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India-Finland Virtual Summit 2021



The **India-Finland Virtual Summit** was held on March 16, 2021, with the participation of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and **Prime Minister of the Republic of Finland Ms. Sanna Marin**. The virtual summit was organised to discuss the entire gamut of bilateral issues as well as other regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. The two leaders reviewed the ongoing bilateral engagements and committed to further expand and diversify the relationship across sectors such as trade and investment, innovation, education, emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence, 5G/6G, and quantum computing.

Finland: Capital: Helsinki; Currency: Euro

Sports Minister Kiren Rijju and IPU President Duarte Pacheco holds meeting in New Delhi



The Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports **Shri Kiren Rijju** held a meeting with the President of **Inter Parliamentary Union, (IPU) Mr Duarte Pacheco** in New Delhi on March 16, 2021.

IPU headquarter: **Geneva, Switzerland**

Key areas of discussions included:

- Discussion about corporation among the international parliamentarians especially in the field of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- India's Fit India Movement, Yoga and how we have been able to start certain sports-related activities in the country in a controlled manner despite COVID 19.
- Proposed to arrange a World Youth Parliamentarian meeting where the younger Parliamentarians can come together and promote some fitness activities during the youth exchange of different countries.

New Delhi Ranked as World's most polluted capital city for third straight year, in 2020 World Air Quality Report

New Delhi has been adjudged as the **world's most polluted capital city** for the third straight year in the **2020 World Air Quality Report** by Swiss organisation, **IQAir**. Globally, New Delhi is ranked as the **10th most polluted city in the world**. The top most polluted city of the world is **Xinjiang in China**. This is followed by nine Indian cities as most polluted cities in the world, which are **Ghaziabad, Bulandshahar, Bistrakh Jalalpur, Noida, Greater Noida, Kanpur, Lucknow and Bhiwari**.

IQAir report



The IQAir report measures air quality levels based on the concentration of lung-damaging airborne particles known as PM 2.5, which is measured by ground-based monitoring stations. As per the report, India was home to 35 of the world's 50 most polluted cities, spanning 106 countries, which means India continues to feature prominently at the top of the most polluted cities ranking. The IQAir report seeks to empower individuals, organizations and communities to breathe cleaner air through information, collaboration and technology solutions.

Indian Army Decommissions two of longest serving artillery systems '130mm Self Propelled Catapult Guns' and '160mm Tampella Mortars' from Service



The Indian Army decommissioned two of the **longest serving artillery systems from service on March 16, 2021 at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan.** These include: **130mm Self Propelled M-46 Catapult Guns and the 160mm Tampella Mortars.** The two weapon systems, have been in the inventory of the

Indian Army for around 60 years. They have been decommissioned to make way for newer equipment with the latest technologies.

130mm Catapult

- It had a range of more than 27 km.
- The system was developed by merging two existing weapon systems: Vijayanta tanks and 130mm M-46 guns.
- The guns were inducted in 1981

160mm Tampella mortars

- It had a range of 9.6km.
- They were inducted after the 1962 war with China to fulfill the need for a weapon system to clear high crests of the Northern borders.
- Originally the system was imported from the Israeli Defence Forces.
- This mortar was successfully deployed on the Line of Control in the Leepa valley and the Hajipir Bowl and played a crucial part in maintaining the sanctity of the Line of Control.

Centre forms experts committee for Startup India Seed Fund Scheme; Head: H K Mittal

The government has constituted an **experts advisory committee** for the overall execution and monitoring of the **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme.**

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The committee would be chaired by **H K Mittal** from the Department of Science and Technology. The other representatives of the committee would include members from DPIIT, department of biotechnology, science and technology, electronics and IT, Niti Aayog, and expert members from startup ecosystem. The committee will evaluate and select incubators for allotment of funds under the scheme, monitor progress and take all necessary measures for efficient utilisation of funds towards fulfilment of objectives of the scheme.

Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS)



The scheme has been approved for the period of next **four years starting from 2021-22, beginning from April 1, 2021**. Government has earmarked **Rs 945 crore corpus** for the scheme, which will be divided over the next four years for providing seed funding to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India.

RBI asks banks to implement image-based Cheque Truncation System in all branches by September 30



The **Reserve Bank of India** has asked banks to implement the **image-based Cheque Truncation System (CTS)** in all branches by **September 30, 2021**. The CTS clearing mechanism will bring operational efficiency in paper-based clearing and make the process of collection and settlement

of cheques faster resulting in better customer service. The CTS is in use since 2010 and presently covers around 1,50,000 branches. However, there are about 18,000 bank branches that are still outside any formal clearing arrangement. Therefore to help these bank branches leverage the availability of CTS and provide uniform customer experience irrespective of location of her/his bank branch, it has been decided to extend CTS across all bank branches.

S Dhanalakshmi Beats Dutee Chand To Win 100m Gold in Federation Cup Athletics

Sprinter S Dhanalakshmi beat national record holder **Dutee Chand** to win women's 100m sprint final in the **Federation Cup Senior National Athletics Championships in Patiala** on March 16, 2021. The 22-year-old **Dhanalakshmi of Tamil Nadu clocked 11.39 seconds** to become the fastest woman of the championships. Odisha-based Dutee clocked 11.58 seconds to be placed at second place. Another Tamil Nadu runner Archana Suseendran was third in 11.76 seconds. Hima Das was disqualified after a false start.

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In men's 100m final category, **Gurindervir Singh of Punjab** won gold in 10.32 seconds, while Elakkiyadasan Kannada of Tamil Nadu (10.43) and Maharashtra's Satish Krishnakumar (10.56) were second and third respectively.

ICC bans UAE cricketers Mohammad Naveed and Shaiman Anwar from all cricket for 8 years



The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** has imposed **eight years ban** on former UAE players **Mohammad Naveed and Shaiman Anwar Butt** from all cricket, for trying to fix matches during the T20 World Cup qualifiers in 2019.

The ICC Anti-Corruption Tribunal had found them guilty of breaching the Anti-Corruption Code in January 2021. Their eight-year bans have been made effective from **16 October, 2019**.