

Awards and Honours

Recipient Name	Awards Name	Extra Information
Cyrus Poonawalla	Lokmanya Tilak National Award	Dr Cyrus Poonawalla, Chairman of the Pune-based vaccine maker Serum Institute of India (SII), has selected for the prestigious Lokmanya Tilak National Award for 2021.
Labhanshu Sharma	Bharat Kesari Wrestling Dangal 2021	20 years since the formation of Uttarakhand, Labhanshu has broken the drought and won the title of Bharat Kesari for the state.
Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project – Bhutan	Brunel Medal	Bhutan’s India-assisted Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project was conferred with the Brunel Medal awarded by the London-based Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE).
Mohammad Azam	National Youth Award	Mohammad Azam from Karimnagar district in Telangana has been awarded the National Youth Award recently by the Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur in Delhi for displaying exemplary leadership qualities.
Diksha Shinde	NASA’s MSI Fellowships Virtual Panel	A 14-year-old Indian girl from Maharashtra’s Aurangabad, Diksha Shinde has been selected as a panelist on NASA’s MSI Fellowships Virtual Panel. The panel meetings were held from July 12-16, 2021.

Appointments

Name	Designation	Extra Information
Deepak Das	Controller General of Accounts	Deepak Das has taken over as the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) on August 01, 2021. Prior to assuming charge of CGA, Mr Das served as the Principal Chief Controller of Accounts in the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).
Priyanka Chopra	Italian luxury brand Bvlgari - brand ambassador	She will support the Roman high jewellery house in amplifying the brand around the world, with a particular focus on themes of women empowerment, diversity and inclusion. Bvlgari is known for its gemstone jewellery, watches, fragrances, accessories and leather goods.
SN Ghormade	Vice Chief of the Naval Staff	Vice Admiral SN Ghormade has assumed charge as the Vice Chief of Naval Staff at a formal ceremony in New Delhi.
Min Aung Hlaing	Myanmar Military Chief - Prime Minister	He is also the Chairman of the State Administration Council (SAC) which has been performing the duties of the government in Myanmar, after the February 01, 2021 coup, which overthrew Aung San Suu Kyi's ruling party.
Justice V M Kanade	Lokayukta in Mumbai	Maharashtra Governor, Bhagat Singh Koshyari has approved the appointment of retired Bombay high court judge Justice V M Kanade as the new Lokayukta of Maharashtra, on the advice of the chief minister Uddhav Thackeray.
John Abraham	MotoGP Brand Ambassador - Eurosport India	John will be seen promoting MotoGP to a wider audience base in India as its face

		through Eurosport’s campaign – “MotoGP, Race Lagate Hai”.
MS Dhoni	First brand ambassador of HomeLane	As part of the partnership, Dhoni will own equity in HomeLane and will be the company’s first brand ambassador.
Kamlesh Kumar Pant	Chairman of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)	The pharmaceutical pricing agency was currently headed by IAS officer Shubhra Singh, who was appointed to the post in 2018. Singh has been repatriated to her cadre state Rajasthan, according to an order of the personnel ministry.
Rajkummar Rao	Cashify - Brand ambassador	The business has signed the actor to a multi-year deal. He will market the goods specifically for the smartphone buyback category across digital media channels through campaigns and promotional activities during this collaboration.
Mirabai Chanu	Amway – Brand ambassador	Direct selling FMCG firm Amway India has announced that it has appointed Olympian Saikhom Mirabai Chanu as the brand ambassador for Amway and its Nutrilite range of products.
Priyanka Chopra	MAMI film festival chairperson	The Mumbai Academy of Moving Image (MAMI) unveiled its plans for the coming year, edition and the change in leadership.
PR Sreejesh	Kerala adventure tourism - Brand ambassador	Sreejesh was a part of the Indian Hockey team that won the bronze medal at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic games. PR Sreejesh hails from Ernakulam, Kerala.
N K Singh	President of IEG Society	N K Singh, the Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission, has been

CURRENT AFFAIRS DAILY DIGEST – AUGUST 2021

		elected as the President of the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) Society during a meeting on August 16, 2021, IEG said in a statement.
Ismail Sabri Yaakob	Malaysia's new Prime Minister	Former Deputy Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob on August 21, 2021, was appointed as the new Prime Minister by Malaysia's King Al-Sultan Abdullah.
Nakul Chopra	Chief Executive Officer of BARC India	Former CEO Sunil Lulla has resigned to pursue his ambition as an entrepreneur. This announcement comes as Sunil Lulla has decided to resign from the position of CEO to pursue his entrepreneurial ambitions.
La Ganesan	Manipur Governor	The post was lying vacant after the retirement of Najma Heptulla on August 10, 2021. Since then Sikkim Governor Ganga Prasad was holding the additional charge of the position.
Abhay Kumar Singh	Secretary in Ministry of Cooperation	The appointment of Abhay Kumar Singh has been cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by PM Modi.
Hitendra Dave	CEO of HSBC India	The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of Hitendra Dave as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of HSBC Bank (India). RBI has accorded the approval for a period of three years with effect from August 24, 2021.
Carol Furtado	CEO of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	Furtado is currently serving as the CEO of Ujjivan Financial Services, the holding company of the bank. The appointment is subject to the approval of the Reserve Bank of India.

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Mansukh Mandaviya	Chairperson of Stop TB Partnership Board	He has replaced Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harsh Vardhan as the chairman. India aims to end TB by 2025 while the UN aims to end TB by 2030.
Sonu Sood	Ambassador by Delhi govt for 'Desh ke Mentors' Programme	The programme will be soon launched by Delhi Government. The programme entails "adopting" one to ten government school students who can be mentored by citizens who are successful in their respective fields.

Banking and Finance

LIC Cards Services, IDBI Bank launch RuPay credit cards Lumine, Eclat

LIC Cards Services Limited (LIC-CSL) has partnered with IDBI Bank to launch ‘Lumine’ Platinum Credit Card and ‘Eclat’ Select Credit Card on the RuPay platform.

The cards will initially be available to LIC policyholders, agents, as well as employees of the corporation and its subsidiaries. The cards will offer a wide range of benefits to users.

Indian Bank signs MoU with IIT Bombay for startup financing

Indian Bank has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE) – an initiative of the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay – for extending exclusive credit facilities to startups and MSMEs.

The Bank will extend loans of up to 50 crore rupees to these start-ups for their working capital requirements or purchase of machinery and equipment.

RBI imposes penalty of Rs 50.35 lakh on Janalaxmi Co-operative Bank

Reserve Bank of India has imposed a penalty of Rs 50.35 lakh on Janalaxmi Co-operative Bank, Nashik for non-compliance with certain regulatory requirements.

The penalty on Janalaxmi Co-operative Bank has been imposed for non-compliance with directions issued by RBI on ‘Placement of Deposits with Other Banks by Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks’ and ‘Membership of Credit Information Companies (CICs)’.

ADB approves USD 300 million additional loan for Maharashtra

The Manila-based Asian Development Bank has approved a USD 300 million loans as additional financing for the ongoing Maharashtra Rural Connectivity Improvement Project for upgrading rural roads and connecting remote areas with markets.

The additional financing will be used for improving an additional 1,100 rural roads and 230 bridges for a total length of 2,900 km in 34 districts of the state.

Indian Navy, IDFC FIRST bank bring ‘Honour FIRST’ banking solutions

The Indian Navy has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC) First Bank to initiate ‘Honour FIRST’.

‘Honour FIRST’ is a premium banking solution for serving personnel and veterans of the Indian Navy. Designed especially keeping in mind the needs of the Armed Forces and its veterans, the Honour FIRST Defence Account is supported by a dedicated team of defence veterans.

Nation to celebrate its 75th year of Independence tomorrow

The Nation will celebrate its 75th year of Independence tomorrow. India is celebrating ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’, marking the 75th year of Independence from the foreign rule.

The whole country has been gripped by patriotic fervour. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’ from Sabarmati Ashramat Ahmedabad in Gujarat in March 2021 to celebrate 75 years of India’s Independence. The celebrations will continue till August 15, 2023.

PhonePe receives direct broking licence from IRDAI

Flipkart-owned digital payments platform PhonePe has received an insurance broking licence from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

This means that with the new ‘direct broking’ licence, PhonePe can now distribute insurance products from all insurance companies in India, on its platform.

Four more sites of India added to Ramsar list as wetlands of International importance

These sites are Thol and Wadhvana from Gujarat and Sultanpur and Bhindawas from Haryana. Informing this in a tweet message, Union Environment Minister, Shri Bhupender Yadav expressed happiness and stated that it is Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s special concern for the environment which has led to overall improvement in how India cares for its wetlands.

RBI to introduce ‘Regulatory GAAR’ for round tripping

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come up with a draft rule with modifications in the existing regulation related to foreign investment to discourage round-tripping. The central bank is looking to tweak the existing regulations and has come up with draft rules around round-tripping.

Some of the largest Indian companies, startups and multinationals with an India presence have put their outbound investment, fundraising and restructuring plans on hold as the RBI looks to introduce fresh regulations around “round-tripping.”

Kotak Mahindra Bank launches ‘Neo Collections’ Digital Repayment platform

Kotak Mahindra Bank has launched a platform named ‘Neo Collections’, which is a Do It Yourself Digital Repayment Platform for missed loan repayments.

Kotak Mahindra Bank has launched the Neo Collections platform in tie-up with Creditas Solutions. The main objective of this DIY digital repayment platform is to make repayments for outstanding loans more convenient for customers.

NPCI partners with Mashreq Bank to launch UPI in the UAE

NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL) has partnered with Mashreq Bank to launch the payment system facility of Unified Payments Interface (UPI), in the UAE. Mashreq Bank is the oldest privately owned bank in the United Arab Emirates.

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

Facebook launches “Small Business Loans Initiative” in India

Facebook India has launched the “Small Business Loans Initiative” in India in partnership with the online lending platform Indifi. India is the first country where Facebook is rolling out this programme.

The objective of this initiative is to help small and medium businesses (SMBs) that advertise on Facebook to get quick access to credit/loans through independent lending partners.

This will make business loans more easily accessible to small businesses, and reduce the credit gap within India’s MSME sector. It is open to businesses registered across 200 towns and cities of India.

HDFC Bank launches ‘Dukandar Overdraft Scheme’

HDFC Bank announced the launch of an overdraft facility for small retailers in partnership with CSC SPV. Known as ‘Dukandar Overdraft Scheme’.

The scheme by HDFC Bank is aimed at helping shopkeepers and merchants ease their cash crunch. According to the bank, retailers operating for a minimum of three years are eligible for the scheme by providing six months bank statement from any bank.

SBI launches ‘SIM Binding’ feature for YONO

India’s largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a new and enhanced security feature for its YONO and YONO Lite apps, called ‘SIM Binding’, to protect customers from various digital frauds.

Under the new SIM Binding feature, the YONO and YONO Lite apps will work only on those devices which have SIM of mobile numbers registered with the Bank.

DBS clinches global accolade for innovation in digital banking

DBS has been honoured as the global winner for Most Innovative in Digital Banking by Financial Times publication, The Banker, in its 2021 Innovation in Digital Banking Awards.

The bank was also recognised as the Asia-Pacific winner and won in the Cyber Security category for its Secure Access and Remote Working Solution.

RBI Authorises IndusInd Bank to act as an ‘Agency Bank’

The IndusInd Bank has been empanelled by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to act as an ‘Agency Bank’.

As an Agency Bank, IndusInd becomes eligible to carry out transactions related to all kinds of government-led businesses. This decision is based on the RBI guideline that authorises scheduled private sector banks as agency banks of the regulator for the conduct of government business.

Indian Bank signs MoU with Paralympic Committee

Public sector Indian Bank has signed an MoU with the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) as one of the banking partners of the Paralympic Games scheduled to commence from August 24 in Tokyo, Japan. The bank, through its year-long association with PCI, will provide financial assistance to paralympic athletes. The President of the Paralympic Committee of India is Deepa Malik.

QSim- India's first Quantum Computer Simulator Toolkit

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has launched the India's first 'Quantum Computer Simulator (QSim) Toolkit'. QSim is the first-of-its-kind toolkit, indigenously developed in India.

It meant to be a vital tool of learning and understanding the practical aspects of programming with the help of Quantum Computers. It will thus bring about a new era of Quantum Computing research in India.

PayPal launched crypto buying and selling in UK

PayPal Holdings Inc has launched crypto buying and selling in the United Kingdom. PayPal will allow customers in the UK to buy, sell and hold bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies now.

This roll-out marks the first international expansion of cryptocurrencies services of PayPal outside of the United States. The move will further inspire mainstream adoption of new asset class.

Paytm & HDFC Bank tie up to provide solutions across payment gateway

HDFC Bank and Paytm have partnered to build comprehensive solutions across payment gateway, point of sale machines and credit products. This includes Paytm Postpaid which is a Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) solution, Eazy EMI and Flexi Pay.

The partnership will also deliver enhanced SmartHub solutions to the market. HDFC Bank SmartHub solutions is an integrated platform offering merchants a one-stop solution shop for all their business needs payments.

India, ADB sign \$500 million loan to expand Metro Rail Network in Bengaluru

Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India have signed a \$500 million loan to expand the metro rail network in Bengaluru with the construction of two new metro lines totalling 56 km in length.

The project will construct two new metro lines, mostly elevated, along Outer Ring Road and National Highway 44 between Central Silk Board and Kempegowda International Airport with 30 stations.

RBI's first financial inclusion index reads at 53.9

The Reserve Bank of India on August 17, 2021 introduced its first financial inclusion index to measure and improve the extent of financial inclusion in the country.

RBI's financial inclusion index (FI-Index) is published annually in July. It is a comprehensive index that incorporates details of banking, insurance, investments, postal as well as the pension sector. It is created in consultation with the government and sectoral regulators.

SBI General partners with SahiPay to offer general insurance products

SBI General Insurance, one of India's leading General Insurance companies, announced a tie-up with Manipal Business Solutions to increase insurance penetration in the rural markets.

SahiPay, the fastest growing tech-enabled financial inclusion platform of Manipal Business Solutions, provides digital and financial services to customers in semi-urban and rural India.

RBI imposes Rs 6 lakh penalty on Hewlett-Packard Financial Services

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 6 lakh on Bengaluru-based Hewlett-Packard Financial Services (India) Private Ltd.

RBI said the statutory inspection of the company, concerning its financial position as of March 31, 2019, revealed, inter alia, non-compliance with the statutory directions on (i) submission of credit information to Central Repository of Information on Large Credits and (ii) submission of credit data to Credit Information Companies.

SBI Life launches new-age term insurance policy "SBI Life eShield Next"

SBI Life Insurance announced the launch of a unique new age protection solution called 'SBI Life eShield Next', which 'levels up' the protection coverage as the insured achieves life's major milestones. This means that the policy is neither linked to the stock market nor shares any profit or dividends with the policyholders.

Axis Bank crosses one million customers on WhatsApp banking

Axis Bank has crossed the milestone of over one million customers on its WhatsApp banking channel with a total request count of 6 million till now.

Axis Bank had launched banking services on WhatsApp in January 2021 and has since witnessed robust organic growth in its customer base for WhatsApp banking.

Suryoday Small Finance Bank opens 'Health and Wellness Savings account

Suryoday Small Finance Bank (SSFB) has launched a ‘Suryoday Health and Wellness Savings Account’ to help customers grow their wealth and also take care of their family’s health amid the covid-19 pandemic.

The account offers an attractive interest rate and comes with three major benefits for a family of four — top-up health insurance of ₹25 lakh, annual healthcare package and on-call emergency ambulance medical care services.

HDFC unveils ‘Green & Sustainable’ fixed deposit

HDFC Bank has announced the introduction of ‘Green & Sustainable Deposits’ to safeguard the environment from climate change. These fixed deposits will be directed towards financing green and sustainable housing credit solutions and services.

Indian Affairs

Union Minister of Science & Technology releases “Biotech-PRIDE”

The Union Ministry for Science & Technology has released “Biotech-PRIDE (Promotion of Research and Innovation through Data Exchange) Guidelines”.

The Biotech-PRIDE Guidelines have been developed by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT). The guidelines are aimed at providing a well-defined framework and guiding principle to facilitate and enable sharing and exchange of biological knowledge, information and data.

Operation Blue Freedom: Team Of Special Forces Veterans

The government of India has accorded sanctions to Team CLAW to lead a team of people with disabilities to scale Siachen Glacier. It will be a new world record for the largest team of people with disabilities. This expedition is being undertaken as part of ‘Operation Blue Freedom’.

C.R. Rao Gold Medal award winners announced

The Indian Econometric Society (TIES) Trust has selected two renowned economic scholars for the Prof. C.R. Rao Centenary Gold Medal award. Renowned economists Jagdish Bhagwati and C Rangarajan have been conferred with the inaugural Prof CR Rao Centenary Gold Medal (CGM).

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

Kaziranga becomes India’s first National Park with satellite phones worth Rs. 16 lakh

Kaziranga National Park (KZP) in Assam has become the first National Park in India to be equipped with satellite phones.

In a first-of-its-kind move to provide assistance to prevent poaching and ensure coordinated functioning, the officials of Kaziranga National Park have been provided with satellite phones.

World’s Highest Altitude Movie Theatre open in Ladakh

The world’s highest movie theatre has recently been inaugurated in Ladakh, which got its first-ever mobile digital movie theatre in the Paldan area of Leh, at an altitude of 11,562 feet.

The inflatable theatre can operate in -28 degrees Celcius. The initiative aims to bring cinema watching experience to most remotest areas of India. It must be noted that four such theatres will be established in Leh in the coming period.

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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set the target of becoming an ‘energy independent country by the year 2047, the year when India will celebrate the 100th year of Independence. For this,

PM has announced a 'Mission Circular Economy' that will replace petroleum with other forms of energy to make India achieve self-reliance in energy production by 2047.

Ministry of Labour & Employment launches e-Shram Portal

Ministry of Labour & Employment has launched e-Shram Portal to link Unorganised Workers with social security schemes being implemented by the Central and State Governments. Minister for Labour and Employment, Bhupender Yadav has launched the portal where 38 crore Unorganised Workers can register themselves and in turn benefit from various social security schemes.

BPR&D collaborates with AICTE to launch India's first hackathon "MANTHAN 2021"

The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) in collaboration with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) have launched a unique national Hackathon named 'MANTHAN 2021'. The basic objective of this hackathon is to identify innovative concepts and technology solutions for addressing the security challenges of the 21st century faced by the intelligence agencies of the country and empower these enforcement agencies.

Bharat Series registration mark for vehicles: What is BH-series? How will it benefit vehicle owners?

The Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways in vide notification dated August 26, 2021, introduced a new registration mark for new vehicles under the 'Bharat series (BH-series)' to facilitate seamless transfer of vehicles.

Keeping in mind the cumbersome process of re-registration of vehicles when relocating or moving to another state, the Government rolled a new Bharat Series registration mark scheme which will not require an individual to get a new registration number for the vehicle if they move to another state.

Vriksharopan Abhiyan – 2021 to be launched

Vriksharopan Abhiyan – 2021 of Coal Ministry is all set to be Launched on August 19, 2021. It will be launched as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

In this year, coal PSUs of the Ministry of Coal have set an ambitious target to cover 2385 hectares of area under "Go Greening" drive. Areas will be covered under bio-reclamation or plantation.

Go Greening drive will be provided the right boost by launching Vriksharopan Abhiyan 2021.

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award renamed after Major Dhyan Chand

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 6, 2021 announced that the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award has been renamed as Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.

Khel Ratna award is the highest sporting honour in India. This move of renaming award after sportsman was welcomed on social media.

India's first Heart Failure Biobank starts at SCTIMST in Kerala

The first Heart Failure Biobank in the country has come up at the National Centre for Advanced Research and Excellence in HF (CARE-HF) at the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), Kerala.

The Biobank is open to study genetic, metabolomics and proteomic markers of health outcomes in heart-failure patients.

Power minister launches e-certification programme to provide regulatory training

Power Minister R K Singh has launched an e-certification programme, 'reform and regulatory knowledge base for power sector', to provide regulatory training.

The Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy R K Singh launched 'reform and regulatory knowledge base for power sector', an e-certification programme to provide regulatory training to the practitioners from diverse backgrounds through virtual mode.

7th August to be named "Javelin Throw Day" to honour Neeraj Chopra

The Athletics Federation of India has decided that javelin throw day will be on 7th August every year in honour of Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra. The 23-year-old Neeraj is India's second individual Olympic gold medallist after Abhinav Bindra. Neeraj bagged the gold medal in men's javelin throw at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics on 7th August 2021.

India's first Internet Governance Forum to be held in October

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on August 9, 2021, informed that India will host the first Internet Governance Forum in the country for three days beginning October 20, 2021.

The pre-events aim to engage students and youth to participate in the main event in October and further involve them in the policy formation stages.

India's first Water Plus City

India's cleanest city, Indore, has now been declared as India's first water plus city under the Swachh Survekshan 2021. Indore has become example for whole nation for its determination and dedication towards cleanliness.

Indore City received this certification from central government on August 11, 2021. This certification is provided for maintaining cleanliness in rivers and drains.

Union Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar flags off 'Operation Blue Freedom'

The Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar has flagged off a pioneering world record expedition named 'Operation Blue Freedom' from Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi on the occasion of 75th Independence Day.

The Operation Blue Freedom expedition comprise of a team of people with disabilities from across the country to reach Siachen Glacier, to create a new World Record, for the largest team of people with disabilities reaching the world's highest battlefield.

PM Gati Shakti Master Plan to create Job Opportunities For Youth

On India's 75th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Centre will launch an Rs. 100 lakh-crore project for developing holistic infrastructure called 'PM Gati Shakti Master Plan.'

In his speech, the Prime Minister said that the project will create employment opportunities for the youth in future.

He called for an Amrit Kaal—the 25-year period till India celebrates 100 years of its independence—to meet all growth imperatives.

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

The All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), New Delhi has become the first hospital of India to house a fire station inside the hospital premises, to meet any emergency. For this, AIIMS has collaborated with Delhi Fire Service (DFS). The fire station, meant for quick response in case of fire emergency, will have its infrastructure developed by the AIIMS, while the fire tender, equipment, and manpower will be managed by the DFS.

Finance Ministry launched 'Ubharte Sitaare Fund'

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has launched an ambitious 'Ubharte Sitaare Fund' -USF for export-oriented firms and startups in a program at Lucknow. The Fund aims at arranging funds for the promotion of micro, small and medium companies.

The fund has been set up by Exim Bank and SIDBI. This scheme will be successful in Uttar Pradesh as the state has the highest number of MSMEs.

India's highest herbal park inaugurated in Uttarakhand

India's highest altitude herbal park has been inaugurated at Mana village in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. The herbal park is situated at a height of 11,000 feet and is close to the Indo-China border.

Mana is the last Indian village in Chamoli bordering China and is adjacent to Badrinath temple. The herbal park has around 40 species found in high altitude alpine areas in the Himalayan region.

India's largest Floating Solar PV Project commissioned in Andhra Pradesh

NTPC has commissioned the largest floating solar PV project in India of 25MW power on the reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. This is also the first solar project to be set up under the Flexibilisation Scheme.

This scheme was notified by the Government of India in 2018. NTPC is also planning to set up a hydrogen-based micro-grid system on a pilot basis at Simhadri.

Hisar Airport renamed as Maharaja Agrasen International Airport

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has announced to rename the Hisar Airport as Maharaja Agrasen International Airport. The Hisar Airport is a domestic airport and the first DGCA licensed Public Aerodrome of the State. This airport is presently under up-gradation to be transformed as an international airport by 30 March 2024.

India's First Agri Sectoral Index GUAREX launched by NCDEX

India's first sectoral index in the Agri commodities basket i.e. GUAREX was launched by the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX). GUAREX is a price based sectoral index that tracks the movement in the futures contracts of guar gum refined splits and guar seed on a real-time basis. This index product will offer a lot of opportunities to the value chain.

Ministry of Electronics & IT launches SAMRIDH programme

Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology has launched the "Start-up Accelerators of MeitY for pProduct Innovation, Development and growth (SAMRIDH)" programme. The programme was launched by Shri Ashwini Vaishnav, Union Minister MeitY.

The objective of the SAMRIDH programme is to create a conducive platform to Indian Software Product start-ups to enhance their products and securing investments for scaling their business.

Ministry of Jal Shakti launches 'SUJALAM' Campaign

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

The Campaign would help in the management of the wastewater and in turn, would help to revive the water bodies through the creation of 1 million Soak-pits and also other Greywater management activities. The campaign started on August 25, 2021, is part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations.

Ohmium launches India's first green hydrogen electrolyzer gigafactory

US-based Ohmium International has started India's first green hydrogen electrolyzer manufacturing unit at Bengaluru, Karnataka. The factory will manufacture India-made Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) hydrogen electrolyzers.

Green hydrogen is made from non-fossil sources as against blue hydrogen that is made from fossil sources. Making green hydrogen in India will give a cost advantage for manufacturers rather than going for imports.

Cabinet Affairs

Rajya Sabha passes Coconut Development Board (Amendment) Bill, 2021

Rajya Sabha on July 30, 2021, passed the Coconut Development Board (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

The bill will make the post of the Chairman of the Coconut Development Board a non-executive position, increase the number of members of the Board to six from four, and allow Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh to be able to nominate their representatives to the Board.

Parliament passes Inland Vessels Bill 2021

Parliament passed the Inland Vessels Bill 2021 after the Rajya Sabha approved it on August 2, 2021. The Lok Sabha had passed the bill earlier on July 29, 2021. The bill seeks to replace the Inland Vessels Act, 1917 and promote cheaper and safer navigation.

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal tweeted saying that the Inland Vessels Bill 2021 promotes cheaper and safer navigation, ensures protection of life & cargo and brings uniformity in the application of laws related to inland waterways & navigation.

National Commission for Homoeopathy (Amendment) Bill, 2021

Parliament on August 11, 2021, passed the National Commission for Homoeopathy (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The Bill will be sent to the President for his assent.

The bill was introduced in Lok Sabha on August 9, 2021, which the lower house cleared on August 10, 2021. The National Commission for Homoeopathy (Amendment) Bill, 2021, aims at amending the National Commission for Homoeopathy Act, 2020.

Lok Sabha passes Tribunal Reforms Bill

Lok Sabha on August 3, 2021, passed Tribunal Reforms Bill, 2021. The bill abolishes as many as nine appellate tribunals, including the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal (FCAT), set up under various acts.

The latest bill was passed in the Lower House by voice vote without a debate amid the ongoing protests by the opposition parties over the Pegasus row and several other issues.

Cabinet approves highest ever FRP for Sugarcane

Union cabinet has approved the highest ever fair & remunerative price (FRP) for sugarcane farmers on August 25, 2021. FRP for sugarcane has been increased to Rs 290 per quintal for 2021-22. This price will be based on 10% recovery. If recovery is less than 9.5%, then farmers will be given a FRP of Rs 275 per quintile.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2021

Parliament passed Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2021, on August 3, 2021 after Rajya Sabha approved the bill amidst the protest. Bill was passed by Lok Sabha on July 28, 2021 and introduced in the Lower House on July 26 during the ongoing Monsoon session.

127th Constitution Amendment Bill introduced

Central Government introduced the 127th Constitution (amendment) bill, 2021 in Lok Sabha on August 9, 2021. The bill seeks to restore state's power to make their own OBC lists.

It was introduced in the Parliament to clarify some provisions of the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Bill, restoring the power of states to identify backward classes.

Rajya Sabha returns Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill after discussion

The Rajya Sabha on August 9, 2021 returned the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 after a brief discussion. Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 seeks to withdraw tax demands made under the 2012 retrospective tax legislation to tax the indirect transfer of Indian assets

Cabinet approves continuation of Samagra Shiksha Scheme till March 2026

Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of Samagra Shiksha Scheme for School Education for five years from April 1, 2021 till March 31, 2026.

The scheme will cover 1.16 million schools, 156 million students and 5.7 million teachers of government and aided schools from pre-primary to senior secondary level.

Rajya Sabha passed AERA (Amendment) Bill, 2021

Rajya Sabha passed Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2021 on August 4, 2021.

Bill was tabled by Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and was passed in the Lok Sabha in June 2021. Now, it will be sent to the President Ram Nath Kovind for his assent.

Lok Sabha passes Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill

The Lok Sabha passed the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 on August 6, 2021. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced the Bill to amend the Income-Tax Act, 1961, and the Finance Act, 2012 and withdraw retrospective tax demand provision.

State Related Affairs

Bhubaneswar becomes first Indian city to vaccinate 100% against COVID-19

Bhubaneswar has become the first Indian city to achieve 100 per cent COVID-19 vaccination. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) had launched a massive vaccination drive against Covid-19. This milestone is credited to the BMC running 55 centres at all times for vaccines.

Uttarakhand Bhookamp Alert: India's first earthquake early warning mobile app launched

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee informed on August 4, 2021, that it has launched the 'Uttarakhand Bhookamp alert' app. It is India's first Earthquake Early Warning (EEW) mobile app.

The Earthquake Early Warning App was launched by the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Trivendra Singh and the project was sponsored by the Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority. The app has been available for both the iOS and Android Platforms.

Tamil Nadu CM Stalin announces Rs 317 crore package for welfare of Sri Lankan refugees

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin announced a Rs 317.40 crore welfare package on August 27, 2021 for the welfare of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living in special camps in the State.

The Chief Minister said that Rs 317 crores and 40 lakhs will be allocated to ensure housing and infrastructure in the Srilankan refugee camps in Tamil Nadu. He announced the same under Rule 110.

Tamil Nadu Government launches doorstep healthcare scheme

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu MK Stalin on August 5, 2021, launched the 'Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam' (healthcare services at people's doorstep) scheme in Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu.

The state government launched scheme aims at eliminating the need for patients to visit hospitals for the treatment of non-communicable diseases.

Rajasthan Government undertakes biodiversity conservation project with French assistance

The Government of Rajasthan, with the assistance of the French development agency Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD), has undertaken a biodiversity conservation project in the eastern districts of the state.

The State Government has already given its approval to the Rajasthan Forestry and Bio Development Project which has been planned by the Rajasthan Forest Department with the support of AFD.

Chhattisgarh becomes 1st state to recognise Forest Resource Rights in Urban Region

Chhattisgarh became the first state to recognise Community Forest Resource Rights in an urban area, with the state government recognising the rights of residents of Dhamtari district over 4,127 hectares of forests. Community resource rights over 5,544 hectares of forest within the core area of the tiger reserve area were also recognised.

Under Forest Rights Act, 2006, Community Forest Resource Right gives gram sabhas the right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any forest resources used by the entire community, or village.

India's first Drone Forensic Lab comes up in Kerala

India's first Drone Forensic Lab and Research Center has come up in Kerala. The Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan was inaugurating the State police department's 'Drone Forensic Laboratory' at the Kerala State Police CyberDome. Cyberdome is a technological research and development centre of the Kerala Police Department.

Odisha to provide Smart Health Cards under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana

Odisha Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik, announced that his government will provide smart health cards under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana. Smart health cards will be provided to 3.5 crore people in 96 lakh families in the state.

Beneficiaries of national & state food security schemes and Annapurna and Antyodaya initiatives will be provided these cards.

Maharashtra govt launched Special Programme for Widows

Maharashtra government launched a special mission called "Mission Vatsalya" in order to help women who lost their husbands to COVID-19.

Mission Vatsalya will provide several services and some 18 benefits under one roof to those women. It been designed for widows, with special focus on widows coming from rural areas, poor backgrounds and deprived sections.

MP: Second State to implement NEP 2020

Madhya Pradesh government implemented the National Education Policy-2020 (NEP-2020) in the state on August 26, 2021. MP became the second state in India to implement NEP-2020 following Karnataka. This new education policy will break all the shackles and help students in exploring outside their boundaries.

Delhi CM to inaugurate India's First Smog Tower

Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal, will inaugurate India's first smog tower at Baba Kharak Singh Marg in Connaught Place (CP), Delhi.

It is over 20-metre-tall structure and was set up to improve air quality in a radius of around 1 km. The tower will operate at full capacity after the monsoon season. This smog-tower was built at the cost of Rs 20 crores.

Swachh Survekshan 2021: Andhra Pradesh becomes first state with three ‘Water Plus’ certified cities

The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs awarded three cities from Andhra Pradesh with ‘Water Plus’ certification under the Swachh Bharat Mission and Swachh Survekshan assessment.

Andhra Pradesh has now become the first state to have more than one ‘Water Plus’ certified city. The three cities awarded are Greater Vishakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC), Vijayawada Municipal Corporation, and Tirupathi Municipal Corporation.

Karnataka becomes first state to issue order implementing NEP-2020

Karnataka has become the first state in the country to issue the order with regard to the implementation of the National Education Policy-2020. The state government has issued an order on the implementation of NEP-2020 with effect from the current academic year 2021-2022.

Gujarat CM launches eNagar mobile application and portal

Gujarat Chief Minister, Vijay Rupani has launched eNagar mobile application and portal. The eNagar covers 10 modules with 52 services including property tax, professional tax, water & drainage, Complaints and grievance redressal, building permission, fire and emergency services.

Assam celebrates Wanchuwa Festival 2021

Tiwa tribesmen perform their traditional dance as they take part in Wanchuwa Festival in Assam. This festival is celebrated by Tiwa tribesmen to mark their good harvest. It comes with songs, dances, a bunch of rituals and people clad in their native attires.

UP Government renames Kakori Conspiracy as Kakori Train Action

The Uttar Pradesh government has renamed the landmark freedom movement event “Kakori Train Conspiracy” as “Kakori Train Action” in a tribute to the revolutionaries who were hanged for robbing a train at Kakori to buy weapons in 1925.

The robbery was planned by Ram Prasad Bismil and Ashfaqullah Khan who belonged to the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA). The HRA was established to carry out revolutionary activities against the British Empire in India to help India gain independence.

International Affairs

Shehroze Kashif becomes world's youngest mountaineer to scale K2

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

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

Tokyo passed Flame of Hope to Paris

Amid the ongoing covid-19 pandemic and approaching typhoon, Tokyo Olympics 2020 was finally concluded on August 8, 2021. Japanese capital pulled the curtains down on one of the most unique Games in history and handed over the flame of hope to Paris.

Israel launched Covid antibody tests for children aged 3

Israel launched antibody testing for children aged as three in order to get the exact number of unvaccinated youths who have developed antibody against coronavirus.

These tests were launched in the backdrop of opening up of schools. Despite increasing daily infections because of highly transmissible Delta variant, Government of Israel wants to avoid the hardships and developmental setbacks that are caused by school closures.

Cuba to recognise and regulate cryptocurrencies

Government of Cuba announced to recognize and regulate cryptocurrencies for payment in the Island nation. This decision was taken following the popularity of cryptocurrencies increased among a technologically savvy group in Cuba as it became harder to use dollars.

As per officials, Central Bank will set rules for such currencies. It will also determine how to license the providers of related services in Cuba.

Amazon CEO to join White House cybersecurity meeting

Apple Inc CEO, Tim Cook and Microsoft Corp Chief Executive, Satya Nadella are set to attend White House cybersecurity meeting. Amazon Inc Chief Executive, Andy Jassy will join tech executives with President Joe Biden at a White House meeting on August 24, 2021. In the meeting, they will discuss efforts by private companies to improve cybersecurity.

World's First fossil-free steel manufactured in Sweden

Swedish green steel venture HYBRIT, which had made the 'world's first' customer delivery of steel produced without using coal. The steel was made using Hydrogen Breakthrough Ironmaking Technology, which uses 100% fossil-free hydrogen instead of coal and coke. The venture has started delivering the fossil-free steel to the Volvo Group as part of its trial run.

Ain Dubai: World's largest and tallest observation wheel

World's largest and tallest observation wheel, called Ain Dubai, will be opened in the UAE on October 21, 2021. This observation wheel will be the latest addition to the long list of record-breaking attractions in Dubai.

Ain Dubai is about 42.5m taller than the London Eye. It will take visitors to the height of 250 metres in order for them to enjoy the majestic view of Dubai's picturesque skyline. It is located at Bluewaters Island, near Dubai Marina.

Foreign Relation

India takes over UNSC presidency for August 2021

India took over from France to assume the presidency of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the month of August 2021. This is the first presidency for India during its 2021-22 tenure as a non-permanent member of the UNSC. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the first Indian PM to preside over a meeting of the UNSC.

India-Bangladesh: Cabinet approves MoU on Disaster Management

Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Disaster Management between India and Bangladesh that was signed in March, 2021.

MoU was signed between National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Home Affairs of India and Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief of Bangladesh.

BRICS nations sign deal for remote sensing satellite data sharing

BRICS nations- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa signed an agreement on August 18, 2021 for cooperation in remote sensing satellite data sharing, as per the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

The deal will enable building a virtual constellation of specified remote sensing satellites of BRICS space agencies and their respective ground stations will receive the data.

ISRO said in a statement that “this will contribute in strengthening multilateral cooperation among BRICS space agencies in meeting the challenges faced by mankind, such as global climate change, major disasters and environmental protection.”

India, Russia sign deal to procure 70,000 AK-203 Assault Rifles

India and Russia on August 19, 2021 signed a deal for the immediate procurement of 70,000 AK-200 series assault rifles.

The agreement was signed at a time when both countries are working on a bigger project to jointly manufacture 6 lakh AK-203 rifles in India. The deal for the same has been pending since 2018.

Greater Male Connectivity Project: India, Maldives sign pact for largest-ever infrastructure project

India and Maldives on August 26, 2021 signed a pact for the largest-ever infrastructure project, Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP).

The project will be funded under the Indian Grant and Line of Credit and will commence soon. A contract for the same was signed between AFCONS (Mumbai-based construction and engineering company) and the Maldives government.

Ranks & Indices

Mumbai, Bengaluru lose top-100 spots in QS Best Student Cities Ranking

Mumbai and Bengaluru are out of the global top-100 list and are currently ranking at 106 and 110, respectively in the latest edition of the QS Best Student Cities Ranking. While Mumbai lost 29 places, Bengaluru fell by 21 places in the ninth edition of the rankings brought out by global higher education analysts QS Quacquarelli Symonds.

7 Indian Companies Feature in Fortune Global 500 list for 2021

Seven Indian companies have found a place in 2021 Fortune's Global 500 list. The Fortune Global 500 is an annual ranking of the top 500 enterprises globally, as measured by business revenues. Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd is the highest-ranked Indian company on the list in terms of revenue, with revenues of nearly \$63 billion. It is placed at 155th spot globally.

Indian Companies in the list – Reliance Industries (155), State Bank of India (205), Indian Oil (212), Oil & Natural Gas (243), Rajesh Exports (348), Tata Motors (357), Bharat Petroleum (394)

World Athletics Rankings 2021: Neeraj ranked at 2

Javelin Thrower Neeraj Chopra has finished at number 2 rank in the World Athletics ranking after securing Gold Medal at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

Neeraj Chopra has been ranked second with his score of 1315. He is only behind German athlete Johannes Vetter who is having the score of 1396.

Delhi Airport among world's top-50 best airports in 2021

The Skytrax World Airport Award ranking 2021 was recently published in which Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi has emerged among world's top-50 best airports in the 2021.

Delhi Airport emerged as best airport in India for the third consecutive year. Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru have also found a rank among world's 100 best airports.

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

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

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

HCL Tech is the third-largest Indian IT services company by revenue, after TCS and Infosys.

Ghaziabad is world's second most polluted city of 2020

Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad was adjudged the second most polluted city out of the 50 'most polluted cities' in the world in 2020 by a report prepared by British company HouseFresh. Ghaziabad reported an average Air Quality Index (AQI) of 2.5 particulate matter (PM) in 106.6µg/m³.

DMart owner Radhakishan Damani enters World's 100 Richest People List

Radhakishan Damani, a reclusive investor, and billionaire, who owns the retail chain DMart has entered the list of the world's 100 richest people. Damani, who grew up in a humble background has been ranked at 98 on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index with a net worth of \$19.2 billion.

The other Indians in the top 100 list are Gautam Adani, Mukesh Ambani, Pallonji Mistry, Azim Premji, Lakshmi Mittal, and Shiv Nadar. The Bloomberg Billionaire Index is a daily ranking of the richest people in the world.

India ranks second in terms of crypto adoption in the world

India has ranked second in terms of crypto adoption worldwide behind Vietnam, but ahead of countries such as the US, UK, and China, according to the 2021 Global Crypto Adoption Index by blockchain data platform Chainalysis. This comes even as worldwide crypto adoption grew by 880% between June 2020 and July 2021, according to the report.

Apple tops Hurun Global 500 Most Valuable Companies list 2021

Apple is the world's most valuable company (USD 2,443 billion) according to the Hurun Global 500 Most Valuable Companies list 2021. The world's top six valuable companies remained unchanged as Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Facebook and Tencent.

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

Infosys hits \$100 billion m-cap, fourth Indian firm to reach milestone

The shares of Information Technology major, Infosys hit a record high during intraday trading, which helped the company cross \$100 billion in market capitalisation. Infosys is the fourth Indian company to achieve this milestone. Reliance Industries (m-cap of \$140 billion), Tata Consultancy Services (m-cap \$115 billion) and HDFC Bank (m-cap \$100.1 billion) are the other Indian firms in the club with Infosys.

India emerges as Second in Global Manufacturing Risk Index

India has emerged as a global manufacturing hub and effectively surpassed the United States to become the world's second most desired manufacturing destination. This indicates the growing interest in India by manufacturers as a preferred manufacturing hub over other countries including the United States and the manufacturing giant nation, China.

India's ranking was reflected in Cushman & Wakefield's 2021 Global Manufacturing Risk Index. The index ranks 47 countries across Europe, the Americas, and the Asia Pacific.

Copenhagen tops EIU's Safe Cities Index 2021

Copenhagen, the capital city of Denmark, has been named as the world's safest city from among 60 global cities, in Safe Cities Index 2021, released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). Copenhagen scored 82.4 points out of 100, to top the fourth edition of the EIU's biennial index, which measures the level of urban safety. Yangon is at the bottom of the index, as least safe city, with a score of 39.5.

Business News

Ordnance Factory launches new weapon ‘Trichy Carbine’

The Ordnance Factory Tiruchirappalli (OFT) in Tamil Nadu launched a new high-tech and low sound weapon called TriCa (Trichy Carbine), a mini version of the Trichy Assault Rifle (TAR). It was unveiled by General Manager of OFT Sanjay Dwivedi, IOFS (Indian Ordnance Factories Service) during a function.

Haryana govt signs MoU with Walmart Vriddhi to help MSMEs

The Haryana government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ‘Walmart Vriddhi’ and ‘Haqdarshak’ to create a pathway for Indian MSMEs’ products to move to the international markets.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, Vikas Gupta, MSME Department Director-General, the Indian government, Nitin Dutt from Walmart Vriddhi, and Aniket Doegar (CEO of Haqdarshak).

HCL Foundation launches ‘My e-Haat’ portal to empower artisans

HCL Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of HCL Technologies has launched an online portal, ‘My e-Haat’, to empower artisans and strengthen the value chain of the handicraft sector in the country. The platform will enable artisans and primary producers to conduct their business, by listing and showcasing their products directly to customers, thereby minimising the informal intermediaries and the long supply chains.

Odisha to sponsor Indian Hockey teams for 10 more years

The Odisha government will sponsor the Indian Hockey teams for 10 more years after the current sponsorship ends in 2023, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced. The state government started sponsoring the national hockey teams in 2018.

The teams have scripted history with their brilliant performance at the Tokyo Olympics,” the chief minister said, handing over a cash award of Rs 10 lakh to each player.

Amazon Alexa Gets Amitabh Bachchan’s Voice in India

Amazon has launched the voice of the 78-year-old Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan as a part of its efforts to amuse existing users and attract new consumers to use its voice assistant over Google Assistant and Apple’s Siri. With the new launch, the US tech giant has also brought its celebrity voice feature to India. The feature initially arrived in the US with the voice of American actor and producer Samuel L. Jackson in 2019.

WEP Nxt: NITI Aayog, Cisco partner to support women entrepreneurs in India

NITI Aayog and Cisco on August 26, 2021 launched the next phase of the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) to build on their shared commitment to empower women entrepreneurs across India.

The next phase of NITI Aayog's flagship platform titled 'WEP Nxt' will use Cisco's technology and experience of working with India's startup ecosystem to foster more women-owned businesses in the country.

PayU acquires Digital payments provider BillDesk

Fintech services provider, PayU, is set to acquire the Indian digital payments provider, BillDesk for \$4.7 billion. This will be one among the largest deals in Indian fintech sector.

Defence News

INS Vikrant, India's first indigenous aircraft carrier begins sea trials

India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant began its much-awaited sea trials on August 4, 2021. INS Vikrant is the largest and most complex warship built in the country.

With the launch of the sea trials of the aircraft carrier, India has joined the select few countries that have the capability of indigenously designing and building a state-of-the-art aircraft carrier.

Indigenously designed INS Vikrant leaves port for maiden sea trials

India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, Vikrant set sail to begin its first sea trial. INS Vikrant was designed by the Indian Navy's Directorate of Naval Design (DND) and built at Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL).

This advanced warship is the first attempt by the two entities to build an aircraft carrier from the ground up. INS Vikrant has 75 per cent indigenous content and will be commissioned into the Eastern Naval Command. It will be commissioned into the Indian Navy by August 2022.

India-UAE Navy undertakes bilateral exercise 'Zayed Talwar 2021'

The Indian Navy and UAE Navy conducted the bilateral naval exercise 'Zayed Talwar 2021' on August 07, 2021, off the coast of Abu Dhabi. The main objective of the 'Zayed Talwar 2021' naval exercise was to enhance interoperability and synergy between the two navies.

Indian Navy participated with INS Kochi, with two integral Sea King MK 42B helicopters, deployed in the Persian Gulf. From UAE, UAES AL – Dhafra, a Baynunah class guided missile corvette and one AS – 565B Panther helicopter took part in the exercise.

Army organises 400 Km "JAZBAA-E- TIRANGA" Relay Marathon in J&K

In Jammu and Kashmir, the Army organised a 400 Km "JAZBAA-E- TIRANGA" Relay Marathon. The event was flagged off by Major General Rajeev Puri, General Officer Commanding, Ace of Spades Division, who led the relay, closely followed by other military personnel.

Exercise Konkan 2021

On August 21, 2021; Exercise Konkan 2021 was held in English Channel in between INS Tabar and HMS Westminster.

The naval exercise Konkan 18 is held in between the navies of India and United Kingdom. It is based on the long-term strategic relationship between them. This exercise provides a platform for the Navies to periodically conduct exercise at sea and in harbour in order to build interoperability and share best practices.

"Shared Destiny-2021" Defence Exercise

Militaries of China, Mongolia, Thailand and Pakistan are set to take part in a multinational peacekeeping exercise called “Shared Destiny-2021”. It will be organised by the People’s Liberation Army at the combined-arms tactical training base in central Henan province of China from September 6 to 15, 2021.

Indian Navy Conducts Bilateral Maritime Exercise with Vietnam

The Indian Navy and Vietnam People’s Navy (VPN) undertook a bilateral maritime exercise in the South China Sea, to strengthen the defence ties among the two navies. From India, INS Ranvijay and INS Kora took part in the exercise and from the Vietnam People’s Navy (VPN), frigate VPNS Ly Thai To(HQ-012) participated in the drill.

DRDO develops advanced chaff technology to safeguard IAF fighter aircrafts

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) informed on August 19, 2021, that it has developed an advanced Chaff Technology that to safeguard the fighter jets of the Indian Air Force against hostile radar targets.

Chaff technology has been given to the industry for production in large quantities in order to meet the annual rolling requirement of the Indian Air Force. Chaff is a critical defence technology that is used to protect fighter aircraft from hostile radar targets.

2nd Indo-Qatari joint Naval Exercise “Zair-Al-Bahr” in Persian Gulf

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

This edition of the exercise included a three-day harbour phase followed by a two-day sea phase. The sea phase is comprised of tactical maritime exercises involving surface action, anti-piracy exercises, air defence, maritime surveillance, boarding operations and SAR exercises.

5th India-Kazakhstan Joint Training Exercise “KAZIND-21”

The 5th edition of Indo- Kazakhstan Joint Training Exercise, “KAZIND-21” will be held from August 30 to September 11, 2021, at Training Node, Aisha Bibi, Kazakhstan. The joint training exercise will boost the bilateral relations between India and Kazakhstan Armies.

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

India and Germany conducts joint maritime exercise in Gulf of Aden

The Indian Navy and the German Navy carried out a joint exercise in the Gulf of Aden near Yemen, in the Indian Ocean leg of Indo-Pacific Deployment 2021. The Indian Navy was represented by frigate “Trikanth” while the German Navy was represented by frigate “Bayern”.

Science & Technology

ISRO-NASA joint mission NISAR Satellite to be launched in 2023

The ISRO-NASA joint mission NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) satellite, aimed at making global measurement of land surface changes using advanced radar imaging, is proposed to be launched in early 2023. It is a dual-band (L-band and S-band) radar imaging mission with the capability of full polarimetric and interferometric modes of operation to observe minor changes in land, vegetation and cryosphere.

India to launch advanced geo imaging satellite “Gisat-1”

India will finally launch its most advanced geo-imaging satellite (GiSAT-1), which will allow better monitoring of the subcontinent, including its borders with Pakistan and China, by imaging the country 4-5 times a day.

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

Pakistan test-fires Ghaznavi Missile

Pakistan carried a successful training launch of surface-to-surface nuclear-capable ballistic missile called Ghaznavi on August 12, 2021.

Missile Ghaznavi has the capability to deliver multiple types of warheads up to a range of 290 kilometres. In February 2021, the ASFC had conducted a ‘training launch’ of Ghaznavi under its annual field training exercise.

NeoBolt: India’s first indigenous Motorised Wheelchair Vehicle

Indian Institute of Technology (Madras) has developed India’s first indigenous motorised wheelchair vehicle called NeoBolt. NeoBolt can be used on roads as well as on uneven terrains.

It has a maximum speed of 25 kmph and it can travel up to 25 km per charge. It was developed to empower wheelchair users a convenient, safe and low-cost mode of outdoor mobility as compared to cars, auto rickshaws and modified scooters.

Pakistan successfully tests Fatah-1

Fatah-1 is a Pakistan-made guided multi-launch rocket system. It is capable of delivering conventional warheads up to a range of 140 kilometres. This new weapons system will equip the military with the capability to strike deep into enemy territory

This was the second test of Fatah-1. Pakistan had conducted test flight of indigenously developed Fatah-1 in January 2021.

Books

A book on Leopard titled ‘Leopard Diaries – the Rosette in India’ by Sanjay Gubbi

Wildlife Biologist, Sanjay Gubbi authored a book about Leopard titled ‘Leopard Diaries – the Rosette in India’, in which he says about the food habits, ecological context, and conservation of Leopard along with the suggestions to overcome leopard–human conflict.

The book also details Sanjay Gubbi’s practical engagement as a conflict manager, adviser to the State government, and leopard PR (Public Relations) person. The book was published by Westland.

A new book titled “My Own Mazagon” by Captain Ramesh Babu

A new book titled “My Own Mazagon” has authored by Captain Ramesh Babu. The book published by Indus Source Books features the history and story of Mazagon, the island which was merged into a single entity as Bombay.

The Book will be jointly released by Vice Admiral R. Hari Kumar, Flag Officer Commanding in Chief, Western Naval Command, Vice Admiral Narayan Prasad, (Retd.), CMD Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited.

A book titled “The Year That Wasn’t – The Diary of a 14-Year-Old” released

Veteran actor Shabana Azmi has launched the book titled “The Year That Wasn’t – The Diary of a 14-Year-Old”, which is penned by Kolkata girl Brisha Jain. The book was written by a 14-year-old girl, which chronicles the lockdown days seen through her eyes as the Covid-19 pandemic spreading last year.

A book title “The Earthspinner” authored by Anuradha Roy

A book titled “The Earthspinner” authored by award-winning novelist Anuradha Roy. In the book, Roy delves into the “life and mind of Elango the potter, who must navigate complicated and impossible love, the dedication of a beloved pet, his own passion for creativity and a world turned upside down by the petty violence that characterises the present day”.

A book title “How the Earth Got Its Beauty” authored by Sudha Murty

A book titled “How the Earth Got Its Beauty” authored by Sudha Murty. The book was published by Penguin Random House imprint Puffin, has illustrations by Priyanka Pachpande.

Sudha Murty is a prolific writer in English and Kannada, she has written novels, technical books, travelogues, collections of short stories and non-fictional pieces, and four books for children. Her books have been translated into all the major Indian languages.

A book to explore life and works of Jayaprakash Narayan

A new biography of revolutionary leader and independence activist Jayaprakash Narayan will hit the stands on August 23, publisher Penguin Random House India. The book, “The Dream

of Revolution: A Biography of Jayaprakash Narayan”, shares anecdotes and never-before-told stories from the life of the man who was known for his “emotional hunger for transformative politics, shunning power and incubating revolutionary ideas”.

A book on “OPERATION KHUKRI” released by CDS Gen Rawat

CDS General Bipin Rawat was presented a book “OPERATION KHUKRI” by authors Major General Rajpal Punia & Ms Damini Punia. The book highlights the Indian Army’s successful rescue mission in Sierra Leone as part of the United Nations.

The year was 2000, Sierra Leone, in West Africa, had been ravaged by years of civil strife. With the intervention of the United Nations, two companies of the Indian Army were deployed in Kailahun as part of a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

A book “Mission Domination: An Unfinished Quest” by Boria Majumdar & Kushan Sarkar

A new book titled “Mission Domination: An Unfinished Quest” authored by Boria Majumdar & Kushan Sarkar. The Book Published by Simon & Schuster Publisher India Private Limited.

The Book talks about the short story of several Indian cricketers life events such as Rishabh Pant, Rohit Sharma, Shubman Gill, R. Ashwin, Cheteshwar Pujara.

A book ‘Address Book: A Publishing Memoir in the time of COVID’ by Ritu Menon

A book titled has ‘Address Book: A Publishing Memoir in the time of COVID’ by Ritu Menon. Menon, who co-founded Kali for Women, India’s first feminist press in 1983, is founder-director of Women Unlimited, an associate of KfW. Weeks after the March 2020 lockdown began, Menon started to write a diary.

A book titled ‘Battlefield’ authored by Vishram Bedekar

A book titled ‘Battlefield’ has been authored by Vishram Bedekar, translated from the Marathi original Ranaangan by Jerry Pinto. The book is the story of a shipboard romance between an Indian man and a German-Jewish woman, both fleeing Europe before the Second World War.

Sports News

Name	Tournament	Extra Information
Esteban Ocon	Hungarian GP 2021	This is the maiden F1 race win for Esteban Ocon. Sebastian Vettel (Aston Martin-Mercedes/Germany) came second. Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) finished third.
PV Sindhu	Bronze in Women's Badminton at Tokyo Olympics	With this win, Sindhu scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman and the only second Indian athlete to win two Olympic medals in individual events.
Alexander Zverev	Gold in men's singles tennis at Tokyo Olympics 2020	Germany's Alexander Zverev beats Russian Karen Khachanov 6-3 6-1 to win the men's singles gold at the Tokyo Olympics. He became the first German man to win singles Olympic gold.
United States	CONCACAF Gold Cup in football	United States clinched an exhilarating 1-0 extra-time win over defending champion Mexico to claim a seventh CONCACAF Gold Cup.
Lovlina Borgohain	Bronze Medal -Tokyo Olympics 2020	She lost to Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey by unanimous decision in the women's welterweight (69 kg) semifinal at Tokyo 2020.
Ravi Kumar Dahiya	silver medal at Tokyo Olympics 2020	Indian wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya bagged the silver medal after losing in the final of men's 57kg freestyle category to Russian Olympic Committee's (ROC) Zaur Uguev.
Indian team	bronze in men's hockey – Olympics	Indian men's hockey team defeated Germany to win their first-ever Olympic medal in 41 years. India wins the bronze medal in

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		men's hockey after beating Germany 5-4 at Tokyo Olympics.
Bajrang Punia	Olympic wrestling bronze medal	Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia has won the Olympic wrestling bronze medal match after 8-0 win over Daulet Niyazbekov of Kazakhstan in the men's freestyle 65kg category.
Neeraj Chopra	Olympic gold medal in Javelin throw	Neeraj Chopra has won a Gold medal for India in the javelin throw event at Tokyo Olympics. With a throw of 87.03 metres in his first attempt, Neeraj killed the competition. In his second he improved it to 87.58m and that turned out to be the golden throw.
Harshit Raja	India's 69th Chess Grandmaster	Grandmaster (GM) title is awarded to chess players by the world chess organization FIDE and is the highest title a chess player can attain.
Shaili Singh	Long Jump silver in WAU20 Championships	Her slight wind-aided effort of 6.59m was only 1cm short of the gold medal jump by Sweden's Maja Askag but her silver medal ensured that Indian athletics continues to showcase the progress it has been making.
Bhavina Patel	silver in Para Table Tennis	She had stormed into the finals after beating China's Zhang Miao 3-2 in her Class 4 match. She ended with a podium finish after losing out China's Zhou Ying 11-7, 11-5, 11-6 in the Class 4 Para Table Tennis finals.
SP Sethuraman	2021 Barcelona Open Chess Tournament	Chennai-born Sethuraman collected 7.5 points after the ninth and final round to tie the score with Daniil Yuffa of Russia. However, the Indian player emerged as the winner on the basis of a better tie-break score.

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		India's Karthikeyan Murali finished third.
Avani Lekhara	Gold in shooting - Paralympics 2020	The 19-year-old from Jaipur, who sustained spinal cord injuries in a car accident in 2012, finished with a world record-equalling total of 249.6, which is also a new Paralympic record.
Nishad Kumar	Silver in men's high jump - Paralympics 2020	This is the second medal for India at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics. The 23-year-old Nishad made a jump of 2.06m, and in doing so created an Asian record. He also equalled his jump with USA's Dallas Wise, who also took home silver.
Max Verstappen	Belgian Grand Prix 2021	The winner was decided based on progress made in these two laps. George Russell Williams came second and Lewis Hamilton, Mercedes came third.
Sumit Antil	Gold in Javelin throw – Paralympics	The 23-year-old Sumit hails from Sonapat in Haryana. Michal Burian of Australia won the silver medal (66.29m), while Sri Lanka's Dulan Kodithuwakku won the bronze medal.
Devendra Jhajharia	Silver in Javelin throw – Paralympics	Devendra Jhajharia won the silver medal in the men's javelin throw – F46 final event on August 30, 2021. The 40-year-old Devendra performed his best throw of 64.35, for the silver.
Yogesh Kathuniya	Silver in Discuss throw - Paralympics	Yogesh claimed the second spot with a throw of 44.38m. Batista dos Santos from Brazil won gold, setting a Paralympic record with a throw of 45.59m. L. Diaz Aldana from Cuba bagged bronze.

Obituary

Name	Associated Field
Man Kaur	World Masters gold medal winner
Kalyani Menon	Playback singer
Padma Sachdev	Padma Shri awardee
S.S. 'Babu' Nayaran	Olympian footballer
Anupam Shyam	Veteran actor
Maki Kaji	Creator of Sudoku puzzle
Kalyan Singh	Former UP CM
Om Nambiar	Renowned athletics coach
Buddhadeb Guha	Noted Bengali Writer
Vasoo Paranjape	Former India cricketer

Important Days and Themes

Day	Date	Theme
Muslim Women's Rights Day	August 01	
World Breastfeeding Week	August 01 – 07	Protect Breastfeeding: A Shared Responsibility
National Handloom Day	August 07	
Nagasaki Day	August 09	
International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples	August 09	Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract
World Lion Day	August 10	
World Biofuel Day	August 10	
World Elephant Day	August 12	
International Youth Day	August 12	Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health
World Organ Donation Day	August 13	
International Lefthanders Day	August 13	
Partition Horrors Remembrance Day	August 14	
World Humanitarian Day	August 19	TheHumanRace: a global challenge for climate action in solidarity with people who need it the most.
World Photography Day	August 19	
Akshay Urja Diwas	August 20	
World Mosquito Day	August 20	Reaching the zero-malaria target
Sadbhavana Diwas	August 20	
Sanskrit Week	August 19 to 25	
World Senior Citizen Day	August 21	
International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism	August 21	
World Sanskrit Day	August 22	
International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition	August 22	
International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief	August 22	
World Water Week	August 23 – 27	Building Resilience Faster
International Dog Day	August 26	

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National Sports Day	August 29	
International Day against Nuclear Tests:	August 29	
International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances	August 30	
National Small Industry Day	August 30	
National Small Industry Day	August 30	