

**INTERNATIONAL**

**French President Emmanuel Macron orders third lockdown across the country**

French President Emmanuel Macron ordered a third lockdown across the country as a fresh wave of coronavirus infections looks set to overrun its hospitals. Non-essential stores will be closed nationwide.

**U.S., Iran agree to indirect nuclear talks**

The U.S. and Iran said that they would begin negotiations through intermediaries next week to try to get both countries back into an accord limiting Iran's nuclear programme, nearly three years after President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the deal.

**BIMSTEC finalizes Connectivity master plan for Bay of Bengal region**

The virtual meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Bay of Bengal Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) grouping has finalized a major Connectivity master plan for the Bay of Bengal region.

**Chile closes its borders, tightens strict lockdown to slow spread of coronavirus**

Chile closed its borders and tightened an already strict lock down further to slow the spread of the corona virus. The move came to stop the influx of contagious new variants as cases climbed past 1 million despite one of the world's fastest vaccination rates.

**Putin signs law that could keep him in office till 2036**

Russian President Vladimir Putin had signed a law allowing him to potentially hold onto power until 2036, a move that formalises constitutional changes endorsed in a vote last year.

**Israel's President Reuven Rivlin nominates PM Benjamin Netanyahu to form a govt following latest inconclusive election**

Israel's President Reuven Rivlin has nominated the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to try to form a government following the latest inconclusive election. In a statement Rivlin said, no candidate has a realistic chance of forming a government that will have the confidence of the Knesset.

**Biden govt. restores aid to Palestinians**

In a significant reversal to the Trump administration's policy towards the Palestine, the U.S. State Department announced the restoration of at least \$235 million in financial assistance to the Palestinians.

**U.S. commits to withdrawal of combat troops from Iraq**

The U.S. has committed to move remaining forces from Iraq, although the two sides did not set a timeline in what would be the second withdrawal since the 2003 invasion.

**U.K. to set up £43 million fund for migrants from Hong Kong**

The British government is setting up a £43 million (\$59 million) fund to help migrants from Hong Kong settle in the country as they escape increasing political repression in the former colony.

**Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan launches construction of trans-border trade center**

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have launched the construction of an international center for trade and economic cooperation named 'Central Asia' on the borders of the two countries.

**Russian Vaccine Sputnik V gets emergency use authorisation in India**

The Central drug regulator, DCGA has approved emergency use authorisation of the Russian Vaccine, Sputnik V. It has now become the third vaccine to get emergency use authorisation from the drug regulator after Covishield and Covaxin.

**WHO, agencies urge countries to suspend sale of live wild mammals in food markets**

The WHO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP) have urged countries to suspend the trade in live caught wild animals of mammalian species for food or breeding purposes. They have warned that wild mammals may be the source of more than 70 per cent of emerging infectious diseases in humans.

**President Joseph Biden administration to withdraw remaining US troops from Afghanistan by Sept 11**

President Joseph Biden administration has decided to withdraw the remaining US troops from Afghanistan by Sept. 11th. This comes 20 years after Al Qaedas attacks triggered Americas longest war in the region.

**Japan's plan to release Fukushima water into the sea raises concerns**

Japan will release more than a million tonnes of treated water from the stricken Fukushima nuclear plant into the ocean, the government said, triggering a furious regional reaction and fierce opposition from local fishing communities.

**UK adds Pakistan to its list of undesirable 21 high-risk countries**

The United Kingdom has added Pakistan to its list of undesirable 21 high-risk countries over money laundering and terror financing charges.

**Coalition of NATO-led troops in Afghanistan to leave in coordination with planned US withdrawal by September 11**

A coalition of NATO-led troops in Afghanistan will leave the country in coordination with a planned US withdrawal by September 11. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said this, ahead of a formal announcement of the end of two decades of fighting.

**Haiti PM resigns amid violence, political strife**

Haitian Prime Minister Joseph Jouthe has resigned as the country faces a spike in killings and kidnappings and prepares for an upcoming constitutional referendum and general election later this year. He has served as the Prime Minister since March 2020.

**U.S. expels Russian diplomats, imposes new sanctions**

The United States announced sanctions against Russia and the expulsion of 10 diplomats in retaliation for what Washington says is the Kremlin's U.S. election interference, a massive cyberattack and other hostile activity.

**Iran says it has started enriching uranium to 60%**

Iran's nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi says Tehran has started 60 percent uranium enrichment at Natanz nuclear facility, days after an explosion at the site that Tehran blamed on Israel.

**Russia to deliver First batch of Sputnik V vaccine to India this month**

Indian Ambassador to Russia, Bala Venkatesh Varma has said that the first batch of Russia's COVID-19 vaccine Sputnik V will be delivered to India in April.

Venkatesh said that the volume of vaccine production in India will be gradually increasing and may exceed 50 million doses per month.

**Opponents of Myanmar coup form shadow government**  
Opponents of Myanmar's ruling junta went on the political offensive, declaring they have formed an interim national unity government with members of Aung San Suu Kyi's ousted Cabinet and major ethnic minority groups.

**Worldwide death toll due to Covid-19 pandemic surpasses three million mark**

The number of people who have died worldwide in the Covid-19 pandemic has surpassed three million. According to the Johns Hopkins University, almost 140 million cases have been recorded since the pandemic began.

**Syria to vote in presidential elections on May 26**

Syrian parliament has said that the country will vote in the presidential election next month on 26th May. The move is likely to maintain President Bashar al-Assad's grip on power.

**France recalls 15 diplomats from Pakistan in wake of violent protests**

France has recalled 15 diplomats from Pakistan in the wake of violent protests and clashes involving a banned group Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

**France drafts 'ecocide' bill to punish acts of environmental damage**

The French National Assembly had approved the creation of an "ecocide" offence as part of a battery of measures aimed at protecting the environment and tackling climate change.

**State of emergency declared in Tokyo, Osaka region as virus surges**

Japan has declared a state of emergency for Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo from April 25, after a recent surge in COVID-19 cases. Announcing the emergency till 11th May, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said that the step is largely intended to be short and intensive.

**90 % of countries' health services continue to be disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic: WHO**

A recent WHO survey has found over one year into the COVID-19 pandemic, about 90 percent of the countries still report disruptions to their essential health services.

**US govt lifts export ban on essential raw materials required for manufacturing COVID vaccine in India**

The US government has decided to lift the export ban on the essential raw materials required by the vaccine manufacturer in India for production of COVID-19 vaccine. This comes after several US lawmakers voiced their concerns over the COVID-19 situation in India.

**Indonesian navy submarine found split into three on seabed**

An Indonesian navy submarine KRI Nanggala that sank off the coast of Bali has been found split into three pieces on the sea bed. All the 53 crew have been confirmed dead.

**Bangladesh govt extends ongoing lockdown in country till May 5**

The government of Bangladesh has decided to extend the ongoing lockdown in the country till May 5. The decision to extend the ongoing restrictions in the country has been taken in view of the global situation following the advice of the public health experts.

**WHO unveils global immunization strategy to save 50 million lives by 2030**

A UN-led global immunization strategy was unveiled to reach more than 50 million children who have missed

lifesaving jabs against measles and other diseases because of COVID-19 disruption. WHO, along with UNICEF and the vaccine alliance Gavi, said their new global strategy has the potential to save 50 million lives within less than a decade.

**Turkey announces lockdown from April 29**

Turkey announces lockdown from April 29 to curb coronavirus infections. The lockdown is set to begin Thursday and last until May 17. Turkey has recorded more than 38,000 deaths and 4.6 million infections since the start of the pandemic.

**European Parliament ratifies post-Brexit European Union-United Kingdom trade deal**

The European Parliament has ratified the post-Brexit European Union-United Kingdom trade deal - a key move to ensure that tariff-and quota-free trade continues. The Trade and Co-operation Agreement, TCA, has been operating provisionally since January. Members of European Parliament voted in favour by 660 votes to 5, while 32 abstained.

**India, Japan And Australia Formally Launch Supply Chain Resilience Initiative**

The trade ministers of India, Japan and Australia have formally launched the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) in a Trilateral Ministerial Meeting held recently. SCRI was proposed by India, Japan and Australia last year as a trilateral push with the intent of reducing the dependence on China and developing supply chains in the Indo-Pacific region.

**Hong Kong's legislature passes controversial immigration bill**

Hong Kong's legislature has passed a controversial immigration bill, which lawyers, diplomats and right groups fear will give authorities unlimited powers to prevent residents and others from entering or leaving the Chinese-ruled city.

**Joe Biden calls for expansion in govt. spending**

In his first joint address to Congress, U.S. President Joe Biden called for a massive expansion in government spending and investment in American society, unveiling a \$1.8-trillion plan that included the provision of universal pre-school, free community college and elderly care under the American Families Plan.

**NATIONAL**

**All public and private sector COVID-19 Vaccination Centres to be open throughout the month.**

In a significant step to exponentially expand the countrywide Vaccination drive, the Centre has decided to operationalize both public and private sector COVID Vaccination Centres on all days this month.

**Central govt declares 14th April, birthday of Dr B R Ambedkar as public holiday for all its offices**

The Central government has declared 14th April, the birthday of Dr. B R Ambedkar, as a public holiday for all its offices.

**Govt sets up three committees on occupational safety**

Central Government has constituted three expert committees to review the existing rules and regulations on safety, health and working conditions standards, pertaining to factories, docks and construction work.

**DRDO lab develops light weight Bullet Proof Jacket**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has congratulated DRDO and DMSRDE Kanpur for developing a Light

Weight Bullet Proof Jacket. DMSRDE Kanpur, a DRDO laboratory has developed a Light Weight Bullet Proof Jacket weighing 9 kg meeting the qualitative requirements of Indian Army.

#### **Govt launches All-India Survey of Migrant Workers**

Government launched the All-India Survey of Migrant Workers and All-India Quarterly Establishment-based Employment Survey. The objective of the All-India Survey of Migrant Workers is to study the kind of employment-related migration undertaken by workers.

#### **Centre to soon roll out Unique Land Parcel Identification Number system in country**

Centre will soon roll out a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number system in the country allotting distinct IDs for each land parcel.

#### **India's biggest floating solar power plant to be set up at Ramagundam in Telangana**

India's biggest floating solar power plant with a capacity of 100 MW will be set up at Ramagundam in Telangana. The project expected to be opened in May, is being set up at Ramagundam thermal power plant reservoir.

#### **Centre releases ₹4,608 crore to States for providing grant-in-aid to local bodies**

The Finance Ministry has released an amount of 4 thousand 608 crore rupees to the States for providing grant-in-aid to the local bodies. The grants are both for the Rural Local Bodies and Urban Local Bodies.

#### **Health Minister approves National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021**

Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan approved the "National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021". The Rare Diseases Policy aims to lower the high cost of treatment for rare diseases with increased focus on indigenous research with the help of a National Consortium.

#### **Rajasthan, 1st State to commission Farm Based Solar Power Project under PM-KUSUM Scheme**

Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Ltd (RRECL) commissioned India's 1st Farm-based Solar Power Project under the PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri-Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyan) Scheme at Bhaloji Village, Kotputli in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

#### **Rajasthan becomes 1st State to provide Health Insurance for all its residents**

With this launch of 'Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme (Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Swasthya Bima Yojana)', Rajasthan became the 1<sup>st</sup> State in India to provide health insurance of up to INR 5 Lakh to each Family every year.

#### **Bharat Dynamics Ltd Starts Delivery of 'Akash Missile' to Indian Army**

Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) started the delivery of the 'Akash Missile' (surface-to-air Missile System) to the Indian Army. Akash Missile can engage aerial threats up to the maximum range of 25 Km up to an altitude of 20 km.

#### **Assembly Election 2021: EC to host IEVP for foreign poll bodies**

Election Commission of India will organize International Virtual Election Visitors Programme (IEVP) 2021 for foreign Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and Organisations during the ongoing Assembly Elections in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

#### **DRDO develops Advanced Chaff Technology**

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an Advanced Chaff Technology to safeguard naval ships against enemy missile attack.

#### **Govt. amends nine laws via ordinance**

In as many as nine laws, the Centre has replaced the existing appellate authorities and vested those powers in the High Courts through an ordinance, the Tribunal Reforms (Rationalisation and Conditions of Service) Ordinance 2021. These laws are Cinematograph Act; Copyright Act; Customs Act; Patents Act; Airports Authority of India Act; Trade Marks Act; Geographical Indications of Goods (registration and protection) Act; Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act and Control of National Highways (land and traffic) Act.

#### **Spices Board India under Ministry of Commerce and Industry and UNDP India's Accelerator Lab sign MoU**

Spices Board India under Ministry of Commerce and Industry and UNDP India's Accelerator Lab signed a MoU with the aim to build a blockchain based traceability interface for Indian spices to enhance transparency in supply chain and trade.

#### **Health Minister Harsh Vardhan launches Integrated Health Information Platform**

Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually launched the Integrated Health Information Platform in New Delhi. Dr Harsh Vardhan stated that India is the first country in the world to adopt such an advanced disease surveillance system.

#### **Centre appoints new Secretaries and Special Secretaries in different departments and Ministries**

Secretary Department of Economic Affairs Tarun Bajaj has been appointed as Revenue Secretary. 1987 batch IAS officer of Karnataka Cadre Ajay Seth has been appointed Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs and 1988 batch IAS Officer of Kerala Cadre Gyanesh Kumar has been appointed as Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs

#### **PM Modi and Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan jointly inaugurates range of Indian projects in Seychelles**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan jointly inaugurated a range of Indian projects in Seychelles virtually. The high level event featured joint e-inauguration of the new Magistrates' Court Building, and handing over of a Fast Patrol Vessel PS Zoroaster to Seychelles Coast Guard.

#### **Union Ministers Dr Harsh Vardhan and Arjun Munda launch Tribal Health Collaborative- 'Anamaya'**

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan and Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launched 'Anamaya'- the Tribal Health Collaborative through video conference. A multi-stakeholder initiative supported by Piramal Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), 'Anameya' will converge efforts of various Government agencies and organisations to enhance the health and nutrition status of the tribal communities.

#### **Cabinet approves PLI Scheme for Air Conditioners and LED Lights worth ₹6238 crore**

The Union Cabinet has approved the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme- 'National Programme on High Efficiency Solar PV Modules' for achieving manufacturing capacity of Giga Watt with an outlay of ₹4,500 crore.

#### **Govt to invest ₹over one lakh crore this fiscal year to ensure tap water supply to every rural household**

The Union government is planning to invest over one lakh crore rupees this fiscal year to ensure tap water supply to every rural household in the country.

#### **Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launches SARTHAQ initiative for implementation of NEP**

Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched an initiative SARTHAQ which will help in the implementation of

National Education Policy in the country. The students and teacher's holistic advancement through quality education, SARTHAQ has been initiated as a part of the Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.

#### **India and Netherlands announce launch of strategic partnership in water sector**

India and the Netherlands have announced the launch of the strategic partnership in water sector to further intensify ongoing cooperation and better coherence in the area.

#### **NITI Aayog to launch Online Dispute Resolution handbook**

NITI Aayog will launch the first-of-its kind Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) handbook in India. ODR is the resolution of disputes outside courts, particularly of small and medium-value cases, using digital technology and techniques of alternate dispute resolution.

#### **Ramesh Pokhriyal launches NanoSniffer, a microsensor based explosive trace detector**

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched NanoSniffer, the world's first Microsensor-based Explosive Trace Detector (ETD) which was developed by NanoSniff Technologies which is an IIT Bombay incubated startup.

#### **Teeka Utsav, mass vaccination programme from April 11th across the country**

Teeka Utsav is being organized across the country from April 11th to fight against the surging COVID-19 cases. The mass vaccination programme will be conducted till 14th of this month.

**Sushil Chandra as Chief Election Commissioner of India**  
President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed Sushil Chandra, the senior-most Election Commissioner, as the Chief Election Commissioner of India.

#### **Centre bans export of Remdesivir & its active ingredients till Covid situation improves in country**

Centre has prohibited exports of injection Remdesivir and Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients of Remdesivir till the COVID situation in the country improves.

#### **PM Modi inaugurates 6th Edition of prestigious Raisina Dialogue**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 6th edition of the Raisina Dialogue. The dialogue will be held virtually from April 13 to 16, 2021. The Raisina Dialogue is India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics. The theme for the 2021 Edition is "#ViralWorld: Outbreaks, Outliers and Out of Control".

#### **Maharashtra announces 15-day 'mini-lockdown'**

Maharashtra, the Indian state worst affected by the coronavirus, has announced sweeping new restrictions amid a wave of Covid-19 infections. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has said for the next 15 days, only essential services would function.

#### **NHAI decides to deploy NSV to enhance quality of National Highways**

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has decided to deploy Network Survey Vehicle, NSV to enhance the quality of the National Highways in the country.

#### **Piyush Goyal inaugurates e-SANTA, an electronic marketplace for aqua farmers**

Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal inaugurated e-SANTA which is an electronic marketplace providing a platform to connect aqua farmers and buyers.

#### **NITI Aayog launches 'Poshan Gyan', a digital repository on health, nutrition**

NITI Aayog, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University launched Poshan Gyan, a national digital repository on health and nutrition.

#### **Approvals accorded under PLI Scheme for Promotion of Domestic Manufacturing of critical KSMs and APIs in country**

Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers accorded approvals to 16 applicants under Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Promotion of Domestic Manufacturing of critical Key Starting Materials or Drug Intermediates and Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients in the country.

#### **Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog sign agreement with Dassault Systemes Foundation**

Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog signed an agreement with Dassault Systemes Foundation to jointly work towards providing a digitally rich ecosystem of Innovation among aspiring young minds across the country.

#### **Govt cancels CBSE Exam for Class 10th; postpones Class 12th exams**

The Union government has postponed CBSE Board Exams for class 12th and exams for class 10th stands cancelled. These exams will now be held at a later date after reviewing the situation on 1st June of this year.

#### **Union Agriculture Ministry signs MoU with Microsoft for pilot project in 100 villages of 6 states**

Union Agriculture Ministry has signed an MoU with Microsoft for a pilot project in 100 villages of six states. This project will carry out various tasks for the betterment of farmers in the selected villages, which will enhance their income.

#### **Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launches Aahaar Kranti mission to spread awareness about nutrition**

Government has launched Aahaar Kranti, a mission dedicated to spread awareness about nutrition. It is designed to address the peculiar problem of hunger and diseases in abundance, being faced by India and the world.

#### **India restores e-visa for 156 countries**

The Union Home Ministry has restored the electronic visa (e-visa) facility for foreigners from 156 countries who intend to visit India for business, conferences and medical reasons, including for medical attendants

#### **100 new hospitals to have their own oxygen plant under PM-CARES fund: Govt**

Union Health Ministry has said that 100 new Hospitals in the country will have their own Oxygen plant under Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM-CARES) Fund.

#### **Secretary MeitY inaugurates three new initiatives of NIXI**

Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Ajay Prakash Sawhney inaugurated three path breaking initiatives for National Internet Exchange of India, NIXI. These initiatives are IP Guru, NIXI Academy and NIXI-IP-INDEX.

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

Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched World 1st affordable and long-lasting hygiene product DuroKea Series. Researcher from Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad has developed this innovative technologies to combat COVID-19 virus spreading.

#### **IMD projects normal rainfall in country this year during monsoon season**

India Meteorological Department, IMD has projected that southwest monsoon rainfall over the country is most likely to be normal at 96 to 104 per cent as per the long period average.

**National climate vulnerability assessment identifies eight eastern states as highly vulnerable to Climate Change**

National climate vulnerability assessment has identified eight eastern states as highly vulnerable to climate change. The report has identified Jharkhand, Mizoram, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, and West Bengal as states highly vulnerable to climate change. These states, mostly in the eastern part of the country, require prioritization of adaptation interventions, the report pointed out.

**Railways Ministry approves to transport Liquid Medical Oxygen container trucks on Roll-on roll-off basis**

Indian Railways has given in-principle approval to transport Liquid Medical Oxygen container trucks on Roll-on roll-off (Ro-Ro) basis. In a first of its kind operation approved by the Railway Ministry, the Indian Railways will soon carry cryogenic tanker trucks loaded with Liquid Medical Oxygen from one part of the country to another.

**Centre bans supply of oxygen for industrial usage to meet rising demand for treatment of COVID-19 patients**

Centre has prohibited the supply of Oxygen for industrial purposes by manufacturers and suppliers from 22nd of this month till further orders. It said, the surplus oxygen available as a result of this temporary restriction will facilitate its freeing up for use as medical oxygen for treatment of COVID-19 patients.

**India, Kyrgyzstan special forces start two-week counter-terror drills**

The special forces of India and Kyrgyzstan have started a two-week military exercise named, 'Khanjar', in Bishkek with a focus on counter-terror drills.

**All above age of 18 years to get COVID-19 vaccine from May 1**

Everyone above the age of 18 years will now be administered COVID-19 vaccine from 1st of May. Centre announced a liberalised and accelerated phase three strategy of Covid-19 Vaccination.

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

The Centre has extended ₹50 lakh insurance coverage scheme meant for healthcare workers across India who die in the line of Covid-19 that had expired last month but had been extended till April 24 as an interim arrangement.

**COVAXIN effective against double mutant strain of Coronavirus: ICMR**

An Indian Council of Medical Research, ICMR study has found indigenous coronavirus vaccine COVAXIN to be effective against the double mutant strain of the virus.

**SC asks Centre to put in place a national policy on issues relating to supply of oxygen**

The Supreme Court of India asked the Centre to put in place a national policy on issues relating to the supply of oxygen, essential drugs and method of COVID vaccination.

**PM Modi ed distribution of e-property cards under SWAMITVA scheme**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the distribution of e-property cards under the SWAMITVA scheme. In a virtual event over four lakh property owners will be given their e-property cards which will also mark the rolling out of the SVAMITVA scheme for implementation across the country.

**Centre to provide free food grains to poor people for two month**

Centre will provide free food grains to the poor people for the upcoming two month under Pradhan Mantri Garib

Kalyan Anna Yojana. Under this scheme, five kilogram per person per month food grains will be provided in May and June of this year.

**Spending of CSR Funds for setting up makeshift Hospitals and Temporary COVID care facilities is eligible CSR activity, says Govt**

The union government has clarified that spending of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds for setting up makeshift hospitals and temporary COVID care facilities is an eligible CSR activity.

**Centre bans use of liquid oxygen for all non-medical purposes**

The Centre has directed States and Union Territories to ensure that liquid oxygen is exclusively used for Medical Purposes only. The exception to nine industries has also withdrawn in order to enhance availability of Medical Oxygen in the country.

**DRDO develops single crystal blades technology, supplies 60 of these blades to HAL for helicopter engine**  
Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed single crystal blades technology and supplied 60 of these blades to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) as part of their indigenous helicopter development program for helicopter engine application.

**Indian Army initiates Ladakh Ignited Minds project**

To provide better educational opportunities for Ladakhi students, the Indian Army has initiated the project Ladakh Ignited Minds. The project is aimed at providing better training facilities to disadvantaged Ladakhi students to give them opportunity to study in niche educational institutes.

**President appoints Justice Rajesh Bindal as Acting Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court**

President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed Justice Rajesh Bindal as the Acting Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court. He will succeed Chief Justice Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan, who is set to retire on 29th of this month.

**New law leaves Delhi's elected govt toothless, all powers with LG**

The new act Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2021 notified by the Centre has left Delhi's elected government virtually toothless by giving sweeping powers to the lieutenant governor who now controls nearly 80 departments and can even stall a bill enacted by the assembly.

**Cabinet approves signing and ratification of Agreement between India, UK on Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters**

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the signing and ratification of an Agreement between India and the United Kingdom on Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters.

**PM Modi sanctions procurement of one lakh Portable Oxygen Concentrators under PM Cares Fund**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sanctioned the procurement of one lakh Portable Oxygen Concentrators from the PM Cares Fund.

**UoH among top institutions in global RUR Rankings**

University of Hyderabad (UoH) figures in the top six Indian educational institutions, and the only university from India in the 13 Indian institutions that figured in the Round University Rankings (RUR). Out of the 13 Indian institutions, UoH is the only university to be ranked after IISc, the IITs and IISER-Pune, in the top six in India.

### **Serum Institute of India reduces price of Covishield from ₹400 to ₹300 for states**

Serum Institute of India has dropped the price of COVISHIELD vaccine by ₹100 for the state government. Earlier, Serum had priced Covishield at ₹400 for state government hospitals and ₹600 for private hospitals.

### **DRDO to set up 500 Medical Oxygen Plants within 3 months**

Defence Research & Development Organisation, DRDO will set up 500 Medical Oxygen Plants within 3 months under the PM CARES Fund.

### **Justice Vimla Singh Kapoor appointed as Chhattisgarh High Court judge**

The President has appointed Justice Vimla Singh Kapoor, Additional Judge of the Chhattisgarh High Court, to be a Judge of the Chhattisgarh High Court.

### **Secretary, DoE in Finance Ministry T V Somanathan designated as new Finance Secretary**

IAS Officer T V Somanathan who is serving as Secretary, Department of Expenditure in the Finance Ministry has been designated as the Finance Secretary.

### **Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad represents India at G-7 Digital and Technology Ministerial Meeting**

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had represented India at the G-7 Digital and Technology Ministerial Meeting.

### **Bharat Biotech reduces cost of COVAXIN from ₹600 to ₹400 for State govts**

Bharat Biotech reduced the cost of COVAXIN vaccine for State governments. It will now cost ₹400 per dose for State Governments instead of the earlier announced price of ₹600 per dose. The COVAXIN will cost ₹1200 per dose for Private Hospitals.

### **Tejas adds Python-5 air to air missile capability**

Indigenously-developed light combat aircraft Tejas has been cleared to carry fifth generation Python-5 air-to-air missile as part of its weapons package that would significantly enhance the combat prowess of the jet.

## **BANKING & ECONOMY**

### **Joe Biden announces \$2 trillion infrastructure plan**

U.S. President Joe Biden had announced a massive \$2 trillion infrastructure plan, which will, over eight years, rebuild much of America's infrastructure — from roads and bridges to high-speed Internet infrastructure and water pipes.

### **Deadline for PAN-Aadhaar link extended**

The Union government extended the deadline for linking PAN with Aadhaar by three months till June 30.

### **India's First Municipal Green Bond was issued by Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh**

Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation, a civic body in Uttar Pradesh(UP), has become India's first municipal corporation to issue municipal green bonds.

### **Saudi Arabia to unveil \$3.2 tn investment drive**

Saudi Arabia announced plans to pump investments worth \$3.2 trillion into the national economy by 2030, roping in the oil-reliant kingdom's biggest companies in a major economic diversification push.

### **India's GDP growth estimated to be in range of 7.5-12.5%: World Bank**

World Bank has raised Indian GDP growth prediction for 2021-22 fiscal to 10.1 percent from 5.4 percent projected

in January. The real India GDP growth could be in the range from 7.5 percent to 12.5 percent.

### **Govt. retains 4% inflation target for RBI's rate panel for 2021-26**

The Centre has decided to retain the inflation target of 4%, with a tolerance band of +/- 2 percentage points for the Monetary Policy Committee of the RBI for the coming five years (April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2026).

### **Nearly 68% loans under PMMY sanctioned to women entrepreneurs**

More than 28 crore 68 lakh loans for an amount of nearly 15 lakh crore rupees have been sanctioned since launch of Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana. About 68 percent of loans have been given to women entrepreneurs and about 51 percent of loans have been given to SC, ST and OBC borrowers.

### **President Ram Nath Kovind promulgates Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021 on 4th April**

President Ram Nath Kovind has promulgated the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021. The amendments aim to provide an efficient alternative insolvency resolution framework for corporate persons classified as micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) under the Code.

### **India-Mauritius CECPA comes into force**

India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement, CECPA will come into force from April 1. It provides for an institutional mechanism to encourage and improve trade between the two countries.

### **Core sector output contracts 4.6% in Feb.**

The output of eight core sectors declined by 4.6% in February, the steepest contraction in the last six months. All the key segments, including coal, crude oil, natural gas, and refinery products, witnessed a decline in production.

### **Govt. extends emergency credit till June**

The government extended the ₹3-lakh-crore emergency credit line guarantee scheme by another three months till June 30 and also widened its scope to new sectors, including hospitality, travel and tourism.

### **Cabinet approves investment of ₹10,900 crore in food processing industry under PLI scheme**

The cabinet has approved an investment of ₹10,900 crore in the food processing industry under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. The Scheme will be implemented over a six year period from 2021-22 to 2026-27.

### **Total dividend receipts from Central Public Sector Enterprises in FY 2020-21 touch ₹39,022 crore**

The total dividend receipts from Central Public Sector Enterprises in Financial Year 2020-21 have touched ₹39,022 crore which exceeds the Revised Estimate of ₹34,717 crore and is more than actual dividend receipts during the previous financial year.

### **Feb. fiscal deficit at 76% of RE: CGA**

According to the data released by CGA, the fiscal deficit at the end of February stood at ₹14.05 lakh crore or 76% of the revised estimate indicating that it is likely to remain within the projections made by Finance Minister.

### **SBI raises additional \$1 billion from JBIC**

State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a loan agreement amounting to up to \$1 billion with the Japanese Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) to promote the smooth flow of funds for the whole range of business operations of Japanese automobile manufacturers in India.

### **Centre infuses fund in 4 PSBs**

The Centre has infused a fresh capital of ₹14,500 crore in four public sector lenders to improve their financial health. Central Bank of India received ₹4,800 crore, IOB ₹4,100 crore, Bank of India ₹3,000 crore and UCO Bank ₹2,600 crore.

### **CBDT notifies Income Tax Return Forms for Assessment Year 2021-22**

The Central Board of Direct Taxes has notified Income Tax Return Forms for the Assessment Year 2021-22. In view of the ongoing crisis due to COVID pandemic and to facilitate the taxpayers, no significant change have been made to the ITR Forms in comparison to the last year's Forms.

### **GST revenue collection hits new record of over ₹1.23 lakh crore in March 2021**

GST Revenue collection for March 2021 has set a new record with highest ever collection of 1 lakh 23 thousand 902 crore rupees. The GST revenue collected in the last month is 27 per cent higher than that collected in March last year.

### **TAFE's Srinivasan to heads PSEB**

Mallika Srinivasan, CMD, TAFE Ltd., has been appointed as the chairperson of the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB). This is the first time a person from the private sector has been made head of the PESB.

### **NPCI starts Bharat BillPay arm**

The National Payments Corporation of India's (NPCI) wholly owned subsidiary, NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd. (NBBL), set up to offer recurring payment services to customers, has started operations.

### **States get ₹45,000 cr. as additional devolution**

The finance ministry released ₹45,000 crore as additional devolution to states in FY 2020-21, an increase of 8.2% over RE 2020-21. As per RE 2020-21, ₹5,49,959 crore, 41% of the shareable pool of taxes and duties were estimated to be released to the states.

### **Govt withdraws orders related to changes in interest rates of small savings schemes**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has withdrawn the recent orders related to the changes in the interest rates of small savings schemes. In a Tweet, she said that Government of India shall continue to be at the rates which existed in the last quarter of 2020-2021.

### **Reliance Retail extends deadline for Future deal**

Reliance Retail Ventures, the retail arm of Reliance Industries, has extended the timeline by six months to complete its ₹24,713 crore deal with Kishore Biyani-led Future group to buy its retail and wholesale business.

### **India's forex reserves decline by \$2.98 billion to \$579.28 billion**

The country's foreign exchange reserves declined by \$2.986 billion to reach \$579.285 billion in the week ended March 26.

### **PayPal Launches Cryptocurrency Checkout Service in United States**

PayPal Holdings Inc has started allowing United States(U.S.) consumers to use their cryptocurrency holdings to pay its online merchants globally.

### **NIIFL made its 1st investment in Health sector by its investment in Manipal Hospital**

The National Investment & Infrastructure Fund Ltd (NIIFL) made its first investment in the Indian healthcare sector by its investment of ₹2,100 crores in Manipal Hospitals through its direct private equity fund, Strategic Opportunities Fund(SOF).

### **₹75,000 cr disbursement to discoms under special liquidity scheme**

State-owned power distribution companies (discoms) have received ₹75,000 crore between June 2020 and March 2021 under the special liquidity scheme announced by the central government last year.

### **India's exports rise 58.23 pc to 34 billion dollars in March**

India's merchandise exports in March 2021 increased an impressive 58.23 percent to 34 billion dollars as compared to 21.49 billion dollars in March last year.

### **Stand-Up India Scheme: More than ₹25,586 crore loans sanctioned in 5 years**

Five years after the Stand Up India scheme was launched by the government to promote entrepreneurship among women, Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST), banks have sanctioned more than ₹25,000 crore to over 1.14 lakh accounts, the Finance Ministry said.

### **Market value of UK's FDI in India surpasses the US': RBI Census**

As per the Reserve Bank of India's latest Census on Foreign Liabilities and Assets of Indian Direct Investment Entities, 2019-20, the market value of the United Kingdom's foreign direct investments in India at ₹5,31,200 crore overtook the US' ₹5,25,771-crore as at March-end 2020.

### **Ashok Soota to invest ₹200 crore in research on ageing, neuro health**

Tech industry veteran Ashok Soota announced the creation of SKAN, a not-for-profit entity exclusively for medical research around ageing and neurological disorders and also made a financial commitment of ₹200 crore to fund the venture.

### **India attracts total FDI inflow of USD 72.12 billion during April 2020 to January, 2021**

India has attracted total FDI inflow of USD 72.12 billion during April 2020 to January, 2021. It is the highest ever for the first ten months of a financial year and 15 per cent higher compared to the first ten months of 2019-20. Singapore is the top investor country with 30.28 per cent of the total FDI Equity inflow followed by the US and UAE for the first ten months of 2020-21.

### **HDFC Bank's advances, deposits rise**

HDFC Bank's advances registered nearly 14 percent growth by end of March 2021 at ₹11.32 lakh crore, while deposits were up by over 16 percent at ₹13.35 lakh crore.

### **Govt. amends IBC for MSME resolution**

The government has introduced a pre-packaged resolution process for such enterprises by amending the insolvency law. Now, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) can seek resolution for their stress through the pre-packaged process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

### **BYJU'S to acquire Aakash in \$1-bn 'strategic' deal**

Edtech platform BYJU'S has entered into a strategic partnership with test preparatory services firm Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) to acquire the latter for approximately \$1 billion.

### **Adani buys ₹2,800-crore stake in Krishnapatnam**

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ) has bought the residual 25% stake in Adani Krishnapatnam Port Ltd. (Krishnapatnam Port) from Vishwasamudra Holdings for ₹2,800 crore.

### **IMF upgrades its growth projection for India to 12.5 per cent for FY 2021-22**

The IMF in its latest World Economic Outlook report has upgraded its growth projection for India to 12.5 per cent for the Financial Year 2021-22.

### **NABARD says balance sheet grew 24%**

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) announced a 24% growth in its balance sheet for FY21. NABARD said its balance sheet grew to ₹6.57 lakh crore in FY21, compared with ₹5.32 lakh crore in FY20, an increase of 24%.

### **Max sells 13% stake in Max Life to Axis Bank**

Diversified Max Group has sold a 13% stake in Max Life Insurance Company to the country's third largest private sector lender Axis Bank, which will now be a co-promoter of the insurer.

### **RBI keeps repo rate, reverse repo rate unchanged at 4% and 3.35%**

The Reserve Bank of India kept key policy rates unchanged. Repo rate and the reverse repo rate remain unchanged at 4 per cent and 3.35 per cent. The central bank also retained its growth outlook for the fiscal year started April 1 at 10.5%.

### **Equitas SFB ends FY21 with total business of ₹34,287 crore**

Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd. (SFB) has reported a 16% year-on-year rise in gross advances to ₹17,896 crore while total deposits rose 52% year-on-year to ₹16,391 crore.

### **RBI extends fresh support of ₹50,000 cr. to NABARD, others**

To help mitigate the impact of the pandemic and aid economic revival, the RBI said it would extend fresh support of ₹50,000 crore to the All India Financial Institutions for new lending in FY22. NABARD will be provided a special liquidity facility (SLF) of ₹25,000 crore for one year. An SLF of ₹10,000 crore will be extended to the National Housing Bank for one year to support the housing sector. SIDBI will be provided ₹15,000 crore under this facility for up to one year for funding of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

### **Ambani tops Forbes rich list with \$84.5 bn**

Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani reclaimed the top spot in the Forbes list of India's 10 richest billionaires, with a net worth of \$84.5 billion. Forbes' 35th annual list of the world's billionaires is topped by Amazon CEO and Founder Jeff Bezos for the fourth year in a row.

### **Payments bank balance limit doubled**

The RBI has doubled the limit of maximum balance that an individual customer can hold with payments banks (PBs) to ₹2 lakh from ₹1 lakh earlier, with immediate effect to expand the ability of lenders to cater to the needs of MSMEs and other businesses.

### **MF assets rose 30% in FY21, equities saw inflows in March**

The Average Assets Under Management (AAUMs) of the Mutual Fund (MF) industry in FY21 touched a historic high of ₹32.17 lakh crore as on March 31, rising 30% over the previous year's ₹24.70 lakh crore, as per annual data released by AMFI.

### **Keeping farmers in mind, Centre directs fertiliser firms not to hike prices**

The Centre directed fertiliser companies not to increase the maximum retail price (MRP) of non-urea fertilisers such as DAP and asked them to sell at old rates.

### **IMF policy panel endorses \$650 billion increase in resources**

The International Monetary Fund has authorised a USD 650 billion expansion of the 190-nation lending institution's resources with the aim of providing more support for vulnerable countries as they battle the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Chinese regulators impose 2.75 billion fine on world's biggest online retailer Alibaba**

Regulators in China have imposed a 2.75 billion dollar fine over the world's biggest online retailer Alibaba. The Regulators said the internet giant abused its dominant market position for several years by stopping some sellers using other platforms.

### **RBI Announced its First OMP for ₹25,000 crore under G-SAP 1.0**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced its first purchase of government securities for an amount of ₹25,000 crore under the G-sec Acquisition Programme (G-SAP 1.0), the purchase was planned to be held on April 15, 2021.

### **Bharti Axa Life Entered into Bancassurance Partnership with Fincare SFB**

Bharti Axa life insurance and Fincare Small Finance Bank(SFB) Limited joined hands for a bancassurance partnership under which the bank will sell insurance policies to its customers.

### **Mahindra & Mahindra to invest ₹3,000 crore on EV business in next 3 years**

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd will put in fresh investments to the tune of ₹3,000 crore on its electric vehicles business in the next three years, while it looks for more alliances and partnerships in the vertical.

### **SBI plans to add 7,000 customer service points in FY22**

State Bank of India (SBI) plans to engage around 15 Corporate Business Correspondents (BCs) who will setup about 7,000 customer service point (CSP) outlets/kiosks for extending banking services and remittance facilities across the country in FY22.

### **KVG Bank launches loan scheme for medical sector**

The Dharwad-headquartered regional rural bank Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVB) has launched a loan scheme – 'Vikasa Nava Sanjeevini' – for medical sector. The loan scheme also includes an overdraft facility of up to a maximum of ₹25 lakh.

### **IRDAI allows insurers to invest in Fund-of-Funds**

In a major boost to private equity industry, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has now allowed insurance companies to invest in Fund-of-Funds (FoF) that invest within the country.

### **Adani Ports removed from S&P index due to links with Myanmar military**

S&P Dow Jones Indices removed India's Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd from its sustainability index due to the firm's business ties with Myanmar's military which is accused of human rights abuses after a coup this year.

### **Regulator Sebi slaps ₹25 crore fine on YES Bank in AT-1 bonds case**

Markets regulator Sebi imposed a penalty of ₹25 crore on Yes Bank in the matter of misselling the lender's AT-1 bonds few years ago.

### **NCDC secures ₹600 cr loan from Deutsche Bank**

The National Cooperative Development Corporation, NCDC has secured 600 crore rupees loan from Deutsche Bank, Germany's largest bank, for onward

lending to cooperatives in the country. This is for the first time that one of the largest European banks in the world is lending to the NCDC.

#### **HDFC Bank plans to raise ₹50,000 cr through bonds within 12 months**

HDFC Bank is planning to raise funds by issuing perpetual debt instruments (part of additional tier-I capital), tier-II capital bonds and long-term bonds up to a total amount of ₹50,000 crore.

#### **Citi to exit retail banking in India, China**

Citigroup announced that it will exit 13 international consumer banking markets, shifting its focus to wealth management and away from retail banking in places where it is small. Citigroup will depart China, India and 11 other retail markets.

#### **WPI inflation quickens to a record 7.4%**

Inflation based on the wholesale price index (WPI) accelerated last month to a record 7.4%. The price gains at the wholesale level were driven by a 10.3% increase in fuel and power, the quickest pace in two years, and the sharpest surge in manufactured products' inflation at 7.3%.

#### **RBI sets up authority to review regulations**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up the Regulations Review Authority 2.0 which will review regulatory prescriptions internally as well as by seeking suggestions from RBI-regulated entities for simplification and ease of implementation. Deputy Governor M. Rajeshwar Rao has been appointed as the Regulations Review Authority.

#### **Flipkart to acquire Cleartrip**

Walmart-backed Flipkart made a proposal to acquire Cleartrip, an online travel technology firm. Flipkart would acquire 100% of Cleartrip's shareholding in a move to further strengthen its digital commerce offerings for customers.

#### **Piyush Goyal chairs first meeting of National Startup Advisory Council**

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal chaired the first meeting of the National Startup Advisory Council. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade had constituted this Council to advise the Government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country.

#### **India's merchandise exports rise 60.3 percent at 34.5 billion dollars in March**

India's merchandise exports rose 60.3 percent at 34.5 billion dollars in March as compared to the same month last year, while country's imports jumped 54 percent to 48.4 billion dollars, Ministry of Commerce & Industry data showed.

#### **China's GDP grew record 18.3% in Q1**

China's economy grew a record 18.3% in the first quarter of 2021, riding on strong domestic and foreign demand and aided by recovery from a low base in early 2020 when Covid stalled the world's second-largest economy. The gross domestic product (GDP) reached 24.93 trillion yuan (about \$3.82 trillion) in Q1.

#### **U.S. Treasury keeps India on currency watch list**

India is one of the 11 countries on the U.S. Treasury's 'Monitoring List' with regard to their currency practices, according to the April 2021 edition of the semi-annual report. India was on the list in the December 2020 report as well.

#### **UK grants approval for extradition of fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi**

UK Home Ministry has approved the extradition of fugitive Nirav Modi. In February this year, a UK court had ordered extradition of Nirav Modi, who is wanted in India in a Bank scam case.

#### **Italy launches first ever mega food park & food processing unit in India**

Italy launched its first ever mega food park project in India involving food processing facilities as the two sides plan to expand ties. The pilot project "The Mega Food Park" was launched over a virtual platform.

#### **Indian pharma exports grow at 18% to 24.44 billion dollars in FY 21**

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

#### **HDFC Bank Q4 net profit up 18.2%**

HDFC Bank reported an 18.2% year-on-year (y-o-y) growth in net profit for the quarter ended March to ₹8,186.51 crore on the back of a 26% y-o-y rise in other income to ₹7,594 crore, with net interest income (NII) growing 12.6% y-o-y to ₹17,120 crore.

#### **Piyush Goyal launches Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal launched the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS). An amount of 945 crore rupees corpus will be divided over the next 4 years for providing seed funding to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India.

#### **RBI decides not to activate countercyclical capital buffer**

The Reserve Bank of India said it has decided against activating the countercyclical capital buffer (CCyB) framework as the current situation does not warrant such an action. The RBI had in February 2005 put in place CCyB guidelines with the overall objective of strengthening the banking sector.

#### **In a first for Indian fintech start-up, Razorpay triples valuation to \$3 billion in six months**

Razorpay has become the first Indian fintech start-up to triple its valuation to \$3 billion, with its latest \$160 million Series E fund raise, in less than six months after it became a Unicorn in October 2020.

#### **Cumulative value of overall exports during FY 2020-21 estimated at over USD 490 Billion**

Commerce Secretary Dr Anup Wadhawan has said that cumulative value of overall exports during the financial year 2020-21 has been estimated at over 490 Billion dollars.

#### **LIC collects highest-ever premium of ₹1.84-lakh crore in FY21**

Life Insurance Corporation of India said it has collected the highest-ever premium of ₹1.84-lakh crore in 2020-21, and has paid out ₹1.34-lakh crore as claims to policyholders in the period.

#### **Gold Imports Surge To 160 Tonnes In March On Price Drop, Duty Cut: GJEPC**

Gold imports during March surged to 160 tonnes on account of duty cut to 7.5 per cent, reduction in prices of the precious metal and rise in demand in export markets, Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) said.

#### **India's export of Agricultural and allied commodities shows an impressive increase of 18.49 per cent during 2020-2021**

India has witnessed an impressive increase of almost 18.5 per cent in export of Agricultural and allied products during April 2020 to February 2021 as compared to the same period, the previous year. The country had witnessed tremendous growth of 727 per cent in Wheat export and 132 per cent in Non-Basmati Rice export, despite the prevalence of COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Bitex becomes first crypto exchange to provide investment disclosures**

Cryptocurrency exchange Bitex has announced that it has started providing investment declaration reports for

all its retail and institutional investors, becoming the first exchange in India to comply with the recent amendments made to the Companies Act 2013 by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

#### **Indiabulls Housing, HDFC ink pact for co-lending**

Indiabulls Housing Finance (IBH) and mortgage lender HDFC Ltd have entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with HDFC Ltd to offer housing loans at competitive rates.

#### **Tata Steel, HSBC execute paperless trade transaction**

Tata Steel along with HSBC, an investment banking company, has executed a blockchain-enabled, paperless trade transaction of export of steel by Tata Steel, India to Universal Tube & Plastic Industries, UAE.

#### **DCB Bank acquires minority stake in Techfino Capital**

DCB Bank Limited, a private sector bank, has acquired a minority equity stake of about 9 per cent in Bengaluru-based non-banking financial company (NBFC), Techfino Capital Private Limited (TCPL).

#### **Rekha Menon becomes first woman to be appointed chairperson of Nasscom**

IT industry's apex body Nasscom appointed Rekha M. Menon, chairperson and senior managing director at Accenture in India, as its chairperson for 2021-22. With this, she becomes the first woman to take on the role of chairperson for Nasscom in its 30-year history.

#### **RBI allows commercial banks to pay up to 50% of pre-Covid dividends**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) relaxed the dividend payout norms of commercial banks and allowed them to pay up to 50 per cent of what they paid before Covid from the profits for the fiscal ended March 31, 2021.

#### **RBI extends temporary advances limit of ₹51,560 crore for states, UTs till September**

The RBI said the existing interim Ways and Means Advances (WMA) limit of ₹51,560 crore for all states and Union Territories will continue up to September 30, 2021, as the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is still prevalent.

#### **India's processed food products exports witnesses growth of over 26%**

India's processed food products exports has witnessed a growth of over 26 per cent during April to February in the last financial year, despite challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic. The total value of export of processed products was 43 thousand 798 crore rupees during this period.

#### **RBI restricts American Express Banking Corp, Diners Club International Ltd from adding new customers**

Reserve Bank of India has imposed restrictions on American Express Banking Corp and Diners Club International Limited from adding new customers to their card networks from 1st of next month. It indicated that both these service providers had failed to comply with directions regarding mandatory storage of customer data within systems in India.

#### **RIL buys Britain's iconic country club Stoke Park for 57 million pounds**

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd has bought Britain's iconic country club and luxury golf resort, Stoke Park, which featured in James Bond movies, for 57 million pounds (about ₹592 crore).

#### **Indian Bank, angel investor in pact for start-up funding**

Public sector lender Indian Bank has entered into pact with Chennai-based angel investment group 'The Chennai Angles' for financing start-ups under the bank's loan product Ind Spring Board.

#### **RBI approves Atanu Chakraborty as HDFC Bank's part-time chairman**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of former Economic Affairs Secretary, Atanu Chakraborty, as the part-time chairman and additional independent director of the private sector lender HDFC Bank.

#### **ICICI Bank Q4 profit surges 260% to ₹4,402 crore**

Private sector lender ICICI Bank's standalone net profit more than doubled by 260.4 per cent to ₹4,402.61 crore in the quarter ended March 31, 2021 with a robust increase in net interest income.

#### **RBI fixes private bank MD, CEO tenures at 15 years**

The RBI has capped the tenure of managing directors (MDs) and chief executive officers (CEOs) of private banks at 15 years. According to the RBI's latest guidelines on corporate governance in banks, after the completion of their term, professional MDs & CEOs or whole-time directors will be eligible for re-appointment in the same bank after a minimum gap of three years. The upper age limit for MDs, CEOs and whole-time directors will be 70 years.

#### **Bank credit grows 5.33%; deposits rise 10.94%**

Care Ratings in a recent report said that bank credit grew by 5.33 per cent to ₹108.89 lakh crore, and deposits rose 10.94 per cent to ₹152.15 lakh crore in the fortnight ended April 9, 2021.

#### **Tech Mahindra to acquire US firm Eventus Solutions for \$44 million**

Tech Mahindra has entered into an agreement to acquire US-headquartered consulting and technology service company Eventus Solutions Group for \$44 million.

#### **India's Organic food products exports rises by more than 50% in terms of value in 2020-21**

India's Organic food products exports rose by more than 50 per cent in terms of value in 2020-21 despite COVID-19 challenges. In terms of quantity, the exports of organic food products grew by 39 per cent to eight lakh 88 thousand metric tonne during last financial year compared to 2019-20.

#### **ADB provided \$1.5-billion fiscal support to India for pandemic response**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said it has provided \$ 1.5 billion to India to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. The institution had announced a package of \$20 billion in April 2020 to provide financial support to 26 countries to help fight the pandemic.

#### **Axis Bank Q4 net jumps to ₹2,677 cr**

Axis Bank reported a net profit of ₹2,677 crore in the quarter ended March 2021 as it returned to profit for this quarter. The bank had reported a net loss of ₹1,388 crore in year-ago period.

#### **Bajaj Finance Q4 net rises 42%**

Bajaj Finance (BFL) reported a 42 per cent jump in consolidated net profit at ₹1,347 crore for the fourth quarter of the fiscal ended March 2021.

#### **Indian real estate sector attracts \$922 m investments in Q1**

According to JLL's Capital Markets Update, institutional investments continued the momentum during the first-quarter (Q1) of calendar 2021, registering a 21 per cent growth in volumes at \$922 million (\$763 million). Hyderabad witnessed the highest capital flows of \$384 million, accounting for a 42 per cent share of investments during the first quarter of 2021.

#### **Govt leaves GPF, other non-government PF interest rate unchanged at 7.1%**

The Union government has decided to maintain status quo on General Provident Fund (GPF) and other non-government PF, gratuity funds interest rate at 7.1 per cent.

### **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund applications cross ₹8,000 crore mark**

Agriculture Infrastructure Fund has crossed the eight thousand crore mark. The investment will give a boost to several agricultural projects which will unlock value for farmers across the country. A total of eight thousand 665 applications worth eight thousand 216 crore rupees have been received for the fund.

### **SBI board approves plan to raise \$2 bn**

Country's largest lender SBI said its central board, at its meeting, has approved raising up to \$2 billion (about ₹14,880 crore) through bonds this fiscal.

### **Zomato files papers for ₹8,250-cr. IPO**

Food delivery app Zomato Ltd., backed by China's Ant Group, filed a draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with the Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to raise ₹8,250 crore.

### **Jio Platforms, Byju's in Time Magazine's First-ever List of 100 Most Influential Firms**

Two Indian firms, Reliance Industries' technology arm Jio Platforms and e-learning startup Byju's have figured in the Time Magazine's first-ever list of 100 most influential companies. It listed Jio Platforms under the Innovators category alongside Zoom, Adidas, TikTok, Ikea, Moderna and Netflix. Byju's was listed alongside Tesla, Huawei, Shopify, Airbnb and DiDi Chuxing in the Disruptors category.

### **Axis Bank board okays reappointment of Amitabh Chaudhry as MD, CEO**

Axis Bank board has cleared the re-appointment of Amitabh Chaudhry as the Managing Director and chief executive officer of the bank for three years more years, starting January 2022 up to December 31, 2024.

### **Tata gets nod to acquire BigBasket**

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved Tata Digital Limited's offer of acquiring up to 64.3 per cent stake in Supermarket Grocery Supplies Private Ltd (SGS) which runs the online grocery delivery platform BigBasket.

### **Country's gold demand recovers during January to March period to witness a growth of 37 per cent**

The country's gold demand recovered during the January to March period to witness a growth of 37 per cent, at 140 tonnes compared to the same quarter of 2020, due to ease of COVID-related restrictions, pent up demand and softening of its prices, according to the World Gold Council (WGC).

### **SEBI allows firms 45 days more to file Q4 results**

SEBI gave 45 days more for companies to file their fourth-quarter results as well as an additional one-month time to submit their annual results as the regulator eased compliance requirements amid the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Equitas SFB Q4 net profit almost trebles**

Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd. (ESFBL) reported net profit for the quarter ended March has almost trebled to ₹113 crore. Net interest income rose to ₹449 crore from ₹424 crore in the year-earlier period.

## **AWARDS**

### **SportStar Aces Awards 2021 Day 1 winners**

Sportsman of the Decade (Para Sports): Devendra Jhajharia

Sportswoman of the Decade (Para Sports) - Deepa Malik

Best PSU for the Promotion of Sports: Indian Railways

Sportsperson of the Decade (Motorsports): Narain Karthikeyan

Sportsman of the Decade (Track and Field): Neeraj Chopra

Sportswoman of the Decade (Track and Field): Krishna Poonia

Sportswoman of the Decade (Individual Olympic Sports): Mary Kom

Club of the Decade: Bengaluru FC

### **Dadasaheb Phalke Award for Rajinikanth**

Actor Rajinikanth has been honoured with the 51st Dadasaheb Phalke award. He has also been honoured with the Padma Bhushan (2000) and the Padma Vibhushan (2016).

### **The second list of Sportstar Aces award winners**

Sportsman of the Decade (Cricket): M.S. Dhoni

Sportswoman of the Decade (Cricket): Mithali Raj

National Team of the Decade: 2011 WC-winning Indian men's cricket team

Sports for Social Good: Anantapur Sports Academy

Inspirational Giant of Indian Sport: Sachin Tendulkar

Lifetime Achievement Award: G.R. Viswanath

### **Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan Receives Kalinga Ratna Samman 2021**

M Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India presented the Kalinga Ratna Samman for the year 2021 to Biswabhusan Harichandan, governor of Andhra Pradesh (AP) to recognise his contribution to literature.

### **Mary Kom wins Sportstar Aces Sportstar of the Decade**

M. C. Mary Kom, the only boxer to win eight world championships medals, was named Sportstar of the Decade at the 2021 Sportstar ACES Awards.

### **Dutee Chand honored with Chhattisgarh Veerni Award**

Dutee Chand, the Jakarta Asian Games silver-medalist in 100 and 200 metres, was honored with the Chhattisgarh Veerni Award.

### **BAFTA 2021 winners:**

Best Film: *Nomadland*

Director: Chloe Zhao, *Nomadland*

Leading Actress: Frances McDormand, *Nomadland*

Leading Actor: Anthony Hopkins, *The Father*

Supporting Actress: Yuh-Jung Young, *Minari*

Supporting Actor: Daniel Kaluuya, *Judas and the Black Messiah*

### **Williamson wins Hadlee Medal again**

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson had won his fourth Sir Richard Hadlee medal for excelling across formats and was also adjudged the 'Test Player of the Year' in the country's annual cricket awards.

### **Bhuvneshwar Kumar is ICC player of the month**

India seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar had won the ICC Player-of-the-Month award for his superlative show in the recent limited-over series against England in March.

### **Oscars 2021 Winners**

**Best Picture:** *Nomadland*

**Best Director:** Chloe Zhao, *Nomadland*

**Best Actor:** Anthony Hopkins, *The Father*

**Best Actress:** Frances McDormand, *Nomadland*

**Best International Feature Film:** *Another Round* (Denmark)

**Best Supporting Actor:** Daniel Kaluuya, *Judas and the Black Messiah*

**Best Supporting Actress:** Youn Yuh-jung – *Minari*

**Best Animated Feature Film:** *Soul*

**PERSONS IN NEWS**  
**(National and International)**

**Shashikala**

Veteran actor Shashikala, best known for her supporting roles in 1960s-70s films like Aarti, Gumrah and Chhote Sarkar, passed away at the age of 88. She received the Padma Shri in 2007 for her contributions.

**Prince Hamzah bin Hussein**

Jordanian authorities said they foiled a plot to "destabilize" the kingdom involving a half-brother of King Abdullah II, Hamzah bin Hussein and arrested at least 16 suspects.

**Digvijaysinh Zala**

Former Union Environment Minister Wankaner Digvijaysinh Zala passed away. Establishing the Environment ministry under Prime minister Indira Gandhi, he became the first Environment Minister of the country from 1982 to 1984.

**Sanjay Chakraverty**

Noted shooting coach Sanjay Chakraverty, who has given India some of its finest shooters, including guiding the likes of Olympic medallist Gagan Narang and Anjali Bhagwat, died.

**Udaykumar**

A.J. Udaykumar, the former India Davis Cupper, passed away. He was 89. Udaykumar went on to be ranked No. 2 in India between 1955 and 1958.

**Nguyen Xuan Phuc**

Nguyen Xuan Phuc, the man behind Vietnam's successful handling of the coronavirus pandemic, was formally sworn in as President in Hanoi. Meanwhile Pham Minh Chinh, a former deputy minister of public security, was sworn in as PM.

**Fatema Zakaria**

Well-known educationist, veteran journalist and Chairman of Aurangabad's prestigious educational institution Maulana Azad Campus Dr. Fatema Zakaria is no more. She was conferred with Padma Shri for her excellent contribution in education and educational reforms.

**Prince Philip**

Britain's Prince Philip, Queen Elizabeth II's husband has died at the age of 99. He was the longest-serving royal consort in British history.

**Ouhoumoudou Mahamadou**

Ouhoumoudou Mahamadou has been appointed Niger's new Prime Minister by its President Mohamed Bazoum.

**Simon Marandi**

Simon Marandi, founder member of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and Senior BJP leader died due to cardiac problems. He was a two-time MP from Rajmahal constituency, five-time MLA and Minister of State in Jharkhand.

**Alessandra Galloni**

Alessandra Galloni will take over as its new editor-in-chief of Reuters. Thus becoming the first woman to head the global news agency in its 170-year history.

**Balbir Singh Jr.**

Balbir Singh Jr., who was a member of the silver medal-winning 1958 Asian Games Indian hockey team, died at the age of 88.

**Bernie Madoff**

Bernie Madoff, the infamous architect of an epic securities swindle that burned thousands of investors,

outfoxed regulators and earned him a 150-year prison term, died in a US federal prison.

**G.V.G. Krishnamurty**

Former Chief Election Commissioner G.V.G. Krishnamurty passed away due to age-related ailments. He was 86.

**Kakarla Subba Rao**

Renowned radiologist and former Director of Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences in Hyderabad Dr. Kakarla Subba Rao passed away. He was honoured with a Padma Shri in 2000.

**Ranjit Sinha**

Former Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) chief Ranjit Sinha passed away. Mr. Sinha, a 1974-batch IPS officer of the Bihar cadre, had tested positive for COVID-19.

**Jimmy Lai**

Hong Kong pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai has been sentenced to 14 months in prison after being found guilty of unauthorised assembly.

**Ahmed Hussain**

Football Olympian Ahmed Hussain Lala passed away in Bengaluru, aged 89. Ahmed represented India in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

**Vivek**

Veteran Tamil actor Vivekh passed away in Chennai following a cardiac arrest. He was awarded Padma shri by the Government of India in the year 2009 for his contribution to the film industry.

**Sara Begum Kabori**

Renowned Bangladeshi actor Sara Begum Kabori passed away in Dhaka. Sara Begum Kabori was honoured with the National Film Award for her role in the film Sareng Bou in 1978. She got the lifetime achievement award in 2013

**Raul Castro**

Raul Castro confirmed that he was handing over the leadership of the Cuban Communist Party to a younger generation at its congress. The move ended six decades of rule by himself and older brother Fidel.

**Bhumidhar Barman**

Former Assam Chief Minister Bhumidhar Barman passed away. He was Chief Minister for 23 days from April 22, 1996, after the death of his predecessor Hiteswar Saikia.

**Anupama**

Former Karnataka State hockey player and international umpire Anupama Puchimanda passed away. In 2006, she became the first woman umpire from India to officiate at the Commonwealth Games

**Idriss Deby**

Chad's longtime President Idriss Deby has died of wounds suffered on the front line in the country's north, where he had gone to visit soldiers battling rebels.

**M.Narasimham**

Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor M Narasimham passed away after battling Covid-19. Narasimham is considered as the father of banking reforms.

**Miguel Díaz-Canel**

Miguel Díaz-Canel will succeed Raúl Castro as the Cuban Communist Party's first secretary, the most powerful position on the island. He is the first person without the surname Castro to run Cuba since the 1959 revolution.

**Walter Mondale**

Former U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale, died at age 93. A leading liberal Democratic voice of the late 20th century who was U.S. Vice President under Jimmy Carter.

### **Derek Chauvin**

In the USA, Former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin has been convicted of murdering George Floyd. Last year, the death of 46-year-old Floyd had prompted protests against racism and police brutality in many US cities and other countries.

### **GC Murmu**

India's Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) GC Murmu has been chosen as the external auditor by a prestigious intergovernmental organisation working for the elimination of chemical weapons (OPCW).

### **Shravan Rathod**

Shravan Rathod of the iconic composer duo Nadeem-Shravan died battling COVID-19 at a Mumbai hospital.

### **Venkata Ramana**

Justice Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana took oath as the 48th Chief Justice of India. President Ram Nath Kovind administered him the oath of office at a brief ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

### **MM Shantanagoudar**

Supreme Court judge Justice Mohan M Shantanagoudar died recently. Justice Shantanagoudar was elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on February 17, 2017.

### **Rajan Mishra**

Renowned Classical singer Rajan Mishra passed away. Belonging to the Benaras gharana, Pandit Rajan Mishra, along with brother Sajan Mishra have performed for both Indian and global audiences for decades now.

### **Krishnamurthy Santhanam**

Indian nuclear scientist Krishnamurthy Santhanam passed away. Krishnamurthy Santhanam was a key figure in the Pokhran -2, 1998 tests.

### **Sanjay Kumar Srivastava**

A senior officer of the Indian Information Service Sanjay Kumar Srivastava passed away following COVID-19 infection.

### **VP Gehlot**

Indian Olympic Association vice-president Janardhan Singh Gehlot died in Jaipur after prolonged illness. Gehlot was also the founder president of International Kabaddi Federation.

### **Manoj Das**

Manoj Das, an eminent Indian author who wrote in Odia and English, passed away at the age of 87. Das was awarded Padma Shri in 2001 and Padma Bhushan in 2020 for his contributions in the field of literature and education.

## **SPORTS**

### **New Zealand sweeps T20 series**

New Zealand beat Bangladesh by 65 runs in a rain-shortened third Twenty20 International to claim a clean 3-0 series sweep.

### **Squash: Harrity beats Mangaonkar to the title**

Todd Harrity of the USA beat Mahesh Mangaonkar to win the men's title, his fourth overall in the PSA Challenger Tour squash tournament. Egypt's Hana Moataz bagged the women's crown with over compatriot Malak Kamal.

### **2023 Men's Boxing World Championships to be held in Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent**

The 2023 men's boxing World Championships will be held in Uzbekistan capital Tashkent. International Boxing Association (AIBA) President Umar Kremlev confirmed Tashkent as the host city during a visit to Uzbekistan.

### **Aussie women break ODI record**

Megan Schutt and Alyssa Healy have powered Australia to a world-record 22nd straight ODI win, crushing New Zealand by six wickets and setting a new benchmark for dominance of the sport.

### **India finish Dubai Para Badminton with 20 medals**

India finished their campaign in the 3rd Sheikh Hamdan bin Al Maktoum Dubai Para-Badminton International 2021 in Dubai with 20 medals. India topped the tally with 20 medals (4 gold, 6 silver and 10 bronze medals).

### **North Korea decides not to participate in Tokyo Olympics**

North Korea will not participate in the Tokyo Olympics this year to protect its athletes amid the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Fakhar powers Pakistan to series win**

Opener Fakhar Zaman hit a second successive century to help Pakistan win the deciding ODI against South Africa by 28 runs and take the series 2-1. This is Pakistan's first ODI series win in South Africa since 2013.

### **Russian Olympic champions banned**

Russian Olympic champions Andrei Silnov and Natalya Antyukh have each been banned for four years for doping offences, the Court of Arbitration for Sport said.

### **Wrestler Anshu Malik, Sonam Malik qualify for Tokyo Olympics**

In women wrestling, Indian Anshu Malik and Sonam Malik have secured the Tokyo Olympics berths in the 57-kg and 62-kg categories

### **Ledecky dips under 4 minutes to win 400 free in California**

Katie Ledecky won the 400m freestyle at the TYR Pro Swim Series with the world's fastest time this year. She touched 3 minutes, 59.25 seconds to be the only swimmer to go under 4 minutes this year.

### **Longjam succeeds Agarwal as NADA DG**

IAS officer Siddharth Singh Longjam will take over as the National Anti-Doping Agency's Director-General, succeeding Navin Agarwal.

### **Babar Azam replaces Virat Kohli as World No-1 batsman in ICC ODI Rankings**

In the International Cricket Council's (ICC) rankings for ODI batsmen, Pakistan Captain Babar Azam has climbed to the No.1 spot. Azam replaced his Indian counterpart Virat Kohli, who was occupying the top position for nearly three and a half years.

### **World TT from Nov. 23**

The World Table Tennis Championships will be held as per schedule from Nov. 23 to 29 in Houston, USA, the game's governing body ITTF has said.

### **Table Tennis: Payas Jain is World No. 2 in Under-17**

Payas Jain has jumped to the second spot in boys' (u-17) world table tennis age-group rankings released.

### **Swimming: Sajan and Kenisha clinch gold**

Sajan Prakash and Kenisha Gupta secured gold medals in the men's and women's 200m freestyle races respectively at the Uzbekistan Open swimming championship.

### **Eight-year ban for Streak**

Former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak was banned for eight years from all cricket after he accepted five charges of breaching the ICC anti-corruption code.

### **Sarita Mor retains her Asian 59kg title**

Sarita Mor became the first Indian woman to win two consecutive gold medals in the Asian wrestling

championships as she defended her women's 59kg title in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

#### **Kohli is Wisden's ODI player of 2010s**

Virat Kohli has been named Wisden Almanack's ODI player of the 2010s, while England all-rounder Ben Stokes was declared the 'Cricketer of the Year' for a second successive time. Sachin Tendulkar was named the ODI Cricketer of the 1990s and Kapil Dev the best for the 1980s. Sir Vivian Richards claimed the prize in the 1970s while Sri Lankan great Muttiah Muralitharan got the nod for the 2000s.

#### **Divya clinches second Asian gold**

Divya Kakran emerged as the second Indian woman to secure two gold medals in the Asian wrestling championships as women wrestlers of the country returned four gold medals in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

#### **Pakistan pips SA, takes series 3-1**

Pakistan beat South Africa by three wickets with one ball to spare in the fourth and final T20I at SuperSport Park. The victory clinched a 3 - 1 series win for the tourists.

#### **Grapplers Sonam, Anshu and four sailors in TOPS**

The Sports Ministry has included six athletes, including Olympic-bound wrestlers Sonam Malik and Anshu Malik, besides four sailors in its Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) core group.

#### **Asian Weightlifting Championships: India's Mirabai Chanu creates a new Clean and Jerk world record in Tashkent**

India's Mirabai Chanu set a new World Record in the women's 49kg Clean and Jerk with an impressive 119 kg lift at Asian Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent. She lifted 86kg in snatch and a world record of 119kg in clean and jerk for a total of 205kg which also won her the bronze medal at the event.

#### **Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium will host T20 World Cup final**

Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium will host the T20 World Cup final in November this year. The BCCI has zeroed in on eight venues in all for the October-November T20 Cup, which include Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Dharamshala.

#### **Deepak Punia settles for silver in 68kg at Asian Championships**

Deepak Punia (86kg) settled for silver on the final day of the Asian Wrestling Championships at Almaty, Kazakhstan. He lost 10-0 to Iranian Olympic champion Hassan Yazdanicharati.

#### **Jhilli grabs gold medal**

Jhilli Dalabehera emerged champion in a depleted women's 45kg field at the Asian weightlifting championships in Tashkent.

#### **Tennis: Tsitsipas claims maiden Masters**

Stefanos Tsitsipas crushed Andrey Rublev 6 - 3, 6 - 3 in a one-sided final in the Monte Carlo Masters for his first Masters 1000 title.

#### **India Open badminton tournament 2021 stands postponed due to surge in COVID-19 cases**

India Open badminton tournament 2021 has been postponed in the wake of a sudden rise in the COVID-19 cases in New Delhi.

#### **India set to host its maiden WBC India Championship**

The World Boxing Council (WBC) has endorsed the Indian Championship fight between the country's two top women boxers -- Chandni Mehra and Suman Kumari -- which will take place in Jalandhar, Punjab on May 1.

#### **Arjun Kalyan becomes India's 68th GM**

Arjun Kalyan became India's 68th Grandmaster in the ongoing GM round robin "Rujna Zora-3 2021" in Serbia. Before this game, he needed 23 points to reach 2500 and become a GM.

#### **IPL 2021: Virat Kohli Becomes First Batsman To Score 6000 Runs In The IPL**

Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) captain Virat Kohli became the first player to score 6000 runs in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

#### **World Youth Boxing C'ships: Indian women boxers create history with seven gold medals**

In the World Youth Boxing championships, Indian women boxers put up sensational performances as they created history with seven gold medals in Kielce, Poland.

#### **Sachin clinches eighth gold as India conclude historic campaign with 11 medals at 2021 AIBA Youth Men's and Women's World Boxing Championships**

Indian boxer Sachin produced a remarkable performance to clinch the gold medal as the Indian contingent concluded their glorious campaign with an unprecedented 11 medals, including eight gold, at the 2021 AIBA Youth Men's and Women's World Boxing Championships in Kielce, Poland.

#### **Nadal outlasts Tsitsipas to claim 12th Barcelona Open title**

Rafael Nadal saved a match point before defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-4, 6-7(6), 7-5 to claim a record-extending 12th Barcelona Open title.

#### **Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat, Komalika Bari bag gold at Archery World Cup**

In the Archery World Cup, Indian women's recurve team including Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Komalika Bari won a gold medal in Guatemala.

#### **India Among Six Teams To Qualify For 2022 Commonwealth Games**

India is among six teams which have qualified for the women's T20 competition of the 2022 Commonwealth Games which is to be held in England.

#### **Six-year ban for Zoysa**

Former Sri Lanka fast bowler Nuwan Zoysa has been banned from all cricket for six years after being found guilty of violating the International Cricket Council's anti-corruption code.

#### **Boxing: Asian meet moved from Delhi to Dubai**

The Asian Boxing Confederation (ASBC) has moved the Asian boxing championships from New Delhi to Dubai due to the worsening pandemic situation in the country.

#### **Athletes to be tested daily for COVID-19 at Tokyo 2020 Olympics**

Organisers of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics rolled out stricter coronavirus counter measures, including a plan to test athletes daily.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **Relief to Indian IT Professionals as US allows H-1B visa ban to expire**

The U.S. ban on foreign workers visa, specially H-1B has expired. US President Joe Biden allowed the ban notification issued by his predecessor Donald Trump to expire as its validity lapsed.

#### **Indian Army participates in Multinational Military Exercise in Bangladesh**

The Indian Army had participated in Multinational Military Exercise namely SHANTIR OGROSHENA -2021 in Bangladesh.

### **2000 Bangladeshi students to get Muktiyoddha Scholarships**

The government of India has announced scholarships to 2000 descendants of the Liberation War fighters of Bangladesh under its new Muktiyoddha Scholarship scheme.

### **WEF's gender gap index: India slips 28 places, ranks 140 among 156 countries**

India has slipped 28 places to rank 140th among 156 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021. For the 12th time, Iceland is the most gender-equal country in the world.

### **NASA Awards \$2.9 billion contract to SpaceX**

The United States space agency NASA has picked Elon Musk's SpaceX for its Artemis programme, to develop the first commercial lander and take the next two US astronauts to the moon. The total value of this contract is \$2.89 billion.

### **NASA's helicopter makes history with successful flight on Planet Mars**

NASA's Mars helicopter makes history with successful flight on the Red Planet. The miniature robot helicopter Ingenuity performed a successful take off and landing on Mars.

### **Russia plans its own space station in 2025**

Russia's space agency said it planned to launch its own orbital station in 2025 as Moscow considers withdrawing from the International Space Station programme.

### **India elected to three bodies of UN Economic and Social Council**

India has been elected by acclamation to three bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council. India was elected to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Executive Board of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the Executive Board of the World Food Programme for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2022.

### **India should be a 'Country of Particular Concern' for Religious Freedom: U.S. Commission**

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), an independent bi-partisan commission, has recommended for the second year in the row that the State Department put India on a list ('Countries of Particular Concern' or CPCs) for the worst violations of religious freedoms in 2020.

### **Japan to host first joint military drill with US, France**

Japan will hold a joint military drill with US and French troops in the country's southwest next month. The exercise, running from May 11 to 17,

### **US to boost public climate finance to help poor countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions**

The United States will boost public climate finance to help poor countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The US administration released its climate finance plan in tandem with a new goal to cut emissions by 50%-52% from 2005 levels.

### **PM Modi announces India-US partnership on clean energy and climate change**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a US-India partnership on clean energy and climate change. Addressing Leaders' Climate Summit, Mr Modi announced launch of India-US climate and clean energy Agenda 2030 partnership, which can be a template of green collaborations to help developing countries access to affordable green finance and clean technologies.

### **Saudi Arabia to join 'Net Zero Producers Forum' on climate change**

Saudi Arabia will join the United States, Canada, Norway, and Qatar in forming 'Net Zero Producers Forum' for oil and gas producers to discuss how they can support the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

### **Indian, French Navy bilateral exercise VARUNA-2021 conducted in Arabian Sea**

The 19th edition of the Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise VARUNA-2021 was conducted in the Arabian Sea from 25th April.

### **SpaceX rocketship launches 4 astronauts on NASA mission to space station**

NASA and Elon Musk's commercial rocket company SpaceX launched a new four-astronaut team on a flight to the International Space Station, the first crew ever propelled into orbit by a rocket booster recycled from a previous spaceflight.

### **India ranked 49th in CGGI**

India has been ranked 49th in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI), which classifies 104 countries in terms of government capabilities and outcomes. Finland has topped the CGGI list, in which each country is measured across over 50 open data points.

### **UK becomes first country to announce regulation of use of self-driving vehicles at slow speeds on motorways**

The UK has become the first country to announce regulation of the use of self-driving vehicles at slow speeds on motorways.

### **Good Friday being observed across the country**

Good Friday is being observed on April 2 this year. It commemorates the day of crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The Easter celebration will begin on the following Sunday on April 4.

### **National Maritime Day being observed on 5th April**

National Maritime Day is being observed on 5th of April. It is on this day in 1919 when Indian shipping embarked on its maiden voyage as India's first merchant vessel, the SS Loyalty, journeyed from Mumbai to London.

### **World Health Day being celebrated on April 7**

World Health Day is being observed on April 7. The theme for World Health Day this year is Building a fairer, Healthier world.

### **World Homeopathy Day 2021: April 10**

World Homeopathy Day is celebrated on April 10. This year the theme of the day in India is, "Homeopathy-Roadmap for Integrative Medicine".

### **World Heritage Day: 18 April**

World Heritage Day observed globally on 18 April every year. This year's theme is "Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures".

### **Civil Services day being observed on April 21**

National Civil Services Day is observed on April 21 every year and is dedicated to India's civil servants for their contribution and hard work in public administration.

### **World Immunization Week 2021- 24th to 30th April**

World Immunization Week is observed annually across the globe in the last week of April (from 24th April to 30th April 2021.) to promote the use of vaccines to protect people against diseases. The theme of World Immunization Week 2021 is "Vaccines bring us closer".

### **International Day for Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace 2021: April 24**

The United Nations(UN)'s International Day for Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace is annually observed across the globe on 24th April to promote the 3 pillars of the United Nations -Peace and Security; Development; and Human Rights.

### **National Panchayati Raj Day 2021: April 24**

National Panchayati Raj Day is annually observed across India on 24th April to recognise the work of the Panchayat leaders towards building an Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

### **Mahavir Jayanti being celebrated across the country**

Mahavir Jayanti, the birth anniversary of 24th and last Jain Tirthankar Bhagwan Mahavir is being celebrated across the country on 25th April.