hyderabad campus**.

Chief Minister unveils AP Amul Project in Guntur

- **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** launched **AP Amul Project in Guntur district** and outlined **4,000 crore** plans to strengthen the **milk supply chain**.
- The Chief Minister said the project was started following an **MoU with Amul on July 21, 2020** for the empowerment of women self help groups by encouraging the setting up of milk cooperatives in government sector.

- Through the AP-Amul project, 9,899 villages across the State will be brought under milk production, where **Bulk Milk Cooling Units (BMCU) and Automatic Milk Collection Units (AMCU)** will be set up.
- **GCMMF (Amul) MD RS Sodhi and Sabarkanta Co-operative Society MD BM Patel** were among those who participated through video conference.

Tourism and Culture Minister initiates first-ever online exhibition on Ramayana

- **Tourism and Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel** has inaugurated the first-ever online exhibition on Ramayana.
- The weblink for the online exhibition is **nmvirtual.in/Virtual_Tour/Ramayan**.
- Mr Patel addressed a webinar '**India's Heritage: Powering Tourism**' on the occasion of **World Heritage Day 2021**.
- The online exhibition showcases **forty nine miniature paintings collections of National Museum, New Delhi** from different art schools of India.
- Mr Patel said that India has a unique heritage of **temples, dance, music, shastras** which cannot be found anywhere in the world.
- He said, protecting these invaluable inheritances for future generations is a collective responsibility and requires a renewed focus on community participation and awareness.
- The Minister said, it is the responsibility of **the younger generation to carry forward the task** of promoting the vast heritage of the country with proper facts and timelines.

DRDO to build its dedicated Corona hospital in New Delhi

- The dedicated **Covid hospital re-established by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** will become operational.
- The hospital has been established near **Domestic Airport Terminal** in New Delhi.
- It has **500 ICU beds**.
- **Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan** said that **250 beds** will be ready and it will be increased to 500 within a few days.
- He said, all beds are equipped with oxygen facilities and sufficient number of ventilators is available.
- A medical team drawn from **the Armed Forces** will look after the facility.
- The facility will be available free of cost.
- The person required in this hospital needs to bring an **RT-PCR Covid positive report** and **Aadhar card**.
- There will be a large number of monitoring equipment, ventilators, basic testing facilities, and air-conditioning in this hospital, **as per the WHO standards**.

162 Pressure Swing Adsorption Oxygen plants - installation in public health facilities in all States

- **The Health Ministry** said that **162 Pressure Swing Adsorption, PSA oxygen plants** have been **sanctioned by Government of India** for installation in public health facilities in all States and these will **augment medical oxygen capacity** by over **154 Metric Tonnes**.
- The Ministry said, out of **162 PSA plants sanctioned by the Centre**, **33** have already been installed, five in Madhya Pradesh, four in Himachal Pradesh, three each in Chandigarh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand, two each in Bihar, Karnataka and Telangana and one each in

Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Puducherry, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

- The Health Ministry said, States have appreciated the installation of PSA Oxygen plants in their public health facilities.
- It said, in addition to **162 plants already sanctioned, they have requested the Government of India for more than 100 such additional plants** which are also being sanctioned.
- Out of **162 PSA Oxygen plants, 33 have been installed.**
- By the end of this month, 59 will be installed and by the end of next month 80 will be installed.
- The Ministry said, the entire cost of 162 PSA Oxygen plants amounting to over 201 crore rupees has been borne by the Central Government.

Gallantry Awards portal organised Innovative Tributes to Bravehearts competition

- The **Gallantry Awards portal** has organized **Innovative Tributes to Bravehearts competition** wherein it is inviting participants from all over India to recommend unique and innovative tributes to salute the **Bravehearts** of the nation.
- The **objective of this competition** is to find a series of befitting **tribute messages** for the **Gallantry Awardees**.
- The competition is being held **from 15th April to 15th May 2021.**
- Entries received as a part of the competition would be judged on the basis of elements of creativity, originality, composition and simplicity and how well they highlight the vision and objectives of the **Gallantry Awards portal**.
- The winners of the competition will be recognized on the **Gallantry Awards portal and its related social media channels**.
- These winners will also be given an opportunity to witness the **Republic Day Parade 2022 in New Delhi**.
- To participate in the competition, people can visit, https://www.gallantryawards.gov.in/single_challenge/event/46.

J&K LG to share his thoughts through radio programme “Awaam Ki Awaaz”

- In the **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha** will share his thoughts through the first episode of the **monthly Radio Broadcast** titled **“Awaam Ki Awaaz”**.
- It will be carried by all the **AIR stations of Jammu and Kashmir** apart from Doordarshan channels of DD-Kashir and DDK Jammu.
- The initiative is a leap towards strengthening the concept of **“Jan Bhagidhari”** by inviting the participation of people of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The **“Awaam Ki Baat”** is a half an hour long radio broadcast and will be aired every third Sunday of a month.
- It is one of the many sequential steps of broader programmes taken by the J&K Government.
- Awaam Ki Baat is the novel initiative of **Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha** which aims at disseminating the progressive steps taken by his administration and seeks feedback from the public.

- Now, with this initiative, the J&K administration is giving a determined push to strengthen the govt-public relationship by inviting suggestions from the public and seeking their active participation in the policy formation.

Centre launches Startup India Seed Fund Scheme

- **Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal** launched the **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS)**.
- The Fund aims to provide financial assistance to startups for **proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialization**.
- An amount of **945 crore rupees** corpus will be divided over the **next 4 years** for providing seed funding to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India.
- The scheme is expected to support an estimated **3,600 startups through 300 incubators**.
- Mr Goyal said that the SISFS will Secure seed funding, Inspire innovation, Support transformative ideas, Facilitate implementation, and Start startup revolution.
- He said that this Scheme will create a robust startup ecosystem, particularly in **Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns of India**, which are often deprived of adequate funding.
- The Minister said that he would like to especially encourage innovators from rural areas to come forward and benefit from this scheme.

About Startup India:

- **Startup India** is an **initiative of the Government of India**.
- The campaign was first announced by **Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi** during his speech on 15 August 2015.
- **Address from the Red Fort, in New Delhi**.
- The action plan of this initiative is focusing on three areas: **Simplification and Handholding**.
- **Official website:** gov.in
- **Launch year:** 2016
- **Launched by** (prime minister): Narendra Modi
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Eligibility for Startup India:

- **Being incorporated or registered** in India for less than seven years and for **biotechnology startups up to 10 years** from its date of incorporation.
- Annual turnover not exceeding **Rs 25 crores** in any of the preceding financial years.

Air Force chief RKS Bhaduria on a five day visit to France for defence cooperation

- Marking the continuity of growing **bilateral defence cooperation with the French Air and Space Force**, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduria left for France on a **five day official visit**.
- The visit will enhance potential avenues for strengthening the level of interaction between the Indian and French Air Forces.
- During his visit, the Chief of Air Staff will hold meetings and discussions with senior military leadership of France and visit operational facilities and air bases.

- The two Air Forces have seen significant operational interaction in the recent past.

About France:

- **President:** Emmanuel Macron
- **Capital:** Paris
- **Currency:** Euro

Indian Oil starts to supply of no cost oxygen at to hospitals in Delhi, Haryana & Punjab

- **Indian Oil** has begun the supply of **150 Metric Tonnes of Oxygen** at no cost to **various hospitals in Delhi, Haryana and Punjab**.
- The first batch of the lifesaver **medical grade Oxygen** was dispatched to **Maha Durga Charitable Trust Hospital, New Delhi**.
- **Delhi is already facing an oxygen emergency situation**.
- In the face of a massive surge in demand for medical oxygen during the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Indian Oil has diverted the high-purity oxygen used in its **Mono Ethylene Glycol (MEG) Unit** to produce medical-grade liquid oxygen at its Panipat Refinery and Petrochemical Complex.

Indian Oil:

- **Chairperson:** Shrikant Madhav Vaidya
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Founded:** 30 June 1959

IFFCO's new oxygen plant in Gujarat: Sadananda Gowda

- **Union Chemicals & Fertilizers Minister Sadananda Gowda** has said that **cooperative fertilizer company** IFFCO's new oxygen plant at **Kalol in Gujarat** will enhance the **daily production capacity of medical grade Oxygen by 33 thousand litres per day**.
- The Minister informed that the company has also agreed to **set up 3 more Oxygen plants each at Aonla & Phulpur in Uttar Pradesh and Paradeep in Odisha**.
- Gowda also urged other urea companies to explore possibilities of setting up of oxygen plants in their existing manufacturing units.
- He said the current COVID situation demands a united fight against it.

About Gujarat:

- **Capital:** Gandhinagar
- **Governor:** Acharya Devvrat
- **Chief minister:** Vijay Rupani

Centre increase insurance scheme for health workers under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package for one year

- **Central government** has extended the insurance scheme under the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package** for health workers for a period of one year.

- **Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Harshvardhan** said that Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package has provided a safety net to the dependents of corona warriors who lost their lives during the Covid-19 pandemic.

About Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package:

- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 2016 is a scheme launched by the Narendra Modi led Government of India in December 2016 on the lines of the Income declaration scheme, 2016 launched earlier in the year.

The cover that is provided by the accident insurance scheme is mentioned below:

- Accidental death because of COVID-19 duty.
- Death due to COVID-19.

PM Modi admires step taken by Tata Group to mitigate oxygen crisis

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has lauded the efforts of **Tata Group** for importing **24 cryogenic containers** to transport liquid oxygen and help in easing the oxygen shortage in the country.
- The **Prime Minister appreciated the step taken by the Tata Group** to mitigate the oxygen crisis and strengthen the health infrastructure in the country.
- Modi said, together, the people of India will fight Covid-19.

Labour Ministry restarts 20 Control Rooms to diminish problems of migrant workers

- **The Ministry of Labour and Employment** has rejuvenated the **20 control rooms** in view of the resurgence of Coronavirus cases and imposition of certain restrictions by various state governments.
- The steps have been taken to address wage related grievances of workers and to mitigate the problems of migrant workers.
- **Secretary of Labour and Employment Ministry, Apurva Chandra** said, this facility was launched in April last year and it is revived again to resolve the issues of migrant workers.
- The Ministry has informed that the aggrieved workers can access these **control rooms through email, mobile and whatsapp**.
- The functioning of all 20 call centers is being monitored and supervised by the **Chief Labour Commissioner** on a daily basis.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Haiti PM Joseph Jouthe resigned

- **Haitian Prime Minister Joseph Jouthe** has **resigned** as the country faces a **spike in killings and kidnappings and prepares for an upcoming constitutional referendum** and general election later this year.
- He has served as the **Prime Minister since March 2020**.
- He did not give an explanation for his resignation.
- Jouthe previously had tried to submit his resignation, but **President Jovenel Moïse** at the time had rejected it.

- This time, **Moïse** accepted it and **nominated Claude Joseph** as **Haiti's new Prime Minister**.
- The President tweeted that Jouthe's resignation will make it possible to address the glaring problem of insecurity and continue discussions with the aim of reaching the consensus necessary for the political and institutional stability of the country.
- Haiti has seen eight Prime Ministers since 2015.

Bui Thanh Son became new Foreign Minister of Vietnam

- **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar** congratulated **Foreign Minister of Vietnam Bui Thanh Son** on his recent appointment.
- Deputy Foreign Minister and seasoned diplomat Bui Thanh Son was appointed foreign minister
- During the telephonic conversation, both Ministers discussed development of the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** and implementation of the Plan of Action.
- They recognised the convergence of **India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and ASEAN's Indo-Pacific outlook**.
- The Ministers also discussed the development partnership, economic engagements and health cooperation.
- Dr Jaishankar said, India and Vietnam will coordinate closely in multilateral forums and consult regularly on regional issues.

Australia opens travel bubble with New Zealand – first time in more than a year.

- Tearful reunions filled Auckland airport as **Australia** opened the travel **bubble with New Zealand** for the first time in more than a year.
- The long-awaited **Australia-New Zealand travel bubble means visitors no longer need to quarantine on arrival**.
- Thousands of passengers were booked to fly between the two nations.
- Both countries have contained COVID outbreaks and kept infection rates low, largely due to tight restrictions.

About Australia:

- **Prime minister:** Scott Morrison
- **Capital:** Canberra
- **Currency:** Australian dollar

About New Zealand:

- **Prime minister:** Jacinda Ardern
- **Capital:** Wellington
- **Currency:** New Zealand dollar

Italy initiates First ever mega Food Park & Food processing unit in India

- **Italy** has launched its **first ever mega food park project in India**, comprising of food processing facilities, in a bid to further strengthen ties between the two nations.

- The pilot project named “**The Mega Food Park**” was launched virtually on April 17, 2021 at **Fanidhar Mega Food Park, in Gujarat**.
- The project will develop a synergy between agriculture and industry of both countries, besides focusing on the research and development of newer, efficient technologies in the sector.

About Italy:

- **Capital:** Rome
- **Currency:** Euro
- **President:** Sergio Mattarella

India, US to correlate efforts for stability in Afghanistan

- **India and the US** will coordinate their efforts for **stability in Afghanistan**.
- **US State Department spokesperson Ned Price** said that **External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar** and his **US counterpart Anthony Blinken** have agreed that the two nations will coordinate on efforts to promote stability in Afghanistan.
- Washington and NATO have announced to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan.
- Price said Mr Blinken spoke to Dr Jaishankar to reaffirm the importance of the US-India relationship and cooperation on regional security issues.
- State Department spokesperson said, the two leaders agreed on close and frequent coordination in support of a lasting peace and development for the **people of Afghanistan**.
- Other issues discussed between the two leaders include the restoration of democracy in Myanmar, Covid-19 and climate change, for which President Joe Biden is convening a global summit.
- Dr Jaishankar said that their conversation covered recent developments in India’s immediate and extended neighbourhood, health cooperation and UNSC agenda.

India-EU Leaders’ Meeting in virtual format scheduled on May 8th

- The **India-EU Leaders’ Meeting** will be held in a virtual format on 8th of next month.
- **MEA Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi** said, in view of the COVID-19 situation, it has been decided to hold the meeting virtually in consultation with the EU and Portuguese leadership.
- He said, the **India-EU Leaders’ Meeting in the EU27 format**, the first time that such a meeting is being held, reflects the shared ambition of both sides to further deepen the **Strategic Partnership**.

Webinar-cum-Expo conducted between Ministry of Defence and Ministry of National Defence Vietnam

- A **webinar cum expo** was organized between the **Ministry of Defence and Ministry of National Defence Vietnam**.
- The **theme of the webinar was India – Vietnam Defence Cooperation**.
- **Various Indian companies** such as Bharat Electronics Limited, Bharat Forge, Economic Explosives Limited, Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers, Goa Shipyards Limited, HBL Power Systems, Larsen and Toubro Limited, Mahindra Defence, MKU, SMPP, Tata

Advanced Systems made company and product presentations. Thirty-seven companies set up virtual exhibition stalls in the expo.

- **Ambassador of India to Vietnam Pranay Verma**, Chief of General Department of Defence Industries Vietnam Lieutenant General **Tran Hong Minh** and other senior officials from both sides participated in the webinar.

India's demographic advantage to overtake China's by 2035, reported by China's central bank

- **China's demographic transition** owing particularly to its stricter birth policies has grappled it with the problem of ageing population and dwindling work-force.
- A report released by the **People's Bank of China (PBOC), China's central bank**, said that China should immediately liberalize its birth policies to tackle the problems of an ageing population and plan to compete economically with a demographically **young India and an immigration-friendly US**.
- In a detailed section on India, the report said the gap between the two countries is narrowing.
- As two big countries in Asia, China's economic growth has been faster than India's for a long time but in recent years, China's demographic dividend fading, India's economic growth has tended to approach **China's, the report said**.
- In a rare frank assessment, it added that China's ageing population and the declining birth rate will become more serious in 10 years while India's demographic structure will be further optimised.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING NEWS

Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC raise DRHP for IPO

- **Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC Ltd** has filed a draft red herring prospectus with the **Securities and Exchange Board of India** to raise funds via initial public offering.
- Aditya Birla Capital Ltd and Sun Life (India) AMC said that they will together sell a **5% stake** in their asset management joint venture – Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC Ltd.
- Aditya Birla Capital will sell up to 2.88 million shares held by it in the asset management business, while Sun Life (India) AMC will sell up to 36.03 million shares.
- Aditya Birla Capital holds **51% stake in the AMC**, and the remaining **49% is held by Sun Life**.

About Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC:

- Aditya Birla Sun Life Asset Management Company Ltd. **formerly known as Birla Sun Life Asset Management Company Limited** is an investment managing company registered under the Securities and Exchange Board of India.
- It is a **joint venture** between the Aditya Birla Group of India and the Sun Life Financial Inc. of Canada.
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai
- **Founded:** 1994

HDFC Bank decided to raise Rs 50,000 crore through bonds within 12 months

- **HDFC Bank** said it is planning to **raise up Rs 50,000 crore** during the **next 12 months through issuing bonds**.
- The bank's board of directors will take up the proposal at its meeting on April 17, it said in a regulatory filing.
- "The bank proposes to raise funds by issuing **perpetual debt instruments** (part of additional tier-I capital), tier-II capital bonds and long-term bonds (financing of infrastructure and affordable housing) up to a total amount of **Rs 50,000 crore** over the **period of the next 12 months through the private placement mode**," HDFC Bank said.
- Perpetual bonds carry no maturity date, so they may be treated as equity, not as debt.

Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation provides India's First Green Bonds

- The **Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation (GMC)** has issued **India's first Green Municipal bond**.
- The green bond was listed on the **BSE bond platform** on April 08, 2021.
- It opened for a subscription on March 31, 2021.
- GMC has raised **150 crore at a cost of 8.1 percent through the issuance of green bonds**.
- The money will be used to clean up dirty water by setting up a tertiary water treatment plant to benefit industries in Ghaziabad and supply piped water through water-meters to places like Sahibabad.

Tesla to start manufacturing in India: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari

- **Union Minister Nitin Gadkari** said **American electric car major Tesla** has a **golden opportunity** to set up its manufacturing facility in India given the country's thrust on e-vehicles.
- Tesla is already sourcing various auto components from Indian automakers and setting up base here would be economically viable for it, **Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Minister Gadkari** said while addressing a session at the **Raisina Dialogue**.
- "I will suggest them (Tesla) that it will be golden opportunity for them to start manufacturing facility in India because as the automobile components are concerned, already Tesla is taking a lot of components from the Indian manufacturers.
- So there will be availability," the minister said. At the same time, the Indian market will be good for Tesla also, he added.

Wipro declared robust hiring plan, skill-based bonuses for existing employees

- **Wipro** will embark on a **robust hiring plan (with a YoY growth in recruitments)**, and offer skill-based bonuses and salary increments for **senior employees after the IT services firm** adopted a new operating model last quarter with a more linear structure.
- **Wipro's top leadership** said during a press conference that the skill-based bonuses will be released as soon as this week and will be essentially for domains like **data analytics, cyber security and based on individual performances**.
- The salary increments, promotion cycles are likely to be effective June 2021.
- The company added a total of 14,826 employees during FY20-21, which included hiring **3,000 graduates** during the last quarter.

- The **Bengaluru-based IT services provider** reported the best fourth-quarter results in a decade, **CEO Thierry Delaporte** said, with the **net profit growing by 27.7% YoY to Rs 2972 crore**.
- The operating margin for Q4, FY21 saw an expansion by 344 basis points YoY at 21%.

Amazon planned to use USD 250 million fund, to focus on digitising small and medium businesses

- **E-commerce giant Amazon** announced a **USD 250 million (about Rs 1,873 crore) fund** that will focus on digitising small and medium businesses, and driving innovation in the areas of agri-tech and health-tech in India.
- **“Small and medium-sized businesses** are often the engine and the lifeblood of economies and I think it’s true in India as well.
- And we are very passionate about trying to enable acceleration of SMBs in fuelling innovation and the economy in India,” **Amazon Web Services CEO Andrew Jassy**
- Building on last year’s announcement, Amazon is announcing a new **USD 250 million Amazon Smbhav Venture Fund, Jassy**, who will take over as the CEO of Amazon Inc later this year, said during the second Amazon Smbhav event.

Eight applicants queued for universal bank, small finance bank licenses

- As many as **eight institutions and individuals have applied for on-tap licenses** to set up **universal banks and small finance banks**.
- UAE Exchange and Financial Services, REPCO Bank and Chaitanya India Fin Credit are among the **four applicants who have applied for a universal banking license**, while VSoft Technologies, Calicut City Service Co-operative Bank and Dvara Kshetriya Gramin Financial Services have **sought small finance bank license**.
- There are **two individual applicants**, who include **Pankaj Vaish** and others, who have shown interest in setting up universal banks, and **Akhil Kumar Gupta**, who have sought on-tap licenses for universal banks, the Reserve Bank said.
- This is not the first time that UAE Exchange is attempting a banking foray.

SoftBank set to invest up to \$500 m in Swiggy

- **Food delivery platform Swiggy** is set to raise up to **\$500 million from SoftBank Vision Fund 2** at a market valuation of nearly **\$5.5 billion**, according to reliable industry sources.
- The competition is getting fierce as people order more food online in India amid the second wave of COVID-19.
- Softbank is in “advanced stages of talks to invest “up to **\$400-\$500 million”** into the food delivery startup, sources told IANS.
- This funding will be additional to **\$800 million (about Rs 5,862 crore) Swiggy** raised earlier this month with **Falcon Edge Capital, Amansa Capital, Think Investments, Carmignac and Goldman Sachs joining as new investors**.
- Swiggy was valued at \$3.7 billion when it raised funds in February last year.

Indian pharma exports raise up at 18% to 24.44 billion dollars in FY 21

- **India’s pharma exports jumped over 18 percent to 24.4 billion dollars** during the last financial year in comparison to the 2020 fiscal year.

- According to the Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India data, North America was the largest exporting region for Indian pharmaceutical companies with **more than 34 percent exports to the region**.
- Country-wise, exports to Canada registered the **highest growth of 30 percent**, followed by South Africa at 28%.
- The US and Mexico also recorded a healthy growth of 12.6, and 21.4 percent respectively.

DoT gets Rs 2,307 cr from Jio, Airtel by assigning some spectrum

- **The Department of Telecom** successfully completed the assignment of frequencies to successful bidders of the **Spectrum Auction, 2021**.
- Frequency assignment letters were issued to successful bidders.
- The frequency assignment was accompanied by a frequency harmonization exercise, whereby spectrum blocks assigned to Telecom Service Providers, TSPs in the current spectrum auction have been made contiguous with the spectrum blocks already held by them, wherever possible, in various bands in different Licensed Service Areas, LSAs.
- **The harmonization of spectrum** was accomplished in 19 LSAs in 800 MHz band, 8 LSAs in 900 MHz band, 21 LSAs in 1800 MHz band, 3 LSAs in 2100 MHz band, and 16 LSAs in 2300 MHz band.
- The harmonization exercise facilitates more efficient utilization of **spectrum held by TSPs**, leading to **improved Quality of Service** for consumers.

Elon Musk's SpaceX bags \$2.89 billion moon lander contract, announced by NASA

- **NASA awarded billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk's space company SpaceX a \$2.9 billion contract to build a spacecraft** to bring astronauts to the moon as early as 2024, the agency said, picking it over **Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin** and defense contractor Dynetics Inc.
- Elon Musk's rocket company has been chosen to build the human lander that will drop those astronauts onto the lunar surface.
- It will do so as part of the **Artemis programme**, which not only aims to put the **first woman and person of colour on the Moon** – but now the first commercial lander, too.
- The contract is worth **\$2.89 billion to SpaceX**, and Nasa noted that total price is fixed and dependent on reaching certain milestones.

Cabinet nods ex-post facto approval for Govt amendments to Finance Bill, 2021

- The **Cabinet gave ex-post facto approval for the Government amendments to the Finance Bill, 2021** enacted on 28th March this year as the **Finance Act, 2021**.
- The amendments were essential to clarify and rationalize the proposals further and address stakeholders concerns arising out of amendments proposed in the Finance Bill.
- The **Government amendments to the Finance Bill, 2021** shall provide equity and inclusiveness to all the taxpayers by addressing stakeholders concerns **arising out of amendments proposed in the Bill**.
- The Government amendments to the Finance Bill, 2021 are tax proposals which shall generate timely revenue for the Government and streamline existing provisions by addressing grievances of the taxpayers.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENT AND RESIGNATION NEWS

NCAER appointed Poonam Gupta as its new Director General

- **World bank economist Poonam Gupta** has been appointed as the **new Director General** of the policy think tank “**National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)**”.
- Gupta is the **first woman director general** of NCAER.
- She would succeed **Shekhar Shah** who was appointed in 2011 and will complete his second five year term in early May 2021.
- Gupta is currently working as a lead economist at the **Washington DC-based World Bank**.
- **President of NCAER – Nandan Nilekani**.

Smriti Mathur appointed as Pega India Head of People Organization

- **Pegasystems**, a US-based software company with huge presence in **India**, has **appointed Smriti Mathur** as **Senior Director and Head of People Organisation in India**.
- Mathur will be responsible for ensuring a diverse and inclusive work culture at the software company, while driving a strong people strategy that **leverages technology** to meet business agility and outcomes.
- The Company has **some robust plans in the pipeline to acquire quality talent** for this year and Mathur will be spearheading these plans.
- She will provide strategic direction towards attracting, developing, and retaining the best talent in the industry and delivering digital innovation to the **world’s leading organizations**.

IDBI Bank appointed Deputy GM Jyothi Biju Nair as new company secretary

- **IDBI Bank** said it has appointed the company’s deputy general manager **Jyothi Biju Nair** as the new company secretary with effect from April 16.
- “The board of directors of the bank has, at its meeting held on **April 15, 2021**, approved the appointment of **Jyothi Biju Nair**, deputy general manager as company secretary and key managerial personnel of IDBI Bank with effect from **April 16, 2021**, in place of **Pawan Agrawal, CS**,” **IDBI Bank** said in a regulatory filing.
- It said that Agrawal would be joining **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** as company secretary with effect from April 16, 2021.
- LIC is the promoter of IDBI Bank.
- Nair is an associate member of the **Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI)**.

Krishna Prasad appointed as Group Editorial Officer of The hindu

- **The Hindu Group Publishing Pvt. Ltd. (THGPPL)**, publisher of **The Hindu, BusinessLine, Frontline and Sportstar**, has appointed **Krishna Prasad** as **Group Editorial Officer with effect from April 16, 2021**.
- He will lead and enable greater synergies across the different print publications and digital offerings, by coordinating content efforts across all publications of **The Hindu Group (THG)**.
- “**Krishna Prasad** as Group Editorial Officer will play a guiding role on content management and strategy across all the publications, working with the editors of the various

publications, digital editors, and the business and technical teams to drive THG's digital transformation," **Malini Parthasarthy, Chairperson, THGPPL**, said in a statement.

Ajai Seth took charge as new Economic Affairs Secretary

- **Ajai Seth** took charge as the **new Economic Affairs Secretary in the Finance Ministry**.
- He has been appointed in place of **Tarun Bajaj** who has been given **full time charge of Revenue Department**.
- Seth is a 1987 Batch Indian Administrative Service officer of Karnataka Cadre.
- Prior to coming to North Block, he was Managing Director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited.
- He will be in service till June 30, 2025

Delhi: Manish Sisodia appointed nodal minister for Covid management

- For the better management of the hospitals, the **AAP-led state government** has appointed Deputy **Chief Minister Manish Sisodia** as the '**Nodal Minister**' for Covid-19 situation in the national capital.
- "**Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister**, shall function as Nodal Minister for Covid management and shall be responsible for inter-ministerial coordination till further orders," an order issued by **Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Dev stated**.
- The government has also appointed **10 IAS officials as nodal officers** at state-run hospitals.
- Each will be the overall in-charge of the Covid-19 hospital assigned and will oversee its functioning.
- "The nodal officer shall also be responsible for efficient and effective handling of telephone lines/call centre and complaint centre pertaining to their respective hospitals," the order stated.

Shaukat Tareen as new finance minister in Pakistan cabinet reshuffle

- **Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan** has appointed **Shaukat Tareen** as the **new finance minister** of the country, the fourth to don the mantle, in another cabinet reshuffle, it was announced by his office.
- A banker by profession, **Tareen, 68**, served in the same capacity in the government of Pakistan Peoples Party (2009-10) for a short period before he decided to step down to raise capital for his Silk Bank.
- Tareen was facing corruption charges and had initially refused to accept the post until his name was cleared.
- It was not known if the **National Accountability Bureau (NAB)** dropped charges against him or not.
- He is a cousin of **Jehangir Tareen**, dubbed as sugar baron due to several sugar mills, who is an influential politician but is facing probe in the sugar scandal of the present government.

Sivasubramanian Ramann appointed as SIDBI Chairman and Managing Director

- **SIDBI** informed **Sivasubramanian Ramann** has taken charge as **Chairman and Managing Director of the bank**.

SALEM INSTITUTE OF BANKING

- The appointment is for a period of three years from April 19, 2021, SIDBI said in a release.
- **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** is the principal financial institution engaged in the promotion, financing, and development of micro, small & medium enterprises.
- Prior to this appointment, Ramann was serving as **Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of National E-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL)**, India's first information utility.
- Ramann is an **Indian Audit & Accounts Service (IA&AS)** officer of 1991 batch.

About SIDBI:

- **Headquarters:** Lucknow
- **Tagline:** "Aaayiye Ganga Nahaiye Aur Udyami Banker Jaayiye" (take a dip in Ganga and become entrepreneur)

Tata Consumer appointed Deepika Bhan as President, Packaged Foods

- **Tata Consumer Products (TCP)**, the **consumer products company** uniting the principal food and beverage interests of the Tata Group under one umbrella, announced the appointment of **Deepika Bhan** as the **Company's new President - Packaged Foods, India, effective April 27, 2021.**
- **Deepika joined TCP from Hindustan Unilever** where she was **Global Brand Director, Haircare for South Asia.**
- She has had varied stints in Sales, Customer Marketing, Media, Brand and Category/ P&L roles in her career during which she has led large teams across brands and portfolios.
- She has also worked with **PepsiCo and Tata Motors.**
- On this appointment, **Sunil D'Souza, MD & CEO, Tata Consumer Products**, said "We are delighted to welcome Deepika on board to lead our Foods portfolio.
- We aspire to build this business through agility, innovation and strengthening our brands, and Deepika will lead us in this exciting growth phase.

Miguel Díaz-Canel as the President of Cuba to succeed Raúl Castro

- **Miguel Díaz-Canel** will succeed **Raúl Castro** as the **Cuban Communist Party's first secretary, the most powerful position on the island.**
- He is the first person without the surname **Castro to run Cuba since the 1959 revolution.**
- **Díaz-Canel** is seen as loyal to the Castros and their economic model.
- Raúl Castro announced that he would step down from the key position of the party and hand over the leadership to a younger generation.
- At 60, Díaz-Canel is almost 30 years younger than his predecessor and will now hold Cuba's two most important positions, head of the party and president of the state.
- Eighty nine year old Castro had been in the post since 2011, when he took over from his older brother, Fidel Castro.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: AWARDS AND HONOURS

Dr Vajrala won Mana Telugu Tejam Award

- As part of **former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's centenary celebrations, Mana Telugu Tejam National Awards** were presented to people from various fields at the Birla Auditorium in Hyderabad on April 9.
- **Dr Vajrala VL Narasimha Rao** is now law officer of APCPDCL and APSPDCL.
- He is also a former member of District Consumer Forum, Ranga Reddy and Visakhapatnam.
- The **advocate was awarded Mana Telugu Tejam National Legendary Award in Legal Service.**
- The alumni of NMH School and advocates congratulated Dr Vajrala.

Lifetime Achievement Award received by Roberto Benigni

- Director Roberto Benigni will be receiving the **Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement** at the **78th Venice International Film Festival**, which runs from **September 1 to 11.**
- The organisers confirmed the news about the **two-time Oscar-winning actor-director.**
- "My heart is full of joy and gratitude.
- It is an immense honour to receive such an important recognition of my work from the Venice International Film Festival," Benigni said in a statement.
- The filmmaker had starred in and directed the holocaust comedy-drama film *Life Is Beautiful* (1997), for which he received the Academy Awards for Best Actor (the first for a non-English speaking male performance) and Best International Feature Film.
- He was last seen in **Matteo Garrone's live-action Pinocchio**, for which he **won a David di Donatello Award.**

Delhi educators in the fray bags Lead Z Awards

- **One Million for One Billion (1M1B) Foundation**, a United Nations accredited **not-for-profit organization** is holding Lead Z Teacher Awards in July for educators across India who made extraordinary efforts to provide quality education during the pandemic.
- **1M1B had received 1,000 applications**, out of which, 100 teachers were selected; four educators being from Delhi.
- The final 10 winners will get the opportunity to showcase their work at the sixth edition of the **1M1B Activate Impact Summit** scheduled at **United Nations, New York in December 2021.**
- **Manav Subodh**, while noting that 1M1B had worked with over **10,000 teachers** on programmes such as AI and digital creativity, says, "In March 2020, overnight the teachers were asked to change their teaching methods, go online, and expected to keep the students engaged in the new virtual classrooms.

Moscow International Film Festival: Marathi Film 'Puglya' bags Best Foreign Language Feature award

- The Marathi film "Puglya" has won the **Best Foreign Language Feature** award at **Moscow International Film Festival, 2021.**
- The film Puglya has been **directed and produced by Vinod Sam Peter** under the banner Abraham Films.

- So far, this film has won over 45 awards and recognitions at various international film festivals.
- The film is yet to be released in India.

Six firms for investment deals selects by Indywood Startup Awards 2021

- Six firms for investment deals selects by Indywood Startup Awards 2021
- These include **education startup**(Futuristic Skill Training Provider) – RobotGuru Education Technologies Pvt Ltd; **technology startup** (Advanced Marine Technology Provider) – EyeROV (IROV Technologies Private Limited); **social impact startup** – AllAbout Innovations (Wolf), **innovative startup**– iBoson Improvements Non-public Restricted; **promising startup** (e-commerce platform for do-it-yourself manufacturers) – Garga M-Commerce, and **schooling startup** (On-line Educating Resolution Supplier) – Tutorhow Scientific Edutech Pvt Ltd.
- As many as 20 startups have been recognized and honoured on the maiden version of **Indywood Startup Awards 2021, organized by Aries Worldwide Maritime Analysis Institute** powered by Indywood Billionaires Membership.
- **Indywood Billionaires Membership startup awards 2021** present enterprise collaboration alternatives to excellent startups that construct modern merchandise and options and have excessive potential to generate wealth, employment and show measurable social influence.
- In addition to providing organizations an opportunity to pitch their merchandise in the entrance of traders, AIMRI would additionally open incubation prospects for deserving tasks.

FICCI HR score 2021 Awards conferred

- **FICCI Tamil Nadu State Council in association with IIM-Trichy** hosted the first-ever **Awards ceremony** which felicitated the **HR Managers** and the team who had excelled in their fields.
- The event saw the participation from hundreds of companies and the winners were announced.
- **Awards were given for** SME Best HR Practices, SME Best HR Leader, Large Corporates Best HR Executive, Large Corporates Best HR Manager, Large Corporates Best HR Leader, Large Corporates Best HR Practices (Manufacturing), Large Corporates Best HR Practices (Healthcare Services), Large Corporates Best HR Practices (State- run PSU), Large Corporates Best HR Practices (IT & ITeS), Corporates Best HR Practices (Banking) and Lifetime Achievement Award.

Bizwoman Rumana Sinha Sehgal won humanitarian award

- Software-engineer turned social entrepreneur, **Rumana Sinha Sehgal** has been awarded the prestigious '**Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award 2021**' by the **Diplomatic Mission Global Peace** earlier this month.
- The proud Hyderabad is also the recipient of the **Nationwide Award -under 50-Business Leader 2021** for social entrepreneurship by Business Mint.
- At the **Influencer Summit** in January this year, she also received the '**International Influencer of the year 2021**'.
- The ceremonies were held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Rumana says: “My work has been recognized in the fields of developing innovative and functional **‘green’ products** by recycling varied materials and creative use of non-biodegradable materials, thus enhancing their useful life.”

Railway Minister declared Rs 50,000 award for Mayur Shelke for exemplary act of bravery

- **Railway Minister Piyush Goyal** has announced a **50 thousand rupees award for Mayur Shelke** for exemplary acts of bravery.
- On the 19th of this month, Mayur showed exceptional courage in saving a precious life by rescuing a child who had slipped and fallen on the tracks from the platform.
- **Mayur Shelke** in absolute disregard of **his own life rescued the child by running in front of the oncoming train** and lifted the child to safety by placing him on the platform.
- Mayur Shelke works as a **Pointsman at Vangni Railway station** in Mumbai Division of Central Railway.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: MOU's AND AGREEMENTS

Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog jointly signed an agreement with Dassault Systemes Foundation

- **Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog** signed an agreement with **Dassault Systemes Foundation** to jointly work towards providing a **digitally rich ecosystem of Innovation** among aspiring young minds across the country.
- The **Atal Tinkering Labs** has played a pivotal role in fostering creativity and imagination amongst school children.
- **Dassault Systemes Fondation** is dedicated to transform the future of education and research in India with **3D technologies**.
- The fondation will contribute to the Atal Tinkering Labs program in three broad areas – project based, self-paced learning content, hackathons and challenges and inter-country academia collaborations.
- Under this agreement, Dassault Systemes Fondation will design and organize innovative challenges, hackathons for Atal Tinkering Labs, promoting problem solving skills and innovation culture amongst students and teachers.

To raise farmers income, Agriculture Ministry signs MoU with Microsoft for a pilot project in 100 villages of six states

- **Union Agriculture Ministry** has signed an **MoU with Microsoft for a pilot project in 100 villages of six states**.
- This project will carry out various tasks for the betterment of farmers in the selected villages, which will enhance their income.
- This will also reduce the input costs for farmers and make farming easy.
- These states are **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh**.
- Microsoft will develop farmer interface for smart and well-organized agriculture, including post-harvest management and distribution.
- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** said, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's** idea of **digital agriculture** is now taking shape.

- He said, since taking over as the Prime Minister in 2014, Mr Modi has laid great emphasis on the use of modern technologies in farming sector to enhance farmers income.
- He said, the agricultural economy is the backbone of the country and any loss to agriculture is a loss for the country.
- Mr Tomar said, the agriculture sector has contributed positively to the country's economy even in adverse conditions like Corona epidemic.

Oberoi Group and EESL signed an MoU

- **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)**, a joint venture of PSUs under the **Ministry of Power**, announced it has signed a **MoU** with **The Oberoi Group** to augment its sustainability initiatives.
- EESL said that it will assist The Oberoi Group in implementing **several energy-efficient initiatives**, including clean energy systems across its properties through its **Building Energy Efficiency Program (BEEP)**.
- These initiatives will help reduce the group's overall carbon footprint and strengthen its energy conservation efforts, the company said.

Facebook partners CleanMax to make 100% renewable energy in India

- **Facebook** is partnering with Mumbai-based **clean energy** company, **CleanMax**, to set up 32 megawatts (MW) wind **power** project in
- While **CleanMax** will own and operate the project, **Facebook** will buy **power** off the grid via environmental attribute certificates.

India and France Inks Agreement for cooperation on Gaganyaan Mission

- **Indian space agency, ISRO** has signed an agreement with the space agency of **France CNES** for cooperation in its **first human space mission, Gaganyaan**.
- Under the agreement, CNES will provide equipment developed by it, tested and still operating aboard the **International Space Station (ISS)** to Indian crews.
- It will also supply fireproof carry bags made in France to shield equipment from shocks and radiation.
- **CNES** will train Indian flight physicians and **CAPCOM mission control** teams at French facilities.

Indian Oil make partnership with Consumerfed for 5 kg LPG cylinders sales

- The **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** launched the sale of a **free trade licence (FTL)** 5-kg LPG cylinders at the M/s Pilot Service Station (IOCL petrol bunk) on the Bandar Road.
- IOCL (Vijayawada Division) **LPG Senior Manager V.V.S. Chakravarthy** launched the sale.
- Petrol bunk managing partner M.V.V. Satyanarayana said the cost of the cylinder including gas has been fixed at **1441.50**.
- The cylinders would be sold at the station round the clock.
- The cylinders can be purchased without submitting any proof of identity, **Satyanarayana** said.
- Petrol bunk managing partner K. Venkatappaiah, IOCL sales officer (LPG) G.V.V. Mukteswara Rao, sales officer S. Prabhu Sunder, Indane Gas distributor Lokesh,

Vijayawada Press Club president N. Chalapathi Rao and others were present on the occasion.

India and Germany sign agreement for Technical Cooperation on Cities combating plastic entering the marine environment

- **The Government of India and Germany** have signed an agreement for **Technical Cooperation** in enhancing practices to prevent plastic entering the marine environment on April 19, 2021, at a virtual ceremony in New Delhi.
- The project titled '**Cities Combating Plastic Entering the Marine Environment**' will be implemented for a period of three and a half years.
- The outcome of the project is completely in line with the **objectives** of **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban** focusing on sustainable solid waste management and Prime Minister Modi's vision to phase out single use plastic by 2022.
- The agreement was signed between the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**, Government of India and **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH India** on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.
- It will be undertaken at the national level (at MoHUA), select states (Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands) and in the cities of Kanpur, Kochi and Port Blair.

Cabinet approved MoU between ICAI and CA ANZ

- The **Cabinet approved** a fresh **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between the **Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)** and **Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, (CA ANZ)**.
- It intends to **develop mutually beneficial relationships** in the best interest of members, students and their organizations and is expected to provide an opportunity to the **ICAI members to expand their professional horizons** and to **foster working relations** between the two accounting institutes.
- The two accountancy institutes will have an opportunity to play the leadership role in addressing new challenges facing the profession in a globalized environment.
- The engagement between the **two Institutes** is expected to result in greater employment opportunities for Indian Chartered Accountants and also greater remittances back to India.
- The MoU provides for mutual recognition of qualification of members of other bodies, who have achieved membership by completing the Examination, professional program and practical experience membership requirements of the two parties.

Cabinet approved MoU between CCI and CADE

- Cabinet approved the **MoU between Competition Commission of India (CCI) and Administrative Council for Economic Defense of Brazil, (CADE)**.
- **Section 18 of the Competition Act, 2002** permits CCI to enter into any Memorandum or arrangement with any agency of any foreign country for the purpose of discharging its duties or performing its functions under the Act.
- CCI has entered into the MoUs with the **Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice of USA**, Director General Competition of European Union, Federal Antimonopoly

Service of Russia, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Competition Bureau of Canada and BRICS Competition Authorities.

Cabinet nods ex post facto approval to MoU between DG of Trade Remedies, India and the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission

- The Cabinet gave ex post facto approval to the **Memorandum of Understanding MoU between the Director General of Trade Remedies, India and the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission** on the establishment of a framework of cooperation in the area of trade remedial measures signed on 27th of last month at Dhaka.
- The **primary objective of the MoU** is to promote cooperation between the two countries in the area of **Trade Remedies**, covering the broad activities related to exchange of information, undertaking capacity building activities and activities in accordance with various provisions of **World Trade Organization** in the area of anti-dumping, countervailing and safeguard measures in bilateral trade.
- The MoU seeks to foster better cooperation between the **relevant authorities of both the countries** so as to discourage unfair trade practices and promote rule based bilateral trading.

CURRENT AFFAIRS : DEFENCE NEWS

Eighth India-Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Khanjar' Begins

- On April 16, 2021, The **8th India-Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Khanjar'** was inaugurated at the Special Forces Brigade of **National Guards of Kyrgyz Republic in Bishkek**.
- This is a **two-week military exercise** in Bishkek with a focus on counter-terror drills.
- It was **Initiated first in 2011**, the **two-week long exercise focuses on high-altitude, mountains and counter-extremism**.
- the Indian contingent for the Exercise and felicitated their role as a bridge in **promoting shared mountain and nomadic-heritage of the two peoples**.
- A ceremonial parade graced the occasion along with a display of equipment and weapons and a visit to the training arena and barracks.

Note :

- In **2018, India and Kyrgyzstan signed four agreements**, including one to **boost defence cooperation and hold annual joint military exercises**.
- The two countries had agreed to expeditiously consider signing an agreement on **"combating international terrorism and other crimes"**.

About Kyrgyzstan :

- Capital: **Bishkek**
- President: **Sadyr Japarov**
- Currency: **Kyrgyzstani som**

About India :

- President: **Ram Nath Kovind**
- Capital: **New Delhi**
- Prime minister: **Narendra Modi**

CURRENT AFFAIRS : ACQUISITIONS & MERGERS

CCI approves acquisition of 89.6% stake in Gangavaram port by Adani Ports

- On April 13, 2021, **The Competition Commission of India (CCI)** approved billionaire **Gautam Adani-controlled Adani Ports and Special Economic Zones Ltd's** acquisition of **6%** stake in Gangavaram Port Ltd.
- It was under **Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002**.
- Adani Ports and SEZ had announced the acquisition of **58.1%** stake in the port located in the northern part of Andhra Pradesh, from **V.S. Raju and family for Rs.3,604 crore**.
- Adani Ports had also announced the acquisition of **Warburg Pincus's 31.5% stake in Gangavaram**.

About Gangavaram Port :

- **Gangavaram Port** is the **second-largest non-major port** in Andhra Pradesh with a **64 MMT** capacity established under a concession from the state government that extends till **2059**.

About APSEZ :

- APSEZ is an integrated port infrastructure services provider currently present across 11 domestic ports in six **maritime states of Gujarat, Goa, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Odisha**.
- CEO: **Karan Adani**
- Founder: **Gautam Adani**
- Founded: **26 April 2016**
- Headquarters: **India**

About Competition Commission of India (CCI) :

- Founded: **14 October 2003**
- Headquarters: **New Delhi**
- First executive: **Dhanendra Kumar**

Flipkart acquired Cleartrip

- **Indian e-commerce company, Flipkart** announced that it will be **acquiring Cleartrip**, an **online travel technology company**.
- The e-commerce made the announcement that it will acquire **100% of Cleartrip's shareholding**, as the company further enhances its investments to strengthen its **digital commerce offerings for customers**.
- Under the terms of the agreement, **Cleartrip operations** will be **acquired by Flipkart**.

- However, Cleartrip will continue to operate as a separate brand, retaining all employees while working closely with **Flipkart to further develop technology solutions** which will be focused on making travel easier for customers.
- The deal closing is still subject to applicable regulatory approvals, according to Flipkart.

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan chairs ICMR's One Health Symposium

- On April 12, 2021, **Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare** chaired ICMR's International Symposium titled '**One Health in India: Research informing biosafety, preparedness and response**' through video conference.
- He launched a special **issue of ICMR's Indian Journal of Medical Research** which discusses the One Health approach, corroborating multi sectoral research informing regarding biosafety, preparedness and response and has original articles, viewpoints, perspectives and reviews from the eminent experts in the field.
- The Commission's secretariat will be hosted by ICMR and will also be supported by the **National One Health Institute, which will be located in Nagpur.**

Infant, Toddler and Caregiver Training and Capacity Building Programme Launched

- On **April 13, 2021**, The '**Infant Toddler and Caregiver-friendly Neighbourhoods (ITCN) Training and Capacity Building Programme**' was launched.
- It was launched virtually by the **National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)** in partnership with **Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF)**.

Purpose :

- The Programme is designed to **help build capacities of city officials and young professionals** for developing **young children and family-friendly neighbourhoods within cities** in India.
- Under the programme, city officials and young professionals are proposed to be skilled through **certified training and capacity building modules.**

Objectives :

- embedding the learnings from **the inventory of knowledge developed by NIUA and BvLF** within the on-going and proposed **urban development initiatives at neighbourhood and city level.**
- **hand holding participants** to embed learnings into the various initiatives of the cities which take into account the everyday needs of young children and caregivers.

About NIUA :

- Establishment : **1976, New Delhi**
- **NIUA**, is a **premier Institute of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**, Government of India for research and capacity building for the **urban sector in India.**
- The Institution has been actively working on bringing forth key areas of concern for urban India to build the urban discourse at various urban scales and committed towards aligning

its efforts towards achieving **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** through all its initiatives and programs.

About Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) :

- **Founded: 1949**
- Headquarters location: **The Hague, Netherlands**

Bharti Airtel unit Nettle acquires 100% stake in OneWeb India

- Nettle Infrastructure Investments, a wholly-owned arm of **Bharti Airtel** has acquired **100% stake in OneWeb India Communications Pvt Ltd.**

About OneWeb :

- OneWeb was incorporated on **04 February 2020** to carry on business activities and **network services associated with the communications industry.**
- OneWeb is a **low earth orbit (LEO)** satellite communications operator, co-owned by **Bharti Global and the UK government.**
- Recently, OneWeb launched **36 satellites** by **Arianespace** from the **Vostochny cosmodrome** in **Russia**, paving the way for launching **high-speed satellite broadband services** in key global markets from late-2021, and in India by mid-2022.

CEO: Adrián Steckel

- Founder: **Greg Wyler**
- Founded: **2012**
- Headquarters location: **London, United Kingdom**

About Bharti Airtel :

- CEO: **Gopal Vittal**
- Founder: **Sunil Bharti Mittal**
- Founded: **7 July 1995, India**

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal chairs first meeting of National Startup Advisory Council

- On April 15, 2021, **Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal** today chaired the **first meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council.**
- It is constituted by the Department for **Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.**

Aim :

- To advise the Government on measures needed to build a **strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country.**
- This council will act as the guiding light for many **budding startup entrepreneurs** in India.

- **Piyush Goyal** mentioned this is the first time in our nation's history where such a **high-powered team of people from the private sector and the government have come together.**

Quess Corporation to acquire 30% stake in Conneqt from Tata Sons for Rs.208 crore

- **On April 16, 2021, Quess Corp**, a business services platform, will **acquire the remaining 30% equity stake in Conneqt Business Solutions from Tata Sons for Rs.208 crore.**
- **Conneqt will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Quess.**
- **Quess had acquired 51% of Conneqt in November 2017** and further increased its stake in Conneqt from 51% to 70% in May 2019 via infusion of primary capital.
- **Conneqt is a customer lifecycle management (CLM) and BPM services firm** that runs 21 delivery centers and employs over 29,000 people.

About Quess Corp :

- CEO and Managing Director: **Suraj Moraje**
- Headquarters: **Bengaluru**
- Founded: **September 2007**

About Conneqt Business Solutions :

- Headquarters : **Hyderabad, Telangana**
- CEO : **Arjun Ramaraju**

Government of Ghana to acquire 100% stake in AirtelTigo

- The government of **Ghana, Bharti Airtel and Millicom International Cellular S.A.** announced **execution of the definitive agreement for transfer of AirtelTigo.**
- The government of Ghana will **acquire 100% shares of AirtelTigo, along with all customers, assets and liabilities.**

Note :

Desire Decide Develop Achieve

- Earlier this month, **Bharti Airtel had entered into an agreement with Reliance Jio Infocomm to acquire the right to use spectrum in the 800-megahertz (MHz) band** in Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, and Mumbai circles through spectrum trading.

About AirtelTigo :

- Founded: **1990**
- Headquarters location: **Accra, Ghana**
- CEO : **Murthy Chaganti**

About Ghana :

- Capital: **Accra**
- Currency: **Ghanaian cedi**
- President: **Nana Akufo-Addo**

Government launches community mental-health digital platform MANAS

- The **Principal Scientific Adviser** to the Government of India **K VijayRaghavan** has virtually launched the **“MANAS” App** to promote wellbeing across age groups.

About MANAS :

- MANAS stands for **Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System**.
- MANAS was initiated by the Office of the **Principal Scientific Adviser** to the Government of India. It was jointly executed by **NIMHANS Bengaluru, AFMC Pune and C-DAC Bengaluru**.
- The app MANAS is developed under **the Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC)**, to promote wellbeing across age groups.

Features of MANAS :

- MANAS is a **comprehensive, scalable, and national digital wellbeing platform and an app** developed to augment mental well-being of Indian citizens.
- MANAS App integrates the **health and wellness efforts** of various government ministries, scientifically validated indigenous tools with **gamified interfaces developed/researched** by various National bodies and Research institutions.

NITI Aayog Launches Poshan Gyan’, a Digital Repository on Nutrition Information

- **On April 13, 2021**, NITI Aayog launched a **national digital repository on health and nutrition**, called **“Poshan Gyan**.
- It is a **national digital repository on health and nutrition**.
- **Poshan Gyan** has been unveiled by **NITI Aayog in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University**.
- The website can be accessed through : **<https://poshangan.niti.gov.in/>**

About Poshan Gyan :

- The repository introduces a unique **crowdsourcing feature** that allows anyone to submit communication material for inclusion on the website, followed by a review by a designated committee.
- The portal highlights the **“Theme of the Month” (in line with MoHFWandMoWCD guidelines to promote key topics)**.
- The Poshan Gyan repository was conceptualized as a resource, enabling search of communication materials on **14 thematic areas of health and nutrition** across diverse languages, media types, target audiences and sources.
- Content for the repository was sourced from the **Ministries of Health and Family Welfare and Women and Child Development and developmental organizations**.
- The website provides an **intuitive interface (multi-parametric search, multiple downloads at a point in time, easy sharing of materials via social media and easy viewing on any type of smartphone)**.

- It also provides links to other important sites and resources, such as **the webpages of MoHFW, MoWCD, NITI Aayog, AnemiaMukt Bharat, EatRightIndia and others.**

About NITI Aayog :

- Formed: **1 January 2015**
- Headquarters: **New Delhi**
- Chairperson: **Narendra Modi**
- CEO : **Amitabh Kant**

RBL Bank & Mastercard partner to launch “Pay by Bank App “

- On April 15, **RBL Bank and Mastercard revealed their partnership to introduce the Pay by Bank App, a mobile-based consumer-friendly payment solution** that will be the first of its kind in India.
- It is a first-of-its-kind mobile-based customer-friendly payment solution, launched to suit the **growing demand for digital, contactless payments** to ensure social distancing norms amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Through this RBL Bank account holders will be able to make **contactless transactions** across the world through their **mobile banking application both in-store and online.**
- The payment application includes **bill payments and personal payments via the mobile banking application.**

About RBL Bank :

- CEO : **Vishwavir Ahuja**
- Founded: **August 1943**
- Headquarters: **Mumbai**

About Mastercard :

- CEO: **Michael Miebach (1 Jan 2021-)**
- Headquarters: **Purchase, Harrison, New York, United States**
- Founded: **16 December 1966, United States**

CURRENT AFFAIRS : SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Agri Minister Narendra Singh Tomar Launches National Nursery Portal

- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** launched a ‘**National Nursery Portal**’ to connect nursery operators with consumers.
- The **National Nursery Portal**, developed by the **National Horticulture Board.**
- It will help consumers to **connect with nurseries** and get information about the availability and prices of quality planting material.
- It will also help **nursery operators in assessing market demand for their products.**

Secretary MeitY Shri Ajay Prakash Sawhney inaugurates three new initiatives of NIXI

- On April 15, 2021, **Ajay Prakash Sawhney, IAS, Secretary Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) & Chairman NIXI** inaugurated three path breaking initiatives for **National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)**.

Three Initiatives are :

- IP Guru,
- NIXI Academy
- NIXI-IP-INDEX

About IP Guru :

- The IP Guru is a group to **extend support to all the Indian entities** finding it technically challenging to migrate and adopt **Internet Protocol version, IPv6**.
- The group will help in **identifying and hiring agencies** that will help end customers by providing necessary **technical support to adopt IPv6**.

About NIXI Academy :

- It has been created to **educate technical and non-technical people** in India about technologies.

About NIXI-IP-INDEX portal :

- It has been launched to showcase **IPv6 adoption rate in India and across the world**.

About NIXI :

- **National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)** is a **not-for-profit organization (section 8 of the Companies Act 2013)** working since 2003 for spreading the **internet infrastructure to the citizens of India**

Education Minister launches “World 1st affordable and long-lasting hygiene product DuroKea Series

- Union Minister of Education **Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’** launched “**World 1st affordable and long-lasting hygiene product DuroKea Series Virtually**”.
- It was **developed by IIT Hyderabad researchers**.
- IIT Hyderabad has developed **innovative DuroKea long-lasting technologies to combat COVID-19 virus spreading**.

Research Team :

- This is a **highly effective and affordable research innovation from IIT Hyderabad**.
- It was developed by a team led by Dr. Jyotsnendu Giri, Department of Biomedical Engineering, IIT Hyderabad. Dr. Sunil Kumar Yadava, Dr. Qasim M, Ms. Meenakshi Chauhan, and Ms. Ruby Singh, Ms. SuparnaBasu, Ms. Uzma Hasan, Mr. Jayakkumar and Dr. PurandhiRoopmani has a common vision with this innovation.

- DuroKea antimicrobial technology starts at Rs. 189, kills 99.99% of germs instantly and leaves behind the long-lasting protective nanoscale coating up to 35 days till next wash.
- The unique property of DuroKea range is to ensure instant killing (within 60 sec) and prolonged protection which is an immense necessity during this current pandemic situation.

Iran launches advanced IR-6 uranium enrichment centrifuges

- **On April 10, 2021, Iran celebrated its National Day of Nuclear Technology**, with an event held simultaneously in **Tehran** and in nuclear sites in different Iranian cities, in which **advanced IR-6 centrifuges started operating**.
- **Iranian President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated the 164 IR-6 semi-industrial centrifuges** were injected with gas and became fully operational at Iran's uranium enrichment plant in Natanz, and 30 IR-6S centrifuges entered the first phase of gas injection at the same plant.
- The manufacturing and assembly of **the first prototype of IR-9S and IR-9-1B centrifuges, currently under mechanical testing**.
- Under the 2015 nuclear agreement, formally known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran is restricted to use only a number of uranium enrichment centrifuges of first generation (IR-1) until year 2025.

About Iran :

- Capital: **Tehran**
- Currency: **Iranian rial**
- President: **Hassan Rouhani**

DRDO develops SpO2 based Supplemental Oxygen Delivery System

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed SpO2 (Blood Oxygen Saturation) supplemental Oxygen Delivery System for soldiers posted at extreme high-altitude areas.**
- It was **Developed by Defence Bioengineering & ElectroMedical Laboratory (DEBEL), Bengaluru of DRDO.**
- The system delivers supplemental oxygen based on the SpO2 levels and prevents the person from sinking into a state of Hypoxia.
- **This automatic system can also prove to be a boon during the current Covid-19 situation.**
- Since the system is indigenously developed for operation in field conditions, it is unique with its dual qualities of being robust & cheap and is already in bulk production with the industry.
- With its SpO2 availability and simple to use facility by a common person, the system shall greatly reduce the workload and exposure time of doctors and paramedics to monitor the SpO2 levels of the patient.

About DRDO :

- Founded: **1958**
- Headquarters: **DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi**

- Chairman : **Satheesh Reddy**

About Defence Bioengineering & ElectroMedical Laboratory (DEBEL) :

- Founded: **1982**
- Director: **Manimozhi Theodore**
- Location: **Bangalore, Karnataka**

CURRENT AFFAIRS : RANKING & INDEX

Facebook-EIU : India Ranked 49th In World Internet Inclusion Index 2021

- The **Economist Intelligence Unit(EIU)**, in **partnership with Facebook**, has released the **Inclusive Internet Index 2021**.
- The index measures the **extent to which the internet is available and affordable by region, and highlights additional insight into how people around the world are using the web.**
- **India is tied with Thailand in 49th** place this year on the scores of internet availability.
- The '**Inclusive Internet Index**' surveyed **120 countries**, representing **98 percent of global GDP** and **96 percent of global population.**

The overall Index score is based on four parameters, which are:

- Availability
- Affordability
- Relevance
- Readiness

The **aim** of the Inclusive Internet Index is to **provide researchers and policymakers with the information they need to enable users to benefit from the Internet**, irrespective of their age, gender, location or background.

Top 5 Countries

- Sweden
- United States
- Spain
- Australia
- Hong Kong

About Facebook :

- Founded: **February 2004, Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States**
- Headquarters: **Menlo Park, California, United States**
- CTO: **Mike Schroepfer**

About EIU :

- Headquarters location: **London, United Kingdom**
- Founded: **1946**

World Press Freedom Index 2021 : Norway Tops , India Ranks 142

- **On April 20, 2021**, In the latest **World Press Freedom Index 2021**, **India** was placed at **142nd position among 180 countries**.
- The World Press Freedom Index 2021 **published by the international journalism not-for profit body, Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**.
- The index **to evaluate the press freedom situation in 180 countries and territories**.
- In **2020 Index India is ranked 142 Position**.
- In **2021 Norway is ranked number 1 in the index**, followed by Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Costa Rica.
- India's neighbour Pakistan ranks at 145.
- At the bottom of the index is Eritrea, with North Korea, Turkmenistan and China preceding it.

About Reporters Without Borders (RSF) :

- Headquarters: **Paris, France**
- Director General: **Christophe Deloire**
- Founded: **1985, Montpellier, France**
- Founders: **Robert Ménard, Rémy Loury, Jacques Molénat, Émilien Jubineau**

CURRENT AFFAIRS : BOOKS & AUTHORS

Suresh Raina's Memorier 'Believe Release in May 2021

- The **autobiography of Suresh Raina**, titled '**Believe - What Life and Cricket Taught Me**', is set to hit the **bookstands in May 2021**.
- It has been co-authored by Raina and sports author **Bharat Sundaresan**.
- It will be published by the **publishing house, Penguin India**.
- This book will be published in **May 2021**.

About the book :

- The book expected to follow **Raina's lightning-fast rise in the Indian cricket team** and the hardships that he encountered on the way to becoming a **record-breaking batsman**.
- The book should also help unwind the story of Raina's early days as a **budding cricketer in UP**.

PM Modi released 4 books related to Babasaheb Ambedkar

- On **April 14, 2021**, **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** will address the Association of Indian Universities' **95th Annual Meet and National Seminar of Vice-Chancellors through video conferencing**.
- He will also launch four books related to **Dr BR Ambedkar**
- It was authored by **Shri Kishor Makwana**.
- The event is being hosted by **Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad**.

Four books List :

- Ambedkar Jivan Darshan,
- Ambedkar Vyakti Darshan,
- Dr Ambedkar Rashtra Darshan, and
- Ambedkar Aayam Darshan

Children's Book Titled "The Christmas Pig" by J.K. Rowling

- **Harry Potter author JK Rowling** will release a **new children's book entitled The Christmas Pig.**
- It was **Published by Hachette Children's Group and Scholastic** in different territories.
- The Scottish author's latest book of the **55-year-old Scottish author will be released simultaneously in 20 different countries and multiple languages.**
- A fairy tale titled The Ickabog though that was her first children's book since the seventh and final instalment of Harry Potter in 2007.

About the book :

- It will **tell the story of a young boy named Jack, who goes to extreme lengths to find his stuffed toy pig, and is aimed at children of eight years and up.**

CURRENT AFFAIRS : SPORTS NEWS

Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Lizelle Lee win ICC Players of the Month for March 2021

- On **April 13, 2021, The International Cricket Council (ICC)** announced the winners of the **ICC Player of the Month Awards for March 2021.**
- In Men's Category, **ICC Men's Player of the Month : Bhuvneshwar Kumar**
- In the women's category, **ICC Women's Player of the Month for March : Lizelle Lee**

About ICC :

- Chairperson: **Greg Barclay**
- Deputy Chairman: **Imran Khwaja**
- CEO: **Manu Sawhney**
- Headquarters: **Dubai, United Arab Emirates**
- Founded: **15 June 1909**

Asian Wrestling Championships 2021: India clinches one Gold, two Bronze medals

- On April 16, 2021, **Olympics-bound Indian wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Anshu Malik clinched their maiden Asian Championship titles at Almaty, Kazakhstan.**
- It is being held from **April 13 to 18, 2021.**
- India has a rich haul of **seven medals from the women's event as the country won four gold, a silver and two bronze medals** in this edition.
- **Sarita Mor** clinched the **sole gold medal** for India by defending the **women's 59 kg title.**
- The 25-year-old wrestler from Haryana made a spectacular comeback in the final stages of her final bout with Mongolia's Shoovdor Baatarjav to score 9 straight points, taking the final score to 10-7.

- **Two other Indian women wrestlers-Seema Bisla (50kg) and Pooja (76kg) won one bronze medal each in their respective weight categories.**

In F1 Grand Prix 2021, Max Verstappen Wins Emilia Romagna

- **On April 18, 2021, Max Verstappen (Red Bull – Netherlands) won the Emilia Romagna F1 Grand Prix 2021.**
- It was **held in Imola, Italy.**
- This win is his first victory of the season.
- The **seven-time Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton finished second**, following the crash and sustaining damage involving Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas.
- **Lando Norris (McLaren – Great Britain) took third place.**
- **The race was the second round of the 2021 Formula One World Championship.**

Senior Asian Wrestling Championship – India Clinches 14 medal including 5 Gold, 3 Silver and Six Bronze at 2021

- **The 2021 Senior Asian Wrestling Championships was held from April 13 to 18, 2021 in Almaty, Kazakhstan**
- **India won 14 medals to stand at third spot** in the medal table.
- The medals include **5 Gold, 3 Silver & 6 Bronze Medals.**
- Iran and Kazakhstan topped the medal tally with 17 medals each.
- **The event was the 34th edition of the Asian Wrestling Championships.**

List of GOLD MEDAL Winners :

1. Ravi Kumar Dahiya – 57 kg Men's freestyle
2. Vinesh Phogat – 53 kg Women's freestyle
3. Anshu Malik – 57 kg Women's freestyle
4. Sarita Mor – 59 kg Women's freestyle
5. Divya Kakran – 72 kg Women's freestyle

List of SILVER MEDAL Winners :

1. Bajrang Punia – 65 kg Men's freestyle
2. Deepak Punia – 86 kg Men's freestyle
3. Sakshi Malik – 65 kg Women's freestyle

List of BRONZE MEDAL Winners :

1. Karan Mor – 70 kg Men's freestyle
2. Narsingh Yadav – 79 kg Men's freestyle
3. Sanjeet – 92 kg Men's freestyle
4. Satyawart Kadian – 97 kg Men's freestyle
5. Seema Bisla – 50 kg Women's freestyle
6. Pooja Sihag – 76 kg Women's freestyle

Stefanos Tsitsipas Wins Maiden Masters 1000 Crown In Monte-Carlo

- On April 18, 2021, the 2021 Rolex Monte Carlo Masters singles title, In Tennis, **Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece) beat Andrey Rublev (Russia)** in a straight-sets 6-3 6-3.
- Including this win, Tsitsipas has claimed the **first ATP Masters 1000 trophy of his career.**
- In Men's Double Event Winner is Nikola Mektić /Mate Pavic (Croatia) Beat Dan Evans / Neal Skupski, (United Kingdom) 6-3, 4-6, [10-7]

About Monte Carlo Masters :

- Monte Carlo Masters is a tennis tournament for male professional players and part of Masters 1000 events on the ATP Tour.
- Founded: 1897

CURRENT AFFAIRS: IMPORTANT DAYS

World Art Day – Observed on Apr 15

- **World Art Day** is celebrated globally on 15 April every year to promote the development, diffusion and enjoyment of art.
- The **first World Art Day** was held on **April 15th, 2012**, a date chosen in **honor of Leonardo da Vinci's birthday.**
- As a symbol of world peace, freedom of expression, tolerance and brotherhood, da Vinci is also a testament to the influence of the Fine Arts on other fields.
- This day is being celebrated all over the world to emphasize the importance of art that nurtures creativity, innovation and cultural diversity for all peoples across the globe.
- World Art Day is an international celebration of the fine arts which was **declared by the International Association of Art** in order to promote awareness of creative activity worldwide.

National Titanic Remembrance Day – Observed on Apr 15

- Each year on **April 15th, National Titanic Remembrance Day** is dedicated to the memory of the lives lost when the **Titanic sank** into the icy waters of the **North Atlantic Ocean in April 1912.**
- We remember the **more than 1,500 people** who died that day.

World Homeopathy Week – Observed on Apr 10 – Apr 16

- The World Homoeopathy Day is observed every year on **April 10** to commemorate the **Birthday of Dr. Hahnemann, the Founder of Homoeopathy.**
- The date of **10th April** was chosen to mark the start of this event as it is the **birthday of Dr Samuel Hahnemann, the German physician** who is credited with creating homeopathy.
- **World Homeopathy Awareness Week** is celebrated annually between **April 10th and April 16th.**
- This year, the **theme** of the celebration is **“Homeopathy- Roadmap for Integrative Medicine”.**

- It has been working towards strengthening education and infrastructure to promote the practice of homeopathy in the country.
- Organized by the World Homeopathy Awareness Organization, the week is a celebration of both homeopaths and those who have been healed with homeopathy.
- Homeopathy is a system of alternative medicine that uses small, highly diluted doses of natural substances to trigger the bodies own healing abilities.
- During the week, there are free public events held across the world, such as lectures, media interviews and free and reduced-price clinics.

World Voice Day – Observed on Apr 16

- **World Voice Day** is a worldwide annual event that takes place on **April 16** devoted to the celebration of the phenomenon of voice.
- The aim is to demonstrate the enormous importance of the voice in the daily lives of all people.
- The **theme** of 2021 is **ONE WORLD MANY VOICES**.
- **World Voice Day** is a global annual event dedicated to recognizing the boundless limits of the human voice.
- The mission is to share the excitement of the **voice phenomenon with people, scientists, and other funding bodies**.
- The day revolves around contributions made by head and neck surgeons as well as other health professionals who encourage the youth and elderly alike to assess their vocal health and take action to maintain good voice habits.
- Frequently, something as familiar as our voice becomes easily overlooked.
- World Voice Day reminds us to protect this vital tool we rely upon daily, so it remains with us throughout our lives.

World Haemophilia Day – Observed on Apr 17

- **World Haemophilia Day** is observed on **17 April every year to increase awareness** about **haemophilia disease** and other inherited bleeding disorders.
- In 1989, World Haemophilia Day was started by the World Federation of Haemophilia (WFH) in honour of WFH founder Frank Schnavel's birthday.
- The **theme** for the year 2021 World Hemophilia Day is '**Adapting to Change, sustaining care in a new world.**'
- This theme has been decided considering the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a major impact on people with a bleeding disorder and is it important for the world to stand together in this changing scenario.

World Heritage Day – Observed on Apr 18

- The **International Day for Monuments and Sites** also known as **World Heritage Day** is an international observance held on **18 April** each year around the world with different types of activities, including visits to **monuments and heritage sites, conferences, round tables and newspaper articles**.
- **Theme** for this year is '**Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures**'.
- Check here all you need to know about the day.
- **World Heritage Day** is observed every year on **April 18**, to preserve the human heritage and recognize the efforts of the organizations working for it.

- The day is dedicated to the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage through various activities undertaken by the **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)**.
- **Italy has the highest number of Unesco heritage sites in the world.**

UN Chinese Language Day – Observed on Apr 20

- **UN Chinese Language Day** is observed on **April 20**
- The event was **established by The UN Department of Public Information established the day in 2010** to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization.
- April 20 has also been chosen to pay tribute to Cangjie, a mythical figure who is presumed to have **invented Chinese characters about 5,000 years ago.**

National Civil Service Day – Observed on Apr 21

- The **Government of India chose April 21 as the National Civil Service Day** as on this day the country's first home minister, **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel** addressed the newly appointed Administrative Services Officers in 1947.
- The historic occasion took place at the Metcalf House in Delhi.
- During the British raj, **Warren Hastings** laid the foundation of civil service and **Charles Cornwallis** reformed, modernized, and rationalized it.
- Hence, **Charles Cornwallis** is known as **'the Father of civil service in India'**.
- Cornwallis introduced two divisions of the Indian Civil service.
- Following Lord Macaulay's Report of the Select Committee of British Parliament, the concept of a merit based modern **Civil Service in India was introduced in 1854.**
- The present-day all-India administrative services owe their origin to **Sardar Patel's** sagacity and thus he is regarded as **Father of modern All India Services.**

Administrative Professionals Day – Observed on Apr 21

- **Administrative Professionals Day** is a day observed on April 21 yearly in a small number of countries.
- It is not a public holiday in any of them.
- In some countries, it falls within **Administrative Professionals Week.**
- National Administrative Professionals' Day, also known as **Secretaries Day or Admin Day**, recognizes the professionals who keep an office running smoothly every day.

World Creativity and Innovation Day – Observed on Apr 21

- The **World Creativity and Innovation Day (#WCID)** is celebrated on **April 21 every year** to raise awareness about the importance of creativity and innovation in problem solving and encourage creative multidisciplinary thinking at the individual and group levels.
- The **United Nations recognized the day in April 2017.**
- The **first UN World Creativity and Innovation Day** was celebrated on April 21, 2018.
- The **World Creativity and Innovation Week** is observed from April 15-21.

CURRENT AFFAIRS : OBITUARIES

Eminent Historian Yogesh Praveen Passes Away

- Eminent Historian and an expert on Awadh Yogesh Praveen has Passed away.
- He was

About Yogesh Praveen :

- He was known as the **Encyclopedia of Lucknow**.
- Yogesh Praveen had a **deep knowledge of the culture and history of Avadh**, especially
- He wrote **more than 30 books on Awadhi culture and Lucknow** and contributed several articles in newspapers and magazines.
- The titles of his books like '**Dastan-e-Avadh**', '**Tajdare-Avadh**', '**Bahar-e-Avadh**', '**Gulistan-e-Avadh**', '**Doobta Avadh**', '**Dastan-e-Lucknow**' and '**Aapka Lucknow**' tell a long-lasting affair he had with the city.
- **Awarded Padma Shri in 2019.**

Hockey player Balbir Singh Junior passes away at 88

- **Balbir Singh Junior** who was a member of the **silver medal- winning 1958 Asian Games Indian hockey team** Passed away.
- He was

About Balbir Singh Junior :

- Balbir Singh Junior was born on **May 2, 1932**, at **Sansarpur in Jalandhar**
- He is also known as the **nursery of hockey players in India**.
- Singh started playing hockey when he was **six years old** and was **first selected to play for the Indian hockey team in 1951**.
- In **1962**, he **joined the Army as an emergency commissioned officer**.
- **Singh retired as a Major in 1984** and later settled in Chandigarh.

Former CBI Director Ranjit Sinha passes away

- On April 16, 2021, Former **CBI director Ranjit Sinha** passed away.
- He was
- He was a **1974 batch IPS officer of the Bihar cadre**.
- He earlier **headed the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and the Railway Protection Force**.
- Ranjit Sinha had also **headed the Railway Protection Force (RPF)**.
- He served at senior positions in the CBI in Patna and Delhi before his appointment as **CBI chief in 2012 for a two-year tenure**.

About CBI :

- Headquarters: **New Delhi**
- Motto: **Industry, Impartiality, Integrity**
- Founded: **1 April 1963**
- **Interim director, Director General : Praveen Sinha,**

About Indo-Tibetan Border Police :

- **Founded: 24 October 1962**
- **Headquarters: New Delhi, India**

Padma Shri Awardee & Noted Radiologist Kakarla Subba Rao passes away

- On April 16, 2021, **Renowned radiologist and former Director of Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences in Hyderabad Dr. Kakarla Subba Rao passed away.**

About Kakarla Subba Rao :

- Rao was born on **25 January, 1925.**
- He was the **founder president of Telugu Association of North America (TANA), an umbrella organisation for Telugu speaking people in the United States.**
- For his efforts to transform **NIMS into a super-speciality hospital**, Rao was its **first director between 1985 and 1990 and later between 1997 and 2004.**
- In recognition of his valuable contributions in the **field of medicine, the Government of India honoured him with a Padma Shri in 2000.**

Former Chief Election Commissioner G.V.G. Krishnamurthy passes away

- On April 14, 2021, **Former Chief Election Commissioner G.V.G. Krishnamurthy passed**
- He was **86.**
- He served as **Election Commissioner from October 1, 1993 to September 30, 1996.**
- His contributions particularly in strengthening laws and procedures of conducting elections will be long remembered by the Commission.
- Dr Krishnamurthy was also one of the **founding fathers of the Indian Society of International Law and personally supervised and ensured the construction of its edifice**, opposite the Supreme Court of India.

First CEO of Angel Broking , Vinay Agrawal, Passes away

- On **April 17, 2021, Vinay Agrawal, the Chief Executive Officer of Angel Broking, passed away.**
- He was **57.**
- Agrawal was the **first CEO of Angel Broking and was developing business strategies and strong analytical skills for the broking house.**

About Vinay Agarwal :

- Agrawal was a **Chartered Accountant by profession holding the executive position since 2015.**
- He had joined the **stock broking firm in the year 2000 as a consultant.**
- Agrawal is also the **Whole Time Director in the company and had 20 years of experience in fields like Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) domain** while also covering various aspects like finance & operations, business development, product development and e-broking.

Noted Tamil Comedy actor Vivek passes away

- **Famous Tamil film actor and Padma Shri awardee Vivek** passed away.
- He was 59.
- He is an incredible comedian, Vivek had entertained people of Tamil Nadu for over **three decades through his 200 plus films.**
- A **disciple of former President Abdul Kalam**, Vivek was involved in **afforestation and other social welfare activities.**

Achievements :

- The actor was awarded the **Padma Shri in 2009** for his **excellent work in Tamil cinema.**

Renowned Bangladeshi actor Kabori passes away

- On **April 17, 2021**, Renowned **Bangladeshi actor Sara Begum Kabori** passed away.
- She was 70 years old.
- she attained popularity and fame in **Bangla cinema with films like Sujon Sokhi, Sareng Bou, Shat Bhai Champa, Arun Varun Kiran Mala and Lalon Fokir**

Achievements :

- Sara Begum Kabori was honoured with the **National Film Award for her role in the film Sareng Bou in 1978.**
- She got the **lifetime achievement award in 2013.** She was also a **freedom fighter and former member of parliament.**
- Kabori was fondly known as the **'Mishti Meye', the 'Sweet Girl' of Bangladesh cinema** for her role in the films.

Indian Former football Olympian Ahmed Hussain passes away

- On **April 16, 2021**, **Former India international footballer Ahmed Hussain** Passed
- He was 89.
- He served as a **SAI coach until his retirement** while occasionally dabbling into officiating a few local matches in the **Garden City apart from the Stafford Cup, a national-level competition hosted in Bengaluru.**

About Ahmed Hussain :

- A **defender, Hussain was also a part of the Indian Olympics football team** that put on a **fantastic show in Melbourne (1956).**
- Ahmed also took part in the **1958 Asian Games in Tokyo, Japan, in which India finished fourth.**
- He was also part of the **Indian team that won the gold medal in 1951 Asian Games.**
- The footballer was incredibly talented and was an **integral part of the Hyderabad side which won the Santosh Trophy in 1956 and 1957.**

Well-Known Kannada Lexicographer, G Venkatasubbaiah, Passes away

- On April 19, 2021, G Venkatasubbaish, well-known Kannada lexicographer, passed away.
- He was 107.

About G Venkatasubbaiah :

- He had compiled 12 dictionaries.
- He also authored around 60 books.
- Professor G Venkatasubbaiah was also proficient in Kannada literature, poetry, essays and translations.
- He was commonly known as a **walking encyclopedia of Kannada language and culture, in his literary circles.**
- He took up the task of working on Kannada-to-Kannada dictionary as its chief editor after retiring from Vijaya College in 1973.

Achievements :

- For His literary works he got various awards, including the **Padma Shri in 2007, Pampa Award, Bhasha Samman by the Sahitya Akademi, Karnataka Rajyotsava Award and the Karnataka Sahitya Akademi Award.**

Former Union Minister Bachi Singh Rawat Passes away

- On April 18, 2021, Former Union minister and senior BJP leader Bachi Singh Rawat Passed away.
- He was 71.

About Bachi Singh Rawat :

- Bachi Singh Rawat was a **four-time MP from the Almora-Pithoragarh constituency in Uttarakhand**
- He had defeated former chief minister and Congress leader Harish Rawat thrice in consecutive elections.
- Rawat Served as the **Union minister of state for science and technology in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government.**

National Award-winning film-maker Sumitra Bhave passes away

- On April 19, 2021, Renowned 7-time National Award winner Marathi film-maker and writer Sumitra Bhave passed away.
- She was 78.
- Sumitra Bhave was popular as a **duo with filmmaker Sunil Sukthankar in Marathi cinema and Marathi theatre.**
- The duo of Sumitra and Sunil together directed several popular films like Doghi, Dahavi Fa, Vastupurush, Devrai, Badha, Ek Cup Chya, Samhita, Astu, Kaasav, among others.

Achievements :

- She made her **first short film “Bai ” in 1985 for Stress Vani.**
- This film made her the **first National Award for Best Non-Feature Film on Family Welfare (1986), followed by another short film “Paani” that got the National Award in 1988.**
- Sumitra Bhavé & Sunil Sukthankar both have won National Film Awards in Best Non-Feature Film on Family Welfare, Best Educational / Motivational / Instructional Film, Best Film on Other Social Issues, Best Feature Film categories.
- Among their other prominent films were “Kaasav” (2016) which bagged the National Award in 2017, “Aastu” (2013) which got a National Award.

Charles Geschke, Adobe co-founder and PDF developer , Passes away

- **On April 16, 2021,** Adobe founder who helped develop Portable Document Format (PDF) document & publishing software company **Adobe Inc Charles Geschke** passed away.
- He was 81.

About Charles Geschke :

- He **founded Adobe in 1982 with colleague John Warnock from Xerox.**
- He also helped in **developing the popular Portable Document Format (PDF).**
- He was **widely known as Chuck.**
- In 2009, President Barack Obama awarded Geschke and Warnock the National Medal of Technology.

About Adobe :

- Founders: **Charles Geschke, John Warnock**
- Founded: **December 1982, Mountain View, California, United States**
- CEO: **Shantanu Narayen**
- Headquarters: **San Jose, California, United States**

Former Reserve Bank governor Maidavolu Narasimham passes away

- **On April 20, 2021, Former Reserve Bank of India Governor Maidavolu Narasimham,** Passed away.
- He was 94.

About Maidavolu Narasimham :

- He was **famously known as the father of Indian banking reforms.**
- He was born in 1927 and hails from Mydavolu village of Guntur District in Andhra Pradesh.
- Narasimham was the **13th governor of RBI and he served as the central bank head from May 2, 1977 to November 30, 1977.**
- Prior to his appointment as governor he served as Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs.

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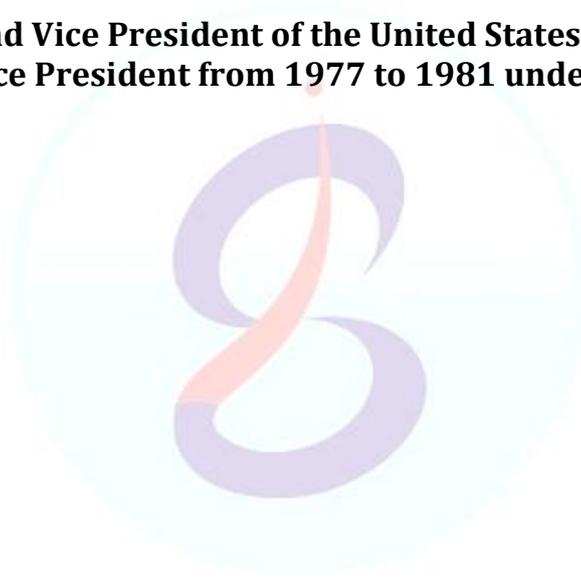
- Narasimham was the first and so far the only governor to be appointed from the Reserve Bank cadre, having joined the Bank as a Research Officer in the Economic Department.
- After his retirement as RBI governor, he served as **India's executive director at the World Bank and later at the International Monetary Fund (IMF)**.
- Narasimham also **served as secretary in the Ministry of Finance**.
- He also headed various committees including the one on the Financial System, 1991 and the Committee of Banking Sector Reforms, 1998.

Achievements :

- Narasimham was awarded Padma Vibhushan award in the year 2000.

Former US Vice-President Walter Mondale Passes aw

- **Walter F Mondale, the former vice-president and liberal leader** Passed away.
- He was 93.
- He **served as the 42nd Vice President of the United States**.
- Mondale served as **Vice President from 1977 to 1981 under President Jimmy Carter**.



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