

My Notes....

NATIONAL

NATIONAL

INDIA IN ITU'S GCI

India has made it to the top 10 in Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020 by ITU, moving up 37 places to rank as the tenth best country in the world on key cybersafety parameters. India is emerging as a global IT superpower, asserting its digital sovereignty with firm measures to safeguard data privacy and online rights of citizens.

As per the ranking

- India has moved up by 37 places to rank as the tenth best country in the world in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020 launched by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on 29 June 2021.
- The US topped the chart, followed by the UK and Saudi Arabia tied on the second position, while Estonia was ranked third in the index.
- India has also secured the fourth position in the Asia Pacific region, underlining its commitment to cybersecurity.
- The GCI results for India show substantial overall improvement and strengthening under all parameters of the cybersecurity domain.
- India scored a total of 97.5 points from a possible maximum of 100 points, to make it to the tenth position worldwide in the GCI 2020.
- India has worked relentlessly on all the five pillars over the last few years, resulting in significant improvement in its ranking in Global Cyber Security Index.

Flashback

- GCI assessment is done on the basis of performance on five parameters of cybersecurity including legal measures, technical measures, organisational measures, capacity development, and cooperation. The performance is then aggregated into an overall score.
- For each of the five aspects, all the countries' performance and commitment were assessed through a question-based online survey, which further allowed for the collection of the supporting evidence.
- Through in-depth consultations with a group of experts, the questions were then weighted and assessed, to arrive at the overall scores.

INDIA IN WORLD COMPETITIVENESS INDEX

India maintained 43rd rank on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development (IMD) that examined the impact of COVID-19 on economies around the world this year. The 64-nation list was led by Switzerland, while Sweden has moved up to the second position (from sixth last year), Denmark has lost one place to rank third, the Netherlands has retained its fourth place and Singapore has slipped to the fifth place (from first in 2020).

What

- At eighth, Taiwan reached the top-10 for the first time since the ranking began 33 years ago (moving up from 11th last year).
- The UAE and the USA remain in their same spots as last year (9th and 10th, respectively).
- The top-performing Asian economies are, in order, Singapore (fifth), Hong Kong

(seventh), Taiwan (eighth) and China (16th).

4. **Among the BRICS nations, India is ranked second** after China (16), followed by Russia (45th), Brazil (57th) and South Africa (62th).
5. **India has maintained its position for the past three years** but this year, it had significant improvements in government efficiency.
6. India's improvements in the government efficiency factor are mostly due to relatively **stable public finances** (despite difficulties brought by the pandemic, in 2020 the government deficit stayed at 7 per cent) and to the positive feedbacks we registered among Indian business executives with respect to the support and **subsidies provided by the government to the private companies.**

FAME-II SCHEME DEADLINE EXTENDED

The **Department of Heavy Industries** on 25 June 2021 announced the extension of the **government's flagship electric vehicles promotion scheme** by a period of two years **till March 2024**. The **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India Phase II (FAME-II) scheme**, which has a financial outlay of Rs 10,000 crore **to promote EVs by extending buyer subsidies**, was first announced as a **three-year program** effective from April 2019.

What

1. The circular did not mention any change in the **financial allocation** to the scheme.
2. The project has **fallen behind its targets** and only a fraction of the **intended number of EVs** has been sold under the program so far.
3. About **78,000 EVs in total have been sold under the scheme so far**, against the intended target of 1 million electric two-wheelers, 500,000 three-wheelers, 55,000 cars and 7,000 buses.
4. The department had earlier this month increased the subsidy given per electric two-wheeler, which is linked to the battery size, from **Rs 10,000 per kilowatt hour to Rs 15,000** in a bid to speed up the take of EVs in India.
5. The cap on maximum available subsidy was raised too **from 20% of the price of the vehicle to 40%**.
6. Recently, the **Gujarat government announced its own EV policy** which would have purchase incentives for EVs bought in the state on top of the **FAME-II scheme**.

Flashback

1. **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME-India) Scheme** is launched under **National Mission on Electric Mobility in 2011/ National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020**, unveiled in 2013.
2. The scheme aims to encourage progressive induction of reliable, affordable and **efficient electric and hybrid vehicles (xEV)**.
3. The First Phase of the scheme was **initially approved for a period of 2 years**, commencing from **1st April, 2015**.
4. The Scheme has been extended from time to time with the last extension allowed for a period up to **31st March 2019**.

SC ORDERS IMPLEMENTATION OF ONORC SCHEME

The Supreme Court on 29 June 2021 directed states and union territories to implement the '**one nation, one ration card (ONORC) scheme**' **till July 31**, while asking the Centre to provide dry ration for free distribution among migrant workers till the **COVID-19 situation continues**. A bench of justices **Ashok Bhushan and M R Shah** issued a slew of directions on a plea of **three activists** seeking directions to the Centre and states **to ensure food security, cash transfers and other welfare measures** for migrant workers

who faced distress again due to curfews and lockdowns in various parts of country during the **second wave of COVID-19**.

What

1. The bench directed the Centre to develop a portal with the help of the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** for **registration of unorganised sector** workers for granting them the **benefits of welfare schemes by July 31**.
2. It also directed the states, UTs **to run community kitchens** for migrant workers till the pandemic situation continues in respective states.
3. It asked the Centre **to keep allocating food grains to the states**, UTs for distribution among migrant workers for free till the pandemic situation exists.

What is the one 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system?

1. Under the **National Food Security Act, 2013**, persons are entitled to buy **subsidized foodgrain** from their designated **Fair Price Shops (FPS)** of the **Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)**.
2. In the present system, a **ration cardholder can buy foodgrains only from an FPS** that has been **assigned to her in the locality in which she lives**.
3. However, this will change once the **'One Nation, One Ration Card'** system becomes operational nationally.
4. This is how it will work: Suppose a **beneficiary lives in the district of Basti in Uttar Pradesh** and **migrates to Mumbai for work**.
5. Currently, she is **no longer able to purchase subsidised foodgrains from a PDS shop in her new locality in Mumbai**.
6. However, under the **'One Nation, One Ration Card'** system, the beneficiary will be able to **buy subsidised foodgrains** from any FPS across the country.

EXPANSION OF BHARATNET

The government on 28 June 2021 said it has allocated an additional Rs 19,041-crore towards the **expansion and upgradation of BharatNet**, a **nationwide initiative to connect 6 lakh villages** with **optic fibre-based network** for the delivery of Internet services.

What

1. The Rs. 19,041 crore for broadband to **each village through BharatNet public-private partnership model** has been earmarked as a **part of Digital India program**, according to a presentation by Finance Minister.
2. With the additional sum, the total outlay for the **BharatNet project** has reached Rs. 61,109 crores that

Flashback

1. **BharatNet**, originally conceived during the UPA-II government in **October, 2011**, has been marred with multiple challenges leading to missing of several deadlines.
2. The deadline to connect **all the 2.5 lakh village blocks in the country** to provide **100 Mbps data connectivity** has already been extended several times, with the **current deadline of August 2021 expected to be extended** as well.
3. Earlier this year, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology had pulled up the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for the delay in preparing a Cabinet note for the rollout of a **public-private partnership (PPP) model** for the **rural broadband initiative**.

includes the already-approved amount of Rs 42,068 crores in 2017.

3. The finance ministry's additional funding is in line with Prime Minister Announcement on August 15, 2020, **to connect every inhabited village in 1000 days**.
4. There is growing adoption of digital services such as **e-education and e-health**. The additional funding is the right accelerator and support from the Government for the **socio-economic development of the country**.

JOB CREATION UNDER IBPS SCHEME

The **India Business Process Outsourcing Promotion Scheme (IBPS)** launched by the Centre has **facilitated expansion of several IT and BPO companies** in tier-II and III cities across the country and **Tamil Nadu has become the second State** in new job generation, the **Software Technology Parks of India (STPI)** said on 19 June 2021.

What

1. **Under the IBPS Scheme, Andhra Pradesh is the highest in employment generation** by creating 12,234 new jobs **followed by Tamil Nadu** at 9,401 while remaining was spread across **Punjab, Odisha, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Bihar**.
2. **STPI, an autonomous body** under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**, is the executing agency for India BPO Promotion Scheme.
3. In recent years, IBPS has generated direct employment for more than 40,000 people residing in tier-II and III cities, out of which about **38 per cent are women**.
4. The **BPO Promotion Schemes** have received an overwhelming response from the BPO industry. Currently, 252 BPO/ITeS units are operational on 47,043 seats under the scheme.

TRANSMISSION CHARGES WAIVER EXTENDED

The union ministry of power **extended the exemption on transmission charges till 2025**. The waiver also now includes **battery storage, pump hydro projects** along with **solar and wind**. In a public order, the ministry of power said, "**Extension of the waiver of Inter-state transmission system (ISTS) charges** on transmission of electricity from solar and wind sources of projects to be commissioned **upto 30th June, 2025**".

What

1. The order further said that waiver of charges would also be **allowed for pump hydro and battery storage projects** as well if **70 per cent** of the electricity produced from these units is generated from **solar and wind sources**.
2. **ISTS charges would be levied gradually** on pump hydro and battery storage projects. It would be aligned with the reduction in tariff and payment of debt.
3. The ministry also waived off ISTS charges for renewable energy that is **traded on the power exchanges till 2023**.
4. The exemption will be for **clean energy traded under Green term ahead market** and Green day ahead market.

Flashback

1. The **ISTS waiver was first introduced in 2019** by the Centre in order to **bring down the tariff of solar and wind projects** and increase investors' interest.
2. The discounted ISTS charges are socialised and **shared by the Central transmission utility and the state governments**.
3. The waiver was **set to expire this June**. Earlier this year it was extended to 2023 but the latest order has taken the deadline two years further.

LIDAR SURVEY REPORTS IN FOREST AREAS

Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar 25 June 2021 released **LiDAR-based reports** mapping out the **water requirement within forest areas in 10 states**. These reports will be used to **augment groundwater in forest areas** so that animals don't venture out in search of water. The **LiDAR (light detection and ranging) technology** was used to **create 3-D images of the project areas** to recommend soil and water conservation structures.

What

1. The surveys were carried out at **forest areas in Assam, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, and Tripura**.
2. The project, awarded to **WAPCOS**, a PSU under the **Jal Shakti Ministry**, is "a first of its kind and a unique experiment **using LiDAR technology** which will help augment water and fodder in jungles areas thereby reducing **human-animal conflict**".
3. The survey will help us in **identifying areas which need groundwater recharge** which will in turn help local communities.
4. Four more states will submit their surveys by 15 July 2021, while the rest will submit their reports by September.
5. The **soil and water conservation structures** will help in **catching rainwater** and prevent stream run-off, which will help in recharging groundwater.
6. The project was **awarded to WAPCOS in July 2020** at a cost of over Rs18 crore for implementation in 26 states over 261897 hectares.
7. **WAPCOS** with the **participation of State Forest Departments** identified one major ridge inside a forest block in these states with average area of 10,000 ha selected in each State for preparation of Detailed Project Reports for planning and identifying locations and structures for construction of appropriate and feasible **micro soil and water conservation structures** consistent with site **specific geography, topography and soil characteristics**.

Flashback

1. **WAPCOS** has prepared these **DPR's using LiDAR technology** in which the **3-D(three dimensional) DEM** (Digital Elevation Model), imagery and layers of the project areas are used for recommending different types of **Soil & Water conservation structures** such as **Anicut, Gabion, Gully Plug, Mini percolation tank, Percolation Tank, Field bund, Sunken pond, Farm pond** etc.
2. These structures will help in **catching the rain water and prevent stream run off**, which will help in recharging of Ground water.

MOU FOR SVAMITVA SCHEME

The **Assam government** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **Survey of India** for implementing the **Svmitva scheme** in the state, which aims to **provide an integrated property validation solution for rural areas**. The **Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj**, and **Assam Government's Department of Revenue and Disaster Management** will implement the scheme with the support of the Panchayat and Rural Development.

What

1. **Survey of India**, as the **technology partner**, will take steps for survey of inhabited rural land by drone as well as establishment of **ground based control stations** to enable a detailed spatial database of properties in rural areas.
2. It is expected **to reduce property related disputes in rural areas** and legal cases.
3. The **Svmitva scheme** was launched on a pilot basis on 24 April 2020, on the occasion

of **National Panchayati Raj Day**, and was rolled out across India on 24 April this year.

- The scheme would provide the '**record of rights**' to village household owners possessing houses in **inhabited rural areas in villages** which, in turn, would enable them **to use their property as a financial asset** for taking loans and other financial benefits from banks.

INTERNATIONAL

US-INDIA HYDROGEN TASK FORCE

The **United States Department of Energy (DOE)**, India's **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** and the **US India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF)** have jointly launched a **US-India Hydrogen Task Force** on 18 June 2021. This is under the **US-India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP)**.

What

- India and US had decided to revamp their strategic partnership to **focus on clean energy sectors** such as **biofuels and hydrogen** after the Joe Biden administration took charge.
- In March this year, the two countries said they will intensify efforts to take advantage of advanced U.S. technologies and **India's rapidly growing energy market**.
- This **new Task Force** represents industry and government stake holders to assess technology status, **study innovative policy options**, and **make recommendations**.
- The formation of this task force was **first announced in April 2021** by US Deputy Secretary of Energy, David M Turk.
- The US and India can help solve the climate crisis by finding ways to scale up access, affordability, and **deployment of critical hydrogen technologies**.
- The **Hydrogen Task Force** will be organized into a **Steering Committee** at the Government level, an Industry council, and working groups or subcommittees in identified priority areas. The **focus will be on strengthening cooperation on hydrogen** between industry and institutions from both countries.

INDIA ABSTAINS FROM UNGA RESOLUTION

India has abstained on a **UN General Assembly resolution on Myanmar**, saying its views have **not been reflected in the draft resolution** and a "**consultative and constructive**" approach involving Myanmar's neighbouring countries is important as the international community strives for the **peaceful resolution of the issue**.

What

- The **UNGA adopted a resolution on Myanmar** on 18 June 2021 that called "**upon the Myanmar armed forces to respect the people's will** as freely expressed by results of the general election of 8 November 2020, **to end the state of emergency, to respect all human rights of people of Myanmar** and **to allow the sustained democratic transition of Myanmar**."
- The resolution was **adopted with 119 countries voting "yes", Belarus voting "no" and India along with 35 other countries abstaining**, including China and Russia.
- In its explanation of vote, India said "**we find that our views have not been reflected in the draft** being considered for adoption today.
- The fact that there is **lack of support from all neighbouring countries** as well as several countries in the region itself should, hopefully, serve as an eye-opener to those who choose to pursue a hasty course of action, India said, adding that it does not

believe that the tabling of this resolution for adoption at this juncture, is "conducive to aiding our joint efforts towards strengthening democratic process in Myanmar".

ANTONIO GUTERRES RE-ELECTED FOR SECOND TERM

UN General Assembly on 18 June 2021 appointed **Antonio Guterres as the UN Secretary General** for a **second term** beginning **1 January 2022**, days after the powerful Security Council unanimously recommended his name to the 193-member body for re-election. This was announced by the President of the **75th session of the UN General Assembly Volkan Bozkir**.

What

1. **Bozkir then administered the oath of office to 72-year-old Guterres** at the podium of the UN General Assembly Hall.
2. On 8 June 2021, the **15-nation Council** had held a closed meeting where it adopted by acclamation the resolution that recommended **Guterres' name to the 193-member General Assembly for a second five-year term** as Secretary General from 1 January 2022-31 December 2026.
3. **India had expressed its support for re-election of Guterres** as UN Chief and welcomed the adoption of the resolution recommending his name.
4. **Under the UN Charter, the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly** upon the recommendation of the Security Council. **Each Secretary-General has the option of a second term** if they can garner enough support from Member States.
5. **Guterres, the ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations**, took oath of office on 1 January 2017 and his first term ends on 31 December this year.
6. **Former Prime Minister of Portugal**, Guterres served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for a decade from June 2005 to December 2015.

LOC TO SRI LANKA FOR SOLAR ENERGY PROJECTS

India has extended a USD 100 million **Line of Credit (LoC) to Sri Lanka** to help the island nation **finance various projects in the solar energy sector** and ensures that the country's 70 per cent power requirements are fulfilled by renewable energy sources by 2030.

What

1. **India becomes the first country** to partner with Sri Lanka in **fulfilling the vision of the President of Sri Lanka** to ensure that 70 per cent of Sri Lanka's national power requirements are fulfilled by **renewable energy sources by 2030**.
2. A **total of 89 countries**, including **Sri Lanka**, have **signed the Framework Agreement of the ISA**, which was jointly launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former French president Francois Hollande **to bring together countries to promote large-scale deployment of solar energy** and overcome challenges related to **technology, finance and capacity**.
3. The **shared vision of our countries in the renewable energy sector** reflects our common national priorities and convergence of approaches for sustainable development.
4. **Over the past 7 years, solar power generation in India has increased** significantly to reach **34.6 GW in 2021** from about **2.6GW in March 2014**. The **National Solar Mission of India** aims to increase it further to **100 GW and beyond**.

INDIA, US KICK OFF MEGA WARGAME

India and the US on 23 June 2021 kicked off a two-day multi-domain wargame in the Indian Ocean involving an array of air defence platforms to further consolidate their operational synergy in the face of China's increasing military presence in the region.

What

1. The US has deployed its **naval carrier strike group**, led by the nuclear-powered **aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan**, as well as a **fleet of F-18 fighter jets** and E-2C Hawkeye all-weather aircraft for the exercise.
2. The Indian assets at the exercise included **Jaguar and Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jets**, IL-78 air-to-air refuelling tanker aircraft, **AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) aircraft** and warships **Kochi and Teg**.
3. The Indian Navy has also deployed a fleet of **PSI maritime surveillance aircraft** and MiG 29K jets, apart from other platforms.
4. The US Carrier Strike Group (CSG) is currently deployed in the Indian Ocean region.
5. A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a **mega naval fleet** comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates and other ships.
6. The two-day exercise aims to **strengthen the bilateral relationship** and cooperation by demonstrating the ability to integrate and coordinate comprehensively in **maritime operations**.
7. The exercise is being carried out **south of Thiruvananthapuram**, on the western seaboard.

Flashback

1. The **Indo-US defence ties** have been on an upswing in the last few years. In June 2016, the US had designated India as a "**Major Defence Partner**".
2. The two countries have also inked **key defence and security pacts** over the last few years, including the **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016** that allows their militaries to use each other's bases for repair and replenishment of supplies as well as provides for deeper cooperation.
3. The two sides have also signed the **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018** that provides for interoperability between the two militaries and the sale of high-end technology from the US to India.
4. In October last year, India and the US sealed the **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** to further boost the bilateral defence ties.
5. The pact provides for the sharing of high-end military technology, logistics and geospatial maps between the two countries.

ECONOMY

GOVT AMENDS RULES PERTAINING TO INDIAN ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

The government has amended rules pertaining to various **Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS)**, including those related to **interest rate benchmark reform**. **Ind AS** are converged with the **International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)**. On 18 June 2021, the corporate affairs ministry notified the **Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2021**. The changes have been made after consultations with the **National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)**.

What

1. Under the revised rules, **entities are required to make additional disclosures** related

to **interest rate benchmark reform**.

2. These disclosures are to enable users of financial statements to understand the effect of interest rate benchmark reform on an entity's financial instruments and **risk management strategy**.
3. Entities would have to **disclose the nature and extent of risks** to which they are exposed arising from financial instruments subject to interest rate benchmark reform, and how the entities manage these risks.
4. Among others, there are changes in the basis for determining the contractual cash flows as a result of **interest rate benchmark reform**.
5. The disclosures will **enable users of financial statements** to understand the effect of these changes, including an entity's progress in completing the **transition to alternative benchmark rates**.

74% FDI CAP IN INSURANCE SECTOR NOTIFIED

The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** has notified the government's decision to increase the **foreign direct investment (FDI) limit** in the **insurance sector** under the **automatic route** to **75 per cent from 49 per cent** earlier.

What

1. The decision will take effect from the date of **FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) notification**.
2. The **Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2021**, was passed by Parliament in **March**. The Bill **amended the Insurance Act, 1938**.
3. **FDI in the insurance sector** was increased from **26 per cent to 49 per cent in 2015**.
4. The announcement for hiking the FDI limit was made in the **Union Budget 2021-22** on 1 February 2021.
5. The new arrangement is expected to benefit **23 private life insurers, 21 private non-life insurers** and **seven specialised private health insurance companies**.

INTERNATIONAL MSMEs DAY 2021

The **United Nations** observes **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) day** on **27 June 2021 every year since 2017** to recognise the contribution of these industries in the implementation of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. The **theme** of the Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day 2021 is "**MSME 2021: the key to an inclusive and sustainable recovery**."

What

1. The **UN designated 27 June** as **Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day** through a resolution passed in the **UN General Assembly in April 2017**.
2. A month later in May 2017, a program titled '**Enhancing National Capacities for Unleashing Full Potentials of MSMEs** in Achieving the SDGs in Developing Countries' was launched.
3. It has been funded by the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** Sub-Fund of the **United Nations Peace and Development Fund**.
4. By observing the MSMEs Day, the UN wants countries to **recognise sustainable development goals** and **create awareness about them**.

SECOND WAVE STIMULUS ANNOUNCED

Government on 28 June 2021 announced a cover of Rs **50,000 crore for ramping up health infrastructure in tier-2 and 3 cities**, and **Rs 23,220 crore additional allocation** with primary focus on **paediatric care**. The **loan guarantee scheme** would provide **75 per cent coverage for new projects** and **50 per cent for those in expansion mode**. Maximum loan of **up to Rs 100 crore** would be given for up to three years at the interest rate capped at **7.95 per cent**.

What

1. Other than the **eight metro cities**, health infrastructure in all other areas will be focused. If the focus is on **aspirational districts 65 per cent cover will be provided**, FM said.
2. Finance Minister said that the allocation of Rs 23,220 crore would also be used to **increase human resource capabilities** by funding the hiring of medical and nursing students along with increasing the availability of ICU beds, oxygen supply at central, district and subdistrict level.
3. The additional allocation would also **finance equipment, medicines, access to teleconsultation, ambulance services**. Besides child care, these funds would also be used for ramping up testing capacity and supportive diagnostics and **to strengthen capacity for surveillance and genome sequencing**.
4. This fund (Rs 23,200 crore) will be spent in **this financial year itself**. The **primary focus is on children** but others also will benefit from it.
5. Last year, FM said that, **Rs 15,000 crore Emergency Health Systems Project** was brought in during 2020-21.
6. Through this fund there was a **25-fold increase in Covid dedicated hospitals, 7.5 times increase in oxygen supported beds**, 42 fold increase in isolation beds, 45 fold increase in ICU beds.

Flashpoint

1. **Rs 50000 crore for health sector**. A guarantee coverage of **50% for expansion of health related projects** and **75% for new projects**.
2. A **50% guarantee coverage for aspirational districts** in case of both expansion and new projects.
3. **Up to Rs 100 crore loan at 7.95% to health sector**.
4. **Rs 23,220 crore to be provided for paediatric care/paediatric beds** at hospitals.
5. As many as 25 lakh people will be benefitted under ECLGS. A maximum **Rs 1.25 lakhs amount will be lent to the smallest borrowers** by micro-finance institutions. **Focus is on new lending & not on repayment of old loans**.
6. Government will also extend **Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana** to foot employer, employee's share of post-retiral benefit of new hires by private companies
7. **Free foodgrain to poor till November 2021** to take total cost of **Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana** to Rs 2.27 lakh crore
8. Additional Rs **14,775 cr fertilizer subsidy** to be provided over and above Rs 85,413 cr budgeted.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ROCKET BLASTS OFF TO NEW SPACE STATION

The **first astronauts for China's new space station** blasted off on 17 June 2021 for the **country's longest crewed mission to date**, a landmark step in establishing Beijing as a major space power. The **trio launched on a Long March-2F rocket** for the **Tiangong station**, where they will spend three months.

What

1. To **prepare for the mission**, the crew has **undergone more than 6,000 hours** of training, including hundreds of underwater somersaults in full space gear.
2. The Chinese space agency is **planning a total of 11 launches** through to the end of next year, including three more manned missions which will deliver two lab modules to expand the 70-tonne station, and supplies and crew members.
3. The first crew will test and **maintain the systems onboard conduct spacewalks and undertake scientific experiments**.
4. China's space ambitions have been **fuelled in part by a US ban on its astronauts on the International Space Station** collaboration between the **United States, Russia, Canada, Europe and Japan**.
5. It is **due for retirement after 2024** even though NASA said it could potentially remain functional beyond 2028.
6. **Tiangong will be much smaller than the ISS**, and is expected **to have a lifespan of at least 10 years**.

PINAKA ROCKET SYSTEM SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRED

The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has successfully **test-fired** the extended range version of **indigenously-developed Pinaka rocket** from a **Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL)** on 24 June and 25 June 2021. The system has been developed by two **Pune-based DRDO facilities**.

What

1. The tests were conducted at the **Integrated Test Range** in Chandipur off the coast of Odisha, during which **25 enhanced Pinaka Rockets** were launched in quick succession against targets at different ranges.
2. The **enhanced range version of Pinaka Rocket System** can destroy targets at **distances up to 45 km**.
3. All the flight articles were tracked by range instruments including **Telemetry, Radar and Electro Optical Tracking System** deployed by DRDO facilities – Integrated Test Range (ITR) and **Proof and Experimental Establishment (PXE)**.

Flashback

1. The rocket system has been developed jointly by Pune-based DRDO labs **Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE)** and **High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL)**, with manufacturing support from **Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur**.
2. The development of the enhanced Pinaka system was taken up to achieve longer range performance.

NANOGENERATOR DEVELOPED

Scientists have fabricated a simple, cost-effective, bio-compatible, transparent **nanogenerator** that **can generate electricity from vibrations** all around for use in **optoelectronics, self-powered devices** and **other biomedical applications**, the government said on 26 June 2021. The **Science and Technology Ministry** said searching for **renewable energy resources with reduced carbon emissions** is one of the most urgent challenges due to the increasing threat of **global warming** and **energy crisis**.

What

1. Some of the unconventional methods to generate electricity include **piezoelectric, thermoelectric, and electrostatic techniques** used in devices like touch screens, electronic displays, and so forth, the Ministry said.
2. The **Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences**, Bengaluru, an autonomous institute under the **department of science and technology**, Government of India, have designed a **transparent triboelectric nanogenerator (TENG)**, using **thermoplastic polyurethanes (TPU)** either in the form of electrospun nanofibers or as a flat film using the simpler doctor's blade technique, along with **polyethylene terephthalate (PET)** as tribo layers.
3. **TPU nanofibers** are obtained from the **electrospinning (ES) technique**. The **doctor's blade technique**, a routine procedure adapted in a variety of situations, involves squeezing the material through a blade.
4. In this, the substrate yields a uniform thin layer. This technique is cost effective compared to currently available **fabrication techniques** on account of active material being easily available, and owing to the simplicity of the procedure.
5. The resulting device is also highly efficient, robust, and gives reproducible output over long hours of operation.

AGNI PRIME MISSILE SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRED

India on 28 June 2021 successfully **test-fired its new generation** nuclear-capable **Agni Prime missile** from a defence base off Odisha coast. The **surface-to-surface ballistic missile** has a range of **1000 to 2000 km**. The sleek missile of the Agni series was test-fired from a mobile launcher off the **Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha**.

What

1. The **Agni-Prime missile** is part of **India's most ambitious Agni series** developed by the **DRDO**.
2. The **new Agni missile** has been developed with the **cutting-edge technologies** used in **4000-km range Agni-IV** and **5000-km Agni-V missiles**.
3. The **two-stage** and **solid-fuelled weapon system** is guided by **inertial navigation systems** based on advanced **ring-laser gyroscopes**.
4. Both stages have composite rocket motors and guidance systems are equipped with **electromechanical actuators**.
5. **Agni-Prime is a new generation advanced variant** of the Agni class of missiles. The new nuclear-capable missile is fully made up of composite material and it was a **textbook launch**.
6. Under the **Make in India initiative**, today Indian scientists are engaged in manufacturing their own missiles in their own country without relying on foreign countries.
7. Many of these missiles are wanted in the world market today. Many countries of the world now want to buy Indian missiles. Most of the missiles are **made of indigenous**

knowledge and skills.

FIRST UNCREWED MISSION OF GAGANYAAN

The **Indian Space Research Organisation** is racing against time to launch the **first uncrewed mission** in December, as part of the human spaceflight programme 'Gaganyaan', due to the adverse impact of the COVID-19-induced lockdowns that has disrupted hardware delivery schedules. As part of the mandate of Gaganyaan, **two uncrewed flights are planned** to test the **end-to-end capacity** for the **manned mission**.

What

1. The space agency said the first and second waves of the pandemic have "**severely affected**" the Gaganyaan programme.
2. **Hardware elements for the mission** are fabricated by the industry, and lockdowns in different parts of the country at different period have adversely impacted delivery schedules.
3. Design, analysis and documentation are done by ISRO while **hardware for Gaganyaan is fabricated** and supplied by hundreds of industries across the country" an ISRO said.
4. The **objective of the Gaganyaan programme** is to demonstrate the capability to **send humans to low earth orbit on board** an Indian launch vehicle and bring them back to earth safely.
5. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Space, Jitendra Singh said in **February this year** that the **first unmanned mission is planned in December 2021** and the **second unmanned one in 2022-23**, followed by the **human spaceflight demonstration**.
6. Four Indian astronaut-candidates have already undergone **generic space flight** training in Russia as part of the **Gaganyaan programme**.
7. ISRO's heavy-lift launcher **GSLV Mk III** has been identified for the mission.

Flashback

1. Formal announcement of the **Gaganyaan programme** was made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address on 15 August 2018.
2. The initial target was to **launch the human spaceflight** before the **75th anniversary of India's independence** on 15 August 2022.
3. **ISRO** is also taking the help of **French, Russian and US space agencies** in "some of the crucial activities and supply of components".

WORLD ASTEROID DAY CELEBRATED

World Asteroid Day is **marked and celebrated globally** on 30 June every year. It is usually observed **in order to raise public awareness about asteroid's hazardous effect** and the measures that should be taken in case of a **near-Earth object threat**. The **United Nation General Assembly (UNGA)** designated the day as the **anniversary of the Tunguska impact over Siberia**, which happened in the year 1908. **Tunguska is the largest asteroid** till date that affected the earth.

What

1. The **UN adopted a resolution in December 2016** and declared **30 June as International Asteroid Day**.
2. The day marks the anniversary of the **Tunguska impact over Siberia**, Russian Federation, on 30 June 1908.
3. The General Assembly took the decision on the basis of a proposal made by the **Association of Space Explorers and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)**.

- Space agencies in several countries like ESA (European Space Agency), JAXA (Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency), Roscosmos (Russia), **ISRO (India)**, and NASA (USA) organize events on this day to educate common people about the impact of asteroids and meteors.

What is an Asteroid?

- Asteroids are **small, rocky objects** orbiting the Sun. They are also known as **leftover material of the Solar System** and found between the **orbits of Mars and Jupiter**.
- Their size ranges from about the size of pebbles to around 600 miles across. There are **several hundred thousand asteroids believed to exist** in our Solar System.

MISCELLANEOUS

INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY OBSERVED

The international community observes **21 June 2021 as International Yoga Day**, recognising the many benefits of the ancient Indian practice of yoga. The year 2021 marks the **7th annual International Yoga Day**. The **United Nations theme** for this year is “**Yoga for well-being**”, which takes into account how the practice can promote the holistic health of every individual.

What

- The **UN proclaimed 21 June as International Day of Yoga** by passing a resolution on **11 December 2014** during the **69th session of the General Assembly**.
- The **first Yoga Day celebrations were held in 2015** at Raj Path in New Delhi and PM, along with other dignitaries, had created **two Guinness World Records**.
- The first record was set for housing 35,985 people and being the **world’s largest yoga session**.
- The second one was for having the **most number (84) of nationalities participating** in it.
- The **word ‘yoga’ is derived from Sanskrit** and means **to join or to unite**, symbolising the union of a person’s body and consciousness.
- In its **‘Common Yoga Protocol’** from 2019, the **Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)** lists Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāṇāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, Samādhi, Bandhās and Mudrās, Śaṭkarmas, Yuktāhāra, Mantra-japa, Yukta-karma as popular yoga ‘sadhanas’.

FIRST EVER CASE OF GREEN FUNGUS

A **34-year-old Covid-19 survivor** was diagnosed with **Green Fungus infection** in Madhya Pradesh's Indore and was shifted to Mumbai by air ambulance for treatment. The patient was found to have **Green Fungus (Aspergillosis) infection** in his sinuses, lungs and blood, a **first ever case reported in India**. Besides **Green, Black, White** and **Yellow fungus infections** have also been reported from different parts of the country recently.

What is Green Fungus?

- Green Fungus is Aspergillosis**, an **infection caused by Aspergillus**, a common mold (a type of fungus) that **lives indoors and outdoors**. Most people breathe in Aspergillus spores every day without getting sick.

2. However, AIIMS has said that it is better to **identify mucormycosis** by its name rather than by the colour.
3. **Mucormycosis is not a communicable disease**, unlike Covid-19. About 90-95 per cent of patients getting infected with mucormycosis are found to have been either diabetic and/or taking steroids. This infection is seen very rarely in those who are neither diabetic nor taking steroids.
4. According to doctors, more research is needed on whether the **nature of green fungus infection in people** who have recovered from Covid-19 is different from other patients.

Why is it called Green Fungus?

1. **It is not that the fungal infection gives colour shades** in the body. Its name is because the **colour appears during its culture in the lab** while testing it.
2. **Fungus show colour in their culture**. There are **black, yellow, green and white fungus** but these are all specimens of **mucormycosis, cinderella and aspergillus**.
3. **Mucormycosis gives black colour**, while **cinderella gives white** and **aspergillus gives green and yellow colour** in different species.
4. There are **various types of fungal infections** such as **candida, aspergillosis, cryptococcus, histoplasmosis and coccidioidomycosis**.
5. **Mucormycosis, candida and aspergillosis** are the ones observed more in those with **low immunity**.

CORPORATIZATION OF OFB

The government on 16 June 2021 approved the **splitting of the floundering Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)** and its **41 factories into seven corporate entities** to improve its functioning as the main supplier of **arms, ammunition and clothing to the armed forces**.

What

1. The “**corporatization**” of **OFB**, which has an annual turnover of around Rs 19,000 crore, **into seven 100% government-owned entities** dealing with **ammunition and explosives, vehicles (tanks, combat and mine-protected vehicles, trawls), weapons and equipment** (artillery and anti-aircraft guns, rifles), **troop comfort items**, optoelectronics, and parachutes.
2. It’s a **big, historic decision** from the point of **view of national security**. The restructuring will make OFB autonomous, more productive and cost-efficient as well as enhance quality and increase exports.
3. The overall aim is **to make India 'atmanirbhar' (self-reliant) in defence preparedness**.
4. The **OFB overhaul** is desperately required in the **backdrop of the 13-lakh strong Army** repeatedly sounding the alarm over the unacceptably high number of accidents, deaths and injuries taking place in the field due to the poor and defective quality of ammunition being supplied for tanks, artillery, air defence and other guns.

DELTA VARIANT IN 85 COUNTRIES

The **Delta variant**, the **significantly more transmissible strain of COVID-19**, is expected to become a **dominant lineage** if current trends continue, the **WHO has warned after it was reported in 85 countries** and continues to be detected in more places around the world.

What

1. The **COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update** released on 22 June 2021 by the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** said that globally, the **variant Alpha has been reported in 170 countries, territories or areas, Beta in 119 countries, Gamma in 71 countries and Delta in 85 countries.**
2. Delta, now reported in 85 countries globally, continues to be reported in new countries across all WHO Regions, **11 of which were newly reported in the past two weeks**, the update said.
3. WHO said the **four current 'Variants of Concern'** being monitored closely **Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta** - are widespread and have been detected in all WHO regions.
4. The **Delta variant is significantly more transmissible than Alpha variant**, and is expected to become a dominant lineage if current trends continue.

Flashback

1. **Alpha:** The **UK or Kent variant** (also known as B.1.1.7) that is **prevalent in Britain** — with more than 200,000 cases identified — and has spread to more than 50 countries and appears to be mutating again.
2. **Beta:** The **South Africa variant (B.1.351)** has been identified in at least **20 other countries**, including the UK.
3. **Gamma:** The **Brazil variant (P.1)** has spread to more than 10 other countries.
4. **Delta:** The **variant was first detected in India (B.1.617.2)** of which more than 3,000 cases have been seen across the UK.

FIRST BULLET TRAIN IN TIBET

China on 25 June 2021 operationalised its **first fully electrified bullet train** in the **remote Himalayan region of Tibet**, connecting the provincial capital Lhasa and Nyingchi, a strategically located Tibetan border town close to Arunachal Pradesh. The 435.5-km Lhasa-Nyingchi section of the **Sichuan-Tibet Railway** has been inaugurated ahead of the centenary celebrations of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) on 1 July 2021.

What

1. The **first electrified railway in Tibet Autonomous Region** opened on 25 June 2021, **linking Lhasa with Nyingchi** as “Fuxing” bullet trains enter official operation on the plateau region.
2. The **Sichuan-Tibet Railway will be the second railway into Tibet** after the **Qinghai-Tibet Railway**. It will go through the southeast of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, one of the world’s most geologically active areas.
3. **China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of South Tibet**, which is **firmly rejected by India**.
4. The **India-China border dispute** covers the **3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC)**.

WORLD DRUG DAY 2021

26 June every year is observed as **International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking** or **World Drug Day** to create awareness about **issues related to drugs** and seek international cooperation to combat its **effects on health, society, and governance**.

What

1. This year, the **theme** is ‘**Share Facts On Drugs, Save Lives**’. According to the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, the motive is to combat misinformation by sharing real facts on drugs — from health risks and solutions for the world drug

DELHI: VIJAY NAGAR 9717380832 & OLD RAJENDER NAGAR 9811293743 | JAIPUR: 8290800441
 BENGALURU: KORMANGALA 7619166663 & CHANDRA LAYOUT 7619136662 | BHOPAL: 7509975361
 PATNA: 7463950774 | INDORE: 7314977441 | RANCHI: 9939982007 | www.ksgindia.com

problem to evidence-based prevention, treatment, and care.

2. As per UNODC, one should '**Know the facts**', and 'only share information from verified sources, like UNODC'.
3. **UNODC prepares the World Drug Report** which contains factual data and statistics to address the current drug problem.

Flashback

1. The day **26 June** was chosen by the UN General Assembly, on **7 December 1987**, as **International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking** by its resolution.
2. The assembly made the decision to observe this day as an expression of its resolution to make **international society free of drug abuse**.

GOVT EXTENDS AG TENURE BY A YEAR

The government on 28 June 2021 **extended** senior advocate and renowned constitutional expert K K Venugopal's **tenure as attorney general (AG)** for India **by another year**. Law ministry sources said Venugopal was persuaded to continue in the **constitutional post for another year till June 30, 2022**.

What

1. **Venugopal, first appointed as AG** on 30 June 2017, during **Modi government's first term**, will turn 90 in September and will **become the oldest senior advocate to hold the constitutional post**.
2. Renowned jurist **M C Setalvad was India's first attorney general** and had the **longest tenure from 1950 to 1963**.
3. Last year, Venugopal had agreed to continue for a year, till 30 June 2021, after a lot of persuasion from the Centre.
4. The **Attorney General for India** is appointed by the President **under Article 76 of the Constitution**.
5. As per this Article, a person who is **qualified to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court** can be the Attorney General for India.
6. It provides that "it will be the duty of the Attorney General **to give advice to the Government of India upon such legal matters**, and to perform such other duties of a legal character, as may from time to time be referred or assigned to him by the President, and to discharge the functions conferred on him by or under this Constitution or any other law for the time being in force."

MODERNA'S COVID VACCINE GETS INDIA NOD

Moderna Inc.'s covid-19 vaccine on 29 June 2021 became the **first messenger RNA jab** and the **fourth overall to be authorized** for emergency use during the pandemic, with the **Drugs Controller General of India** granting its local partner **Cipla Ltd an import licence**. It is the **first foreign vaccine** to get approval under the **government's revised norms** for accelerated regulatory clearance of covid-19 jabs.

What

1. With this approval, **Moderna's coronavirus vaccine** would be the **fourth COVID-19 jab** to be available in India after **Covishield, Covaxin, and Sputnik**.
2. Before India, the **Moderna vaccine was approved in more than 40 countries** like the US, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Israel, Qatar, the UK, etc.
3. It is **one of the four vaccines** that have received the "**green pass**" after **European**

DELHI: VIJAY NAGAR 9717380832 & OLD RAJENDER NAGAR 9811293743 | JAIPUR: 8290800441
 BENGALURU: KORMANGALA 7619166663 & CHANDRA LAYOUT 7619136662 | BHOPAL: 7509975361
 PATNA: 7463950774 | INDORE: 7314977441 | RANCHI: 9939982007 | www.ksgindia.com

Medicines Agency's (EMA) approval.

ENTIRE NAGALAND DECLARED 'DISTURBED AREA'

The **entire state of Nagaland** has been declared a “**disturbed area**” for **six more months**, till December-end, under the controversial **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act** which empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and **arrest anyone without any prior warrant**.

What

1. In a notification, the **Union Home Ministry** said on 30 June 2021 the government is of the opinion that the area comprising the whole of the state of Nagaland is in such a **disturbed and dangerous condition** that the **use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary**.
2. Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by **Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958**, the central government, hereby, declares that whole of the state of Nagaland to be '**disturbed area**' for a period of six months with effect from 30th June, 2021 for the purpose of the said Act, the notification said.
3. The decision has been taken as **killings, loots and extortion cases** have been going on in various parts of the state which necessitated the action for the convenience of the security forces operating there.
4. The **AFSPA has been in force in Nagaland for decades**.
5. It was not withdrawn even after a **framework agreement** was signed on 3 August 2015 between **Naga insurgent group NSCN-IM** general secretary Thuingaleng Muivah and government interlocutor R N Ravi in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
6. The **framework agreement came after over 80 rounds of negotiations** spanning 18 years with the **first breakthrough in 1997** when the ceasefire agreement was sealed after decades of insurgency in Nagaland.