

Current Affairs:31-06.11.2021

India's biggest aromatic garden opened in Nainital, Uttarakhand

The **biggest aromatic garden of India** has been unveiled at Lalkuan in **Nainital** district of Uttarakhand. The garden has been developed by the research wing of Uttarakhand forest department over an area of 3 acre. The project has been funded under **CAMPA** (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority) scheme of the central government. The garden houses around 140 different species of aromatic species from across India such as Chandan, Tulsi, Parijat, etc.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh launches 'Samudrayan Project'-India's First and Unique Manned Ocean Mission

The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences Dr Jitendra Singh officially launched **India's First Manned Ocean Mission** called "**Samudrayan project**" at Chennai on October 29, 2021. The Unique Ocean Mission aims to have deep underwater manned vehicles for carrying out subsea activities. The deep water **manned submersible** has been code named as the '**MATSYA 6000**'.

It is developed by **Chennai-based National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT)**.

The technology will help to conduct deep ocean exploration of the non-living resources located at a depth of about 1000 and 5500 meters, such as polymetallic manganese nodules, gas hydrates, hydro-thermal sulphides and cobalt crusts.

With this technology, India joins the the elite club of nations such as USA, Russia, Japan, France and China to have such underwater vehicle.

National Commission For Women Launches Legal Awareness Programme For Women in partnership with With NALSA

The **National Commission for Women (NCW)** in collaboration with **National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)** has launched a Legal Awareness Program for Women, titled "**Empowerment of Women through Legal Awareness**". **Objective:** to impart practical knowledge to women about legal rights and remedies provided under various women-related laws, and hence making them fit to face the challenges in real-life situations. It is a **pan-India initiative**. It was **launched at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh** by Hon'ble Justice UU Lalit, Judge Supreme Court of India.

Earlier in 2020, the NCW had launched a pilot project '**Legal Awareness Programme**' in collaboration with NALSA.

National Small Matchbox Manufacturers Association increases price of matchbox from Re 1 to Rs 2

National Small Matchbox Manufacturers Association has increased the price of a matchbox **from Re.1 to Rs. 2 per box**. This will come into effect from December 01, 2021.

The increase in the price of matchbox has been done **after 14 years** since last increase in 2007 from 50 paise to Re. 1.

However, with the increase in the price of matchboxes, **the number of matchsticks** in each box has also been increased from **36 matchsticks to 50 matchsticks**. The increase in



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price was necessary as the price of all the **14 key raw materials** of the matchstick has increased.

World's Largest Hydrogen Fuel Cell Power Plant Inaugurated in South Korea

The **world's largest hydrogen fuel cell power plant** has been inaugurated at Seo-gu, Incheo in **South Korea**. The plant named 'Shinincheon Bitdream Fuel Cell Power Plant' has a total capacity of 78.96 kWh and can provide electricity to nearly 250,000 households per year. It will be operated by South Korea's largest independent power production company, POSCO Energy and Doosan Fuel Cell. Total cost of the project is 340 billion won, (around USD 292 million).

Govt approves interest rate on EPF for FY21 at 8.5%

Ministry of Finance has approved the **interest rate on employees' provident fund (EPF)** deposits for **2020-21 at 8.5%**. The rate has been kept unchanged as for year 2019-20. EPF is one fixed-income instrument that is completely tax-free under the exempt-exempt-exempt (EEE) regime, along with PPF and the Sukanya Samriddhi Account. Now the labour ministry will notify the interest rate for it to come into effect.

ADB approves \$250 million loan for India's National Industrial Corridor Development Program (NICDP)

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **USD 250 million (about Rs 1,875 crore)** loan to support India's **National Industrial Corridor Development Program (NICDP)**. This is the **first subprogram** of the programmatic USD 500 million loan to develop 11 industrial corridors spanning 17 states. NICDP aims to develop world-class industrial nodes that are supported by efficient urban agglomerations and multimodal connectivity, including international gateways like ports and airports and inclusive, climate-resilient, and sustainable infrastructure.

Fabio Quartararo wins 2021 MotoGP World Champion title

Fabio Quartararo (From France) who rides for Yamaha has won the **2021 MotoGP World Champion title (Motorcycle)**. So far in 2021, with two races remaining, Fabio Quartararo has won five races.

It is Yamaha's first rider's title since 2015 when Jorge Lorenzo took his third MotoGP title.

World Savings Day: October 30

The **World Savings Day** (formerly known as World Thrift Day) is observed every year on **October 30** in India. However, the day is observed on October 31 in few countries where this day is a public holiday. World Savings Day aims to promote the importance of savings and learn more about the same. The theme of World Savings Day 2021 is **"Understanding the Importance of Savings"**.

- The day was established on October 30, 1924, during the first International Savings Bank Congress (World Society of Savings Banks) in Milan, Italy.

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World Cities Day: 31 October

The United Nations designated **World Cities Day (WCD)** is marked every year on **October 31**. The first World Cities Day was launched in October 2014 in Shanghai, China. WCD aims to promote the international community's interest in global urbanization, cooperation among countries in addressing challenges of urbanization, and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world. The **general** theme of World Cities Day is **Better City, Better Life**.

2021 Theme of WCD is **Adapting cities for climate resilience**. In 2021 the Global Observance will be co-hosted by UN-Habitat and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The event will take place in Luxor.

National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas): 31 October

The **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas** is observed every year in India on **October 31 since 2014**.

The day is marked to commemorate the birth anniversary of the **Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**. **2021** marks the **146th anniversary** of the great leader.

He played an instrumental role in India's struggle for independence, and later during the integration of the country. Sardar Patel was the **first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of India**. He is often referred to as the **Father of the Indian Constitution** and was a key member of the Constituent Assembly.

Padma Shri awardee eminent oncologist M Krishnan Nair passes away at 81

Eminent **oncologist Dr M Krishnan Nair** has passed away following age-related ailments. He was 81. Dr Nair was the founder-director of the **Regional Cancer Centre (RCC) in Thiruvananthapuram**. He was known for setting up one of the largest comprehensive cancer centres in the country. In 2001 the Government of India awarded Dr Nair with Padma Shri (the fourth highest civilian award) for his contributions in the cancer care field.

Chennai-Mysore-Chennai Shatabdi Express gets IMS certification

The **Chennai-Mysore-Chennai Shatabdi Express** has become the **first train of Southern Railway** to receive **Integrated Management Systems (IMS) certification**.

It got the certificate for world-class maintenance of the train, environment -friendly resources and convenient and safe travel of the passengers. It is also the first Shatabdi train and the only second mail/express train of Indian Railways to receive this prestigious certification. The IMS certificate provided are ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018.

The first train of Indian Railways to be IMS certified is Habibganj-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Habibganj Bhopal Express.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh dedicates 'Sardar Patel Leadership Centre' to the Nation in Mussoorie

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh dedicated to the nation "**Sardar Patel Leadership Centre**" at **Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie**.

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The facility was inaugurated on the occasion of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas on October 31, 2021, which marks the birth anniversary of Sardar

Vallabhbhai Patel. The Sardar Patel Leadership Centre aims to lay the foundation capacity building for future generations of Civil Servants from India and Abroad, as visualised by the Father of All India Services. The Centre aims to emerge as a Huge Resource Centre to provide continuous study and learning opportunities to Civil Servants so that they learn from the best practices of leadership across the world while remaining connected with their cultural ethos, values and roots.

Union Minister Amit Shah launches the “Dairy Sahakar” scheme

The Union Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah launched the “**Dairy Sahakar**” scheme on October 31, 2021 at Anand, Gujarat during a function organised by Amul to celebrate the 75th Foundation Year of Amul. Total outlay of the Dairy Sahakar scheme is **Rs 5000 crore**.

The scheme will be implemented by **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)** under Ministry of Cooperation.

The scheme will supplement the existing efforts of strengthening the dairy sector in the country, doubling the farmers income as well as realize the vision of ‘from cooperation to prosperity’.

Under the scheme NCDC will extend financial support to eligible cooperatives for activities like bovine development, milk procurement, processing, quality assurance, value addition, branding, packaging, marketing, transportation and storage of milk and milk products, exports of dairy products among others.

Microsoft surpasses Apple to become world’s most valuable company

Microsoft Corp. has surpassed Apple Inc. to become the **world’s most valuable publicly-traded company by market capitalisation** on October 29, 2021. At market close on October 29, 2021, Apple stood at about \$2.46 trillion while Microsoft reached nearly \$2.49 trillion. Apple had held the top position for more than a year.

Centre appoints former SC Judge Ashok Bhushan as NCLAT Chairperson

Centre has appointed former Supreme Court Judge **Justice Ashok Bhushan** as the new **Chairperson of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)**, for a period of four years or until he attains the age of 70 years, whichever is the earliest. Justice Bhushan was the former Chief Justice of Kerala High Court. NCLAT was formed by the government under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013. Apart from this, **Justice Ramalingam Sudhakar** has been appointed as the new **President** of quasi-judicial body, **National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)** for five years or till he attains the age of 67 years. Justice Sudhakar was the former Chief Justice of Manipur High Court.

Yezi Nagporewalla named as new CEO of KPMG India

Financial services firm **KPMG** has announced the appointment of senior partner **Yezi Nagporewalla** as the new **chief executive officer (CEO)** for the **India** division. Nagporewalla has been appointed as the new CEO of KPMG India for a **four-year term** with effect from February 7, 2022 till December 31, 2026. Nagporewalla will replace current Chairman and CEO, Arun M. Kumar, who completes his five-year term on February 6, 2022.



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With the new appointment, KPMG India has split the roles of Chairman and CEO. The new Chairman will be named over the next few months.

World Vegan Day: 01 November

World Vegan Day is held every year on **November 1**. The day was first celebrated in the year 1994 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of UK-based The Vegan Society and the coining of the terms “**vegan**” and “**veganism**”. **Purpose:** to spread benefits of veganism for humans, non-human animals, and the natural environment.

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Azim Premji tops EdelGive Hurun India Philanthropy List 2021

- **Azim Premji**, the founder-chairman of Wipro Ltd has topped the **EdelGive Hurun India Philanthropy List 2021**.
- The 76-year-old, made the highest contribution of Rs 9,713 crore between **April 2020 and March 2021** towards philanthropic causes to retain the top position for second year in a row.
- Shiv Nadar, founder and chairman of HCL Technologies, retained second spot with an annual donation of Rs 1,263 crore.
- India’s richest man and the chairman of Reliance Industries, Mukesh Ambani stood at the third spot with an annual donation of Rs 577 crore.
- The EdelGive Hurun India Philanthropy List 2021 is compiled by the EdelGive Foundation and Hurun Research Institute. It is the eighth edition of the annual list.
- The list ranks individuals from India who donated **Rs 5 crore and above** between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 towards philanthropic contributions.

President Ramnath Kovind to give away National Sports Awards on November 13, 2021

The **National Sports Awards for the year 2021** were announced by the **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports** on November 02, 2021. President of India Shri Ramnath Kovind will felicitate the awardees on November 13, 2021. The National Sports Awards are given every year to recognize and reward excellence in sports.

IREDA launches ‘Whistle Blower’ portal

The **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA)** has launched a ‘**Whistle-blower Portal**’ as a part of celebration of ‘Vigilance Awareness Week 2021’. The portal was launched by Shri Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman & Managing Director (CMD), IREDA on November 02, 2021. The Whistle-blower Portal has been developed by IT Team of the company and will help the IREDA employees to raise concerns related to fraud, corruption, abuse of power among other things.

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The IREDA is a PSU under the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) established as a Non-Banking Financial Institution.

CCI approves acquisition of 100% shareholding in Exide Life by HDFC Life

The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved the acquisition of **100% shareholding in Exide Life Insurance Company Limited by HDFC Life Insurance Company**. The acquisition has been approved under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002. After the acquisition Exide Life will become wholly owned subsidiary of HDFC Life. It is proposed to merge Exide Life with HDFC Life.

Former Afghanistan PM Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai passes away at 78

Former Afghan Prime Minister **Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai** has passed away. He was 78. He served as **acting prime minister of Afghanistan from 1995 to 1996**.

PM Narendra Modi Unveils Shri Adi Shankaracharya Samadhi and Statue in Kedarnath

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited **Kedarnath in Uttarakhand** on November 05, 2021 to inaugurate key infrastructure projects related to redevelopment of Kedarnath. PM inaugurated the reconstructed **Shri Adi Shankaracharya Samadhi (final resting place)** at the premises of the Kedarnath Temple in Rudraprayag district of Uttarakhand and unveiled the statue of Shri Adi Shankaracharya at the Samadhi. The Samadhi was damaged in the 2013 Kedarnath flood. The **12-foot long statue weighing around 35 tonnes (35,000kg)** has been constructed by **Mysore-based sculptor Arjun Yogiraj**.

During the visit PM Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of several reconstruction projects worth over **Rs 400 crore at Kedarpuri**.

The unveiling programmes of the statute was organized at the 12 Jyotirlingas and Jyotishpeeth across the country including Char Dhams (Badrinath, Dwarka, Puri and Rameshwaram).

Prime Minister Modi concludes five-day tour to Italy and UK for G20 Summit and COP26

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was on **five-day** official visit to Italy, the city-state of Vatican, and the United Kingdom to attend the **G20 Summit in Rome** and **Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow**. PM Modi's first destination was Rome where he attended the G20 summit and held bilateral meeting with the host and Italian PM Mario Draghi. In Vatican City, PM met Pope Francis and extended invitation to him to visit India. Finally, in Glasgow, the largest city of Scotland, PM Modi attended the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26). Subsequently he also held bilateral meetings with world leaders on the sidelines of the COP-26 Summit, such as UK and Australian counterparts, President of Ukraine and Prime Ministers of Nepal and Israel and Finnish counterpart.

During the Conference of Parties (COP26) Summit, Prime Minister Modi announced **five "amrit tatva" or five commitments**. These include:

1. Increase the non-fossil fuel based energy capacity of the country to 500 GW by 2030.
2. Meet 50% of the country's energy requirements through renewable energy sources by 2030.

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3. Reduce one billion tonnes of carbon emissions from the total projected emissions by 2030.
4. Bring down the carbon intensity of the economy by more than 45 percent by 2030.
5. India would become carbon neutral and achieve net zero carbon emissions by the year 2070.

Home Minister Amit Shah launches 'Ayushman CAPF' Scheme health cards

The Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation **Shri Amit Shah** launched the pan-India '**Ayushman CAPF**' Scheme health cards in New Delhi on November 02, 2021. The 'Ayushman CAPF' Scheme was launched on Pilot basis in Assam on January 23, 2021 to provide healthcare services to all Central Armed Police Force (CAPFs) personnel and their dependants. The Scheme is a joint initiative of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and National Health Authority (NHA). Under the national level roll out, it is proposed to distribute about 35 lakh cards to beneficiaries across various CAPFs by December, 2021.

The scheme will cover all serving personnel and their dependents of the **seven Central Armed Police Forces under MHA**.

India's first rooftop drive-in theatre launched in Mumbai

The **first open air rooftop drive-in movie theatre in India** has been inaugurated at Jio World Drive mall of Reliance Industries' in **Mumbai, Maharashtra** on November 05, 2021. The drive-in theatre will be operated and managed by the multiplex chain PVR Ltd.

The theatre has been launched in partnership with the **Reliance Retail and multiplex chain PVR**. The facility can accommodate around 290 cars. The first movie screened at the theatre was **Akshay Kumar's Sooryavanshi**.

Yahoo Inc. stops its services in China w.e.f November 01

Yahoo Inc. has announced that the company has stopped providing service in mainland **China** with effect from November 01, 2021 due to the increasingly challenging business and legal environment in the country. With this Yahoo has ended its 22-year presence in the Chinese market. This means that services like Yahoo Weather, Yahoo Finance, and other websites run by Yahoo such as AOL.com, TechCrunch and Engadget will not be accessible from within China. Earlier, US tech platform LinkedIn also announced the closure of its localized social media network in China on October 14.

China launches earth science satellite, Guangmu

China has launched an Earth science satellite named Guangmu into space from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in the northern Shanxi Province. The satellite was launched via Long March-6 carrier rocket on November 05, 2021. Guangmu is the **world's first Earth-science satellite** dedicated to **servicing the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**.

RBI issues revised PCA Framework for banks

The Reserve Bank of India has issued revised Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) Framework for Scheduled Commercial Banks and it will be effective from **January 1, 2022**.

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Objective of PCA framework: The PCA framework enables Supervisory intervention by RBI at an appropriate time and to initiate

and implement remedial measures for the scheduled commercial banks in a timely manner, so as to restore its financial health.

Monitoring areas in the revised PCA framework: Capital, Asset Quality and Leverage are the key areas that will be monitored by RBI for all banks.

Indicators to be tracked: To keep track of **Capital, Asset Quality and Leverage** the indicators that would be tracked are: **CRAR/ Common Equity Tier I Ratio, Net NPA Ratio and Tier I Leverage Ratio** respectively. i.e to track Capital of a bank RBI will see RAR/ Common Equity Tier I Ratio of the bank, to track Asset Quality of the bank, RBI will track Net NPA Ratio of the bank, similarly, to track Leverage of the bank, RBI will track Tier I Leverage Ratio of the bank.

On which banks PCA will be applicable: The PCA Framework would apply to all banks operating in India including foreign banks operating through branches or subsidiaries based on breach of risk thresholds of identified indicators.

Exit from PCA and Withdrawal of Restrictions under PCA: When a bank is placed under PCA by RBI, then withdrawal of restrictions imposed under the PCA Framework will be considered under two circumstances

- if no breaches in risk thresholds in any of the parameters are observed as per four continuous quarterly financial statements, one of which should be Audited Annual Financial Statement (subject to assessment by RBI); and
- based on Supervisory comfort of the RBI, including an assessment on sustainability of profitability of the bank.

Indian Air Force Mirage 2000s takes part in Blue Flag exercise in Israel

The Mirage 2000 aircraft squadron of the Indian Air Force took part in the **Blue Flag 2021 international exercise in Israel**. The **biennial event** was held at **Ovda Air Force Base in Israel** from October 17 to October 28, 2021. It is organised by the **Israeli Air Force** since 2013. Overall eight nations participated in the multinational air combat exercise Blue Flag to strengthen cooperation between the nations. Apart from Israel, seven other countries which took part in the war games were Germany, Italy, Britain, France, India, Greece and the US. From India, **Indian Air Force Mirage 2000s** was deployed at the exercise.

It was for the first that India, France and Germany featured in the exercise.

Damon Galgut wins 2021 Booker Prize for “The Promise”

South African writer Damon Galgut has been awarded with the prestigious **2021 Booker Prize for Fiction** on November 3, 2021. Galgut has won the prize for his novel **'The Promise'**. The Booker Prize for Fiction, (formerly known as the Booker–McConnell Prize (1969–2001) and the **Man Booker Prize** (2002–2019)), is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in the English language and published in the United Kingdom. It carries £50,000 prize (\$69,000).

Rahul Dravid appointed head coach of Indian men’s cricket team till 2023 ODI World Cup

Former captain **Rahul Dravid** has been appointed as the **head coach of the Indian men’s cricket** team by the BCCI. The former right-handed batsman has been appointed for a

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period of two years till the **2023 50-over World Cup**. Dravid will begin his tenure as full-time coach from the T20I series against New Zealand starting November 17, 2021 in Jaipur.

Indian Boxer Akash Kumar settles for bronze in 2021 AIBA Men's World Championships

Indian boxer Akash Kumar managed to clinch bronze medal at the **2021 AIBA Men's World Boxing Championships** on November 05, 2021 at **Belgrade in Serbia**.

The 21-year-old Akash lost 0-5 in the 54 kg category to Makhmud Sabyrkhan of Kazakhstan. Akash is the seventh Indian male boxer to win a medal at the world championships.

World Tsunami Awareness Day: 5 November

The **World Tsunami Awareness Day** is observed every year on **November 5** to raise awareness in areas such as tsunami early warning, public action and building back better after a disaster to reduce future impacts. The day was designated by the UN General Assembly in December 2015. It was on December 26, 2004 that a devastating Tsunami in the Indian ocean created havoc in 14 countries, killing over 230,000 people. In 2021, World Tsunami Awareness Day will promote target (f) of the "Sendai Seven Campaign" which aims to "Substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of the present Framework by 2030."

International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict: 06 November

The **International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict** is an international day observed annually on **November 6**. It was established on November 5, 2001 by the **United Nations General Assembly**, during Kofi Atta Annan's tenure as Secretary-General.