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BAZOOKA

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE

MARCH-2021 COVERAGE



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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. The Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting said that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is associating with **IIT Bombay** to form a **Centre of Excellence** in **gaming** and other related areas.
2. **Ministry of Culture** has organized 3rd and final edition of **Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2021 at Murshidabad, West Bengal**.
 - Directors of all zonal cultural centres of Ministry of Culture were present during inauguration of Mahotsav and lit the ceremonial lamp.
3. The Union Minister of **Health & Family Welfare** and Science & Technology, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, inaugurated the second edition of **Global-Bio India-2021** on March 1, 2021. This is a three-day event which will be organised from March 1 to March 3, 2021 under the Theme– '**Transforming Lives**' along with the tagline '**Biosciences to Bio-economy**'.
4. The National Association of Software and Service Companies (**NASSCOM**) is all set to launch its '**AI Game Changers**' program in India.
 - The programme will be launched to promote the artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation across the country.
 - The programme is being run in collaboration with the innovation partner for the programme, **Microsoft**.
5. PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated **Maritime India Summit-2021** through video conferencing.
 - It is organized by Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways on a virtual platform www.maritimeindiasummit.in.
 - It will visualize a roadmap for India's Maritime sector for next decade.
 - **Denmark** is the partner country for the three-day summit.
6. India has launched the "**Real-time Vessel Tracking System**" in order to help the seafarers and fishermen as and when they need. This system has been named as "**Sagar-Manthan: Mercantile Marine Domain Awareness Centre (MMDAC)**".
 - The system was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Maritime India Summit-2021.

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7. Union Agriculture Minister **Narendra Singh Tomar** has inaugurated **Saras Aajeevika Mela 2021** at **Noida Haat**
- It has been organized by **Ministry of Rural Development** under **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)**
 - **Aim:** to bring rural women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under one platform to show-case their skills
8. **CERAWeek Conference-2021** has been organized from **March 1 to 5, 2021** by **IHS Markit** based in Houston, Texas
- Theme: **The New Map: Energy, Climate, and Charting the Future**
 - It is an annual international energy conference of energy industry leaders, experts, government officials and policymaker
 - During this, PM Modi will receive **CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award**
9. Minister for Social justice and Empowerment **Thaawarchand Gehlot** will virtually launch '**Sugamya Bharat App**'.
- **Sugamya Bharat App:** Means for sensitising and enhancing accessibility. It provides for registration of complaints of inaccessibility, transportation sector and ICT ecosystem.
10. **Rajya Sabha TV** and **Lok Sabha TV** have been merged and now the new merged channel will be known as **Sansad TV**.
- **Sansad TV:** It will telecast live proceedings of both Upper and Lower Houses on two different channels during simultaneous sitting of the Houses.
11. Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal** has virtually inaugurated **New Delhi World Book Fair 2021-Virtual Edition**.
- It has been organized by National Book Trust (NBT).
 - Theme of 2021 New Delhi World Book Fair: '**National Education Policy-2020**'.

12. **DRDO** has conducted successful flight test of **Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology** from **integrated test range (ITR), Chandipur, off Odisha coast**
- SFDR is a missile propulsion system being developed primarily by **Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL)** and **Research Centre Imarat (RCI)** in Hyderabad.
13. PM Modi will inaugurate '**Maitri Setu**' between India and Bangladesh
- It has been built over **Feni river** which flows between Tripura and Bangladesh
 - It has been built by **National Highways and Infrastructure Development**
14. Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways **Mansukh Mandaviya** has flagged off an **all-woman crew onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel, MT Swarna Krishna.**
15. Minister of Culture and Tourism **Prahlad Singh Patel** has inaugurated **All-Women's Art Exhibition titled as 'Akshya Patra'** at Rabindra Bhavan Galleries in New Delhi on the occasion of International Women's Day.
- The exhibition has been curated by **Lalit Kala Akademi** for providing opportunity to all the female artists around India and the world.

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16. Union Minister, **Sanjay Dhotre** has inaugurated **International Conference on Multifunctional Electronic Materials and Processing (MEMP 2021)** virtually on the occasion of 30th foundation day of Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology.
- It is organised by **Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET), Pune** from 8 to 10 March 2021.
17. **Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD)** has signed an agreement with **Invest India** in New Delhi to enhance cooperation.
- The aim will enhance co-operation in the thematic areas of **Nutrition, Child Protection and Development, Women Empowerment** and convergent capacity building in mission mode.

18. **DRISHTI** under **Invest India** will conduct input and output analysis research, and other research as per requirement including coordinating with research agencies.
19. Third Scorpene-class submarine '**INS Karanj**' was commissioned into Indian Navy in Mumbai
- It is third in the series of six Scorpene-class diesel-electric submarine, being built for Indian Navy
 - It has been designed by France's Naval Group and is being built in India by Mazagon Dock Limited under Project 75.
20. **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has launched indigenously made sounding rocket, **RH-560** from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota Range, Andhra Pradesh
- **RH-560** will study attitudinal variations in neutral winds and plasma dynamics
21. PM **Narendra Modi** has virtually addressed **4th Global Ayurveda Festival (GAF)** in Kozhikode
- It has been organized from **12 to 19 March 2021**
 - **GAF** is the **largest Ayurvedic event** ever held anywhere across the world and witness the largest gathering of experts, stakeholders, and business explorers from Ayurveda.
 - **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI)** is the festival and industry partner
22. **Samsung Electronics** set up **Samsung innovation lab** at **Delhi Technological University (DTU)** to promote joint research and training on domains such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and computer vision.
23. Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare **Harsh Vardhan** has been appointed as the **Chairman of 'Stop TB Partnership Board'** with effect from **July 2021**.
- He will be serving at this post for **3-year tenure**.
24. IT major **Amazon Web Services** and **NITI Aayog** partnered to train students on the fundamentals of cloud computing through Atal Tinkering Labs.
- **AWS** will introduce the fundamentals of cloud computing to students at more than **7,000 ATLS**.
25. Union Health Minister, **Harsh Vardhan** has inaugurated **Advanced High Resolution Microscopy Facility** at **National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI)** and Unveiled the 4 Star GRIHA Certification of Center of Innovative and Applied Bioprocessing (CIAB) Lab and Admin Building at Mohali, Punjab

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26. Union Cabinet has approved MoU between **Union Public Service Commission** (UPSC), India and **Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Services Commission** (IARCSC), Afghanistan
- The MoU will facilitate sharing of experience and expertise in the area of recruitment, books manuals and other documents which are not of a confidential nature and Information Technology for the preparation of **written examinations** and holding of **Computer Based Recruitment Tests** and Online Exams
27. **Power Grid Corporation of India Limited** has established an e-Tendering Portal-PRANIT.
28. CJJ **Justice S A Bobde** has recommended the Union Government to appoint the senior-most Supreme Court Judge **Justice N V Ramanna** as the next Chief Justice of India.
29. **Ministry of AYUSH** has set up high level **interdisciplinary committee** to explore various aspects of the Productivity dimension of Yoga
- Committee will be chaired by **H. R Nagendra** (Chancellor of Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana)
30. Chief Justice of India **S A Bobde** has recommended Union Government to appoint senior most Supreme Court Judge **N V Ramanna** as the next **Chief Justice of India**
31. Govt is all set to roll out a **GPS based toll collection system** and introducing **E-Highway from Delhi to Mumbai**
- Toll collection through fast tag has reached to 93% across the country which has resulted in 10 thousand crores more toll collection in comparison to previous year.
32. **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** will develop world class '**Wayside Amenities**' at more than 600 locations across 22 states in 5 years
33. Health Minister **Dr Harsh Vardhan** has launched the '**Tribal TB Initiative**' in pursuit of TB Mukta Bharat.
34. The Union Territories of Lakshadweep and the **district of Badgam** in Jammu and Kashmir have been declared TB Free on **World TB Day** (24 March) this year.
35. **IIT Kharagpur** has emerged as winners at **CoreNet Global Academic Challenge 6.0**, sponsored by Cushman and Wakefield, KI and IA: Interior Architects.

- It is for the first time that a squad from India has emerged as winners in this Challenge since 2015.
36. Chief of Defence staff **Bipin Rawat** has formally commissioned **Indian Coast Guard ship 'Vajra'** into service at Chennai.
37. Centre plans to issue 14-digit identification number termed as **Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN)** to every plot of land in the country by 2022

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STATES AFFAIRS

38. Nagaland Chief Minister **Neiphiu Rio** has launched its **first air cargo** services from **Dimapur airport**.
- He officially flagged off the service, a joint initiative of **Department of Horticulture, Nagaland and Airport Authority of India** with **Air India and Indigo** as airline partners.
 - AAI is planning to construct terminal building including cargo service terminal at Dimapur
39. The **Governor of Haryana**, Satyadev Narayan Arya, has approved a bill to **reserve 75 per cent jobs in Private sector** jobs for the people of the state.
- Reservation will be provided in every company, trust and society. Thus, the "Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020" has now come into force in the State.
40. **Ladakh** and **Jammu and Kashmir** will have a **separate cell in National Commission for Women (NCW)**
- Ladakh became launching pad for the first-ever online training programme **Empowering Women through Entrepreneurship**.
 - It is being launched in collaboration with **IIM, Bangalore** and **India SME Forum**.
 - UT Administration will also provide women entrepreneurs with internet facilities or facilitate at a common point to participate in the training programs.
41. Karnataka has launched **India's maiden Engineering Research & Development (ERD) policy** to raise R&D contribution to 45% in 5 year.
- This policy has the potential to create over **50,000 jobs** in ERD space

- New policy has identified **5 key focus sectors**: aerospace and defence; auto, auto components and EV; biotechnology, pharma, medical devices; semiconductors, telecom; software products
42. **Indian Army** has inaugurated **Community Radio Station** in North **Kashmir**, with the tagline '**Radio Chinar 90.4, Har Dil Ki Dhadkan**'.
43. Uttarakhand government has launched '**Gharoki Paachan, Chelik Naam**' (daughter's name is a home's identity) programme and development schemes.
- Around **32,000 women groups** of the state are being linked with self-employment to make them self-reliant.
44. Tripura CM **Biplab Kumar Deb** has launched '**Jagrut Tripura**' project to empower citizens of the northeastern state
- It was developed by **EasyGov**, a Jio Group company, and it will be available to all the residents of Tripura.
 - The platform will have at least **102 schemes** of various departments of central as well as state governments.
45. The first consignment of '**red rice**' was flagged off on March 4, 2021 to the United States. This adds on to the India's rice exports potential. The rice was sourced by leading rice exporter called 'LT Foods'.
46. The government of Jharkhand have presented the "**Outcome-Based Budget**" on March 3, 2021 for the first time.
- In this budget, all the departments were given specific targets and responsibilities that are required to be completed in a specified time. The results with respect to those targets will be evaluated at the end of financial year.
47. The state of **Madhya Pradesh** has introduced the **night safaris in the three national parks** in Madhya Pradesh on March 4, 2021. This move by the state is a major boost for the state which is already known for its robust tourism industry.
- With the introduction of night safaris in three national parks, wildlife enthusiasts can now experience the majestic animals at night. The three parks include the Bandhavgarh National Park, Kanha National Park and Pench National Park.

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48. **Cyberabad police** has inaugurated '**Transgender Community Desk**' at Gachibowli Police Station in Rangareddy district, Telangana.
- It is the first-of-its-kind gender inclusive community policing initiative of India
49. India's first-of-its-kind '**Forest Healing Centre**' has been inaugurated at **Kalika, Ranikhet in Uttarakhand**
- It is based on the concept of making people healthy by bringing them into direct contact with nature over 13 acres land
 - It is a **pine-dominated forest**, developed by **research wing of Uttarakhand Forest Dept**
 - It has various activities for visitors like hug trees, walk barefoot on the grass, lie on their back and gaze at the swaying trees
50. J&K Lt Governor **Manoj Sinha** has launched '**Super-75**' scholarship schemes for meritorious girls to facilitate the education and entrepreneurship of women
51. The **Mission Gramodaya** has been launched in **Madhya Pradesh**.
- Under the Gramodaya mission, besides providing housing facilities in rural areas, basic and fundamental infrastructure will also be expanded.
52. The Jharkhand govt launched the **SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction)** campaign to tackle malnutrition.
53. Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced to launch of the much anticipated **Universal Health Scheme (UHS) "Mukhya Mantri Chiranjeevi Yojana"**.
54. Andhra Pradesh government has decided to set up "**India's first government-run ambulance network**" for animals
55. **ITC Limited** has entered into a partnership with the Government of **Karnataka** to execute a **Watershed Development Programme** covering over 1 million acres and 100 watersheds across the State.
56. Minister of State for Civil Aviation, **Hardeep Singh Puri** has virtually inaugurated **Kurnool Airport** in Andhra Pradesh
- Flight operations at Kurnool will begin from 28 March 2021

- It has been developed under **Regional Connectivity Scheme, Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN)**

57. Hyderabad-based startup, **Maithri Aquatech** has set up **world's first mobile water from air kiosk** and **Water Knowledge Resource Centre in Visakhapatnam**

- Through this, potable water will be harvested from air instead of depending on water resources

58. Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** has virtually inaugurated **Ānandam: The Center for Happiness** in Indian Institute of Management, Jammu

- Centre will be divided into 5 categories: **counselling, holistic wellness, elective courses on happiness development, Research-Leadership** and **faculty development**

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

59. Russian space corporation '**Roscosmos**' has successfully launched **its first satellite to monitor the Arctic's climate** and environment.

- This satellite is titled as '**Arktika-M**' and was launched onboard **Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket**, from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.
- This satellite will help to collect information to solve operational meteorology and hydrology problems, and monitoring the climate and environment in the Arctic region, Earth's northern polar region.

60. **Indian Air Force (IAF)** with six Su-30 MKI, two C-17 and one IL-78 tanker aircraft is participating in **Exercise Desert Flag-VI** for the first time **Desert Flag-VI**

- It has been organized from March 3 to 27, 2021 at Al-Dhafra airbase, UAE.
- It is an annual multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by UAE Air Force.
- Participants: **UAE, USA, France, Saudi Arabia, South Korea** and **Bahrain**
- It involves diverse fighter aircraft.

61. The scientists have discovered a "**space hurricane**" for the first time. The hurricane swirled for eight hours over the North Pole in the upper atmosphere of Earth.

- These hurricanes are usually occurred in the lower atmosphere of the Earth. It was never observed in the upper atmosphere.

62. The Union Ministry of Earth Science announced that India have agreed to work in collaboration with **Norway** in the area of **marine spatial planning** of the oceanic space for next five years.

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63. India was downgraded to '**partly free**' for the first time **since 1997** in an annual ranking of democracies by the U.S.-government funded research group **Freedom House**
64. **United Nations General Assembly** has adopted a resolution sponsored by India and supported by **70 nations** declaring **2023 as the International Year of Millets**
65. **France** has launched its **first military exercise in space** to evaluate its ability to defend its satellites and other defence equipment from an attack.
- It has been codenamed as '**AsterX**' in memory of the first French satellite from **1965** and will be based on 18 simulated events
66. **China** has signed MoU with **Russia** to jointly construct a lunar space station that will be open to all countries.
- This Lunar space station will be known as **International Scientific Lunar Station (ISLS)**
 - **ISLS**: Complex of experimental and research facilities, created on the moon's surface or in orbit of the moon.
67. **Quadrilateral Framework (QUAD) Leader's Summit 2021** has been held.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Joseph Biden, Australian PM Scott Morrison and Japanese PM Yoshihide Suga addressed 1st virtual Quadrilateral Framework (Quad) summit 2021
 - It is first time leaders of the Indo-Pacific grouping (QUAD) are meeting.
68. World's **most powerful supercomputer** named '**Fugaku**' is made fully operational.
- It has been developed by Japanese scientific research institute **RIKEN** and **Fujitsu**.
69. **Italy** has signed amended **Framework Agreement of International Solar Alliance (ISA)** with India
- The amendments to the **ISA Framework agreement** entered into force in Jan 8, 2021, opening its membership to all Member States of the UN, including those lying beyond the tropics.
70. **Ajay Mathur** has assumed the charge as the **Director General of International Solar Alliance (ISA)** with effect from March 15, 2021.
- He has been appointed for tenure of 4 years which can be renewed for an additional term.

71. **Singapore** is building **world's largest floating solar farms of the world** to support the effort against climate change
- It will be **60 mw-peak floating solar system** with 1200 panels and is being built at **Tengeh Reservoir** by Sembcorp Industries in collaboration with Singapore Public Utilities Board
72. **Norwegian Coastal Administration** has received green signal to construct World's first exclusive ship tunnel, known as **Stad Ship Tunnel**
- It will be built under mountainous **Stadhavet peninsula** in northwestern Norway.
73. Russian space agency '**Roscosmos**' has successfully launched **38 foreign satellites** into orbit, onboard Soyuz-2.1a carrier rocket from **Baikonur cosmodrome** in Kazakhstan
74. **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** members states, including **India, Pakistan and China** will hold joint anti-terrorism exercise titled '**Pabbi-Anti-Terror 2021**'
- It will be hosted by Pakistan at its premier anti-terrorism centre in **Pabbi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**
75. **India** and **US** conducted two-day naval **PASSEX exercise** in **Bay of Bengal**, reflecting the growing congruence in defence and military partnership
- Exercise was held from 28th to 29th March
76. **Indian Navy** will participate in France-led naval drill named as '**La Perouse**' in the **Bay of Bengal**.
77. The exercise will be held from **April 5 to 7, 2021**.
- Participating nations also include Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) member countries: **Australia, Japan and United States of America (USA)**.

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REPORTS & INDICES

78. **Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs** has released **Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2020**
- **Indore** has emerged as the highest ranked municipality, followed by **Surat** and **Bhopal** in **Million+ population category**
 - **New Delhi Municipal Council** has emerged as the leader, followed by **Tirupati** and **Gandhinagar** in less than Million population category

- MPI has examined sectoral performance of 111 municipalities across five verticals, 20 sectors and 100 indicators in all totality.
79. **Bengaluru** emerged as the best city in **Government's Ease of Living Index 2020 [EoLI]**, followed by **Pune** and **Ahmedabad**, including 111 other cities.
- **Shimla** was ranked the highest in ease of living in the category of 'population less than million', followed by **Bhubaneshwar** and **Silvassa**
 - **EoLI** is an **assessment tool** that evaluates the quality of life and the impact of various initiatives for urban development, spanning across **13 categories**, account for 70% of overall outcome.
80. QS World University **Rankings by Subject** has been released with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), US at the top.
- As 25 courses by Indian universities have figured in the top 100 globally:
 - Three Indian Institutes of Technology have entered the **top 100 engineering institutes** with **IIT-Bombay (49th) followed by IIT Delhi (54) and IIT Madras (94)**. MIT, USA has retained its top position.
 - IISc, Bangalore is placed at the 92nd spot for natural sciences.
81. Recently, a report was commissioned by the Amazon Web Services (AWS) on India's Digital skilled workforce. The report highlights that, digital skills are becoming a significant component for employees in order to perform their jobs efficiently
82. The United Nation Environment Programme (**UNEP**) published the "**Food Waste Index Report, 2021**". As per the UNEP report, estimated **931 million tonnes** of food were wasted across the world 2019. The agency also highlighted that this amount of wasted food can circle the Earth seven times.
83. The World Health Organization (WHO) has published the first world report on hearing on World Hearing Day which was observed on March 3, 2021.
- In the new report, the WHO has highlighted that, one in every four individuals across the world will be experiencing mild-to-profound hearing loss by 2050, which roughly accounts for 2.5 billion
84. **FICCI's Overall Business Confidence Index** has been released that witnessed **decadal high of 74.2** in the current round on account of improvement in present conditions as well as expectations
- The Index had stood at **70.9 in 2020** survey and **59 in 2019** survey

85. **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and **WRAP** has released **Food Waste Index Report 2021** to cut food waste to half by 2030

- It estimates that around 931 million tonnes of food waste was generated in 2019
- Out of which, 61% came from households, 26% from food service and 13% from retail
- Around 17% of total global food production was wasted
- About 690 million people went hungry in 2019
- In India, household food waste is about 68.7 million tonnes a year

86. **Singapore** has topped in **Economic Freedom Index 2021**, for 2nd year in row with overall score of 89.7, followed by New Zealand and Australia

- The index is published by US conservative think-tank, **The Heritage Foundation**
- It covered **184 countries** that covered the period from July 2019 to June 2020
- India has been placed at **121** position in the index, with a score of **56.5 out of 100** under **Mostly Unfree category**
- Among Asia-Pacific countries, **India ranks 26 out of 40 countries**

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87. **Hurun India Wealth Report 2020** has been released. According, to the report, there are **412,000 dollar-millionaire households/affluent households** in India with net worth of Rs 7 crore.

- Top 10 states that are home to 70.3% of millionaire households in India: **Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka** and **Gujarat**.

88. **New Delhi** has been ranked as the **10th most polluted city** in World's **most polluted capital city** for 3rd straight year, in **2020 World Air Quality Report** by Swiss organisation, **IQAir**

- Top most polluted city of the world: Xinjiang, China

89. Sweden-based **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** released report titled '**Trends in International Arms Transfers-2020**'

- As per the report, **imports of weapons and military equipment of India declined by 33%** during 2016-2020

- India continues to be 2nd largest World importer, despite import rates cut
- Largest arms importers: **Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia, China**
- Largest arms exporters: **US, Russia, France, Germany, China**. India ranked 24th in this

90. **UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network** has released the **World Happiness Report 2021**.

- **Finland** was once again crowned as the world's happiest country.
- **India** has been ranked **139** out of **149** countries.
- **Denmark** ranked 2nd followed by **Switzerland, Iceland** and the **Netherlands**.
- **Afghanistan** was classed as the world's unhappiest nation this year.

91. **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** has projected **India's economy contraction by 6.9% in 2020** due to coronavirus pandemic.

92. **India** has been ranked **40th** in **International Intellectual Property (IP) Index 2021** among 53 global economies

- **IP Index 2021** was released by **US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC)**
- **US** bags top spot in the index, followed by **UK** and **Germany**

93. **Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC)** has released 16th annual flagship report titled as '**Global Wind Report 2021**'.

- As per the report, despite COVID-19 pandemic, year **2020 was the best year in history for the global wind industry** as this sector installed 93GW of new capacity in 2020, representing a 53% year-on-year increase.
- There is now 743 GW of wind power capacity worldwide, helping to avoid over 1.1 billion tonnes of CO2 globally.

94. **World Bank** has released **World Development Report 2021: Data for Better Lives**

- The report focuses on how data can improve the lives of poor people and advance development objectives, to ensure no one is left behind
- It highlights the tremendous potential of the changing data landscape to improve the lives of poor people, acknowledging its potential to open back doors that can harm individuals, businesses and societies
- India monitors 54 out of 130 SDG indicators.

95. World Health Organization (WHO) is all set to release long-awaited report on the origin of the coronavirus (Covid-19)

- The report has been drafted by a team of international experts appointed by WHO, who visited China's Wuhan city
- According to the preliminary information on the study, researchers have found that Covid-19 most likely transmitted to humans via animals. However, report offers no conclusive answers to the origin questions.

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GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES

96. The Office of Principal Scientific Adviser of the Government of India has launched the “**Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship**” under the “**Waste to Wealth**” Mission on March 3, 2021.

- The Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship initiative was launched with the objective of recognizing the students, self-help groups, community workers, sanitary workers and municipal workers who are engaged in tackling enormous challenge of waste management in a scientific and sustainable manner.
- Under the fellowship programme, the government will be providing awards under three categories as stated below:
- **Category-A**– This category will be open to School students of standards 9th to 12th who are engaged in the waste management community work.
- **Category-B**– This category is open to UG, PG and Research Students engaged in the waste management community work.
- **Category-C**: This category of the fellowship is open to the Citizens who are working in the community and through Self Help Groups, municipal workers or sanitary workers who are working beyond the specifications of their job requirements.

97. Union Minister **Harsh Vardhan** has virtually launched the ‘**CSIR Floriculture Mission**’.

- **CSIR Floriculture Mission** has been recently approved for implementation in **21 States** and UT of India wherein available knowledgebase in CSIR Institutes will be utilized and leveraged to help Indian farmers and industry re-position itself to meet the import requirements.
 - **Floriculture** is concerned with growing and marketing flowers and ornamental plants as well as a flower arrangement.
 - The floriculture mission is being implemented in association with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Directorate of Floriculture, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED) etc.
 - This mission will converge the floriculture with apiculture to yield benefits. The mission will focus on the commercial crops for honeybee rearing such as Gladiolus, Carnation, Canna, Marigold, Rose etc.
98. **Union Minister for Labour** has launched **convergence of ESI Scheme with Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPM-JAY)** in 113 districts of Chhatisgarh, Karnataka, MP and Maharashtra.
99. **Convergence Energy Services Ltd**, a wholly owned subsidiary of **Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL)**, unveiled the **GRAM UJALA programme**.
- Under the programme, high-quality energy-efficient **LED bulbs** will be given for **Rs 10 per piece** in certain villages of five states in the first phase.
 - The programme will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such programme in India.
 - In phase-I of the programme, **15 million LED bulbs** will be distributed
100. PM **Narendra Modi** has launched '**Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain**' campaign on World Water Day (22nd March)
- Campaign will run till **30th Nov, 2021**
 - It will be undertaken across the country, in **734 districts** covering **600,000 villages** with theme '**catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls**'
 - It will be launched as **Jan Andolan** to take water conservation at grass-root level through people's participation. During this, geotagging of all water bodies will be carried out.

101. Union Environment Minister, **Prakash Javadekar** has launched new **Nagar Van Scheme** for creation of Urban forests in the cities on the occasion of International Day of Forests

- Under Nagar Van Scheme, **Urban forests will be developed in 200 cities in its first phase.**
- **Drone mapping water conservation** and tree plantation were also taken into consideration.

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ECONOMY & BUSINESS

102. **Wipro** has joined the **World Economic Forum's (WEF)** 'Partnering for Racial Justice in Business' initiative to promote a culture of diversity, inclusion, equity and justice for people of all racial backgrounds in the workplace.
- This partnership will help in cross-pollinating ideas with other industry leaders and help in developing industry standards and best practices.
103. **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** announced interest rates on Provident Fund deposits for the financial year 2020-21 on March 4.
- EPFO board has recommended **8.5% interest** for the **financial year 2020-21**, same as 2019-20.
104. **Ministry of Textiles** has signed MoU with **Ministry of Agriculture** to amplify sericulture activities in the country.
- MoU will focus on establishing tree based agro-forestry models in sericulture, along with exploring possibilities of activities through Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
105. **NITI Aayog**, along with **Dept of Economic Affairs (DEA)** has organized **national-level virtual workshop on asset monetization**.
106. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development **Authority (APEDA)** has launched its **first virtual trade fair** to boost export of agricultural and processed food products.
- The fair will display **basmati rice, non-basmati rice, millets, wheat, maize, groundnut** and **coarse grains** have been displayed.
107. **Tata Motors** has launched a holistic programme that supports new parents in their exciting journey both as a parent and also as a valued employee, titled as '**Wheels of Love**'
- It will promote a progressive culture of care, inclusion and sensitization within the organization across levels.
108. Govt has launched '**Mera Ration**' **mobile app** for ration card holders, particularly migrant beneficiaries to identify the nearest fair price shop, check details of their entitlement and recent transactions.
- The app has been developed by **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**
 - It is currently available in **Hindi** and **English** and will be made available in **14 languages**
 - It will facilitate various **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)** related services.
109. **United States (US)** has overtaken **Saudi Arabia** as India's second biggest oil supplier.

- Oil import of India from US rose 48% to a record **545,300 barrels per day (bpd)** in Feb 2021 compared to Jan 2021

110. Govt has constituted an **experts advisory committee** for overall execution and monitoring of **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**

- **H K Mittal** (Dept of Science and Technology) will head the committee
- Apart from this, members from DPIIT, dept of biotechnology, science and technology, electronics and IT, Niti Aayog, startup ecosystem will be part of it

111. **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** and **US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)** have announced **\$41 million-loan portfolio guarantee program** to finance investment in renewable energy solutions by Indian SMEs

- It will enable finance investments by **small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of India** in renewable energy solutions including rooftop solar installations
- These loans will enable SMEs to access reliable power and will cut the cost.

112. **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** projected Indian economy is expected to grow **12.6% in FY22**.

113. Moody's Analytics had projected the Indian economy to grow **13.7% in FY22**.

114. **Fitch Ratings** has revised India's GDP growth estimate to **12.8% for the next fiscal** from the previous 11% estimate in its latest Global Economic Outlook GEO

115. **Govt** has operationalized **22 new routes in the last three days under UDAN scheme** as a part of endeavor to connect the unconnected regions.

- Out of these new routes, six routes have been operationalized in North-East India.
- **Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN):** flagship **Regional Connectivity scheme of Ministry of Civil Aviation** envisaged to make air travel affordable and widespread in the country. Till date, 347 routes have been operationalized under the UDAN scheme.

FINANCE & BANKING

116. **SBI** has tied up with **JPMorgan** to use '**Liink**' blockchain technology in order to speed up overseas transactions.

- With this, SBI has become the first bank in India to go live on the blockchain-based payment network of JPMorgan.

- It will reduce the transaction costs and time taken by SBI customers for overseas payments.
- It will also reduce time taken to resolve cross-border payments-related inquiries and payments will reach beneficiaries faster.

117. **Reserve Bank of India** has included **Fino Payments Bank** in **Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**.

- This means Fino Payments Bank is given the status of scheduled commercial bank or simply scheduled banks.
- The bank will now be able to enhance its banking position in the treasury and participation in liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) window
- Headquarters: **Mumbai**.

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118. Govt has notified comprehensive amendments to **Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017**, or policyholders' complaints regarding insurance services, in a timely and impartial manner.

- Scope of complaints will include disputes, deficiencies in service on the part of insurers, brokers and other intermediaries.
- The insurance brokers have also been brought within the **ambit of the Ombudsman** mechanism.
- It will be administered by the **Council for Insurance Ombudsmen**.

119. **Matam Venkata Rao** has been sworn in as the new **Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of the state-run **Central Bank of India** for a period of three years.

120. The **SBI Mutual Funds** has launched its first overseas offering on 1 March 2021.

- The fund titled **SBI International Access - US Equity FOF** is an open-ended fund of funds scheme investing in a mutual fund scheme/ETFs that invest in US markets, which are domiciled overseas.

121. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) partnered with **SBI Payments** to announce the launch of '**RuPay SoftPoS**' for millions of Indian merchants.

- This innovative solution has the capability to transform NFC enabled smartphones into merchant Point of Sale (PoS) terminals for the retailers.
- Now, **Merchants** will be able to accept contactless payments of up to ₹5000 through a simple tap and pay mechanism on their smartphones.

122. **Axis Securities** has announced the launch of an online platform to buy and sell bonds as well as debentures in the secondary market named as '**YIELD**'

- **YIELD:** first-of-its-kind initiative that allows retail investors direct access to the debt instruments.
- This will remove the hassle of filling up physical forms or the need for separate KYC with bond institutions to facilitate transactions only in secure option

123. **HDFC ERGO General Insurance** has launched '**Business Kisht Suraksha**' covering MFIs, financial institutions and banks during catastrophe or natural disaster.

- It aims to protect balance sheet of financial institutions due to non-payment of EMIs by borrowers, following listed calamities such as floods, earthquakes, cyclones, etc.

124. **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has **cancelled certificate of registration** of **Sahara India Financial Corporation Ltd (SIFCL)**, as a sub-broker.

- The move has been taken by **SEBI**, due to failure of SIFCL to fulfill the '**fit and proper**' criteria, in terms of Intermediaries Regulations

125. **HDFC Bank** has launched dedicated mentoring programme named as '**SmartUp Unnati**' to support women entrepreneurs.

126. **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** has acquired **26% equity stake in Indian Gas Exchange (IGX)**, through its wholly owned subsidiary NSE Investments.

127. **RBI** has removed **IDBI Bank** from **Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework**, amid the improving finances of the bank after Board for Financial Supervision (BFS) review

- PCA places curbs on lending and expenditure of bank and RBI keeps close watch on banks certain financial parameters like capital ratios, asset quality and profitability

128. Cabinet has approved amendment to **Insurance Act, 1938** to increase the permissible **foreign direct investment (FDI) limit in insurance sector to 74%**

- It will allow foreign ownership and control with safeguards, and also provide insurance companies with committed funds to improve the penetration of insurance

129. **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has launched '**UPI-Help**' on **BHIM UPI** for grievance redressal mechanism for the users of the BHIM application

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130. **India's foreign-exchange reserves** become the **world's fourth largest reserve of the world**, surpassing Russia.

- **Foreign currency holdings of India** fell by **\$4.3 billion to \$580.3 billion**, as per the data by Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

131. Union Cabinet has approved creation of **Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN)** under **Section 136-b of Finance Act, 2007**

- It is a single non-lapsable reserve fund for health from the proceeds of health and Education cess.
- Share of Health from the proceeds of **Health and Education Cess (4%)** will be credited to **PMSSN**

132. **RBI** has decided to extend new **Cheque Truncation System (CTS)** across all bank branches in India by September 30, 2021.

- It is issued under Section 10 (2) and Section 18 of Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 (Act 51 of 2007).

133. **RBI** has imposed a **monetary penalty of ₹2 Crore on State Bank of India** for contravention of provisions of section 10 (1) (b) (ii) of Banking Regulation Act, 1949 and payment of remuneration to employees in the form of commission.

134. **RBI** has released data related to **2019-20 round of its annual survey** on exports of computer software and IT enabled services

- Survey collects details on India's exports of software services as per type of activity, on-site/off-site nature of service, country of destination and modes of supply

- India's export of software services stood at US\$ 128.6 billion during 2019-20, registering 9.1% growth
- Exports of computer services and ITES/BPO services contributed 66.6% and 33.4 %

135. **Union Cabinet** has approved bill to set up **Development Finance Institution (DFI)** with an **initial capital infusion of Rs 20 thousand crores.**

136. **RBI** has set up **5 members standing external advisory committee (SEAC)** to evaluate applications for on-tap licensing of universal banks and small finance banks (SFBs)

- It will be chaired by former RBI deputy governor **Shyamala Gopinath.**

137. **Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)** has launched Savings Bank account targeted at Millennials titled as '**IOB Trendy**'.

- IOB Trendy savings account will be customized for the growing millennial population by keeping their banking preferences in mind.
- Eligible Customers age group: **21 years to 38 years**

138. FM **Nirmala Sitharaman** has virtually inaugurated **Central Scrutiny Centre (CSC)** and **Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority's (IEPFA) Mobile App**

- They have been launched by **Ministry of Corporate Affairs** to leverage digital solutions to achieve Prime Minister's vision of Digitally empowered India

139. **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has once again extended the restriction imposed on scam-hit **Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank** for a further period of 3 months till June 30, 2021.

- The restriction puts curbs on the withdrawals and deposits activity of the lender.

140. **HDFC Bank** has been conferred as 'India's Best Bank for SMEs' at **Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021.**

- **HDFC Bank** has been honoured for its transformation of micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) business over the past few years.
- **Asiamoney Best Bank Awards** is based upon Annual Best Banks survey by a financial magazine based in Hong Kong, to identify excellent banks a range of core banking activities over the past 12 months.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

141. **78th edition of Golden Globe Awards 2021** was held to recognise excellence in film, both American and international, and American television by Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

List of winners:

- Best Film (Drama): **Nomadland**
- Best Film (Musical/Comedy): **Borat Subsequent**
- Best Director: **Chloe Zhao for Nomadland**
- Best Actress (Drama): **Andra Day**
- Best Actor (Drama): Chadwick Boseman
- Best Foreign Lang Film: **Minari**
- Best Animated Film: **Soul**
- Best TV Series-Drama: **The Crown**

142. **10th Edition of Hurun Global Rich List 2021** has been released that ranked 3228 billionaires from 2,402 companies and 68 countries

- Tesla chief **Elon Musk** bagged the top spot with net worth \$197 billion.
- **Jeff Bezos** ranked second with \$189 billion net worth, followed by Bernard Arnault
- Asia's richest person and Reliance Industries chairman **Mukesh Ambani** is ranked 8th
- Total wealth of all billionaires across the globe surged 32% (\$3.5 trillion) in 2020

143. **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Railway Station of Central Railway** is the first railway station in Maharashtra to be awarded with Gold certification as per **CII's Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) ratings.**

- Central Railway has implemented various green initiatives across its zone, with plantation creating green areas, installation of solar panels, etc.
- **IGBC ratings** gives impetus to the national priorities like energy efficiency, water conservation, etc.

144. Ambassador of India to Thailand **Suchitra Durai** has received the prestigious **King Bhumibol World Soil Day 2020 Award** on the behalf of Indian Council of Agricultural Research in Bangkok.

- The award was announced by **Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome** in view of ICAR's excellent contributions in Soil Health Awareness on the theme **Stop soil erosion, save our future**

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145. **Sahitya Akademi** has announced annual literary honour in India, **Sahitya Akademi Awards 2020** in **20 Indian languages**.

- The awards include 7 books of poetry, 4 novel, 5 short stories, 2 plays, and one each of memoirs and epic poetry.

146. Noted Hindi writer **Prof. Sharad Pagare** will be conferred with the prestigious Vyas Samman - 2020 for his novel '**Patliputru Ki Samragi**.'

147. Range officer of Rajaji Tiger Reserve, **Mahinder Giri** has won the prestigious **International Ranger Award** for his contribution towards conservation.

- He is the only ranger from Asia to win this prestigious Award
- It is being given by **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** and **World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)**

148. The **66th Filmfare Awards for 2021** has been announced to honour artistic and technical excellence in Hindi cinema for 2020. Anubhav Sinha directed '**Thappad**' won seven awards. Winners:

- Best Film: **Thappad**
- Best Director: **Om Raut (Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior)**
- Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male): **Irrfan Khan (Angrezi Medium)**
- Best Actor (Critics): **Amitabh Bachchan (Gulabo Sitabo)**
- Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female): **Taapsee Pannu (Thappad)**
- Best Lyrics: **Gulzar (Chhapaak)**

PERSON IN NEWS

149. **Ligia Noronha of India** has been appointed as **Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme**.

- It has been announced by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

- She is an economist with over 30 years of international experience in the field of sustainable development.
- She has worked since **2014** as **Director of UNEP's Economy Division in Nairobi**, leading UNEP's on climate mitigation energy transitions

150. Jaideep Bhatnagar has taken over as the **Principal Director General** of **Press Information Bureau (PIB)**.

IPS officer **Kuldiep Singh** has been appointed to hold additional charge as **Director General (DG) of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)**, with effect from March 1, 2021

151. Indian-origin **Naureen Hassan (25 years)** has been appointed as **1st Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (COO)** of New York-based **Federal Reserve Bank** by Board of Governors of Federal Reserve System.

152. Chairman of NABARD, **G.R. Chintala** has been sworn in as the **Chairman of APRACA (Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association)**

- **Established:** 1977 by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- **Aim:** to promote the development of rural finance in Asia Pacific.
- Headquarters: **Bangkok, Thailand.**

153. Autobiography of freedom fighter 'Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan', titled '**The Frontier Gandhi: My Life and Struggle**' has been released

154. Comptroller and Auditor General (**CAG**) of India, **Girish Chandra Murmu** has been re-appointed as **Chairman of United Nations Panel of External Auditors** for 2021

155. World rapid chess champion **Koneru Humpy (33 years)** has won **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year award for 2021.**

- She was the youngest grandmaster in 2002 at the age of 15. She has received the Arjuna Award in 2003 and the Padma Shri in 2007.
- She hails from Andhra Pradesh

156. Centre has appointed **G P Samanta** as the **new Chief Statistician of India (CSI)** for a period of two years.

- Prior to this, he was serving as an **adviser in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Department of Statistics and Information Management**

- He will also serve as the Secretary in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

157. Bollywood actor **Deepika Padukone** has joined **Forum of the Young Global Leaders (YGLs)** for 2021 compiled by World Economic Forum.

158. **Arindam Bagchi** took charges as the **official spokesperson of Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**.

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OBITUARIES

159. Renowned **Kannada** poet, eminent academic, and critic Prof **N S Lakshminarayana** passed away in Bengaluru. He was known as '**NSL**' in the literary circles and Kannada music world

160. Veteran Kathakali artist **Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair (105 years)** passed away in Kozhikode, Kerala due to old age-related ailments.

161. Veteran banker and former **Reserve Bank of India** (RBI) deputy governor **K.C. Chakrabarty** (68-years) passed away at his Mumbai residence following a heart attack.

IMPORTANT DAYS

162. **Zero Discrimination Day** is being observed every year on **March 1** globally to promote equality in practice and before the law.

- The day also highlights the urgent need to take action against the inequalities in income, age, sex, health status, colour, race, occupation, sexual orientation, religion, gender and ethnicity.

163. **World Wildlife Day** is observed on **March 3** every year to celebrate and raise awareness about world's wild animals and plants (fauna and flora)

- Theme 2021: **Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet**

- March 3 has been chosen as it is the day of signature of **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** in 1973.

164. World Hearing Day is observed on **3rd March** every year by **World Health Organisation (WHO)** to raise awareness on how to prevent deafness and hearing loss and promote ear and hearing care across the world

- Theme 2021: **Hearing care for ALL!: Screen. Rehabilitate. Communicate**

165. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has declared the year **2023 as the 'International Year of Millets'**.

- The resolution to declare the year was sponsored by India.
- The UN General Assembly has proclaimed the "UN Decade of action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025" in the month of April 2016.

166. International Women's Day (IWD) is observed every year on **March 8** to celebrate women, their rights and their achievements.

- Theme 2021: **Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world.**

167. World Consumer Rights Day is observed every year on **15th March** to raise global awareness about consumer rights and needs.

- Centre has enacted **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** replacing old 1986 Act to protect the interest of consumers and timely settlement of disputes in 2020.
- Theme 2021: '**Tackle plastic pollution**'.

168. National Vaccination Day (National Immunization Day) is observed every year on **March 16** in India, to convey the importance of vaccination.

169. International Happiness Day is celebrated on **20th March** every year.

- It is a global event designated by the **United Nations**.
- The theme of the 2021 International Day of Happiness campaign is '**Keep Calm. Stay Wise. Be Kind**'.

170. International Day of Forests (World Forestry Day) is observed every year on **March 21** to commemorate and raise awareness of the significance of all types of forests

- **UN General Assembly** adopted **International Day of Forests** on **November 28, 2012**
- Theme 2021: **Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being**

171. **World Water Day (WWD)** is observed every year on **22nd March** to highlight the importance and sustainable management of fresh water.

- **UN-Water** is the convener for **World Water Day**.
- Theme of WWD 2021: **Valuing Water**.

172. **World Tuberculosis (TB) Day** commemorated each year on 24th March to raise public awareness about the **devastating health**, social and economic consequences of TB.

- Theme 2021: **'The Clock is Ticking'**

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SPORTS

173. **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** has chosen **Odisha** as the host for the upcoming **Indian Women's League (IWL) 2020-21 edition**

- IWL is the top division women's league in India.

174. India is set to host the AFC Women's Asian Cup in 2022.

175. Star Indian wrestler **Vinesh Phogat** has defeated **Vanesa Kaladzinskay** of Belarus to win a gold medal at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial tournament, held in **Kiev**

- Haryana's Bhiwani-based Vinesh won in the 53kg category with 10-8 lead.

176. Indian Boxer **Deepak Kumar (23 years)** won the silver medal at **72nd Strandja Memorial Tournament** in Sofia, Bulgaria.

- He belongs to Hisar district of Haryana.

177. **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** has topped medals tally in the **2nd edition of Khelo India Winter National Games**

- **Khelo India Winter National Games** was five-day mega sports event that was held at **Gulmarg** in Baramulla, north Kashmir
- **J&K** won **11 gold, 18 silver** and **5 bronze medals**. It was followed by **Karnataka** and **Maharashtra**
- It was organized by **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** in collaboration with **J&K Sports Council** and **J&K Winter Games Association**

178. World Championship bronze medallist wrestler, **Bajrang Punia** won a gold medal at **Matteo Pallicone** ranking series held in Rome, Italy.
- He defeated Mongolia's **Tulga Tumur Ochir** by 2-2 in 65kg freestyle event final.
 - Apart from this, ace India woman wrestler **Vinesh Phogat (26 years) won gold medal in the 53kg title**, after beating Canada's Diana Weicker by 4-0
179. India's ace shuttler **PV Sindhu** has won **silver** medal in **BWF Swiss Open Super 300** in final of women's singles event held at Basel
- She lost to World No. 3 and reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin.
180. India's off-spinner **Ravichandran Ashwin** has been named as the **ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2021**.
181. Veteran cricketer **Mithali Raj (38 years)** became **first Indian woman cricketer** to complete 10,000 runs across all formats.
- With this, she also became the 2nd largest woman scorer in international cricket
182. **Virat Kohli** has become **1st-ever batsman** to score **3,000 runs in T-20 International**
- He achieved this milestone during **2nd T20-International against England** at Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, in which unbeaten knock of 73 runs and crossed 3,000-run mark.
183. Youth Affairs & Sports Minister **Kiren Rijiju** has announced to set up **Winter Sports Institute in Gulmarg, Kashmir**.
- He also announced inauguration of **100 small sports centres** under **Khelo India mission**.
184. Tamil Nadu's **Chadalavada Anandha Bhavani Devi (27 years)** became the first-ever fencer from India to qualify for Olympic Games.
- She secured a spot for the Tokyo Olympics at the World Cup in Hungary.
185. Indian athlete **Avinash Sable** set a **new national record in men's 3000m steeplechase event** in ongoing Federation Cup Senior National Athletics Championships in Patiala with 8:20.20 timing.
186. India bagged 3rd position at the end of 2021 World Shooting Para Sport competitions with seven medals, held at Al Ain in UAE from 15 to 25 March 2021.
187. Indian contingent emerged successful in ISSF World Cup in the Trap events with **30 medals in total (15 gold, 9 silver and 6 bronze)**

- Indian trio of **Shreyasi Singh, Manisha Keer** and **Rajeshwari Kumari** won the gold medal in women's Trap Team event.
- India outgunned the Kazakhstan trio 6-0 in the final

188. Tokyo 2020 Olympic Torch Relay kicked off in **Fukushima, Japan.**

- The torch relay will travel through all the **47 districts of Japan** over the next **121 days.**
- It will arrive in Tokyo for the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony that will be held on July 23.
- Japanese footballer **Iwashimizu Azusa** is the first receiver of this Olympic Torch Relay.

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