

Daily News Decode

15.06.21

47th G7 summit held in UK's Cornwall



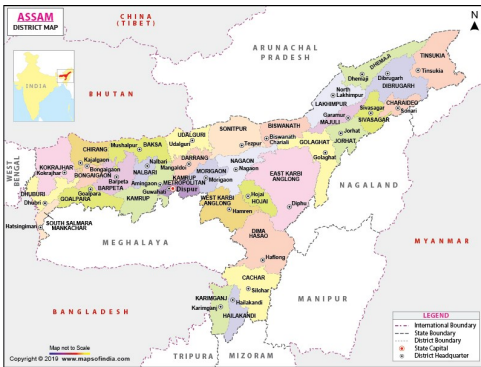
- The 47th G7 Leaders' Summit 2021 (Outreach Session of the G7 meeting) took place in a Hybrid format from June 11-13, 2021 at Cornwall, United Kingdom (UK).
- It was hosted by the United Kingdom (UK) as it holds the Presidency of G7 for 2021.
- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually participated in the meeting and called G7 summit members for the 'One Earth One Health' approach to effectively deal with the coronavirus pandemic globally, and sought the support of the G7 grouping to lift patent protections for COVID-19 vaccines.
- The theme for the Summit – 'Building Back Better'.
- The UK invited Australia, India, South Korea, and South Africa (jointly called 'Democracy 11') as Guest Countries to the 2021 summit.
- US President Joe Biden, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Italy's Prime Minister Mario Draghi attended the Summit in person.
- The 47th G7 Leaders' Summit has been called the 1st ever net-zero G7 as all have committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 (or at the latest with ambitious reductions targets in the 2020 decade).
- PM Narendra Modi participated in the 1st Outreach Session of the G7 Summit, he was the lead speaker for the session titled 'Building Back Stronger – Health', which focused on global recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and on strengthening resilience against future pandemics.

India slips 12 spots to 55th position in Global Home Price Index



- India has moved down 12 spots in the global home price index to 55th rank in Q1 2021 against 43rd rank in Q1 2020, with a decline of 1.6 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in home prices, Knight Frank, in its latest research report "Global House Price Index" – Q1 2021.
- Global Home Price Index is prepared by the London-based Knight Frank, which monitors housing prices in 56 countries.
- Turkey continues to lead the annual rankings with prices up by 32 per cent YoY, followed by New Zealand.

Assam to institute own versions of Bharat Ratna and Padma awards



- The Assam government will present its own versions of the Bharat Ratna and the Padma awards from next year.
- The cabinet also instituted other civilian honours such as the Asom Bibhushan Award to be presented to three persons, the Assam Bhushan to five, and the Asom Shree to 10 people every year.
- These 4 awards will carry cash prizes of Rs 5 lakh, Rs 3 lakh, Rs 2 lakh & Rs 1 lakh respectively.

Justice AK Sikri to chair IMAI's Grievance Redressal Board



- The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) has roped in former Supreme Court Justice (Retd.) Arjan Kumar Sikri to chair the Grievance Redressal Board (GRB), formed as a part of the Digital Publisher Content Grievances Council (DPCGC).
- The GRB will address content grievances pertaining to any of the DPCGC member's video streaming services.
- With the addition of Apple, BookMyShow Stream, Eros Now, and Reeldrama, the DPCGC currently has 14 publishers of online curated content as members.
- Others include which include Amazon Prime Video, Alt Balaji, Firework TV, Hoichoi, Hungama, Lionsgate Play, MX Player, Netflix, Shemaroo, and Ullu.
- The Grievance Redressal Board will aim to provide independent adjudication on content grievances escalated to it.
- The members of the GRB include prominent personalities from the media and entertainment industry, online curated content providers, experts from various fields — including child rights, women rights, and media laws.
- The Grievance Redressal Board includes National award-winning actress Suhasini Maniratnam; Madhu Bhojwani, Indian film Producer and Partner at Emmay Entertainment and Motion Pictures; Gopal Jain, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India; and Dr Ranjana Kumari, eminent Civil Society Representative who currently serves as the Director of the Centre for Social Research and as the Chairperson of Women Power Connect.
- The two members from the Online Curated Content Providers are Amit Grover, Senior Corporate Counsel, Amazon India, and Priyanka Chaudhari, Director-legal, Netflix India.

India's retail inflation touches 6.3% in May



- India's retail inflation shot up to a six-month high of 6.3 per cent in May, after easing to a three-month low of 4.23 per cent in April. Inflation, based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), has breached the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) target range for the first time after five months.
- The RBI is mandated to maintain the crucial number at 4 per cent in the medium term, with a 2 percentage point margin on either side as part of its inflation target.
- National Statistical Office data for retail inflation showed food inflation shot up to 5% in May from 2% in April as prices of protein items such as meat, fish, eggs, oils and fats accelerated.
- The fuel bill also went up 11.6% as the government increased retail prices of petrol and diesel after state election results on 2 May.
- Services inflation jumped as costs of health, transport and personal care rose during the second wave of the pandemic.

SPACE TOURISM



- Last week, Amazon founder and billionaire Jeff Bezos's space company called Blue Origin concluded the online auction for the first seat on New Shepard, a rocket system meant to take tourists to space.
- The seat went for a winning bid of \$28 million.
- Blue Origin is an American privately funded aerospace manufacturer and sub-orbital spaceflight services company headquartered in Kent, Washington.
- it was founded in 2000 by Jeff Bezos, the founder and chief executive officer of Amazon.
- New Shepard is blue origin's reusable suborbital rocket system designed to take astronauts and research payloads past the Kármán line – the internationally recognized boundary of space.
- New Shepard has been named after Mercury astronaut Alan Shepard – the first American to go to space.
- Alan Shepard was an American astronaut.
- In 1961, he became the second man and the first American to travel into space, and in 1971, he walked on the Moon.
- Project Mercury was the first human spaceflight program of the United States, running from 1958 through 1963.

OPEN SOCIETIES STATEMENT



- India signed off on a joint statement by G-7 and guest countries on “open societies”.
- The ‘Open Societies Statement’ was adopted at the end of an G7 outreach session titled ‘Building Back Together—Open Societies and Economies’, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi was invited as a lead speaker.
- The joint statement was signed by the G-7 countries, and India, South Korea, Australia and South Africa, with host British Prime Minister Boris Johnson calling them “Democracies 11”.
- This statement reaffirm the values of “freedom of expression, both online and offline, as a freedom that safeguards democracy”.
- The statement also refers to “politically motivated internet shutdowns” as one of the threats to freedom and democracy.
- It also affirmed “human rights for all, both online and offline, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments, and opposition to any form of discrimination, so that everyone can participate fully and equally in society”.

Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) - Defence Innovation Organisation (DIO)



- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the budgetary support of ₹498.8 crore to iDEX - DIO for the next five years.
- Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) was launched by the Government of India in 2018.
- iDEX will be funded and managed by a ‘Defence Innovation Organization (DIO)’ which has been formed as a ‘not for profit’ company as per Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013 by the two founder members i.e. Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) - HAL & BEL alongwith the Department of Defence Production (DDP).
- iDEX will function as the executive arm of DIO, carrying out all the required activities while DIO will provide high level policy guidance to iDEX.
- The iDEX framework and establishment of the DIO is aimed at promoting innovation and indigenisation in the aerospace and defence sector at the start-up level.
- The scheme is aimed at providing financial support to nearly 300 start-ups, MSME, individual innovators and 20 partner incubators.

PROJECT O2 for INDIA



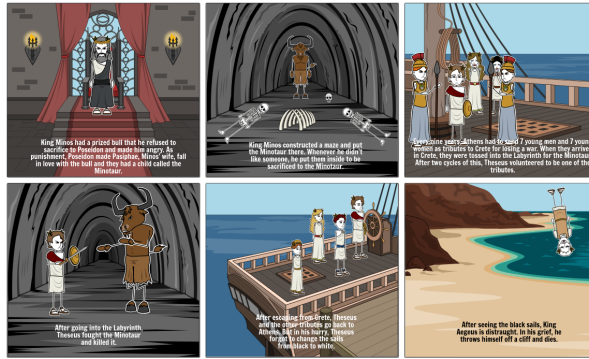
- The Office of Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India has launched 'Project O2 for India'.
- Its objective is to enable stakeholders working to augment the country's ability to meet the rise in demand for medical oxygen.
- In November 1999, Cabinet Secretariat established the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India.
- The PSA's office aims to provide pragmatic and objective advice to the Prime Minister and cabinet on matters related to science, technology and innovation with a focus on application of science and technology in critical infrastructure, economic and social sectors in partnership with Government departments, institutions and industry.
- The first PSA was APJ Abdul Kalam and the current PSA is K. VijayRaghavan.
- The 9 member Prime Minister's Science, Technology And Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) is headed by Government of India's Principal Scientific Adviser to (K. Vijay Raghavan).

India into Scientific Research based on UNESCO Science Report



- Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) plays a significant role in fostering socio-economic and political development globally and benefitting all the sectors through scientific and technological advances.
- STI acts as a key determinant in addressing socio-economic challenges related to critical sectors such as health, environment, education, food, energy, climate change, water etc.
- In this context, while India has made 'solid progress' towards the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets concerning industry, infrastructure and innovation, the country's investment in research remains unsatisfactory, the UNESCO Science Report has observed.
- The UNESCO Science Report is a global monitoring report published every 5 years by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- This report maps the latest trends and developments in national and regional policy landscapes, against the backdrop of shifting socio-economic, geopolitical and environmental realities.
- Each edition is released on 10 November, which is World Science Day for Peace and Development.

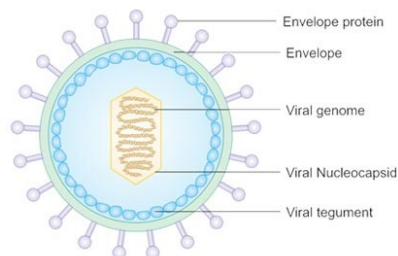
Pasiphae project



Create your own at Storyboard That

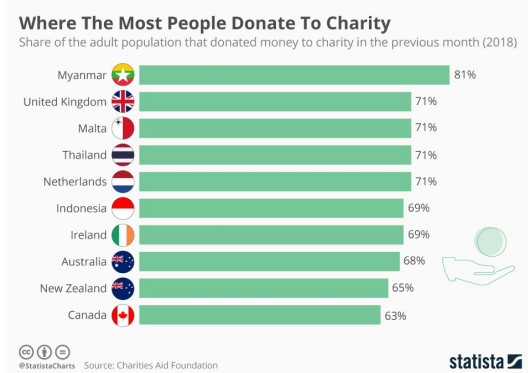
- Polar-Areas Stellar-Imaging in Polarisation High-Accuracy Experiment (PASIPHAE), an international collaborative sky surveying project helps to study the polarisation in the light coming from millions of stars.
- The project name is inspired from Pasiphae, the daughter of Greek Sun God Helios.
- The survey will use two high-tech optical polarimeters to observe the northern and southern skies, simultaneously.
- It will focus on capturing starlight polarisation of very faint stars over large areas of the sky.
- Such data can help remove the galactic polarised foreground light.
- By combining these data, astronomers will perform a maiden magnetic field tomography mapping of the interstellar medium using a novel polarimeter instrument known as WALOP (Wide Area Linear Optical Polarimeter).
- WALOP will be mounted on two small optical telescopes – 1.3-metre Skinakas Observatory, Crete, and 1-metre telescope of the South African Astronomical Observatory located in Sutherland.
- Scientists from the University of Crete, Greece, Caltech, USA, Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), India, the South African Astronomical Observatory and the University of Oslo, Norway, are involved in this project, steered by the Institute of Astrophysics, Greece.
- The Infosys Foundation, India, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, Greece and USA's National Science Foundation have each provided a grant of \$1 million, combined with contributions from the European Research Council and the National Research Foundation in South Africa.

Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV)



- Indian Scientists have recently found that the cancer-causing virus Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) affects the glial cells or the non-neural cells in the central nervous system
- The recent finding could pave the path towards understanding the probable role of the virus in neurodegenerative pathologies, especially given the fact that the virus has been detected in brain tissue of the patients suffering from neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson and multiple Sclerosis.
- It was the detection of the virus in patients with neurodegenerative diseases that triggered the search for the mechanism of propagation of the virus.

World Giving Index 2021 ranks India as 14th Most Charitable Country in the World



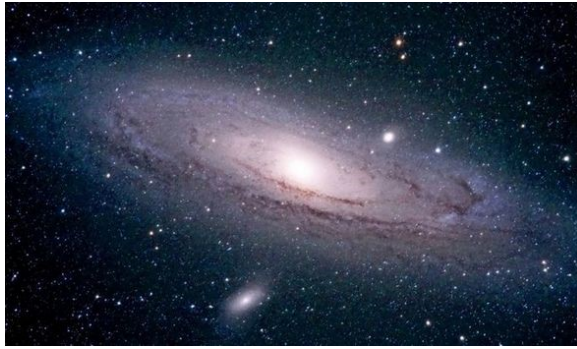
- WGI is a global survey that has interviewed more than 1.6 million people since 2009.
- It conducts surveys by asking three questions: have they helped a stranger, given money, or volunteered for a good cause in recent month.
- It releases an annual report published by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), using data gathered by Gallup and ranks countries in the world according to how charitable they are.
- The first report was produced in 2010 and this year marks the 10 year anniversary of WGI.
- India is now ranked as the 14th most charitable country in the world as per a report released by the World Giving Index 2021 (WGI).
- The report suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has further increased the 'giving' trends worldwide.
- In fact, India has been recognised among the Top 20 most generous countries across the globe, an improvisation from its earlier 10-year global rank of 82.
- The score of India has rapidly improved between 2017 & 2019 while continuing to improve during 2020.
- This improvement in India was observed across all age groups and both genders.
- As per the report, around 61 per cent of Indians helped strangers, 34 per cent volunteered for a good cause while 36 per cent donated money.
- The report also highlights that communities across the world mobilised to help fellow citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It has resulted in the highest 'helped a stranger' numbers since 2009.
- Moreover, About 3 billion people, which accounts for 55 per cent of the world's adults, reported helping someone they didn't know in 2020.
- Australia and New Zealand have maintained their top 10 rankings, the survey here was undertaken weeks before the first wave of the pandemic took hold.

'Blankets' of spider webs cover Australian town after severe



- In many parts of Gippsland in Victoria, Australia, blankets of spider webs have covered vast areas after flash floods swept through the region.
- Flooded roads and paddocks disrupted the local spider populations, which are now seeking higher ground on road signs, trees and any tall grass they can find.
- Experts said the spiders do not pose any harm.

Dark matter slowing down Milky Way's galactic bar's spin: Study



- The spin of the Milky Way's galactic bar has slowed by about a quarter since its formation, a study by University College London and the University of Oxford researchers said.
- This is the first time that the slowdown, which has been predicted for years, has been measured.
- The researchers say the counterweight slowing this spin must be dark matter.

UPSC_HACKS
www.upschacks.com

UPSC_HACKS
www.upschacks.com

UPSC_HACKS
www.upschacks.com