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Current Affairs:- August 21 – September 08, 2018

- The Supreme Court ruled that the 'None of The Above' (NOTA) option will not be applicable for voting in the Rajya Sabha elections.
 - In Sri Lanka, the ten-day festival of the historic Esala Maha Perehera was celebrated in Kandy. The procession set off from the biggest Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka, Sri Dalada Maligawa.
 - President Ram Nath Kovind appointed governors for seven states Bihar, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Meghalaya, and Tripura. The newly appointed Governors of 7 states are:-
 1. Satya Pal Malik - Jammu & Kashmir
 2. Tathagata Roy - Meghalaya
 3. Lalji Tandon - Bihar
 4. Ganga Prasad - Sikkim
 5. Kaptan Singh Solanki - Tripura
 6. Satyadev Narayan Arya - Haryana
 7. Baby Rani Maurya - Uttarakhand
 - Digital payments firm Paytm has partnered with China's Alibaba to launch AI-based cloud computing platform 'Paytm AI Cloud'. Note: Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the Founder of Paytm. Jack Ma is the founder of Alibaba.
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- Novak Djokovic (Serbia) beat Roger Federer (Switzerland) in straight sets, high-profile championship match at the 2018 Western and Southern Open in Cincinnati. With this win, Djokovic became the first men's tennis player in history to win all nine Masters 1,000 tournaments.
 - In a tribute to the late former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Chhattisgarh Cabinet approved the proposal to rename Naya Raipur as 'Atal Nagar'. The Bilaspur University will be known as Atal Bihari Vajpayee University while the Narrow Gauge Line will be called Atal Path. *Note:* Naya Raipur is the proposed administrative capital of Chhattisgarh. Anandiben Patel is the present Governor of Chhattisgarh.
 - The first-ever joint air exercise involving the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) commenced at Subang Air Base in Malaysia.
 - Serena Williams (with earnings of \$18.1 million) was the highest paid female athlete for the third consecutive year in 2018, according to "*List Of Highest Paid Female Athletes 2018*" published by Forbes. Indian badminton player P.V. Sindhu was at seventh place with earnings of \$8.5 million.
 - Akshay Kumar and Salman Khan have made it to the Forbes' list of World's Highest-Paid Actors 2018, which was topped by George Clooney. Akshay and Salman made it to spot seven and nine, respectively.
 - Veteran cricketer VVS Laxman, known for the suppleness of his wrists, has penned down his autobiography titled, "*281 and Beyond*". The book will be released by the Westland Publications. The title has been borrowed from the Hyderabad stylist's fabulous series-turning innings of 281 against Australia at the Eden Gardens in 2001.
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- Spin legend Shane Warne will talk about his extraordinary cricketing career and his life off the pitch besides unveiling several unknown facts in his autobiography titled 'No Spin' which will be published in October 2018.
 - Shooter Rahi Sarnobat won the women's 25m Pistol event at Asian Games 2018 in Indonesia. With this, she becomes the first ever Indian female shooter to win gold in the history of Asian Games.
 - The Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has emerged as the second fastest growing airport in the world in the first half of 2018 in terms of actual growth in the number of passengers. Only Tokyo's Haneda International has bettered KIA's growth. *Note:* The Chairman of Airports Authority of India is Guruprasad Mohapatra.
 - The Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) became the first Indian company to cross Rs 8 trillion market capitalization after its shares surged nearly 37% in 2018.
 - The Receivables Exchange of India (RXIL) announced that Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) has become the first public sector enterprise to make a transaction on the "TReDS platform". NSE-SIDBI joint venture, TReDS is an online electronic institutional mechanism for facilitating the financing of trade receivables of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) through multiple financiers.
 - Former England captain David Beckham will receive the UEFA President's Award for his contribution to football and promoting the sport in "every corner of the planet". David Beckham will become the third Englishman to receive the UEFA President's Award. Sir Bobby Robson (2002) and Sir Bobby Charlton (2008) are the previous English winners.
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- Union Minister Arun Jaitley is back as the Finance Minister after a three-month interval to recuperate from a kidney transplant surgery. In Mr Jaitley's absence, Railway Minister Piyush Goyal was holding the additional charge of the Finance and Corporate Affairs portfolio.
 - Eminent Indian writer and journalist Kuldeep Nayar passed away in New Delhi following a brief illness. His famous autobiography was "Beyond The Lines".
 - The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has appointed former Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice S J Vazifdar as head of a three-member committee to decide mining company Vedanta's plea challenging closure of its Sterlite copper plant at Tuticorin. *Note:* NGT Chairman: A K Goel, Headquarters: New Delhi.
 - The World Bank launched 'bond-i', the world's first bond to be created, allocated, transferred and managed by using distributed ledger technology. *Note:* Bond-i is a Blockchain Operated New Debt Instrument. *Note:* President of the World Bank- Jim Yong Kim. Headquarters of World Bank- Washington, DC.
 - Scott Morrison has been elected the new Prime Minister of Australia. Morrison will take over the charge as PM from Malcolm Turnbull.
 - In a big step forward to strengthen the startup ecosystem in Rajasthan, the Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje launched India's largest business incubator *the Bhamashah Techno Hub* in Jaipur. The incubator will provide end-to-end support to startups, ranging from infrastructure, technology, angel funding, access to venture capitalists, mentorship, exposure to national and international organisations and experts and much more. *Note:* Kalyan Singh is the present Governor of Rajasthan.
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- Former President Pranab Mukherjee launched the National Electoral Transformation (NETA) mobile application to rate Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs). '*Neta - Leaders' Report Card*' App, the brainchild of 27-year-old entrepreneur Pratham Mittal, is a platform where voters can review and rate their elected representatives and hold them accountable as well.
 - Exercise Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Peace Mission 2018, the latest in 'Peace Mission' series formally started at Chebarkul, Russia. *Note:* The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization founded in Shanghai on 15 June 2001 by six countries, People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. SCO Headquarters in Beijing, China. The 8 member nations of SCO are China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, and Pakistan.
 - Indian women's team fast bowler Jhulan Goswami announced her retirement from T20 Cricket Internationals. The 35-year-old will only play ODIs. In ODIs, she is the world's highest wicket-taker with 200 scalps from 169 games.
 - India's first biofuel-powered flight landed in Delhi, covering the distance between Dehradun & Delhi. The flight test was successfully completed by SpiceJet. The flight was powered with a blend of 75% air turbine fuel (ATF) and 25% biojet fuel. *Note:* Jayant Sinha is the present Minister of State in the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
 - "Atal Ji Ne Kaha" is the latest of the books on the BJP patriarch and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee launched with a message by Prime Minister Narendra
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Modi. The book is Authored and compiled by Brijendra Rehi.

- PepsiCo's India-born CEO Indra Nooyi will be honoured with the Game Changer of the Year award by a global cultural organisation Asia Society in recognition of her business achievements, humanitarian record and advocacy for women and girls around the world.
 - Reliance Power has announced that its wholly-owned subsidiary Reliance Power Netherlands BV has won an international arbitration award of \$56 million (Rs 390 crore) against Prestige Capital Holdings (a Seychelles-based company) and Kokos Jiang. Kokos Jiang is the owner of Sugico Group in Indonesia, from whom Reliance Power had acquired the entire economic interest in three coal mining concessions in Indonesia in 2010.
 - India's first human space mission will be launched by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) by 2022. The programme will make India the fourth nation in the world to launch a Human Spaceflight Mission. So far, only the USA, Russia and China have launched human spaceflight missions. PM Modi had earlier announced 'Gaganyaan — India's maiden human spaceflight programme'. *Note:* Dr K Sivan is Chairman of ISRO. Headquarters of ISRO- Bengaluru, Karnataka.
 - The 2019 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships will be held in the North Korean capital Pyongyang. *Note:* North Korea Capital- Pyongyang, Currency- North Korean won, Supreme leader: Kim Jong-un.
 - Union Water Resources Minister Nitin Gadkari signed an MoU with six states for the construction of the Lakhwar multi-purpose project in the upper Yamuna basin to deal with water crisis. The 204-metres high project will be
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constructed near Uttarakhand's Lohari village with live storage capacity of 330.66 million cubic metres (MCM). The total project is worth Rs 3,966.51 crore.

- The Centre appointed renowned scientist, Dr G Satheesh Reddy, as Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Secretary in Department of Defence Research & Development (DDR&D).
 - Alphabet Inc's Google has partnered with four Indian banks to grant consumer loans online. The U.S. search giant has teamed with HDFC Bank Ltd., ICICI Bank Ltd., Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. and Federal Bank Ltd. to offer instant, pre-approved loans to customers. California-based company re-branded its made-in-India Tez app as 'Google Pay' -- the catch-all label for its payments services.
 - DBS Bank has been named the world's best bank by Global Finance magazine, in a reflection of its ability to invest in digital innovation while still maintaining stable operations for its customers. DBS is the first Asian bank to receive the accolade from the New York-based publication, which last year gave the title to ING Bank. *Note: Piyush Gupta is the chief executive officer of DBS.*
 - Punjab National Bank (PNB) has announced that the Department of Financial Services report has rated it as number one state-owned bank in terms of digital transactions. The bank is also rated as the sixth overall amongst all banks in India for digital performance. *Note: Sunil Mehta is the CEO of Punjab National Bank.*
 - The National Sports Day was celebrated on 29th August to mark the birthday of legendary hockey player Dhyan Chand.
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- The Union Government, Rajasthan and the World Bank signed a USD 250 million Development Policy Loan (DPL) to support Rajasthan in improving the performance of its Electricity Distribution Sector under the State's '24x7 Power for All' program.
 - The Union Government has constituted a 21-member science and technology council, headed by K Vijay Raghavan, to advise Prime Minister Narendra Modi on matters related to science, technology and innovations. The council has been named as Prime Minister's Science Technology and Innovation Advisory Committee (PM-STIAC).
 - The Reserve Bank of India has released its annual report in Mumbai. It was mentioned in the report that due to the evolving economic conditions, real GDP growth for 2018-19 is expected to increase to 7.4% from 6.7% in the previous year.
 - The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave its approval for implementation of an umbrella scheme '*Ocean Services, Technology, Observations, Resources Modelling and Science (O-SMART)*'. The scheme covers a total of 16 sub-projects, which address ocean development activities such as services, technology, resources, observations and science.
 - Google launched Project Navlekha to enable Indian publishers of regional languages to publish their content online, without facing the trouble of selling printed copies.
 - The 4th BIMSTEC Summit concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal. The main focus of the Summit was on countering terrorism, enhancing regional connectivity and boosting trade. The theme of the summit was 'Towards a peaceful,
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prosperous and sustainable Bay of Bengal region'. Note: The group was formed in 1997 and it brings together Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. Sri Lanka has become the new chair of the BIMSTEC after Nepal.

- The government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$375 million loan agreement to contribute to double farming incomes in Madhya Pradesh by expanding irrigation networks and system efficiency.
 - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$346 million loan to finance improvement of over 400 kilometres of state highways that will enhance connectivity and access to economic centers across 12 districts in Karnataka. *Note:* The Asian Development Bank is a regional development Bank established in 1966. Headquarters of ADB is in Manila, Philippines. Takehiko Nakao is Present President of the Asian Development Bank.
 - Idea Cellular Ltd has announced that it has completed its merger with Vodafone India Ltd (VIL) and Vodafone Mobile Services Ltd (VMSL) after getting approval from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
 - Balesh Sharma takes over as Vodafone Idea's first CEO.
 - The National Nutrition Month (September) is being celebrated across the country to mark the fight against malnutrition. *Note:* With the aim to bring down stunting of children in the age group of 0-6 years from 38% to 25% by 2022, POSHAN Abhiyaan- the National Nutrition Mission was launched by PM Narendra Modi on March 8th this year in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan.
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- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) asked all scheduled commercial banks with more than 10 branches to appoint an Internal Ombudsman (IO). The apex bank has, however, excluded regional rural banks (RRBs) from appointing IOs.
 - Jain Muni Tarun Sagar passed away due to prolonged illness. The monk was known for his lecture series 'Kadve Pravachan'.
 - To promote a culture of innovation and research in higher education, the human resource development (HRD) ministry launched the *Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)*.
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a payments bank of the Department of Posts that will take banking to the doorstep of every citizen through an unmatched network of post offices and almost 3 lakh postmen and 'Grameen Dak Sewaks'. It will carry out most banking operations like accepting deposits but won't advance loans or issue credit cards. The payments bank will accept deposits of up to Rs 1 lakh, offer remittance services, mobile payments/transfers/ purchases and other banking services like ATM/debit cards, net banking and third-party fund transfers. *Note:* Suresh Kumar Sethi is the Managing Director & CEO of IPPB.
 - In a bid to boost Prime Minister Narendra Modi's flagship 'Digital India' campaign, Rajasthan government will soon distribute mobile phones to women under the *Bhamashah Yojana*. Focused on women who fall under the Below Poverty Line (BPL), the scheme aims to transfer financial and non-financial benefits of government schemes in a transparent manner.
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- England's highest Test run-scorer Alastair Cook announced his retirement from International cricket after final Test against India.
 - Indo-Kazakhstan Joint Army Exercise 'KAZIND' will be conducted between the Indian and Kazakhstan Army from 10 to 23 Sep 2018 in Otar region, Kazakhstan.
 - The International Day of Charity was observed globally on September 5 with an aim to recognise the role of charity in alleviating human suffering within and among nations, as well as to recognise the efforts of charitable organisations and individuals such as Mother Teresa.
 - Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidate Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi was elected as the 13th President of Pakistan. *Note* : Pakistan Capital: Islamabad, Prime minister: Imran Khan, Currency: Pakistani rupee.
 - The Government has decided to make the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) an open-ended scheme and added more incentives to encourage people to open bank accounts. The Finance Minister Arun Jaitley stated that the overdraft facility has been doubled from Rs.5,000 to Rs.10,000 under the Yojana. The accidental insurance cover for new RuPay Cardholders has been raised from Rs. one lakh to Rs. two lakh.
 - The Telangana Cabinet passed a resolution calling for the dissolution of the Telangana Legislative Assembly. *Note:* Telangana CM- K Chandrasekhar Rao, Governor- ESL Narasimhan.
 - India retained the top WHO position in South-East Asia Region with Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh being unanimously re-elected as Regional Director for another five-year term beginning February 2019.
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- State-run telecom firm Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) roped in Indian boxer MC Mary Kom as its brand ambassador for two years. *Note:* Director Anupam Shrivastava is the present Chairman and Managing Director of BSNL.
 - India is the Partner Country in the 87th Izmir International tradeshow which begins in Turkey.
 - The Supreme Court abolished Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the 1862 law which criminalised homosexuality.
 - Bhagwati Kumar Sharma, noted Gujarati language author and poet passed away. Some of his novels include 'Aarti ane Angara', 'Man Nahi Mane', 'Rikta', 'Vyaktamadhya', 'Samaydvip' and 'Urdhvamool'.
 - Indian navy ships and aircraft have arrived in Sri Lanka to take part in the joint exercise SLINEX-2018 to be held with Sri Lankan navy at Trincomalee.
 - The government of India has doubled the monetary limit to 20 lakh rupees for filing loan recovery application in the Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRT) by banks and financial institutions. To make the tribunals more effective and to facilitate fast disposal of debt recovery cases, the government has made several amendments in different laws, including the SARFAESI Act. *Note:* The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act, 2002 (also known as the SARFAESI Act) is an Indian law. It allows banks and other financial institution to auction residential or commercial properties to recover loans.
 - The Union Government has appointed former Reserve Bank of India governor Bimal Jalan as the head of the
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panel that has been tasked with selecting India's next chief economic advisor (CEA).

- State Bank of India (SBI) has appointed Anshula Kant as Managing Director of the Bank. She has been appointed to the post for 2 years. With this appointment, SBI now has four MDs- PK Gupta, DK Khara and Arijit Basu. *Note:* SBI Chairman- Rajnish Kumar, Headquarters- Mumbai, Established on- 01st July 1955.
 - International Literacy Day was celebrated on 8 September. This year's theme is '*Literacy and skills development.*'
 - Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric has been named UEFA Men's Player of the Year for 2017-18. He was also named UEFA Champions League Midfielder of the Season. *Note:* Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid & Portugal) was the UEFA Men's Player of the Year for 2016-17.
 - 16-Year-Old Saurabh Chaudhary became only the fifth Indian shooter to claim a gold in the Asian Games history. *Note:* The Host cities for Asian Games 2018 are Jakarta and Palembang, Indonesia. Bhin Bhin, Kaka, and Atung are the mascots of the 2018 Asian Games.
 - Neeraj Chopra became the first-ever Indian javelin thrower to win a gold medal at the Asian Games. Notably, Neeraj had also become the first Indian to bag gold in the javelin throw at the Commonwealth Games earlier this year.
 - World number three PV Sindhu lost to world number one Tai Tzu-ying (Taiwan) in the women's singles final to bag India's first-ever silver medal in badminton at Asian Games.
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- Vinesh created history as she became the first Indian woman wrestler to win gold in the Asian Games. She defeated Japan's Yuki Irie in the final of freestyle 50 kg category in Women's Wrestling.
 - Top seeds Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan notched up their maiden men's tennis doubles gold medal at the Asian Games, in Palembang, Indonesia.
 - Swapna Barman created history by becoming the first Indian heptathlete to win an Asian Games gold in Indonesia.
 - India's 60-year-old Pranab Bardhan and 56-year-old Shibnath Sarkar won the men's pair bridge event to bag the country's first-ever gold in bridge at the Asian Games.
 - Japanese swimmer Ikee Rikako has been named as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the recently-concluded 18th edition of the Asian Games. The 18-year-old, who bagged six gold and two silver medals in the tournament, became the first female athlete to win the MVP title.
 - The 18th Asian Games came to a close, with India achieving its best-ever medal haul of 69 and equaling its best gold medal haul of 15 after 67 years.
 - *Note:* General Bipin is the present Chief of Army Staff. Admiral Sunil Lanba is the Present chief of Naval Staff. Air Chief Marshal DS Dhanoa is the present chief of Airforce Staff.
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