

**CURRENT EVENTS
AND
ANALYSIS
(May 2021)
PART-2**

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CURRENT EVENTS AND ANALYSIS

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NATIONAL POLITY

Right to Privacy:

Whats App Challenges New IT Intermediary Rules In Delhi High Court

- WhatsApp, a social media messaging application (app) which provides its users secure platform for messaging, voice and video calls over internet, challenged the new Information Technology Rules 2021. The rules were issued by the Government using powers conferred to it under section 87 of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

Misuse of Social Media:

- The new rules were issued by the Government as the social media platforms are being misused for
 - spreading fake news,
 - organising mob violence,
 - child sexual abuse, etc.

New IT Rules:

- Under the new rules, significant social media intermediaries (with users of 50 lakhs and above) like WhatsApp which provide messaging services have to identify the first originator of message and provide the same when required by the Court or Competent Authority for following purposes.
 - For prevention, detection, investigation of offences related to
 - sovereignty and integrity of India,
 - security of the State,
 - public order,
 - rape offences,
 - sharing of sexually explicit material and child sexual abuse material

Why WhatsApp challenged the new IT Rules?

- The new rules **undermine the private nature of the platform and are an infringement of users Right to Privacy** which has been recognised as Fundamental Right by the Supreme Court in 2017.
- WhatsApp uses end-to-end encryption which ensures privacy of communication of its users.
- Encryption allows only the sender and receiver can see the messages.
- To ensure traceability, WhatsApp has to break the end-to-end encryption which compromises users' privacy. It is not possible to check the origin messages without compromising the privacy of other users as even WhatsApp does not know the first origin of the message. So its software has to be redesigned to keep a fingerprint on every single message sent on WhatsApp to trace the first origin of message required under the new rules.
- Hence, WhatsApp contested the Government through the new IT rules is **mandating mass surveillance** of its users.
- To comply with the new rules, WhatsApp would have to keep giant databases of every message sent on its platform and add a permanent identity stamp to private messages of its users.

What is the Stand of Government on WhatsApp Challenge?

- **No Fundamental Right including Right to Privacy is absolute right** and is subject to reasonable restrictions.
- The Government is **committed to ensure the Right of Privacy** to all its citizens but at the same time it is also the **responsibility of the government to maintain law and order and ensure national security**.
- Traceability order for messages will be a measure of last resort. These would not be issued when there are less intrusive and effective in identifying the first originator of the information.

Union Territories:

Protests over New Draft Regulations and Orders in Lakshadweep

- A series of draft regulations and orders issued by the Lakshadweep Administrator Mr. Praful Patel became controversial and led to protests in the Union Territory.

About Lakshadweep:

- Lakshadweep is India's smallest Union Territory with a population of 65,000 as per 2011 census. More than 90 per cent of the population is Muslims.
- It is located in the Arabian Sea close to the State of Kerala on which it depends for essential supplies.
- It consists of 36 islands. Only 10 of these are inhabited.
- It is administered by the Union Home Ministry through Administrator appointed by it.

Some of the draft regulations and orders issued by the Lakshadweep Administrator are as follows.

1. Land Acquisition Powers for Administration:

The Administration unveiled a draft Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation (LDAR). Lakshadweep Development Authority would have powers to acquire land for **carrying out infrastructure and development works like national highways, ring roads, railways, airports, theatres, museums, playgrounds, Stadiums, etc.** The objective of these projects is to promote development in Lakshadweep which has not witnessed any significant development in the last 70 years and make it a **hub of global tourism like Maldives** which is not far away from Lakshadweep.

But residents are opposing the new regulation on infrastructure and development works as they see it as a threat to them and also the fragile ecosystem.

Lakshadweep islands are **tiny and densely populated**. The largest of the inhabited islands is Androth with a landmass of 4.9 sq km area where the density of population is 2,312 per sq km. The islands are also ecologically fragile.

Large infrastructure projects like highways, airports, **lead to forceful evacuation of people and also lead to ecological damage of the islands.**

Lakshadweep need not compete with Maldives as it has huge number of uninhabited islands. (Maldives is made up of 1190 islands out of which 188 are inhabited and remaining are uninhabited. Maldives has developed many uninhabited islands exclusively for tourism apart from some inhabited islands.)

2. Ban on Beef:

The draft Animal Preservation (Regulation), 2021 bans sale and consumption of beef in Lakshadweep islands.

Beef was removed from the menu of Mid-Day meals scheme.

The Lakshadweep administration also decided to close two dairy farms run by Animal Husbandry Department to reduce unnecessary expenditure.

Residents are opposed to the ban as beef is part of their culture and dietary habits. Majority of Lakshadweep population are Muslims.

3. Two Child Norm for Contesting Panchayat Polls:

The Draft Panchayat Regulation 2021 bars people with more than two children from becoming a member of the gram Panchayat.

For those who already have more than two children, the regulation does not disqualify them provided they do not have further children after the date on which the rule comes into effect.

4. Anti-Goonda Regulation:

Under the draft rules framed under Lakshadweep Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Regulation, a person can be detained up to one year without trial if he engages in anti-social activities and becomes a threat to the maintenance of public order.

The administration wanted this regulation as there were reports of drugs trade as well as trade of weapons and ammunition.

But, residents are skeptical of the need for such a stringent regulation as Lakshadweep has one of the lowest crime rates in the country.

They allege that the regulation is aimed at arresting those opposed to the Administration.

5. Allowing Liquor Sale in Inhabited Islands:

Currently, prohibition is in place on all inhabited islands. Liquor is served only at resorts on the **uninhabited** Bangaram Island.

Now, the Administration has decided to allow liquor to be served at resorts on **inhabited islands**.

Residents are opposed to this move as it will lead to a proliferation of liquor sales in the inhabited islands.

SOCIAL ISSUES:

Children:

Free Education, Health Insurance and Rs.10 Lakh Corpus for Children Orphaned by COVID-19

- On May 29, 2021, the Union Government announced Rs. 10 lakh fixed deposit, free health insurance and education for children who have lost both parents or surviving parent or legal guardian/adoptive parents due to covid-19.
- The support will be provided under 'PM-CARES for Children' scheme.

Details:

- Over 30,000 children have been orphaned due to COVID-19. Taking care of their educational, healthcare and financial needs has become a major concern to be addressed. Hence, the Union Government announced measures under 'PM-CARES for Children' to address the needs of children orphaned due to COVID-19.

Monetary Support:

- A corpus of 10 lakhs will be created in the name of child orphaned by COVID-19. It would be maintained as a fixed deposit in his/her name till the age of 18.
- When a child turns 18, he or she will draw a monthly stipend from the corpus of Rs.10 lakh in order to meet expenses for personal needs and higher education.
- On reaching 23, the child will get the corpus amount of Rs. 10 lakh as lump sum. This amount can be used for personal or professional use.

Education:

- The government will also assist such children with school education.
- They will be given admission in the nearest Kendriya Vidyalaya or in a private school as a day scholar.
- If the child is admitted in a private school, the school fees will be paid from the PM CARES fund as per norms under the Right To Education Act, 2009.
- Expenses on uniform, text books and notebooks will met through PM CARES funds.
- Children in the age group of 11-18 years will also have the option to study in a residential school under the Central government such as Sainik School and Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Higher Education:

- These children will also be supported during their higher education through either scholarship equivalent to the tuition fees or educational loans where the interest on the loan will be paid by the PM CARES fund.

Health Insurance:

- All children will be enrolled as a beneficiary under Ayushman Bharat Scheme with a health insurance cover of Rs. 5 lakh, where the premium amount will be paid by PM CARES till a child turns 18.

Additional Information:**PM-CARES Fund:**

- PM CARES Fund is a public charitable trust.
- It has been set up as a dedicated fund with the primary objective of dealing with any kind of emergency or distress situation, like posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to provide relief to the affected.
- Trustees of the PM CARES Fund: The Prime Minister is Chairperson (ex-officio) of the PM CARES Fund and Minister of Defence, Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Finance, Government of India are ex-officio Trustees of the Fund.
- The Prime Ministers as the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of PM CARES Fund has the power to nominate three trustees to the Board who shall be eminent persons in the field of research, health, science, social work, law, public administration and philanthropy. All the Trustees of the PM CARES Fund act in a pro bono capacity.

Objectives of the PM CARES Fund Trust:

- undertake and support relief or assistance of any kind relating to a public health emergency or any other kind of emergency, calamity or distress, either man-made or natural, including the creation or upgradation of healthcare or pharmaceutical facilities, other necessary infrastructure, funding relevant research or any other type of support.

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- render financial assistance, provide grants or payments of money or take such other steps as may be deemed necessary by the Board of Trustees to assist the affected population.
 - undertake any other activity, which is not inconsistent with the above Objects.

Contributions:

- PM CARES Fund accepts voluntary contributions by individuals/organizations as well as contributions as part of CSR from Companies/Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- All contributions towards the PM CARES Fund are 100% exempt from Income Tax.
- During 2019-20, an amount of Rs. 3076.62 Crore was collected under PM CARES Fund.
- An amount of Rs. 39.68 lakh was collected in foreign currency in PM CARES Fund.

Utilisation of PM CARES Funds:

- So far, an amount of Rs. 3100 Crore has been allocated from PM CARES Fund for the following activities:-
- **Rs. 2000 Crore:** For supply of 50,000 'Made-in India' ventilators to Government Hospitals run by Centre/States/UTs
- **Rs. 1000 Crore:** For care of migrant labourers (funds allotted to State/UT Govts.)
- **Rs. 100 Crore:** For vaccine development.
- To address the medical needs during COVID second wave, PM-CARES funds were sanctioned for installation of **oxygen generation plants** in district hospitals and Tier-2 towns (those with population between 50,000 to 1 lakh). An initial amount of Rs. 201 crores was sanctioned in this regard.
- PM-CARES funds were also sanctioned for procurement of **one lakh portable oxygen concentrators**.
- In May 2021, assistance from PM-CARES Fund was announced for children orphaned due to COVID-19 to meet their educational, health and financial needs.

Supreme Court Directs Uploading Details of Children Orphaned Due to COVID on Bal Swaraj Portal

- Expressing concern over the plight of children orphaned due to COVID, the Supreme Court, on May 28, 2021, ordered the district authorities to upload the details of children in need of care and protection on Bal Swaraj portal developed by NCPCR (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights).
- National Commission for Protection of Child Rights is a statutory body working for protection and promotion of child rights in the country.
- Bal Swaraj portal has been initially developed for purpose of online tracking and as a real-time monitoring mechanism of children who are in need of care and protection under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.
- On the Supreme Court's direction, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights extended the use of this portal for tracking children who have been orphaned due to COVID-19 by providing a link under the name of "**COVID-Care**" for uploading of data of such children.
- 'Bal Swaraj-COVID-Care' portal will help in tracking the children affected by COVID-19
- Data on children orphaned due to COVID will be filled in the portal by the District officers and State officers.

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- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights will be able to get information about whether the child is being able to get his/her entitlements, benefits and monetary gains for which the child is entitled to.
 - The Commission can also identify if there are States in need of financial assistance to support such children.

Cultural Heritage:

Six Indian Heritage Sites Listed in Tentative List of UNESCO Heritage List

Six heritage sites in India have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in May 2021. The tentative list is the inventory of the heritage properties submitted by each country for inclusion in World heritage List. Only those heritage sites in the tentative list are considered for listing in World Heritage List.

The six heritage sites from India added to the tentative list are

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Ghats of Ganga river in Historic City of Varanasi | Uttar Pradesh |
| 2. Temples of Kanchipuram | Tamil Nadu |
| 3. Hire Benkal, Megalithic Site | Karnataka |
| 4. Bhedaghat-Lametaghat in Narmada Valley | Madhya Pradesh |
| 5. Satpura Tiger Reserve | Madhya Pradesh |
| 6. Maratha Military Architecture | Maharashtra |

What is World Heritage?

- World Heritage is the designation for places on Earth that are of outstanding universal value to humanity.
- These are inscribed on the World Heritage List by **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** to be protected for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.
- Places as diverse and unique as the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, Galápagos Islands in Ecuador, the Taj Mahal in India, the Grand Canyon in the USA, or the Acropolis in Greece are examples of the 1007 natural and cultural places inscribed on the World Heritage List to date.
- Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.
- The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** encourages the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the **Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage**, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

What does it mean for a site to be inscribed on the World Heritage List?

- Once a country signs the World Heritage Convention, and has sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, it helps raise awareness among citizens and governments for heritage preservation.
- Greater awareness leads to a general rise in the level of the protection and conservation given to heritage properties.

- A country may also receive financial assistance and expert advice from the World Heritage Committee to support activities for the preservation of its sites.
- **India's Heritage Sites in the UNESCO World Heritage List:**
- There are 38 Indian heritage sites in the UNESCO World Heritage List - 30 cultural sites, 7 natural sites and 1 mixed site.

Indian Cultural Sites in UNESCO Heritage List (30):

S.No	Name of Heritage Site	Year of Listing in UNESCO
1.	Agra Fort	1983
2.	Ajanta Caves	1983
3.	Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar	2016
4.	Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi	1989
5.	Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park	2004
6.	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus)	2004
7.	Churches and Convents of Goa	1986
8.	Elephanta Caves	1987
9.	Ellora Caves	1983
10.	Fatehpur Sikri	1986
11.	Great Living Chola Temples	1987
12.	Group of Monuments at Hampi	1986
13.	Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram	1984
14.	Group of Monuments at Pattadakal	1987
15.	Hill Forts of Rajasthan	2013
16.	Historic City of Ahmadabad	2017
17.	Humayun's Tomb, Delhi	1993
18.	Jaipur City, Rajasthan	2019
19.	Khajuraho Group of Monuments	1986
20.	Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya	2002
21.	Mountain Railways of India	1999
22.	Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi	1993
23.	Rani-ki-Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat	2014
24.	Red Fort Complex	2007
25.	Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka	2003

26.	Sun Temple, Konârak	1984
27.	Taj Mahal	1983
28.	The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement	2016
29.	The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur	2010
30.	Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai	2018

Natural Sites from India in UNESCO World Heritage List (7)

S.No	Heritage Site	Year of Listing in UNESCO
1.	Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area	2014
2.	Kaziranga National Park	1985
3.	Keoladeo National Park	1985
4.	Manas Wildlife Sanctuary	1985
5.	Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks	1988
6.	Sundarbans National Park	1987
7.	Western Ghats	2012

Mixed Site (1)

1. Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)

Additional Information:

Criteria for Selection into UNESCO World Heritage List:

To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria.

1. represent a **masterpiece of human creative genius**;
2. exhibit an **important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area** of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
3. bear a **unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization** which is living or which has disappeared;
4. be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
5. be an **outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use** which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
6. be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;
7. contain **superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance**;

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8. be **outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history**, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
 9. be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of **terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals**;
 10. contain the most **important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity**, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Indo-EU:

India-European Union Summit

India-European Union (EU) summit attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, E.U. Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen and President of the European Council Charles Michel was held virtually in May 2021.

Outcome of the Summit:

1. Relaunch of Free Trade Agreement Negotiations:

India and the European Union agreed on Saturday to relaunch free trade negotiations which were suspended in 2013.

Negotiations on the India-EU Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) started in 2007. Talks were suspended in 2013 after 16 rounds of negotiations as the two sides failed to bridge substantial gaps on crucial issues, including tariffs, data security status for the IT sector and market access.

2. Connectivity Partnership:

India and EU signed connectivity partnership. The partnership is wide-ranging and covers cooperation in

digital connectivity

energy connectivity

transport connectivity, and

people to people connectivity.

3. Assistance for Pune Metro Rail Project:

A contract for the second tranche of \$150 million from the EU for the Pune Metro rail project was also signed.

4. Global Health Emergencies:

India and EU committed to work together to better prepare for and respond to global health emergencies like COVID-19 pandemic.

They committed to strengthen the World Health Organisation's (WHO) preparedness and response to global health emergencies by reforming the WHO.

5. Protecting the Planet:

India and EU committed to address the interdependent challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

6. Role in Multi-polar World:

India and EU agreed that as the world's two largest democracies, India and the EU have a **common interest** in ensuring **security, prosperity and sustainable development in a multi-polar world**.

They agreed to further build on these convergences and foster new synergies for jointly contributing to a **safer, greener, cleaner, more digital, resilient and stable world**, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

7. Indo-Pacific:

India and EU emphasised commitment to a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific space, underpinned by respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, democracy, and rule of law, transparency, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

8. Terrorism:

India and EU emphasised the need for strengthening international cooperation to combat terrorism and terrorism financing in a comprehensive and sustained manner

Background and Other Significant Facets of India-EU Relationship:

- India-EU bilateral relations date back to the early 1960s with India being amongst the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community in 1962.
- The **first India-EU Summit took place in 2000** in Lisbon and marked a watershed in the evolution of the relationship. The relationship was upgraded to a 'Strategic Partnership' during the 5th India-EU Summit held in 2004 in The Hague.
- The relationship between India and the European Union (EU) are based on shared values and principles such as **democracy, rule of law, rules based international order and multilateralism**.
- The ties between India and EU are multifaceted and cover a broad spectrum of issues including **trade, investment, climate change, science and technology, artificial intelligence, connectivity, agriculture and marine**.

Trade:

- India-EU bilateral trade in goods in 2020 was valued at Euro 65.30 billion (Euro 33.1 billion exports from India and Euro 32.2 billion imports to India).
- During 2019, India-EU bilateral trade in services was valued at Euro 32.6 billion (Euro 17.7 billion exports from India and Euro 14.8 billion imports to India).
- Overall, EU is India's second largest trade partner in goods and services.

Investments:

- EU is the largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India.
- During April 2000 to September 2020, FDI inflows from the EU to India totaled USD 86.82 billion.
- 6,000 European companies are present in India, providing directly 1.7 million jobs and indirectly 5 million jobs in a broad range of sectors.
- Indian investments in the EU are estimated at around Euro 50 billion.

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- India and EU have also established an Investment Facilitation Mechanism (IFM) in 2017 under which Invest India has created a single window entry point for EU companies proposing to invest in India.

Additional Information:

Background of European Union:

- The European Union is an economic and political union between **27 EU countries** that together cover much of the continent.
- The **predecessor of the EU** was created in the aftermath of the Second World War to promote peace, security and wellbeing of the people in Europe.
- The **first steps** were to **foster economic cooperation**: the idea being that **countries that trade with one another become economically interdependent** and so **more likely to avoid conflict**.
- The result was the **European Economic Community (EEC)**, created in 1958, and initially increasing economic cooperation between six countries: Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.
- Since then, 22 other members joined.
- The name of the organization was changed from the European Economic Community (EEC) to the **European Union (EU) in 1993**.
- United Kingdom left the European Union on 31 January 2020 and currently EU has 27 Member countries.

Achievements of European Union:

1. Peace and Stability:

The EU has delivered more than half a century of peace, stability and prosperity.

2. Single Currency:

It launched a single European currency: the euro. More than 340 million EU citizens in 19 countries now use it as their currency and enjoy its benefits.

3. Free Movement of People:

There are no border controls between EU countries. People can travel freely throughout most of the continent.

All EU citizens have the right and freedom to choose in which EU country they want to study, work or retire. Every EU country must treat EU citizens in exactly the same way as its own citizens for employment, social security and tax purposes.

4. Single Market:

The EU's main economic engine is the **single market**. It enables most **goods, services, money and people to move freely**.

5. The EU in the world

Trade

The European Union is the **largest trade block in the world**.

It is the world's biggest exporter of manufactured goods and services, and the biggest import market for over 100 countries.

Humanitarian aid

Collectively, the EU and its constituent countries are the **world's leading donor of humanitarian aid**. The EU is committed to helping victims of **man-made and natural disasters worldwide** and supports over 120 million people each year.

EU Institutions

The EU has 7 main institutions with defined roles.

1. European Council:

The European Council brings together the heads of state or government of every EU country and defines the EU's overall political direction and priorities.

It is not one of the EU's legislating institutions, so does not negotiate or adopt EU laws. Instead it sets **the EU's policy agenda**, traditionally by adopting 'conclusions' during European Council meetings which identify issues of concern and actions to take.

2. Council of the European Union:

The Council of the European Union consists of one government minister from every member state. The Council is part of the law making process in the European Union.

3. European Parliament

The European Parliament is one of the **law making institutions** of the European Union. It is made up of 705 Members who are directly elected.

4. European Commission

The European Commission is the **executive** arm of the **European Union**.

5. European Court of Justice

The European Court of Justice ensures that European law is interpreted and applied in each member state.

6. Court of Auditors

The main task of the European Court of Auditors is auditing and overseeing the accounts and budgets of the institutions of the European Union.

7. European Ombudsman

The European Ombudsman safeguards the fundamental rights of citizens living in Europe by ensuring open and accountable administrations within the European Union.

Map of EU Countries



Note: United Kingdom left from European Union in 2020.

EU Countries:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Austria | 15. Italy |
| 2. Belgium | 16. Latvia |
| 3. Bulgaria | 17. Lithuania |
| 4. Croatia | 18. Luxembourg |
| 5. Cyprus | 19. Malta |
| 6. Czechia | 20. Netherlands |
| 7. Denmark | 21. Poland |
| 8. Estonia | 22. Portugal |
| 9. Finland | 23. Romania |
| 10. France | 24. Slovakia |
| 11. Germany | 25. Slovenia |
| 12. Greece | 26. Spain |
| 13. Hungary | 27. Sweden |
| 14. Ireland | |

Indo-UK:**India-United Kingdom Virtual Summit**

India-United Kingdom Virtual Summit attended by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of United Kingdom Mr. Boris Johnson was held in May 2021.

Outcome of the Summit:

1. **India-UK Roadmap to 2030** was signed which would steer cooperation between both the countries for the next 10 years.

2. Enhanced Trade Partnership (ETP):

India and UK launched Enhanced Trade Partnership (ETP). As part of this partnership, India and UK will work towards concluding Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA). They agree to finalise an interim trade deal by early or mid 2022 and after that conclude an FTA at the earliest.

Both the countries agreed to increase cooperation in the services sector such as IT and digital technology, healthcare and life sciences, financial and professional services, transport & logistics, Business Services, Tourism and Hospitality, Audio-Visual Services and other services.

Trade:

Merchandise trade between the two countries was US\$15.45 billion in 2019-20 with the trade balance in favour of India.

There are 850 Indian companies operating in the UK, with combined revenues of almost £41.2 billion. Together, they employ 110,793 people.

Investment:

UK is the 6th largest inward investor in India, after Mauritius, Singapore, Netherlands, Japan, and USA with a cumulative equity investment of US \$28.39 billion (April 2000 - June 2020).

3. MOU on India-UK Global Innovation Partnership

Both the Leaders signed memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on a new Global Innovation Partnership (GIP) between India and the UK. Its main objective is to support the **transfer of climate smart innovations from India to selected developing countries**.

Under the project UK and India will extend support in the form of grants, investment capital and technical assistance to Indian innovators/enterprises help them take their innovations to third countries. Additional resources will also be mobilized from the market.

4. MoU on India-UK Migration and Mobility Partnership.

Both the Leaders signed memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Migration and Mobility Partnership. It will facilitate legal movement of students and professionals.

The MoU creates a new scheme for exchange of young professionals under which every year up to 3000 young Indian professionals can avail employment opportunities in UK for a period of 2 years without being subject to labour market test.

Under the labour market test, UK employers who wish to recruit skilled foreign workers have to show that no settled worker is available in UK for the role (position) they intend to fill in their organisations. Employers have to advertise the job in a special way for 28 days to see if there are any suitable settled workers available to fill the vacancy. If any suitable settled workers apply who meet the minimum requirements of the job, then employer has to offer the job to them, rather than foreign skilled workers.

5. Indian Diaspora

Both leaders reaffirmed that people-to-people contacts provide strength and durability to the bilateral partnership.

The Indian Diaspora in UK is one of the largest ethnic minority communities in the country, including approximately 1.6 million British nationals of Indian origin and about 3,51,000 NRIs living in the UK equating to almost 2.5 percent of the UK population and contributing 6% of the country's GDP.

At present there are sixteen Indian origin MPs in the UK Parliament and, out of these, five of them hold key Ministerial posts in the Government.

6. Defence Cooperation:

Both Prime Ministers agreed to deepen their defence and security cooperation.

They agreed that there is a promising new era ahead for India-UK collaboration on key military technologies including combat aircraft, maritime propulsion system and complex weapons, harnessing the strengths of Indian and British industries, government laboratories and academia to help deliver the next generation of defence and security capabilities through co-development and co-production.

7. Secure Cyberspace:

Both the Leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation partnership to tackle growing cyber threats.

8. Indo-Pacific Region:

Both the Leaders affirmed their shared vision of an **open, free, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region**, underpinned by respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, rule of law,

transparency, freedom of navigation and overflight in the international seas, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peaceful resolution of disputes.

9. Terrorism:

Both leaders condemned terrorism and all those who **encourage, support and finance terrorism or provide sanctuary** to terrorists and terror groups. They agreed to continue cooperation through the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, including on information and intelligence sharing on terror networks.

10. UN Reforms:

UK reaffirmed its support for India's permanent membership on a reformed UN Security Council. In this context, both countries called for the initiation of text-based negotiations with the aim of achieving concrete outcomes within a fixed timeframe.

11. Climate Change:

Both leaders reaffirmed their personal commitment to taking ambitious climate action in pursuit of the goals of the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

INTERNATIONAL POLITY

Israel:

Israel's Iron Dome Air Defence System

- Israel and Hamas, the militant outfit which rules Gaza strip, waged an 11 day war in May 2021.
- The fighting began May 10, 2021 when Hamas militants in Gaza fired rockets towards Jerusalem after days of clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli police at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound.
- There are three main reasons behind the recent war.
- First, tensions were building up since the start of Ramzan, holy month for Muslims, in mid April 2021. Israeli police set up barricades at the Damascus Gate, a main entrance to the Jerusalem, preventing Palestinians from gathering there which led to clashes. Damascus Gate is the popular place for Palestinians where they gather and sing national songs as a form of civil protest against Israeli occupation of their land. The intensity of these protests increases during the Ramzan month.
- Thousands of Palestinians gathered in the Al-Aqsa mosque, Islam's third holiest site located in East Jerusalem, on May 7, 2021 for the last Friday prayers in the holy month of Ramzan.
- Israeli police entered the Haram al-Sharif compound (Noble Sanctuary), which houses the Al-Aqsa mosque to disperse the Palestinians stating that they were resorting to rioting. Hundreds of Palestinians were injured in Israel police intervention to bring the riots under control.
- Second, a Jewish settlement agency has also issued eviction notices to Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah, a neighborhood in Jerusalem claiming that their houses sit on land purchased by Jewish agencies in the late 19th century. Arab families have been living in Sheikh Jarrah for generations. This also escalated tensions and led to protests.

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- Third, despite the volatile situation, the Israeli authorities also gave permission to the annual Jerusalem Day Flag March, traditionally taken out by Zionist youth through the East Jerusalem to mark the city's capture by the Israelis. More violence broke out ahead of the march.

(Israel captured the western part of the Jerusalem city in the 1948 first Arab-Israel war and the eastern half in the 1967 Six-Day War and claims sovereignty over the whole city whereas the Palestinians state that East Jerusalem should be the capital of their future state.)

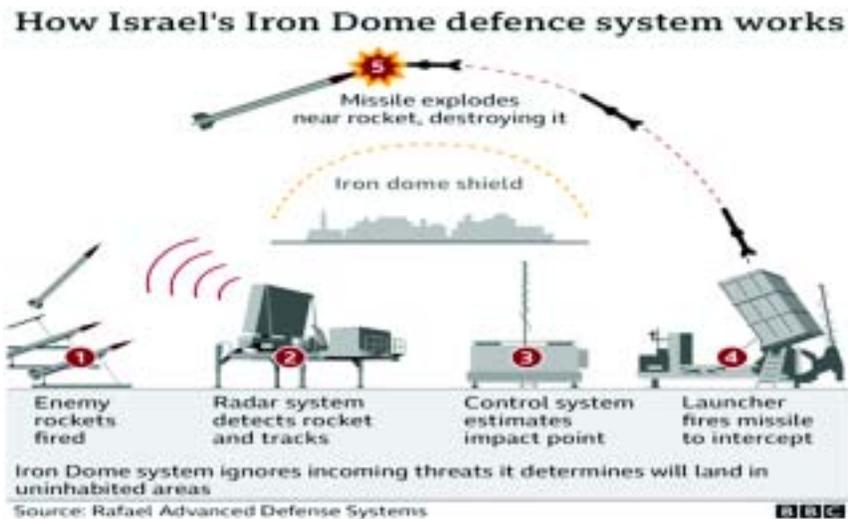
- The protests led to the involvement of Gaza based Hamas militant group which is fighting for the cause of Palestinians.
- Hamas militants fired more than 4,000 rockets towards Israel. Israeli military responded with airstrikes on Gaza.
- At least 243 people, including more than 100 women and children, were killed in Gaza.
- In Israel, 12 people, including two children, were killed.
- The loss of lives in Israel was minimal due to Israel's Iron Dome Air Defence System

About Israel's Iron Dome Air Defence System:

- It is a **short range ground-to-air, air defence system**.
- It is capable of intercepting rockets, artillery, mortars and Precision Guided Munitions like very short range air defence systems as well as aircraft, helicopters and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) over short ranges.
- It is an **all-weather system** and can engage multiple targets simultaneously and be deployed over land and sea. The naval version of the air defence system is called C-Dome while the land version is called Iron Dome. It is a mobile system which means it can transported from one place to another place.
- Iron Dome uses radar to identify and destroy incoming threats before they can cause damage.
- One of the important advantages of Iron Dome Air Defence system is its ability to identify the path and landing of an incoming missile and calculate whether the incoming missile falls in populated areas or open areas. It intercept and destroys the incoming missiles only if they are likely to fall in populated areas which leads to loss of lives and damage of property.
- This also prevents unnecessary interception of rockets that will fall in open areas and thus not cause damage.

When Did Israel Develop Iron Dome Air Defence System?

- It was developed by Israel after it suffered heavy casualties during 2006 war with Lebanon based militant group Hezbollah. In the 2006 Lebanon war, around 4,000 rockets were fired on the northern parts of Israel resulting in the death of about 44 Israeli civilians and evacuation of around 250,000 citizens.
- The Iron Dome Air Defence System was deployed in 2011.
- It is manufactured by Rafael Advanced Defence Systems Limited.
- It has intercepted thousands of rockets so far. It has a success rate is over 90 per cent in interception of enemy missiles.
- Israel now has 10 batteries (full units) deployed across the country. Each battery (full unit) has three to four launchers that can fire 20 interceptor missiles.



China:

China Adopts Three Child Policy

- In May 2021, China Government announced that it would allow married couples to have up to three children. Shrinking labour force, expanding elderly population and the need to maintain human resource advantage are the major reasons for adopting 'Three Childs' policy.

Background of China's Population Policy:

- The ruling Chinese Communist Party followed voluntary family planning from 1949 to 1979.
- But the population of China kept growing and was nearing one billion (100 crores).
- This rising population was seen as a **hindrance to social and economic development of China**. Controlling population growth was considered essential to improve quality of life of the people.
- Hence, the **Chinese Government** under the leadership **Deng Xiaoping adopted 'One Child' policy in 1979** to slowdown population growth. The policy was implemented aggressively through a combination of voluntary methods (contraceptives) and forced methods (forced abortions and sterilisations). Fines were imposed on families which violated 'One Child' norm.

Criticism on One Child Norm:

- One Child policy came under lot of criticism as the Government intruded into choices of people in their personal lives. This is a **violation of sexual and reproductive rights of couples**.

Consequences of One Child Norm:

- After the one child policy, China's **fertility rate fell** from 2.75 in 1979 to 1.3 in 2020. This is lower than Replacement Rate of 2.1 per cent which is the rate at which one generation replaces another generation.
- The policy also led to **gender imbalances** with couples giving more preference to male child by using sex selection methods.

Reasons for adopting 'Three Child' Norm:

- **Birthrates are declining in China.** As per the 2020 census released in May 2021, China recorded only 12 million births in 2020, the lowest since 1960. These births in 2020 are also significantly down from 17.86 million births in 2016.
- The **share of elderly population is increasing.** There are 264 million in the 60 and over age group accounting for 18.70% of the population.
- When birthrates decline and the share of elderly population increases, a country stands to lose competitive edge and faces a demographic crisis. Elderly population will no longer be part of labour force while declining birth rates reduce the future labour force.
- Recognising the consequences of declining birth rates, China replaced the 'One Child' policy with '**Two Child' policy in 2016.** In 2021, the policy was further relaxed with '**Three Child' policy.**

How effective will be the Three Child Policy?

- It is debatable whether the Three Child Policy will have any dramatic impact on the birth rates in China.
- Decades of the **one-child policy** led to **cultural shift** and **made single-child households the norm.** Generations of Chinese people have lived without siblings and are used to small families.
- **Improving education standards and income levels** are delaying marriage and childbirth.
- Women in urban areas of China are also **career oriented** and are focusing on professional growth. They are no longer confined to their traditional roles of getting married and having children. Having more children would harm their career prospects as their responsibilities at home increase.
- **Healthcare and education costs are rising** in urban areas of China. So couples in urban areas are still preferring a single child to ensure better standard of living to their child.
- Besides, coupled in urban areas have to endure long working hours and support their aging parents.
- Hence, the replacement of One Child Policy with Two Childs policy in 2016 failed to have desired impact. It did not contribute to increase in birth rates. On the other hand, birth rates further declined from 17.86 million births in 2016 to 12 million births in 2020.
- However, the policy may contribute to growth of rural population in China.

MISCELLANEOUS (PERSONS, AWARDS, SPORTS)

NATIONAL PERSONS

Sunderlal Bahuguna (94), well-known environmentalist and Gandhian, passed away due to COVID-19 related complications at All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), Rishikesh, on May 21, 2021. He was one of the founders of the Chipko (a Hindi word which means hug the tree) movement, in the 1970s to save Himalayan forests.

Mr. Bahuguna also led the protests against the construction of big dams in the Himalayas in the 1980s. He was fervently opposed to the construction of the Tehri dam and sat on two long hunger strikes against the dam, which proved to be of no avail.

Mr. Bahuguna wrote about the problems of deforestation for years - drawing a link between the lack of tree cover and the drying up of springs in the Himalayas. He also led a movement of women's groups, or mahila mandals, to enforce prohibition in Tehri Garhwal.

Indu Jain (84), Chairperson of Times Group, died of COVID-related complications on May 13, 2021.

She was the founder president of FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), established in 1983 to promote entrepreneurship and professional excellence among women in India. From 1999, she also served as chairperson of Bharatiya Jnanpith Trust, founded in 1944 by Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain, her father-in-law, to promote literature in Indian languages.

Ms. Jain is also well-known as a philanthropist and received the Padma Bhushan in 2016.

K.K. Aggarwal (62), former national president of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Padma Shri award winner, passed away from complications related to COVID-19 on May 17, 2021.

Over the past year, Mr. Aggarwal made constant efforts to spread awareness and educate the masses about COVID-19, its aspects, and how to manage if struck with the disease.

29-year-old **Nitika Kaul**, who lost her husband Major Vibhuti Shankar Dhoundiyal in an anti-insurgency operation in south Kashmir's Pulwama in 2019 just nine months after her marriage, formally joined Indian Army as Lieutenant on May 29, 2021 after completing one-year rigorous training in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Major Dhoundiyal was awarded Shaurya Chakra (posthumously) for his sacrifice for the nation. The Major was among five security forces personnel killed in the February 18, 2019 encounter in which three JeM terrorists, including two top commanders believed to be behind the deadly Pulwama suicide attack on a CRPF convoy, were gunned down.

Motivated by her husband, Nikita Kaul cleared the Short Service Commission (SSC) exam and interview in 2020 and underwent a formal training before being inducted into the Army. She had left her job with a multinational company in Delhi to join the Army.

Ajit Singh (82), former Union Minister and chief of the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), passed away on May 6, 2021 due to COVID-19 related complications.

Mr. Singh, 82, a computer engineer by training, was one of the first IIT graduates to enter politics. He became a Rajya Sabha member after his father, former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh, fell ill due to paralysis.

He was a seven time Lok Sabha member and served as Agriculture Minister in the Government headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2001 and also as Civil Aviation Minister in Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's cabinet in 2011.

T.M. Kalliannan Gounder (101), the last surviving member of the Indian Constituent Assembly, passed away in Thiruchengode, Tamil Nadu on May 28, 2021. He had worked with stalwarts such as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and former Chief Minister K. Kamaraj.

Mr. Gounder was born on January 10, 1921, at Akaraipatti village in Namakkal. He joined the Indian National Congress at the age of 19 and participated in the Quit India movement. He was elected to the Indian Constituent Assembly while he was 28-years-old.

He was reportedly the youngest member in the Constituent Assembly then and also a member of India's first provisional parliament.

Mr. Gounder served as a Member of Legislative Council in Tamil Nadu and also as an MLA thrice, between 1952 and 1967.

He served as president of the Salem District Zilla Board and was instrumental in setting up about 2,000 schools in Salem district.

M.S. Narasimhan (89), a world-renowned mathematician, passed away in Bengaluru on May 15, 2021. He made fundamental contributions to diverse fields in mathematics such as algebraic geometry, differential geometry, representation theory and partial differential equations.

He won numerous awards during his illustrious career which include S.S. Bhatnagar prize in 1975, Third World Academy award for mathematics in 1987, Padma Bhushan in 1990, Fellow of the Royal Society and King Faisal International Prize for Science in 2006 (jointly with Simon Donaldson, Imperial College).

Jagmohan Malhotra (93), former Civil Servant who had also served as Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, passed away on May 3, 2021.

Mr. Jagmohan also served Delhi and Daman and Diu as Lieutenant Governor. He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 1971, Padma Bhushan in 1977 and Padma Vibhushan in 2016 for his contributions as a public servant.

Homen Borgohain (88), noted Assamese litterateur and journalist, passed away on May 12, 2021.

His body of work includes 11 novels and four non-fictions. He won the Sahitya Akademi in 1978 for his novel Pita Putra but returned the award in 2015 to protest the growing intolerance in India and the Government's silence on the issue. He was serving as the editor-in-chief of Assamese daily Niyomiya Barta until his death.

Raamlaxman (78), veteran music director best known for his work on Rajshri Productions' blockbuster movies - Maine Pyar Kiya, Hum Aapke Hain Koun..! and Hum Saath Saath Hain - died due to a cardiac arrest on May 22, 2021.

In his over four decades-long career, he composed music for more than 150 films in Hindi, Marathi and Bhojpuri, and worked with directors such as Manmohan Desai, Mahesh Bhatt, G.P. Sippy, Anil Ganguly and Sooraj Barjatya.

Subodh Kumar Jaiswal, a 1985-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Maharashtra cadre, took charge as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director on May 26, 2021.

INTERNATIONAL PERSONS

Yuan Longping (91), a Chinese agricultural scientist whose breakthroughs in hybrid rice brought food security to China, passed away on May 22, 2021.

In 2004, he was honoured with the World Food Prize "for his breakthrough achievement in developing the genetic materials and technologies essential for breeding high-yielding hybrid rice varieties".

SPORTS PERSONS

Maharaj Kishen Kaushik (66), 1980 Olympic gold medalist, former India Hockey coach, Arjuna, and Dronacharya awardee, passed away due to pneumonia on May 8, 2021.

V. Chandrasekar (63), three-time National table tennis champion and 1982 Arjuna Award winner,, passed away on May 12, 2021 due to COVID-related complications.

Mr. Chandrasekar groomed many top-level players such as S. Raman, Arul Selvi, Chetan Baboor, N.R. Indu, M.S. Mythili and G. Sathiyana.

India shuttler **PV Sindhu** and Canada's **Michelle Li** were nominated in May 2021 as athlete ambassadors for the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) 'Believe in Sport' campaign aimed at preventing competition manipulation. This initiative is aimed at preventing cheating in sports which threaten the integrity and essence of sports.

Sindhu and Li will be working alongside other athlete ambassadors from around the world to raise awareness on the topic of competition manipulation amongst athletes.

SPORTS AWARDS

Laureus Sports Awards:

Laureus Sports Awards, which are given annually to honour achievements of individuals and teams in sports, were announced in May 2021.

The awards are given by the Laureus World Sports Academy (led by a unique group of sporting legends). 200 current or recently retired sports people who have achieved sporting greatness and made significant contributions to the sporting community are part of the Laureus World Sports Academy.

List of Winners:

1. Laureus Sportsman of the Year: Rafael Nadal (Spain) - Tennis
2. Laureus Sportswoman of the Year: Naomi Osaka (Japan) - Tennis
3. World Team of the Year: Bayer Munich (Germany) - Football
4. World Breakthrough Player of the Year : Patrick Mahomes (USA) - Football
5. World Comeback of the Year: Max Parrot (Canada) : Snowboarding
6. Lifetime Achievement Award: Billie Jean King (USA) - Tennis
7. Athlete Advocate of the Year Award : Lewis Hamilton (USA) - Formula One
8. Sporting Inspiration Award: Mohamed Salah (Egypt) - Football
9. Sporting Moment of the Year Award: Chris Nikic (USA) - Athletics
10. **Sports for Good Award:** KICKFORMORE by KICKFAIR (Germany). It is an organization which is working with young refugee people to develop them into confident individuals by taking sports as a career.

SPORTS

TENNIS:

Italian Open (Rome, May 2021)

Men's Singles:

Rafael Nadal - Winner

Novak Djokovic - Runner

Men's Doubles:

Nikola Mektic, Mate Pavic - Winners

Rajeev Ram, Joe Salisbury - Runners

Women's Singles:

Iga Swiatek (Poland) - Winner

Karolina Pliskova (Czech) - Runner

Women's Doubles:

Sharon Fichman, Giuliana Olmos - Winners

Kristina Mladenovi, Marketa Vendrousova - Runners

Madrid Open (Madrid, 2021 May)

Men's Singles:

Alexander Zverev (Germany) - Winner

Matteo Berrettini (Italy) - Runner

Men's Doubles:

Marcel Granollers, Horacio Zeballos - Winners

Nikola Mektic, Mate Pavic - Runners

Women's Singles:

Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus) - Winner

Ashleigh Barty (Australia) - Runner

Women's Doubles:

Barbora Krejčíková, Katerina Siniaková - Winners

Gabriela Dabrowski, Demi Schuurs - Runners

Formula One:

Monaco Grand Prix (Monte Carlo, 2021 May)

Max Verstappen - Winner

Lewis Hamilton - Runner

Spanish Grand Prix (Spain, 2021 May)

Lewis Hamilton - Winner

Max Verstappen - Runner

Portuguese Grand Prix (Portimao, Portugal, May 2021)

Lewis Hamilton - Winner

Max Verstappen - Runner

Boxing:

Asian Boxing Championships (Dubai, May 2021)

Medal Table: Top Five Countries:

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Kazakhstan	8	6	2	16
2	Uzbekistan	7	6	5	18
3	Mongolia	3	0	5	8
4	India	2	5	8	15
5	Iran	0	2	2	4

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