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# WEEKLY CA SEP 2021

SEP 16-23



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**NATIONAL AFFAIRS**

1. **NITI Aayog** in partnership with Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and RMI India launched a campaign named “**Shoonya**” – an initiative to promote the usage of Zero-pollution delivery vehicles among e-commerce companies, fleet aggregators, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and logistics companies.
  - **Aim** – To create consumer awareness on the benefits of using pollution free Electric Vehicles (EV) in delivery of consumables.
  - Over 30 logistic and consumables companies participated in the meeting headed by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, where the Campaign was launched.
  - They decided to implement an Online Tracking platform that shares the EV’s data including vehicle kilometers electrified, carbon savings, criteria pollutant savings and other benefits from clean delivery vehicles to customers.
  - Around 10% of the freight transportation related CO2 emission in India is caused by Urban Freight vehicles, which is expected to grow by 114% by 2030.
2. Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of **Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh State University in Aligarh**, Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh will establish the university in the memory of Jat social reformer Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh.
3. **India’s largest Floating Solar PV plant at NTPC Simhadri**, Andhra Pradesh (AP), executed by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), has become commercially operationalized by NTPC Limited.
4. The Government of India constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM), Chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, to improve the implementation of various schemes meant for Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), minorities and women.
  - The first meeting of the GoM was held at the residence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
  - The objective of the GoM is to work for the empowerment and prosperity of backward classes and minorities
5. **NITI**(National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Amitabh Kant launched an initiative in collaboration with edutech company **BYJU’S** to provide free access to the company’s “Premium Learning” resources to students of class 6-12 in government schools across 112 ‘Aspirational Districts’
6. On September 17, 2021, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) virtually organized the 3rd Life Sciences Conclave 2021 on the theme ‘**Taking Indian Lifes Sciences to the Global Stage**’. The event was attended by Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology & Department of Science and Technology.
  - During this CII released a report ‘Taking India’s Life Sciences to the Global Stage – “Make in India” to fuel 4x growth in Biosimilars and Vaccines by 2026’.
7. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (**BHEL**) has developed India’s **1st High ash Indian Coal to Methanol conversion plant in Hyderabad**, Telangana under plot basis. The plant is developed using indigenous

technology, to promote the adoption of clean technology. Methanol produced through the plant will be blended with crude oil to reduce emission through transportation fuel.

8. The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (**TRIFED**) made an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with e-grocery platform **Big Basket and Purti Agrotech** of Jharkhand for the promotion and sale of natural Van Dhan products. These two initiatives will become operational from October 2, 2021.
9. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has formulated a **12-member National Steering Committee (SC) for the development of National Curriculum Frameworks** in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
  - It will be chaired by Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan, an scientist who headed the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) from 1994 to 2003.
  - The tenure of the SC will be of 3 years w.e.f .September 21, 2021.
  - The SC will be assisted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) Director Prof. Sridhar Srivastava (Current).

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## STATES AFFAIRS

10. On the occasion of International Democracy Day (15th September 2021), Conrad K Sangma Chief Minister (CM) of **Meghalaya** launched the “**MyMeG**” Program, an initiative to facilitate citizens engagement and participation in the governance process.
11. The Chief Minister (CM) of Uttar Pradesh (UP) Yogi Adityanath has announced the launch of ‘Uttar Pradesh Matra Bhumi Yojana’ while virtually laying other road projects under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak yojana (PMGSY). This scheme will strengthen the rural economy and infrastructure in the state.
12. The Member of Legislative Assembly(MLA) from Congress party **Charanjit Singh Channi** took the oath as the 16th Chief Minister (CM)of Punjab. He has succeeded the previous CM Captain Amarinder Singh.
13. The **Sikkim** government has declared ‘**Copper Mahseer**’ locally named ‘Katley’ as the State fish. The scientific name of the fish is *Neolissochilus hexagonolepis*.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



14. On 16th September 2021, the World Bank group announced to discontinue its “**Doing Business**” reports after **finding data irregularities** in countries rankings in 2018 and 2020 reports. The law investigation agency, WilmerHale, has unveiled inconsistent with the Doing Business methodology in the 2018 report, which favoured China’s position.
- In Doing Business 2018 report, China was ranked 78th with a score of 65.3, but after making corrections in various indicators, its position dropped 7 places to 85th with a score of 64.5
15. The World Economic Forum (WEF) announced that its next annual meeting with the theme ‘Working Together, Restoring Trust’ will be held at Davos-Klosters in Switzerland from January 17-21, 2022.
- It the first major in-person congregation of the world leaders in almost two years since the deadliest pandemic hit the world.
  - The yearly gathering in 2021 was skipped due to safety and health concerns
16. On 17th September 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually participated in the 21st Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) that was held for the first time through hybrid format from Dushanbe, Tajikistan. During the meeting, SCO member countries adopted the ‘**Dushanbe Declaration**’ to promote counter terrorism & stability in Afghanistan.
17. The 14-day long 15th **India-Nepal Joint Military Training exercise Surya Kiran** commenced on September 20, 2021 in the Himalayan border town of Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand in India.
18. Canadian Prime Minister(PM) Justin Trudeau, leader of the Liberal party since 2013, won 3rd term as the PM of Canada by winning the 2021 Canadian federal election but failed to secure the absolute majority.

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## REPORTS & INDICES

19. On September 14, 2021, three United Nations (UN) agencies viz. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) released a report titled ‘**A multi-billion-dollar opportunity: Repurposing agricultural support to transform food systems**’.
- The report is an analysis of countries’ support to farmers and its adverse impacts on food prices, environment, global warming and farmers, specifically smallholders.
  - The contemporary food production system emits **high greenhouse gas** (GHG) and support is being provided for the most emission-intensive sectors like sugar and the beef production chain.

20. On September 16, 2021, a report titled ‘**Reforms in Urban Planning Capacity in India**’ was released by NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog’s Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar, CEO (Chief Executive Officer) Amitabh Kant and Special Secretary Dr K. Rajeswara Rao.
- The report has been developed by NITI Aayog over a period of 9 months, in consultation with concerned ministries and eminent experts in the domain of urban and regional planning.
  - NITI Aayog and France’s software maker Dassault Systèmes have signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) during a virtual event to support various current and future initiatives of AIM (Atal Innovation Mission) programs and AIM beneficiaries in India.
21. On September 20, 2021, Union Minister Mansukh Laxmanbhai Mandaviya, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) released 3rd State **Food Safety Index (SFSDI) 2020-21** by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in New Delhi.
- It measures the performance of States/Union Territories (UTs) across five parameters of food safety.
  - **Gujarat** was the top ranking state among larger states
  - **Goa** stood first in the category of smaller states.
  - **Jammu & Kashmir** grabbed the topped spot among UTs.
22. To resolve the global issue of Nutrition disparity, Countries should invest more on nature-based farming and providing incentives to small & medium scale farmers will play critical role in reducing rural poverty & increasing nutrition security, as per the ‘**Rural Development Report 2021**’ released by United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), named “Transforming Food Systems for Rural Prosperity”.
- Small-scale agriculture is directly linked with the livelihood of the majority of rural population across the globe, with over 31% of the World’s food being produced in farms sized up to 2-hectares.

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## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & PROGRAMMES

23. On September 17, 2021, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Ministry of **Railways** launched **Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana (RKVY)** under the aegis of **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)** from Rail Bhavan, New Delhi.
24. The Union Tribal Affairs minister Arjun Munda announced to start **Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojna (PMAGY)** covering 36 thousands villages across the country priority will be provided to villages which consists of 50 percent tribal population.

- **1,700 tribal villages in Assam** will be covered under PMAGY and converted into modern villages. It would benefit around 60,000 people.
- 184 Van Dhan Kendra will be set in Assam.

## ECONOMY & BUSINESS

25. On 15th September 2021, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (**UNCTAD**) released its “**Trade and Development Report 2021**”, which predicts India’s Gross Domestic Product (**GDP**) to grow by **7.2 percent** in **2021**, whereas the Global Growth rate is projected at **5.3 percent**.
26. Tata Consultancy Services (**TCS**) of TATA groups becomes the **2nd Indian** company to hit the **200 Billion USD** market capitalization (**M-Cap**) mark. Reliance Industries (**RIL**) was the first Indian Company to achieve the feat.
- Among the most valued software companies, TCS is ranked behind Accenture (USD 218bn) and ahead of IBM (USD 123 bn).
  - TCS, which completes 50 years, listed on the stock exchanges in 2004, crossed the USD 50-Bn market value in December 2010, USD 100 Bn in April 2018 and USD 150 Bn in December 2020.
27. **Amazon** launched ‘**Kisan Store**’ – a facility that allows Farmers to purchase agricultural products like seeds, farm accessories, plant protection, nutrition at Amazon Easy stores. Over 8000 products were available for their purchase with doorstep delivery facilities.
- Digital payment modes facilities like Net Banking, UPI, Amazon Pay, and Debit & Credit Cards can also be used for procurement.
  - The website is available in 5 Indian languages – Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, and Malayalam.
28. In its Economic Outlook, Interim Report September 2021, the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** has reduced India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast in FY22 to 20 basis points to **9.7 percent** and for FY23 the GDP growth forecast was reduced by 30 bps to 7.9 percent.
29. As per the latest economic outlook of **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** titled ‘the Asian Development Outlook 2021 Update Transforming Agriculture in Asia’, India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast for FY2021-22 was reduced to 10 percent from its earlier projection of 11 percent (April 2021) due to the impact of COVID-19.
- The GDP growth forecast for FY2022-23 was increased from 7 percent to 7.5 percent.
  - Inflation: The inflation forecast for FY2021-22 was increased to 5.5 percent from its earlier projection of 5.2 percent.

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## FINANCE & BANKING

30. As part of resolution of bad loans, on September 16, 2021, the Union Cabinet approved government guarantee of up to **Rs 30600 crore to back Security Receipts (SRs)** for 5 years that will be issued by National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL). The information for the same was provided by Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Ministry of Finance while briefing media in New Delhi.
- It has been incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 and has applied to the Reserve Bank of India for license as an Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC). It is basically a government backed bad bank in the name of ARC.
31. Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC), the leading Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) in the power sector, launched its first €300 million 7-year Euro Bond issuance on September 13 pricing 1.841%.
32. On September 17, 2021, the **45th meeting of GST** (Goods & Service Tax) Council was held at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, under the chairmanship of the Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Ministry of Finance.
- The Council has made the various recommendations related to extension of existing concessional GST rates on certain COVID-19 treatment drugs, reduction of GST rates on various other medicines, revision and clarification of GST rates of various Goods and Services, several measures relating to GST Law & Procedures, etc.
  - The existing concessional GST rates (till 30th September, 2021) on Covid-19 treatment drugs extended to December, 31 2021.
  - From January 1, 2022, food delivery apps will collect and deposit 5% GST with the government, in place of restaurants, for deliveries made by them. This will not affect the end consumer.
  - There is an increase of 12/18% to 18% GST rate on Cartons, boxes, bags, packing containers of paper, and kinds of pens from 12/18% to 18%.
33. **HDFC Bank** announced partnership with Paytm to launch a range of co-branded credit cards powered by Visa. The collaboration comes as a result of providing a range of offers like 'EMIs' and 'Buy Now Pay Later' options to increase the purchase potential of customers in this festival season.

## AWARDS & RECOGNITION



34. **'The 100 Most Influential People of 2021'**, an annual list of global leaders was released by TIME magazine recently. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Serum Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar Poonawalla were named among the world's 100 most influential people of 2021.
- Global leaders like US President Joe Biden, US Vice President Kamala Harris, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, Israel's Naftali Bennett, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi were listed.
  - Even Former US President Donald Trump and the Taliban government's deputy PM Abdul Ghani Baradar of Afghanistan.
  - The list also includes tennis player Naomi Osaka, Russian opposition activist Alexei Navalny, music icon Britney Spears, executive director of the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council Manjusha P. Kulkarni, Apple CEO Tim Cook, actor Kate Winslet and the first African and first woman to lead the World Trade Organization Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
35. **Euromoney**, a UK-based financial publication, announced its Global Awards for Excellence 2021 recently, and named **DBS**, the Singapore based financial services group as **'World's Best Bank 2021'** for the 2nd time in 3 years. Euromoney has also named DBS the **'World's Best Digital Bank 2021'**.
- DBS becomes the first bank in the world to hold both titles concurrently.
  - DBS was awarded for demonstrating its rare skills in surviving the COVID-19 pandemic and for utilising the chance to innovate and become a better bank.
36. **Bangladesh** Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina** has been conferred with **'SDG Progress Award'**, for Bangladesh's steady progress in achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs), by the UN sponsored Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) at the 9th Annual International Conference on Sustainable Development held in New York in September 2021.

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## PERSON IN NEWS

37. **Adidas**, a German footwear and accessories company, has named Olympic silver medalist (weightlifting), **Mirabai Chanu** as the face of its "Stay in Play" campaign, which is designed to keep more menstruating women in sports.

- To support the menstruating women athletes, the brand has launched “TechFit Period Proof tights” with added layer of protection.
38. **Jhumpa Lahiri**, the Pulitzer Prize-winning fiction writer, has authored a new book titled “**Translating Myself and Others**”, which is set to be released in 2022. The book includes several essays (previously published and unpublished) about translation. The book has been acquired by the Princeton University Press.
39. BJP MP Subramanian Swamy has authored a book “Human Rights and Terrorism in India” which traces how the combating of terrorism can be harmonised with human and fundamental rights within reasonable restrictions that are permitted by the Constitution and upheld by the Supreme Court.
40. The Japanese Sports equipment company **Asics** announced Indian squash player **Joshna Chinappa** as its new brand ambassador. It will bring positive change by spreading awareness about sports among the youth.
41. Fino Payments Bank Limited (FPBL) has appointed Indian actor(Hindi) Pankaj Tripathi as its first-ever brand ambassador. He will endorse the brand for a period of 2 years effective from September 1 2021.
42. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advocates, ahead of the 76th General Assembly.
- **Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, STEM activist Valentina Munoz Rabanal, Microsoft President Brad Smith and K-pop superstars Blackpink were named in the list.**
43. The Air Marshal, **Vivek Ram (VR) Chaudhari** has been appointed as the **Chief of the Indian Air Force (IAF)**. He will succeed the current Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria (RKS Bhadauria), who will retire on September 30, 2021.

## OBITUARIES

44. Padma Shri awardee, a noted physicist and cosmologist **Thanu Padmanabhan**, 64, passed away in Pune on September 17, due to cardiac arrest. He was born in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- He was professor at the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) in Pune, Maharashtra.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

45. **World Bamboo Day (WBD)** is annually observed across the globe on **September 18th** to create awareness about Bamboo, a non-wood forest product, which is considered Green Gold and to promote the new cultivation of bamboo for new industries across the globe.
- The day also aims to ensure the sustainable utilization of bamboo.
  - The Message of WBD 2021 is “#PlantBamboo: It is Time to Plant Bamboo”.

- World Bamboo Organisation(WBO) has launched a new hashtag #PlantBamboo to mark WBD 2021.
46. The **United Nations (UN)’s International Day of Peace** is annually observed across the globe on September 21st to strengthen the idea of peace both within and among all nations and people by observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.
- The theme of the International Day of Peace 2021 is “**Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world**”.
  - The 2021 theme focuses on the efforts of the UN on recovering better for a more equitable and peaceful world.

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## SPORTS

47. India’s **R Raja Rithvik** became chess **Grandmaster** after he crossed the ELO Rating of 2500. The 17-year-old achieved this GM title in Vezerkepzo Grandmaster Chess Tournament at Budapest, Hungary.
- He thus became the 70th Grandmaster from the country. A native of Warangal, Rithvik has been undergoing advanced coaching at RACE Chess Academy under reputed coach N.V.S. Rama Raju.