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**MONTHLY UPDATES ON  
CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**WILEY**

## NATIONAL

- Chief Minister of Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that **Raimona reserve forest** in Kokrajhar district has been upgraded to **sixth national park of Assam**. This forest comes under Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) across the border with Bhutan. Assam Government also announced **Dihing Patkai** as a **National Park** which was the last remaining stretches of the Assam Valley tropical wet evergreen forests.

Till now, Assam has five national parks:

1. Kaziranga National Park
2. Manas National Park
3. Nameri National Park
4. Orang National Park
5. Dibru-Saikhowa National Park

Now, Assam has the third most National Parks that is seven in India. Madhya Pradesh with 12 national parks maintains the top slot and it is followed by Andaman & Nicobar Islands having 9 national parks.

- World Environment Day** is observed globally on 5th June every year. This day is observed to raise awareness about protecting the environment and to remind people not to take nature for granted. The day provides an opportunity to broaden the 'basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises, and communities in preserving and enhancing the environment'.
- Education Testing Service (ETS)** has allowed use of Aadhar card for GRE and TOFEL Exams for Indian students as identification proof from July 1, 2021. This decision was taken by Educational Testing Service as many students have faced difficulties in getting passports amid the COVID-19 induced lockdowns.
- Union Health Ministry has capped the price for administration of Covid-19 vaccines in private hospitals. Maximum price for **Covaxin** was fixed at **₹ 1,400**. **Covishield** will cost **₹ 780** per dose while, **Sputnik V** vaccine will cost **₹ 1,145** per dose. Strict action will be taken against private vaccination centres for overcharging. Apart from that, government will provide free vaccines to states to inoculate all person above age 18 from June 21.

- Weyan**, a remote village in Bandipora district of Jammu & Kashmir became India's first village to vaccinate all its adult population against COVID-19 having an adult population of 362.
- Rubber Board** has started field trial of world's first GM (genetically modified) rubber in the state of Assam. GM Rubber was developed in biotechnology laboratory at Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII) in Puthuppally, Kottayam. It was planted at Rubber board's Sarutari research farm in Guwahati. Rubber Board launched field trial of GM Rubber in Assam a decade after Kerala Government denied permission for the same because of its adverse impact on environment.
- Sports Minister of Mizoram, Robert Romawia Royte, has announced a cash incentive of ₹ 1 lakh for having more children. ₹ 1 lakh would be given to living parent with highest number of children in minister's constituency to encourage population growth among the demographically small Mizo communities. This declaration was announced at a time when several Indian states are advocating population control policy. Person will also get a certificate and a trophy. Cost of the incentive will be borne by a construction consultancy firm which is owned by Royte's son.
- Delhi government has launched **Mukhyamantri COVID-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojana** to provide financial assistance to the families who lost a member due to Covid-19 pandemic. According to notification by Social Welfare Department, ₹ 50,000 ex-gratia will be provided to every family that has lost a member amid pandemic. A pension of ₹ 2,500 per month would also be given to those families that lost the sole breadwinner to covid-19 pandemic. Government will also consider single member of affected family to be enrolled as civil defence volunteer. Government will also look after health and education needs of dependent children.
- Goa** has become the **first Rabies-free state** of India. According to Chief Minister, Pramod Sawant, state has not reported a single rabies case in last three years. Chief Minister highlighted; Goa has achieved 5,40,593 vaccinations against rabies in dogs. State has also educated nearly a lakh people about dog bite prevention and has set up 24-hours rabies surveillance which comprise of an emergency hotline and rapid response team for dog bite victims.



- ⊙ Social media platform, **Twitter**, has partnered with first payments operator, **Razorpay** for its **Tip Jar** feature. Twitter is in process of adding new monetization features. It opened access to Ticketed Spaces and Super Follows. These two monetisation features which will only be able in US currently. Ticketed Spaces will allow creators to charge for Twitter's live audio rooms while Super Follows feature will allow users to charge for special access to content.

## ECONOMY

- ⊙ Security and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has cleared amendments to SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 while reviewing regulatory provisions related to independent directors. To boost corporate governance between listed companies, SEBI approved amendments to rules that govern appointment, re-appointment and removal of independent directors.
- ⊙ India has cut import tax on crude palm oil from 15% to 10% for three months. This new duty would be effective from June 30, 2021. India is world's biggest importer of vegetable oils. But it has been struggling to bring down edible oils prices. Thus, decision to reduce the import tax was taken. After the tax reduction, palm oil imports will account for 30.25% tax in total. It will include 10% base import duty and other taxes. Overall tax rate on palm oil imports was 35.75% earlier.
- ⊙ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has changed some rules regarding cash withdrawal from automated teller machine (ATM) which are as follows:
  1. Bank customers can now do five free financial and non-financial transactions every month from their own bank ATMs.
  2. ATM cardholders can do three free financial and non-financial transactions in metro centres while five in the non-metro transaction from other bank ATMs.
  3. RBI allowed banks to increase charges on ATM transactions beyond the free ATM transaction limit.
  4. Interchange fee per transaction changed from ₹ 15 to ₹ 17 for financial transactions while from ₹ 5 to ₹ 6 for non-financial transactions in effect from August 1, 2021.

- 5. Bank customer will have to pay ₹ 21 (currently it is ₹ 20) for each ATM cash withdrawal beyond the free transaction limit in effect from January 1, 2022.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- ⊙ India has decided to make **CoWIN** platform an open source for other countries in order to enable them to use this technology to run their own vaccination drives. Countries including Vietnam, Iraq, Peru, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Panama, Nigeria, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Uganda have expressed their interest in learning about CoWIN technology to run their vaccination programmes.
- ⊙ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launch **mYoga** app on the occasion of international day of Yoga and gave the mantra of **Yog se Sahyog Tak**.



This app is a great example of fusion of modern technology & ancient science. mYoga App was launched to provide yoga training videos which will be available across the world in different languages. Currently it is available in English, Hindi and French languages. It will be launched in other UN languages soon.

- ⊙ DCGI, the Drug regulator of India, has allowed Mumbai-based pharmaceutical company Cipla to import Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for restricted emergency use in India.





Moderna's vaccine is going to be fourth COVID-19 vaccine available in India after Covaxin, Covishield and Sputnik. This vaccine along with Pfizer is being preferred among wealthy countries. These are more than 90% effective at preventing coronavirus.

- ⊙ World Health Organisation has warned that **Delta** variant is significantly more transmissible strain of COVID-19, is expected to become a dominant lineage if current trends continue. Warning came after WHO reported in 85 countries & continues to be detected at more places worldwide. According to COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update, variant Alpha has been reported across 170 countries, variant Beta in 119 countries, variant Gamma in 71 countries while variant Delta in 85 countries.
- ⊙ Reliance Industry has announced to launch a new clean energy factory to make solar photovoltaic cells for next three years. **Mukesh Ambani** will launch a ₹ 75,000 crore investment project. It will be launched to set up four 'Giga' factories in order to make solar photovoltaic cells, green hydrogen, batteries and fuel cells for next three years. It will set up 100 GW of solar power generating capacity. These capacities will be set up through rooftop installations and de-centralised operations across villages.
- ⊙ **China** was certified as **malaria-free** by World Health Organisation on June 30, 2021 after a 70-year effort of eradicating this mosquito-borne disease. Nations that have achieved at least three consecutive years of zero indigenous cases of Malaria can apply for WHO certification of malaria-free status.

## SPORTS

- ⊙ New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) has selected weightlifter **Laurel Hubbard** to contest women's +87 kg category.



Weightlifter will be the first transgender athlete to compete at Olympics. 43-year-old weightlifter had competed in men's weightlifting competitions before gender transition in 2013. Hubbard has been eligible to compete at Olympics since 2015.

- ⊙ **Novak Djokovic** has won his 19th Grand Slam title in French open 2021 in Men's single category at Roland Garros in Paris.



He won this title after coming back from 2 sets down against 5th seed Stefanos Tsitsipas. Djokovic won the title winning Grand Slam final debutant by 6-7 (6), 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4. He played 18 sets since his fourth-round match. He has become the first man in Open Era to win all 4 Grand Slams at least twice. He is the third man to win all Grand Slams after Roy Emerson and Rod Laver.

- ⊙ Indian football **Sunil Chhetri** has surpassed Argentina's **Lionel Messi** and has become second-highest active international goal-scorer with 74 strikes.



Chhetri now leads Barcelona star Messi by two goals and is placed above Ali Mabkhout of UAE, who is at third place with 73 strikes. He achieved this feat against Bangladesh in joint preliminary qualifying round match for 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

- © **Naomi Osaka**, announced her withdrawal from Roland Garros 2021, after she was fined by French Open.



French open fined her \$15,000 and warned that she could face expulsion from tournament because she decided not to speak with press during tournament.

## PERSONS IN NEWS

- © Central government has extended tenure of NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer (CEO), **Amitabh Kant**, by one year. His tenure will now end in June 2022.



Extension order was issued by Department of Personnel and Training after it was approved by Appointments Committee of Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He is a 1980 batch retired IAS officer of Kerala cadre. He has been at helm of policy think tank of government since 2016. Before joining NITI Aayog, he was Secretary in Government of India.

- © Indian Athlete **Milkha Singh** passed away at the age of 91 due to Covid-19 related complications on June 18, 2021. He was introduced to sport while serving the Indian Army.
- © Union government has appointed **Anup Chandra Pandey**, as Election Commissioner.



He is a retired IAS officer of 1984 batch from Uttar Pradesh cadre. He will serve the office for around three years and will retire in February 2024. He has been appointed to position after retirement of former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora.





**Milkha Singh** is the only athlete who won gold in 400 metres race at Asian Games & Commonwealth Games. He won gold medals in 1958 and 1962 Asian Games. He also represented India in 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne, 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome and 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. He was conferred India's fourth-highest civilian honour, Padma Shri for his sporting achievements.

## PLANS AND POLICIES

- ⊙ **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** in collaboration with Microsoft to introduce coding and data science in school curriculum. Coding will be introduced for students of Class 6 to class 8 while data science will be introduced for Class 8 to class 12 as new skilling subjects. Both these courses will be introduced in 2021-2022 academic session.
- ⊙ Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, **RK Mathur**, launched the **YounTab scheme** for students. Under the scheme, about 12,300 tablets were distributed among them in Leh. It is an initiative of Department of School Education. It was launched with the technical support of Information Technology Department. Under the scheme, 12,300 tablets with preloaded online and offline content like textbooks, video lectures and online class applications would be distributed among students from Class 6th to 12th in government schools. Scheme was launched as an attempt for long term technology infusion in education system.
- ⊙ Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar, announced to create 80 acres of **Oxi-van** (a forest) in Karnal district. It was announced on the occasion of World Environment Day on June 5, 2021. Oxi-van will consist of 10 types of forests. On the occasion, highlighting importance of trees and encouraging promotion, protection, planting of trees Haryana Government launched four important schemes:

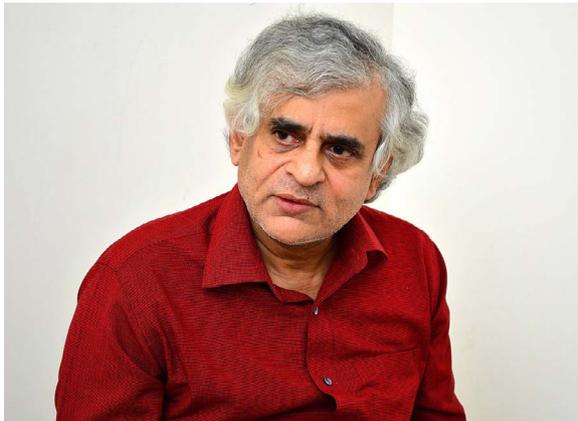
  1. Prana Vayu Devta Pension Scheme
  2. Oxi-Van in Karnal
  3. Oxi-Van in Panchkula
  4. Panchavati Plantation in Haryana
- ⊙ Chief Minister of Gujarat, Vijay Rupani, e-launched **Agricultural Diversification Scheme-2021** which will benefit vanbandhu- farmers in tribal areas. It seeks to make agriculture sustainable and profitable in tribal areas. Scheme will benefit some 1.26 lakh farmers from 14 tribal districts of the state. Under this scheme, tribal farmers will be provided fertilizer-seed assistance of ₹ 31 crores. About 45 kg of urea, 50 kg of NPK and 50 kg of ammonium sulphate will be provided to these farmers. Seeds of crops such as maize, millet, tomato, Bitter Melon (Karela), Calabash (Dudhi) etc. will be provided under this scheme.
- ⊙ Union government has extended validity period of **Teachers Eligibility Test (TET)** qualifying certificate from 7 years to lifetime with retrospective effect from 2011. According to Education Minister, this is a positive step which will increase employment opportunities for candidates who seeks to make a career in teaching field. Now, respective state government and union territories will take action to revalidate or issue a fresh TET certificates for candidates whose period of 7 years have expired already.
- ⊙ Kerala government has launched **Knowledge Economy Mission** to boost job prospects in the state by supporting knowledge workers. Initiative was announced in State Budget on June 4. It was being spearheaded by Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC) and they will submit a comprehensive project report before July 15.



- West Bengal Cabinet approved the **Student Credit Card Scheme** on June 24, 2021. Trinamool Congress had promised to launch this scheme in its election manifesto. This scheme will be implemented and launched on June 30, 2021. Under the scheme, student can get a soft loan of up to ₹ 10 lakh with the help of credit card to enroll into higher studies. Loans will be given for higher studies in India as well as abroad. Loans will be given at 4% interest rates. State government would act as guarantor.

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

- Noted journalist, P. Sainath, was selected as one of the three recipients of **Fukuoka Prize 2021**. He will receive **Grand Prize** of Fukuoka Prize.



Secretariat of Fukuoka Prize Committee described P. Sainath as 'very deserving recipient of Grand Prize of Fukuoka Prize'. He will be awarded for his work of creating a new form of knowledge through his writings & commentaries on rural India and for promoting civil cooperation. Also, Academic Prize will go to Prof. Kishimoto Mio of Japan and the Prize for Arts & Culture will be given to filmmaker Prabda Yoon of Thailand.

- Cochin International Airport (CIAL) won **Airport Council International (ACI) Director General's Roll of Excellence honour** in Airport Service Quality. Airport Council International (ACI) is a global body of airport operators which established Roll of Excellence recognition to airports. This recognition is awarded to those airports which, in opinion of passengers, consistently delivered excellent services. Award will be presented during ACI Customer Experience Global Summit which will be held on September 9, 2021 in Montreal, Canada.

- The 105th class of **Pulitzer Prize 2021** winners in Journalism, Books, Drama and Music were announced. The Pulitzer Prize is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in the United States. Megha Rajagopalan, an Indian-origin journalist, has won this top journalism award of USA on June 11, 2021.

Category	Winner
<b>JOURNALISM</b>	
Public service	The New York Times
Criticism	Wesley Morris of The New York Times
Editorial writing	Robert Greene of the Los Angeles Times
International Reporting	Megha Rajagopalan, Alison Killing and Christo Buschek of BuzzFeed News
Breaking News	Reporting Staff of the Star Tribune, Minneapolis, Minn
Investigative Reporting	Matt Rocheleau, Vernal Coleman, Laura Crimaldi, Evan Allen and Brendan McCarthy of The Boston Globe
Explanatory Reporting	Andrew Chung, Lawrence Hurley, Andrea Januta, Jaimi Dowdell and Jackie Botts of Reuters
Local Reporting	Kathleen McGrory and Neil Bedi of the Tampa Bay Times
National Reporting	Staffs of The Marshall Project; AL.com, Birmingham; IndyStar, Indianapolis; and the Invisible Institute, Chicago
Feature Writing	Mitchell S. Jackson, freelance contributor, Runner's World
Commentary	Michael Paul Williams of the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch
Breaking News Photography	Photography Staff of Associated Press
Feature Photography	Emilio Morenatti of Associated Press
Audio Reporting	Lisa Hagen, Chris Haxel, Graham Smith and Robert Little of National Public Radio

Category	Winner
<b>BOOKS, DRAMA, AND MUSIC</b>	
Fiction	The Night Watchman by Louise Erdrich
Drama	The Hot Wing King, by Katori Hall
History	Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America, by Marcia Chatelain (Liveright/Norton)
Biography or autobiography	The Dead Are Arising: The Life of Malcolm X by Les Payne and Tamara Payne
Poetry	Postcolonial Love Poem by Natalie Diaz
General nonfiction	Wilmington's Lie: The Murderous Coup of 1898 and the Rise of White Supremacy by David Zucchino
Music	Stride, by Tania León (Peermusic Classical)
Special Citation	Darnella Frazier, The teenager who recorded the killing of George Floyd

- © The winners of the **BAFTA TV Awards 2021** were announced. The ceremony itself, filmed at London's Television Centre and hosted by Richard Ayoade, was a hybrid event that kept in line with COVID-19 protocols by allowing a number of nominees from the main performance categories to attend, with others taking part digitally. Winners of BAFTA TV Awards 2021 are:

Category	Winner
Leading Actress	Michaela Coel, I May Destroy You
Leading Actor	Paul Mescal, Normal People
Drama Series	Save Me Too
Best Comedy Performance	Charlie Cooper and Aimee Lou Wood
Best Comedy Series	Inside No. 9
Original Music	Harry Escott, Roadkill
Best Sport	England v West Indies Test Cricket (Sky Sports Cricket)

