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JANUARY' 2021

ENGLISH CURRENT AFFAIRS



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ADVOCATES AND ACADEMICIANS.....**

Head Office :

211-212, D-1, 2nd Floor, Virat Bhawan, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-110009

**PAHUJA LAW ACADEMY
CURRENT AFFAIRS
[MONTH OF JANUARY' 2021]**

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

- **Gov. approves export of indigenous Akash missile system**
 - The government has approved the export of the indigenous Akash missile system.
 - Under the AtmaNirbhar Bharat, India is growing in its capabilities of manufacturing a wide variety of Defence platforms and missiles.
 - The Akash missile system is an important defence asset for the country with over 96 per cent indigenization.
 - The Akash is a surface-to-air missile with a range of 25 kilometres.
 - Developed by DRDO, it is India's first indigenously designed missile system and

- **IAF Chief, Air Marshal R K S Bhaduria launches IAF e-Governance (e-Office) portal in New Delhi**
 - Indian Air Force Chief, Air Marshal R K S Bhaduria formally launched the IAF e-Governance (e-Office) portal in New Delhi.
 - The launch of the portal is part of Digital India and e-governance initiative that will transform the entire Indian Air Force into a paperless office workflow.
 - It marks a major shift from the current method of correspondence, filing and documentation to a digital one.
 - The platform will ensure enhanced transparency, improved efficiency, increased accountability, assured data integrity and rapidly accessible archives along with a major reduction in the use of paper.

- **DRDO, Indian Navy conduct successful maiden test trial of SAHAYAK-NG**
 - Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO along with Indian Navy conducted the successful maiden test trial of SAHAYAK-NG India's first indigenously designed and developed Air Dropped Container from IL 38SD aircraft of Indian Navy off the coast of Goa.
 - The trial was conducted by Indian Navy to enhance its operational logistics capabilities and provide critical engineering stores to ships which are deployed more than 2000 kilometres from the coast.
 - It reduces the requirement of ships to come close to the coast to collect spares and stores.
 - The newly developed GPS aided air dropped container has the capability to carry a payload that weighs upto 50 kg and can be dropped from heavy aircraft.

- **India's 1st Testbed TiHAN launched at IIT Hyderabad**
 - Union Minister of Education, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has virtually laid the foundation stone of "TiHAN-IIT Hyderabad", India's first Testbed for Autonomous Navigation Systems (Terrestrial and Aerial) at IIT Hyderabad.

- The Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation Systems (TiHAN) for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Remotely Operated Vehicles at IIT Hyderabad.
 - The Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, has sanctioned Rs 135 crores to IIT Hyderabad under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) to set up a Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation and Data Acquisition Systems.
- **Assam assembly passes bill to abolish all state-run Madrasas**
- Assam Assembly has passed 'The Assam Repealing Bill, 2020' to abolish all state-run Madrasas by converting them to general schools.
 - Opposition Congress and AIUDF staged a walkout when their demand for sending the bill to the Select Committee was rejected.
 - With the passage of the bill, all madrasas being run under the government will be converted into regular educational institute with effect from 1st of April next year.
- **Entire state of Nagaland declared disturbed area for six more months**
- The entire state of Nagaland was declared a disturbed area for six more months.
 - In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, the central government declares that the whole of the State of Nagaland to be disturbed area for a period of six months.
 - The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act has been in force in Nagaland for several decades.
 - Nagaland Capital: Kohima Governor: RN Ravi
 - Chief minister: Neiphiu Rio
- **North East's first-ever specialised Ginger Processing Plant in Meghalaya is being revived**
- Minister for Development of North Eastern Region, DoNER Dr Jitendra Singh has informed that North East's first-ever specialised Ginger Processing Plant at Ri- Bhoui district in Meghalaya is being revived and is likely to become functional in the beginning of 2021.
 - It is the only Ginger Processing Plant of North East India established around the year 2004 but it has remained non-functional for many years.
 - The Plant will not only process ginger but also help in preparing products like waxed ginger, ginger paste, ginger powder, ginger flakes, ginger oil etc.
 - The North Eastern Region of India produces about 450,000 Metric Ton of high- quality ginger every year but most of it is sold at a lower price due to lack of processing and cold storage facilities.
- **Cabinet Approves Multi Modal Logistics Hub & Multi Modal Transport Hub (MMTH) at Greater Noida**
- The Union Cabinet has approved proposals of Department of Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (DPIIT) for construction of various trunk infrastructure components, which includes:
 - Krishnapatnam Industrial Area in Andhra Pradesh (estimated cost of the project of Rs. 2,139.44 crore);
 - Tumakuru Industrial Area in Karnataka (estimated cost of Rs. 1,701.81 crore)

JANUARY' 2021

- Multi Modal Logistics Hub (MMLH) and Multi Modal Transport Hub (MMTH) at Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh (estimated cost of Rs. 3,883.80 crore)

➤ **ISRO Chairman K Sivan gets one year extension up to January 14, 2022**

- The Central Government has approved the extension of the term of ISRO Chairman K Sivan, for a period of one year.
- He was due to retire on January 14, 2021.
- Sivan will now continue as ISRO chairman and Secretary, Department of Space up to January 14, 2022.
- He has been serving the post since January 14 2018, replacing AK Kiran Kumar.

➤ **PM chairs 34th PRAGATI interaction**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 34th PRAGATI interaction.
- In the meeting, various projects, programmes and grievances were reviewed.
- Projects of the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs were discussed.
- During the interaction, the programmes, Ayushman Bharat and Jal Jeevan Mission were reviewed.

➤ **Indian Army Chief MM Naravane receives Guard of Honour at ROK Army Headquarters**

- Chief of Army Staff General MM Naravane has received a Guard of Honour at Republic of Korea Army Headquarters at Gyeryong.
- He called on General Nam Yeong shin, Chief of Staff of Korean Army and discussed issues of bilateral defence cooperation.
- The Army chief visited the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) near the border with North Korea.
- General Naravane visited the 30th Armoured Brigade and DMZ.
- During his three day visit, he met senior military and civilian leadership of the Republic of Korea and discussed avenues for enhancing defence relations between the two countries.

➤ **GST revenue collection for December 2020 records all time high**

- GST Revenue collection for last month has been recorded to be an all time high since the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax in the country.
- The gross GST revenue collected in the month of December 2020 is Rs 1,15,174 crore.
- The revenue collected is 12 per cent higher than the GST revenues in the corresponding period lasting last financial year.
- The December 2020 revenues are significantly higher than the November's revenues which was nearly Rs 1,04,963 crore.

➤ **India begins its two-year tenure as a Non-Permanent Member of the UNSC**

- India began its two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the powerful organ of the world body.
- India will sit in the 15-nation United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2021- 22

term as a non-permanent member.

- This is the eighth time that the country has had a seat on the powerful horseshoe table.
- In 2021, India, Norway, Kenya, Ireland and Mexico join non-permanent members Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam and the five permanent members China, France, Russia, UK and the US in the Council.
- India will be UNSC President in August 2021 and will preside over the Council again for a month in 2022.

➤ **India, Sri Lanka hold meeting of Joint Working Group on Fisheries**

- The Fourth Meeting of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group on Fisheries was held through virtual mode.
- The meeting covered the entire gamut of issues related to fishermen and fishing boats which have been on the agenda of bilateral discussions between India and Sri Lanka for many years.
- In the previous meeting held on 26 September this year, both leaders agreed to continue engagement to address the issues related to fishermen through regular consultation and bilateral channels.
- The Indian side also reiterated the need for releasing all fishing boats in Sri Lankan custody in line with the commitment given by the Sri Lankan President during his state visit to India in November last year.

➤ **South runway of Bengaluru airport now CAT III B compliant**

- Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru now has a CAT IIIB compliant South runway that can be used by aircraft even during inclement weather and foggy conditions.
- The South runway in the airport has installed an advanced instrument landing system, airfield ground lights, meteorological equipment, automatic weather observation station, surface movement radar and other navigational aids for the smooth operations during low visibility.
- The upgrade was made operational facilitating aircraft landing with a runway visual range as low as 50 meters and take off at 125 metres.

➤ **COVID-19 negative report must for all Magh Mela devotees**

- Uttar Pradesh Government has made it compulsory to have a COVID-19 negative report for all the devotees who want to attend Magh Mela in Prayagraj
- It is mandatory for devotees coming to the Magh Mela, Prayagraj and Sant Samagam, Mathura and other religious congregations to bring negative reports of RT-PCR test done before five days of attending the fair.
- The COVID-19 negative report must be done through the RT-PCR test method.
- Magh mela is the first big religious congregation which will be organised after the spread of corona in Uttar Pradesh.

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- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs were discussed.
 - During the interaction, the programmes, Ayushman Bharat and Jal Jeevan Mission were reviewed.
 - In the previous 33 PRAGATI interactions, 280 projects, along with 50 programmes, schemes and grievances across 18 sectors were taken up.
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 - This is the eighth time that the country has had a seat on the powerful horseshoe table.
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- **India becomes co-chair of Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP), a regional forum to conserve wildlife**
 - India has been chosen as the co-chair of the IUCN-supported Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP) for a period of three years till November 2023.
 - The APAP is chaired by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Asia and co-chaired by an APAP nation member on a rotational basis.
 - India will replace South Korea ,which held the post for 3 years until November, 2020.
 - As a co-chair, India would be responsible to assist other Asian countries in managing their protected areas.
- **BEL and Indian Navy inks pact for initial supply of indigenously developed Laser Dazzlers**
 - The Indian Navy has signed a contract with the Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), to procure Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation Dazzlers (Laser Dazzlers).
 - Initially, agreement has been signed for 20 Laser Dazzlers.
 - The Laser dazzler technology has been developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and would be manufactured by BEL, Pune plant.
 - It is the first time that this unique product is indigenously designed and developed for the Armed Forces.



- **DCGI gives approval for restricted use in emergency situation of two Covid19 vaccines- Astra Zeneca's Covishield and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin**
 - Drugs Controller General of India, DCGI has given approval for restricted use in emergency situations of two Covid19 vaccines- Astra Zeneca's Covishield and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin.
 - The decision of the DCGI came after the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) of Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) recommended their emergency use.
 - The announcement in this regard was made by Drug Controller General of India Drug Controller General of India V G Somani.

- **Denmark's Oscar nominee 'Another Round' to be opening movie at 51st IFFI**
 - 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will open on 16th January, with the Indian premiere of the movie 'Another Round' by Thomas Vinterberg.
 - The movie starring Cannes Best Actor Award winner Mads Mikkelsen is among a star-studded line up of movies being showcased at IFFI.
 - The movie is also Denmark's official entry to the Oscars.
 - The 51st IFFI is being organised from 16th to 24th January in Goa.
 - This edition is being organised in a hybrid mode for the first time and will comprise both online and in-person experience.

- **1088 people traced in Ahmednagar district under operation 'Muskan' to trace missing children**
 - In Maharashtra, as many as 1088 people have been traced in Ahmednagar district by the police in last month under the operation 'Muskan' in the district to trace missing children.
 - Out of 200 cases of child abduction, 77 children have been traced.
 - Police have also traced 621 women and 390 men out of a total of 1210 women and 1091 men reported to have gone missing.
 - The local administration under the Union Home Ministry's initiative Operation Muskan for rescuing and rehabilitating missing children had launched the drive on December 1.

- **PM Modi inaugurates National Metrology Conclave 2021 organised by CSIR**
 - Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the National Metrology Conclave, via video conferencing.
 - National Metrology Conclave 2021 was organised by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi, to mark its 75th year of inception.
 - 2020 Theme: 'Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation'.
 - As a part of this conclave, PM Modi also dedicated 'National Atomic Timescale', and 'Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya' to the nation, and laid the foundation stone of the 'National Environmental Standards Laboratory'.
 - CSIR President: Prime Minister of India
 - Director General: Shekhar C. Mande

- **ADB approves \$100 million loan to upgrade power distribution system in Bengaluru**
 - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India has signed a \$100 million loan to modernise and upgrade the power distribution system in Bengaluru to

- enhance the quality and reliability of electricity supply in the city.
 - Apart from this, ADB will provide a \$90 million without sovereign guarantee loan for the project to Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM), one of five state-owned distribution utilities in Karnataka.
 - ADB & India sign \$300 million loan to upgrade power distribution network in Uttar Pradesh.
- **GRSE delivers eighth & final Landing Craft Utility (LCU) ship to Indian Navy**
- Kolkata-based defence PSU, Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), delivered the last ship of the MK IV Landing Craft Utility (LCU) class vessel 'IN LCU L-58' (Yard 2099) to the Indian Navy.
 - IN LCU L-58 is the eighth and final ship in the series of 8 LCUs manufactured by GRSE for the Indian Navy.
 - These amphibious ships will be based in the strategic location of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to undertake landing operations in most difficult beaching areas.
 - Apart from troops, each ship can accommodate main battle tanks, personnel carriers and other Army vehicles, which can be launched on the beaches.
- **FSSAI reduced the limit of Trans fat levels in foods.**
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has reduced the limit of trans fat in foods.
 - At present, the FSSAI's limit of trans fat content in fats and oils is 5%.
 - After this notification, the trans-fat limit will be reduced to 3% in 2021 and to 2% by 2022.
 - The revised limit will apply to edible refined oils, partially hydrogenated oils, bakery, etc.
 - In 2011, the government had reduced the trans fatty acids limits from 10 % to 5 % in oils and fats.
 - WHO aimed for the global elimination of trans fats by 2023.
 - FSSAI Founded: August 2011
 - Headquarters: New Delhi
 - Chairperson: Rita Teatia
- **Kiren Rijju launched the first Khelo India Sports School of North-East.**
- Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijju has launched the Assam Rifles Public School in Shillong.
 - It is the first Sports School under Khelo India scheme from North-East.
 - The main aim of Khelo India Sports School is to identify the young talent at an early age and provide them with proper training, competition exposure, and sports equipment for international competition.
 - Khelo India Sports School will also help the talented Sports Students in completing their education.
- **Floating solar project at Omkareshwar dam to begin power generation by 2022-23**
- The world's largest floating 600 MW solar energy project to be constructed at Omkareshwar dam on Narmada river in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh will begin power generation by year 2022-23.

- The estimated investment in this project stands at Rs 3,000 crore.
 - The International Finance Corporation, World Bank and Power Grid have granted in-principle consent for providing aid for the said project development.
 - Madhya Pradesh Power Management Company has agreed to purchase 400 MW power from the project.
 - Solar panels will float on the surface of the water in the reservoir.
- **Prasar Bharati's Digital Channels record 100% growth in 2020.**
- The digital channels of Prasar Bharati have recorded 100% growth in 2020.
 - Pakistan has the second-highest audience of Doordarshan (DD) and All India Radio (AIR).
 - Prasar Bharati's mobile app, 'NewsOnAir,' has added 2.5 million users and registered 300 million views in 2020.
 - Prasar Bharati was formed in November 1997.
 - CEO : Shashi Shekhar Vempati.
- **Journalist Day Observed in Maharashtra on January 6**
- The Journalist Day is observed by Maharashtra state government on 6th January every year in the memory of late journalist Balshastri Jambhekar.
 - Balshastri Jambhekar is also known as 'The Father of Marathi Journalism', for his efforts in starting journalism in Marathi language, in the form of the first Marathi newspaper and first Marathi monthly.
 - The first newspaper in the Marathi language named 'Darpan', was published on January 6, 1832, the date which also marks the birth anniversary of Balshastri Jambhekar.
- **PM Modi dedicates Kochi – Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline to the Nation**
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated Kochi – Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline to the Nation.
 - The pipeline is a step forward towards the Centre's ambitious 'One Nation One Gas Grid' programme.
 - The Kochi – Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline would improve the ease of living in Kerala and Karnataka, and reduce the expenses of the poor, middle class and entrepreneurs of both the states.
 - The 450-kilometre long pipeline has been built by GAIL (India) Ltd at an estimated cost of the project is Rs 3,000-crore.
- **40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica flagged off from Mormugao Port, Goa**
- The 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica was flagged off from Mormugao Port, Goa.
 - The chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasily Golovnin has been chosen for the prestigious 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica (ISEA) mission journey and will reach Antarctica in 30 days.
 - The expedition journey has 43 members onboard.
 - Apart from its scientific mission, this expedition shall carry out the humanitarian responsibility of bringing back the 48-strong winter crew from their 15-month tenure, and

resupply the bases with food, fuel, provisions and spares for operations and maintenance of life support systems.

- **Madhya Pradesh Government launches 'Launch Pad Scheme' to make youth self-reliant**
 - The government of Madhya Pradesh has launched a 'Launch Pad Scheme' for the boys and girls coming out of child care institutions and having completed 18 years of age.
 - This scheme has been launched by the Women and Child Development Department of the state with the objective to provide a platform to these youth, through which they will be able to become self-reliant by continuing their education and training.
 - Under the scheme, the District Administration will provide space to these youths for opening of coffee shops, stationery, photocopying, computer typing and DTP work.
 - All the 52 districts of the state have been divided into 5 clusters with headquarters at Indore, Sagar, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Bhopal.
 - Capital: Bhopal
 - Chief minister: Shivraj Singh Chouhan
 - Governor: Anandiben Patel

- **Argentina filmmaker Pablo Cesar to head the International Jury for 51st IFFI**
 - The 51st edition of International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will be held in Goa from January 16 to January 24, 2021.
 - The International Jury of IFFI will be headed by iconic Argentine filmmaker Pablo Cesar.
 - IFFI takes place in Goa from November 20-28 every year, but has been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.
 - A total of 224 films will be screened at the 51st IFFI under different sections.

- **Centre constitutes high-level group for South Asia energy security**
 - The Central Government has set up a high-level group to build a South Asia-focused energy security architecture
 - The high-level group, named the South Asia Group for Energy (SAGE), will be headed by former Union Power Secretary Ram Vinay Shahi.
 - SAGE has been set up under the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)-run think tank Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS).

- **Toycathon 2021 launched to promote manufacturing of indigenous toys**
 - Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and Union Minister for Textiles and Women & Child Development Smriti Zubin Irani jointly launched the Toycathon 2021.

 - This Toycathon is aimed to conceptualize innovative toys based on the Indian value system which will inculcate the positive behaviour and good value among the children.
 - India imports 80 per cent of toys and the government is working towards promoting the indigenous toy industry for making the country self-reliant in this sector.
 - The Toycathon will majorly focus on conceptualizing new and innovative toys using local material which are economical, affordable, safe and environment friendly.

- **“Udyog Manthan” being organized from Jan 4 to March 2**
 - Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry is organizing Udyog Manthan - a marathon of focused sector-specific webinars for promoting Quality and Productivity in Indian Industry.
 - It got underway on 04 January and will go on till 2nd of March.
 - The webinar series comprising 45 sessions will cover various major sectors in manufacturing and services.
 - Each webinar will be a two-hour session involving discussions led by sectoral and industry experts in a particular sector.
 - Participants will include representatives from industry, testing and standardization bodies.

- **KVIC signs MoU with ITBP for supply of 1,72,000 cotton durries every year**
 - Khadi and Village Industries Commission signed MoU with Indo-Tibetan Border Police, ITBP for supply of 1,72,000 cotton durries every year.
 - The total value of these durries is eight crore 74 lakh.
 - The agreement has been signed for one year which will be renewed thereafter.
 - The development comes after Home Minister Amit Shah gave instructions to the paramilitary forces to encourage local products to support the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
 - The cotton durries will be produced by Khadi artisans in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab.

- **PM CARES Fund allocates Rs. 201.58 crore for installation of 162 Medical Oxygen Generation Plants in public health facilities**
 - The Prime Minister’s Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund Trust is allocating 201.58 crore rupees for installation of additional 162 dedicated Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) Medical Oxygen Generation Plants inside public health facilities in the country.
 - The total project cost includes 137.33 crore rupees towards supply and commissioning of the plants and Management fee of Central Medical Supply Store and around 64.25 crore rupees towards Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract.
 - The procurement will be done by the Central Medical Supply Store which is an autonomous body of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
 - A total of 162 plants with a total capacity of 154.19 MT are to be installed in 32 States and UTs.

- **Govt. signs 2 loan agreements of USD 646 million with NDB for upgrading State Highway and District Road Network in Andhra Pradesh**
 - Government signed two loan agreements of USD 646 million with New Development Bank for upgrading State Highway Network and District Road Network in Andhra Pradesh.
 - The first project is Andhra Pradesh Roads and Bridges Reconstruction Project comprising widening of 1,600 kilometre of State Highways to double lane and reconstructing dilapidated bridges on the State Highway network.

- The second project is Andhra Pradesh Mandal Connectivity and Rural Connectivity Improvement Project comprising widening of 1,400 kilometre of district roads to double lane and reconstructing dilapidated bridges on the district road network.
 - The Government of Andhra Pradesh will implement the Projects through the Roads and Buildings Department.
- **PM Modi dedicates new Section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor to nation & flags off World's first Double Stack Long Haul Container Train**
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 306 km long New Rewari–New Madar Section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC).
 - The New Rewari-New Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor is situated in Haryana and Rajasthan.
 - He also flagged off the Double Stack Long Haul Container Train on the same route.
 - This 1.5 km long train is the first double stacked container freight train. It will run from New Ateli in Haryana to New Kishanganj in Rajasthan,
 - The freight trains will run at the maximum speed of 100 km per hour as against the current maximum speed of 75 kmph on Indian Railway tracks.
- **Karnataka CM launches Krishi Sanjeevani vans to test soil, water & suggest remedies for pest control**
- Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa launched Krishi Sanjeevani vans in Bengaluru.
 - The 40 vans flagged off will reach out to the agriculture fields to test soil, water and suggest remedies for pest control to improve yield.
 - In future the Agriculture Department has proposed to attach one such van for every Farmers Assistance centre in the districts.
 - The Agriculture Department has launched Krishi Sanjeevani vans to take labs to the fields so that farmers can find hand support in their farming techniques.
 - The vans will reach the agriculture fields, study the conditions and address the needs of the farmers about pest control, fertility of the soil, weeds and suitable crops in the existing conditions.
- **MoS Reddy to head committee for 'protecting language, culture and land of Ladakh'**
- A 10-member delegation from Ladakh met Union home minister Amit Shah and urged the government to protect Ladakh's language, culture and land.
 - The Centre had decided to form a committee under MoS G Kishan Reddy for protecting the language, culture and land of Ladakh.
 - The committee will have members from the delegation which met the home minister, as well as elected representatives from Ladakh, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, central government and the Ladakh administration.
- **RBI sets up College of Supervisors under former deputy governor to strengthen supervision**
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an academic advisory council called 'College of Supervisors (CoS)' to further strengthen supervision over regulated entities.

- The Cos will be headed by former deputy governor N S Viswanathan and will have five other members.
 - Key objectives of the council will be to identify areas where skill building/up-skilling are required, plan and develop curricula of all programmes, benchmark the programmes with international standards/best practices, and develop appropriate teaching methods, etc.
- **PNB in alliance with IIT-Kanpur, FIRST to set up fintech innovation centre**
- Punjab National Bank (PNB), the country's second largest public sector bank, has announced an alliance with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur and FIRST (Foundation for Innovation & Research in Science & Technology), to jointly establish the Punjab National Bank - IIT Kanpur Innovation Centre at the IIT campus.
 - Under this partnership, PNB and IIT-Kanpur will set up a "Fintech Innovation Centre (FIC)" as a vehicle to research and develop technological solutions to explore opportunities in the BFSI space.
 - PNB intends to create new products / solutions with technological innovations by creating a Fintech Innovation Centre at IITK involving IITK's experienced faculty members with the help of FIRST.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas: 09 January**
- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated every two years in India on January 9 to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community to the growth and development of our country.
 - It is also known as the NRI day which commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa in 1915.
 - On this celebratory day, the Central Government of India presents the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards to those overseas Indians who made a significant contribution to the development of India.
 - The Pravasi Bhartiya Divas was observed for the first time in 2003.
 - This year, the theme of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas is "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat".
- **India to chair 3 important committees of UNSC**
- India has been asked to chair three important committees of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
 - India began its eighth term as a non-permanent member of the UNSC with the stated objective of raising its voice against terrorism, speaking for the developing world and bringing human-centric inclusive solutions to matters of global peace and security.
 - The bodies include- Counter-Terrorism Committee, Taliban Sanctions Committee and Libya Sanctions committee.
 - It was announced by the Permanent Representative of India, TS Tirumurti at the United Nations Security Council.
- **I&B Minister launches Govt's Digital Calendar, Diary App**
- Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar launched the Government's Digital Calendar and Diary App in New Delhi.
 - Digital calendar is an environment-friendly initiative.

- It is available in Hindi and English, but it will be available in 11 languages from 15th of this month.
 - The calendar has a theme for every month and it will also have all information of 100 revolutionary programmes of the government.
 - The GOI Calendar and the Diary App is available for download on both Google Play store and iOS App Store.
- **Indian Railways achieves a train speed of 130 kilometer per hour on Golden Quadrilateral - Golden Diagonal route**
- Indian Railways has started the New Year by achieving a landmark to enhance the maximum speed to 130 kilometres per hour for 1,280 km length out of 1,612 Km in Golden Quadrilateral - Golden Diagonal route.
 - This covers the entire GQ-GD route over South Central Railway, except Vijayawada - Duvvada section, where signaling upgradation work is in progress.
 - The enhanced speed limits could be achieved due to the systematic and planned strengthening of track and its infrastructure by removing bottlenecks in these sections at a fast pace.
 - This included heavier rails, laying of 260 meters long welded rail panels, improvement of curves and gradients among others.
- **India to rollout world's largest vaccination drive on Jan 16**
- The vaccination drive for COVID 19 will kick off on 16th January in the country.
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired a high-level meeting to review the status of COVID-19 in the country along with the preparedness for COVID vaccination.
 - Emergency Use Authorisation or Accelerated Approval has been granted by the National Regulator for two vaccines - Covishield and Covaxin - which have established safety and immunogenicity.
 - The vaccination exercise is underpinned by the principles of people's participation, utilizing experience of elections and Universal Immunization Program.
- **Brazil seeks two million doses of Covishield vaccine from India on priority basis**
- Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has requested India for 2 million doses of Covishield vaccine produced indigenously by the Serum Institute of India, Pune.
 - Mr Bolsonaro has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to expedite the shipment of Covishield vaccine to Brazil without affecting India's vaccination program.
 - Brazilian National Immunization Program has finalized the Covishield and Covaxin for emergency use in the country.
 - Earlier, the federally funded Fiocruz biomedical center had requested an emergency use authorization for Covishield vaccine coming from India.
- **MP-UP close to agreement on Ken-Betwa link project**
- Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat reviewed the Ken-Betwa project.
 - The governments of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh were close to an agreement on it.
 - Discussions on the project were underway between the two States since 15 years and now some minor issues are left for which there is a need for clarifications.

- The project that aims to transfer surplus water from the Ken river in MP to Betwa in UP to irrigate the drought-prone Bundelkhand region spread across the districts of two states
 - The Ken-Betwa River linking project will benefit the dry Bundelkhand area in MP and UP.
 - There are 31 river interlinking projects planned in the country, of which Ken-Betwa is the first that has reached an advanced level of planning.
- **Gujarat CM decides to create new Bagasara Prant in Amreli district**
- Gujarat Chief Minister has decided to create a new Bagasara Prant in Amreli district.
 - This will take the state's revenue services nearer to the people and provide services faster.
 - The newly created Bagasara Prant would come into effect on 26th January, which includes Bagasara and Vadiya talukas in it.
 - Since the districts with larger geographical areas cause inconvenience to the people, the state government has been reorganizing smaller districts and talukas for administrative convenience, faster development, reducing workload as well as saving the people's time.
- **Cherry Blossom Mao Festival held in Manipur**
- In Manipur, the Cherry Blossom Mao Festival was held at Senapati district marking the beginning of pink season in the district.
 - The Mao area of Senapati district in Manipur is known for Cherry Blossom, a plant which is popularly known as Sakura in Japan.
 - The Manipur government started organizing the festival every year from 2017 onward.
 - However this year, the authority decided to scale down the festival due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- **High Level Committee to commemorate 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose**
- A High Level Committee, headed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been constituted to commemorate the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in a befitting manner.
 - Union Culture Ministry has said that the High Level Committee will decide on the activities for a one year long commemoration, beginning 23rd January 2021.
 - The Members of the Committee include distinguished citizens, historians, authors, experts, family members of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, as well as eminent persons associated with Azad Hind Fauj.
- **National Youth Festival to be organized from January 12**
- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is organizing a week long National Youth Festival in the country commencing from the 12th of this month.
 - Every year, the festival is being held to commemorate the birth anniversary of youth icon Swami Vivekananda.
 - This year the festival has been organised in virtual mode and talent from every state has been included.
 - The objective of National Youth Parliament Festival is to hear the voice of youth between 18 and less than 25 years of age, who will join various careers in coming years, including public services.

➤ **India to get UN tag of international disaster response force for NDRF**

- India could soon be a part of the United Nations (UN) mandated international disaster rescue operations as its country's federal contingency force, NDRF, is expected to obtain a globally recognised standardisation later this year.
- The authorisation will be done by the Switzerland-headquartered INSARAG (or the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group) which is a network of more than 90 countries and organisations under the UN umbrella to deal with urban search and rescue related issues.
- An INSARAG committee, comprising Australian and Singaporean experts, has conducted preliminary review of NDRF teams in September, 2019, but the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic put the process on a back burner for a while.
- The National Disaster Response Force was raised in 2006 to undertake specific tasks of relief and rescue during natural and manmade disasters or life threatening situations.

➤ **WHO's India map 'separates' J&K and Ladakh with different colours**

- A map of India on the website of the World Health Organization, depicting the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in a totally different colour, has evoked angry reactions from the Indian diaspora in Britain.
- WHO, however, held that it follows UN guidelines and practice regarding maps.
- The map is on WHO's Covid-19 situation dashboard that shows the latest pandemic numbers by country.
- Whilst the rest of India is coloured navy blue, J&K and Ladakh have been marked in grey as if they are a separate country.
- The disputed border area of Aksai Chin is demarcated with grey with blue stripes, the same shade as that of China.
- WHO Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- Founded: 7 April 1948
- Director-General: Tedros Adhanom

➤ **LiDAR (Aerial Ground) survey starts on Delhi - Varanasi bullet train project**

- The proposed Delhi Varanasi High-Speed Rail (DVHSR) corridor with a length of about 800 km gained momentum.
- The LiDAR survey for Delhi-Varanasi High Speed Rail Corridor started from Greater Noida where a Helicopter fitted with state of art Aerial LiDAR and Imagery sensors took the first flight and captured the data related to ground survey.
- National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited is adopting Light Detection and Ranging Survey (LiDAR) technology which provides all the ground details and data in 3-4 months wherein this process normally takes 10-12 months.
- The ground survey is a crucial activity for any linear infrastructure project as the survey provides accurate details of areas around the alignment.

➤ **Suriname's Indian-origin President to be Chief Guest at Republic Day 2021**

- Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Indian-origin President of Suriname, will be the chief guest at India's Republic Day Parade on January 26, 2021.

- The news comes after UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson cancelled his visit to India.
 - The Suriname President was earlier the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention.
 - Chandrikapersad Santokhi was sworn in as the 9th President of the Republic of Suriname in July 2020 after his party- Progressive Reform Party won the 2020 General Elections by claiming 20 out of the total 51 seats.
- **MoRTH notifies rules for facilitating renewal of International driving licence while travelling abroad**
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has issued a notification to facilitate the issuance of International Driving Permit (IDP) for Indian citizens whose IDP has expired while they are abroad.
 - There was no mechanism for its renewal while citizens were abroad and their IDP had expired.
 - Now, with this amendment, it is proposed that Indian citizens can apply for renewal through the Indian Embassies / Missions abroad, from where these applications would move to the VAHAN portal in India, to be considered by the respective RTOs.
- **"Period Room" set up for women at a public toilet in Maharashtra**
- In a bid to help the women, residing in congested slums, during their menstruation days, a 'period room' has been set up at a public toilet in Maharashtra's Thane city.
 - Equipped with several basic facilities, the period room aims to facilitate menstrual hygiene among women dwelling in slums.
 - Claimed to be the first-of-its-kind initiative, the 'period room' set up at a public toilet in a slum in Thane, was opened recently for women.
 - The 45,000 rupees low-cost facility will be replicated in all 120 community toilets in the city.
- **Arunachal Pradesh likely to become India's prime producer of vanadium**
- Arunachal Pradesh is likely to become India's prime producer of vanadium.
 - Vanadium is a chemical element with the symbol V and atomic number 23. It is a hard, silvery-grey, malleable transition metal.
 - The elemental metal is rarely found in nature. It is recovered as a by-product from the slag collected from the processing of vanadiferous magnetite ores (iron ore).
 - Vanadium is a high-value metal used in strengthening steel and titanium.
 - The largest deposits of vanadium in the world are in China, followed by Russia and South Africa.
- **Road Safety Week 2021: 11-17 January**
- Road Safety Week is observed from January 11th to January 17th every year.
 - It aims at making the roads and streets in India safer.
 - During this week-long yearly campaign, the government spreads awareness about how to drive safely in order to avoid accidents and injuries.
 - The event promotes work that everyone can do to stop the prevalence of needless deaths every day.

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- This year, we are celebrating 32nd Road Safety Week and its theme is “Safe yourself to save your family”.



- **Amit Shah inaugurates the Single Window Clearance System for coal mines**
 - Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched the 'Single Window Clearance System' for smooth and transparent operationalisation of coal mines.
 - It is an online platform to obtain clearances for smooth operationalisation of coal mines.
 - The single window clearance system in mining will drastically reduce the time taken to grant approvals in the sector.

- **ISRO to adopt 100 Atal Tinkering Labs across country to promote education**
 - Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO will adopt one hundred Atal Tinkering Labs across the country to promote education in the field of Space Education and Space Technology related innovations for school students.
 - This will help in promoting innovation and the spirit of experiential learning among the school kids compared to traditional learning.
 - This project based learning will improve the attitude towards research right from the school days.
 - To foster entrepreneurship and innovation, Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog has established over seven thousand Atal Tinkering Labs across the country.

- **Nation celebrates birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda on 12 January**
 - The Nation is celebrating the birth anniversary of youth Icon Swami Vivekananda on 12 January.
 - One of the greatest spiritual leaders of India, Swami Vivekananda introduced the world to the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga.
 - He became popular in the western world after his famous speech at the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893.
 - Vivekananda was the chief disciple of the 19th-century mystic Ramakrishna Paramhansa.
 - He was the founder of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission.
 - Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary is also celebrated as National Youth Day in the country.

- **Union Minister Harsh Vardhan inaugurates Coastal Research Vessel 'Sagar Anveshika'**
 - The Union Science and Technology Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched state-of-the-art vessel 'Sagar Avneshika', at Chennai Port Trust in Chennai.
 - The vessel 'Sagar Avneshika' will enable the scientists to launch deep ocean mission for ocean exploration.
 - The research ship 'Sagar Avneshika' has been developed by the Titagarh Marine Limited, Kolkata for the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai.
 - It would boost multi-disciplinary research on oceanography along the Indian coast, deepen understanding of the ocean, transform India's ocean research activities and boost blue economy.

- **Odisha CM launches Bindu Sagar Cleaning Project**
 - Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched Bindu Sagar Cleaning Project in presence of Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel, Dharmendra Pradhan in

Bhubaneswar.

- Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) will spend Rs 70 lakh for the revival and cleaning of the lake, through the CSR Fund which is one of the natural heritage sites in the State Capital.
- Indian Oil Corporation, Institute of Chemical Technology, Bhubaneswar in collaboration with Odisha Bridge Construction Company will jointly carry out the Project.
- The holy Bindusagar lake is believed to have originated in the 7th century AD. Surrounded by historic temples and architectural treasures.
- This lake near the Lingaraj Temple has immense mythological, religious as well as cultural significance for the people of Odisha.

➤ **IREDA Signs MoU With NHPC for Developing Renewable Projects**

- The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), under the administrative control of Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NHPC Ltd.
- The MoU has been signed for providing its technical expertise in developing renewable energy projects.
- Under the (MoU), IREDA will undertake Techno-Financial due diligence of Renewable energy and Energy Efficiency & conservation projects for NHPC.
- IREDA will assist NHPC in developing an action plan to create and acquire Renewable Energy projects for the next 5 years.

➤ **Jay Shah named BCCI's Official Representative on ICC Board**

- Jay Shah has been named as the official representative of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board meetings.
- Shah is the Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
- He will replace BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, who was currently representing India at the ICC Board, but he suffered a heart condition recently and had to be admitted to hospital where he underwent primary angioplasty.

➤ **Nitin Gadkari launches eco-friendly, non-toxic paint developed by KVIC**

- Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari launched an innovative new paint developed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission.
- The eco-friendly, non-toxic paint, called “Khadi Prakritik Paint” is a first-of-its-kind product, with anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties.
- Khadi Prakritik Paint is available in two forms - distemper paint and plastic emulsion paint.

➤ **Indian Navy to coordinate largest coastal defence exercise Sea Vigil-21**

- Indian Navy will coordinate the second edition of its largest coastal defence exercise Sea Vigil-21.
- The inaugural edition of the exercise was conducted in January 2019.
- The two-day biennial pan-India coastal defence exercise, will be undertaken along the entire 7,516-kilometre long coastline.

- The exercise will also include Exclusive Economic Zone of the country and will involve all the 13 coastal States and Union Territories along with other maritime stakeholders.
 - It will also include the fishing and coastal communities.
 - The entire coastal security set up was reorganised after the 26/11 Terror attack at Mumbai which was launched via the sea route.
- **In wake of bird flu cases, Gujarat govt. announces SOPs for Karuna Abhiyan**
- In the wake of bird flu cases in parts of Gujarat, the state government has announced the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be adopted for the upcoming Karuna Abhiyan.
 - Every year, the state government undertakes the Karuna Abhiyan, a campaign to save and treat birds that get injured during the kite festival.
 - Human beings coming in contact with birds infected with Bird Flu during treatment may also get infection.
 - The Chief Minister issued specific precautions to be adopted in dealing with birds during the Karuna Abhiyan this year.
 - All health workers on Karuna Abhiyan duty must follow Covid-19 protocols like wearing masks, maintaining social distance and washing hands with soap or sanitizing frequently.
- **Manish Sisodia launches TESOL Core Certificate Program for govt. school teachers**
- Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia launched the TESOL Core Certificate Program for the English teachers of Government schools.
 - The programme will be conducted at the Regional English Language Office of the US embassy.
 - The programme aims to improve English language teaching in government schools
 - The Regional English Language Office of the US embassy has trained around 800 teachers of Delhi Government schools since 2017.
 - TESOL stands for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.
 - It includes teaching English as a foreign language as well as a second language in a country where the primary language is English.
- **Apple, Amazon suspend Parler from App Store, web hosting service**
- Apple Inc. and Amazon.com Inc. have suspended Parler from their respective App Store and web hosting service, saying the social networking service popular with many right-leaning social media users has not taken adequate measures to prevent the spread of posts inciting violence.
 - The action by Apple and Amazon follows a similar move by Alphabet Inc's Google.
 - Parler is favoured by many supporters of the U.S. President Donald Trump, who was permanently suspended from, and it is seen as a haven for people expelled from Twitter.
 - Amazon suspended Parler from its Amazon Web Services (AWS) unit, for violating AWS's terms of services by failing to effectively deal with a steady increase in violent content.
 - Parler is an American microblogging and social networking company.
- **Tesla incorporates fully owned subsidiary in Bengaluru for R&D unit and manufacturing plant for its electric vehicles**
- US-based Electric car maker Tesla has incorporated a fully owned subsidiary in Bengaluru as a first step to set up an R&D unit and a manufacturing plant for its electric vehicles in the

- country.
- Tesla has registered its 100 per cent subsidiary, as - Tesla India Motors and Energy Pvt Ltd, according to disclosures with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
 - It is a private unlisted company with an authorised capital of Rs 15,00,000 and a paid-up capital of Rs 1,00,000.
 - Tesla had originally planned its India entry back in 2016. It will enter India with the Model 3 Sedan, expectedly priced at around Rs 60 Lakh.
 - The vehicle is fully electric and is powered by a 60kw hour lithium-ion battery pack with a range of 500 km.
- **Naveen Patnaik inaugurates India's first 'Fire Park' in Bhubaneswar**
- The Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik virtually inaugurated a first of its kind 'Fire Park'.
 - It has been established to educate and bring awareness on basic fire safety measures among the people, particularly the students.
 - The 'Fire Park' is located inside the premises of the Odisha Fire and Disaster Academy in Bhubaneswar.
 - The fire park will facilitate demonstrations on use of first aid fire-fighting equipment, rescue and disaster operations, visit to exhibition hall, screening of films and distribution of leaflets on fire safety.
- **Cabinet clears purchase of 83 Tejas fighter jets for Indian Air Force**
- Government has approved procurement of 83 Light Combat Aircraft, LCA, Tejas worth about 48 thousand crore rupees from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for Indian Air Force.
 - The LCA-Tejas is going to be the backbone of the Indian Air Forces fighter fleet in the years to come.
 - HAL has already set-up second line manufacturing facilities at its Nasik and Bengaluru Divisions.
 - About 500 Indian companies including MSMEs in the design and manufacturing sectors will be working with HAL in this procurement.
- **Cabinet approves MoU between India, UAE for scientific and technical cooperation**
- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval to the Memorandum of Understanding on scientific and technical cooperation between National Centre of Meteorology of the United Arab Emirates and Ministry of Earth Sciences.
 - The MoU will enable sharing of knowledge, data and operational products for meteorological, seismological and oceanic services between both the countries.
 - This MoU will facilitate exchange of scientific and technical information, deployment of Meteorological observation networks over ocean, mutual cooperation in the development of special capacities and research of Tsunami models for faster and more reliable forecasts of Tsunamis.
- **NIC and CBSE jointly launched CollabCAD Software**
- National Informatics Centre and Central Board of Secondary Education, CBSE jointly

launched CollabCAD Software.

- It will provide a total engineering solution for students and Faculty of Engineering Graphics Curriculum.
- This initiative aims to provide a great platform to students across the country to create and modify 3D digital designs with a free flow of creativity and imagination.
- This software will also enable students to collaborate over designs across the network and concurrently access the same design data for storage and visualization.

➤ **Indian Army Day: 15 January**

- The Army Day in India is celebrated on 15 January every year.
- The day is observed to salute the valiant soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country and its citizens.
- 2021 marks the 73rd Indian Army Day.
- The day is marked to commemorate the day when General (later Field Marshal) KM Cariappa took over the command of Army from General Sir FRR Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief in 1949 and became the first Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army post Independence.

➤ **Indian Army inks \$20 mn contract with ideaForge to buy SWITCH drones**

- The Indian Army has recently signed a contract with Mumbai-based drone manufacturing company, ideaForge, to procure high-altitude variant of SWITCH unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).
- The total cost of the deal is approximately USD 20 million. However the quantity of UAVs to be procured is not disclosed.
- SWITCH are fixed-wing UAV, capable of vertical takeoff and landing. They can be deployed at high altitude and harsh environments for day-and-night surveillance.
- These UAVs will be delivered to the Indian Army over a period of one year.

➤ **Third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana launched in 600 districts across country**

- The third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 3.0 launched in 600 districts across the country.
- Spearheaded by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, this phase will focus on new-age and COVID-related skills.
- The third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana envisages training of eight lakh candidates over a scheme period of 2020-2021 with an outlay of 948.90 crore rupees.
- Skill India Mission was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 has gained tremendous momentum through the launch of its flagship scheme PMKVY to unlock the vision of making India the Skill Capital of the world.

➤ **PM Modi to interact with startups and address 'Prarambh: Startup India International Summit'**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with startups and address 'Prarambh: Startup India International Summit' through video conferencing.
- The two day Summit is being organized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

- It is being organised as a follow up of the announcement made by the Prime Minister at the fourth Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, BIMSTEC Summit held in Kathmandu in August 2018 wherein India committed to host the BIMSTEC Startup Conclave.
 - The Summit marks the fifth anniversary of the Startup India initiative, launched by the Prime Minister on 16 January, 2016.
 - The objective is to focus attention on global capital for startups in India, mobilize domestic capital, provide opportunities for accessing international markets to our startups and evolve enabling policy provisions.
- **Indian ship 'MV Jag Anand' stranded at Chinese port likely to reach Japan on Jan 18 for crew change**
- MV Jag Anand, the Indian ship which was stranded at Chinese port of Jingtang is likely to reach Japan on 18th January for crew change.
 - The ship started from Jingtang on 10th January and was likely to reach Japan on 14th January.
 - The estimated time of arrival of Jag Anand is delayed and it will now reach Japan on 18th morning.
 - Then the crew can fly back to India after following necessary COVID protocols.
 - The ship with 23 Indian crew members onboard was stuck at Chinese port of Jingtang since June last year.
- **India-Oman Strategic Consultative Group meets in New Delhi**
- A meeting of the India-Oman Strategic Consultative Group, IOSCG was held in New Delhi.
 - This was the first high-level official visit from Oman to India since the onset of COVID-19.
 - Both sides also expressed happiness that the Air Bubble arrangement between the two countries is functioning well.
 - The Omani side expressed appreciation that India had facilitated food and medical supplies to Oman during the pandemic.
 - India assured assistance to Oman in its requirement for COVID-19 vaccines.
 - Capital: Muscat
 - Currency: Omani rial
 - Sultan: Haitham bin Tarik
- **Farmers in Maharashtra benefiting from 'Rin Samadhan Yojna'**
- State Bank of India has provided a major relief to farmers under its loan settlement schemes. Many farmers in Maharashtra are benefiting from this Rin Samadhan Yojna.
 - The bank has appealed to the borrower farmers to immediately contact their respective SBI branch to avail the benefit of this loan waiver scheme.
 - Under the Rin Samadhan Yojna, if the farmer who has borrowed loan, pays 20 percent of the principal amount of the total dues, pending since two years, then the entire loan will be waived.
 - At the same time, new agricultural loans are also being given to these farmers. This is providing a great relief to the farmers.

- **Tamil Nadu celebrates Thiruvalluvar Day in honour of poet Thiruvalluvar**
 - Tamil Nadu celebrates Thiruvalluvar Day in the honour of the poet Thiruvalluvar.
 - Valluvar's couplets on discipline life love money politics and a lot of other issues are followed worldwide.
 - His exceptional contribution of 1330 kurals or couplets are translated into many Indian and international languages.
 - He is also called a divine poet because of his couplets which is an inspiration to lead an exemplary life.
 - Thiruvalluvar day is celebrated on the 2nd day of the Thai month.
 - Every year the State Government honours the patrons of the Tamil literature and culture.

- **Telangana celebrates festival of cattle 'Kanuma' on third day of Sankranti festival**
 - In Telangana, people are celebrating Kanuma, the festival of cattle, on the third day of Sankranti festival.
 - On occasion, the people especially in rural areas, worship cattle and agriculture tools.
 - Rural craftsmen and artisans who help farmers in their daily chores are specially honoured.
 - Cattle processions are being held at many places across the states as farmers showcase their bulls and adorned cattle in their village streets.
 - Cattle competitions and rural sports for youth are held at several places to mark the day.

- **India Meteorological Department (IMD) celebrates its 146th Foundation Day**
 - India Meteorological Department (IMD) celebrated its 146th Foundation Day on 15th January 2021.
 - On the occasion, Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated Doppler Weather Radars at Mukteshwar, Uttarakhand and Kufri, Himachal Pradesh; Multi-Mission Meteorological Data Receiving and Processing System in IMD in collaboration with ISRO (MMDRPS) and released Report on Cyclone disturbances during 2020; Hindi Patrika – 'Mausam Manjusha';
 - IMD has been continuously redefining its focus for accurate Prediction of Monsoon and cyclones as our GDP is mainly based on agriculture.
 - It has succeeded in minimizing loss of lives from various extreme events like cyclone, heavy rain, thunderstorm, heat wave and cold wave etc. in the recent years with its precise forecasting and timely warnings.

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviews preparations for Aero India show in Bengaluru**
 - Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviewed the preparations for the Aero India show in Bengaluru.
 - The premier bi-annual event will be held from 3rd to 5th February at the Air Force base in Bengaluru.
 - During the review meeting, Mr Singh launched the Aero India-21 mobile app with details of the event.
 - This year's Aero India theme is Runway to a billion opportunities keeping with Prime Minister's vision for Atmanirbhar Bharat.
 - The indigenous technologies will be prominently on display during this show with active participation of Indian Aerospace and Defence Industry, Start ups and MSMEs.



- **Govt. brings forward target of 20% ethanol-blending with gasoline by 2025**
 - India plans to achieve 20% ethanol-blending with gasoline by 2025, five years ahead of its previous target, to help reduce its dependence on costly oil imports.
 - In 2020, the government had set a target of reaching 10% ethanol-blending by 2022 – meaning 10% of ethanol mixed with 90% of gasoline – and 20% by 2030.
 - India relies on foreign suppliers to meet more than 80% of its demand.

- **Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh launches India's First Indigenously Designed & Developed Driverless Metro Car**
 - Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh unveiled India's First Indigenously Designed & Developed Driverless Metro Car.
 - He unveiled state-of-the-art 'Driverless Metro Car' for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) at a function held at BEML's Bangalore Complex.
 - Indigenously designed & developed state-of-the-art Driverless Metro trains are being manufactured at BEML Bangaluru Complex.
 - MMRDA project has 63 per cent indigenous content which will enhance to 75 per cent in next two to three years.
 - Rajnath Singh also virtually launched the Aerospace Assembly Hangar, situated within BEML's Bangalore Complex, and unveiled the first indigenously manufactured Tatra Cabin by BEML.

- **PM Modi flag off eight trains connecting different regions of country to Statue of Unity in Kevadiya**
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off eight trains connecting different regions of the country to Kevadiya.
 - These trains will facilitate seamless connectivity to the Statue of Unity.
 - The Ahmedabad-Kevadiya Jan Shatabdi Express has been provided with the new-age Vista-dome tourist coach which will offer a panoramic view of the skyline.
 - Situated near Kevadiya in Gujarat's Narmada district, the 'Statue of Unity' is the world's tallest statue and monumental tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, independent India's first home minister as well as deputy Prime Minister.
 - The statue was inaugurated in October 2018 by Prime Minister Modi on the occasion of Patel's 143rd birth anniversary.

- **PM announces Startup India Seed Fund Scheme of Rs 1000 cr for startups**
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Rs 1,000-crore 'Startup India Seed Fund' on 16 January 2021, while addressing the 'Prarambh: Startup India International Summit' 2021.
 - This will help in setting up new startups and promote their growth.
 - The summit marked the fifth anniversary of the Startup India initiative launched by Modi on this day in 2016.

➤ **Home Minister lays foundation stone for 97th battalion of RAF**

- Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for the 97th battalion of Rapid Action Force in Bullapur near Bhadravathi in Shimoga district of Karnataka.
- To be built on 50 acres of land, the campus will have a training centre, administrative block, stadium and a Kendriya Vidyalaya.
- The Rapid Action Force is a specialised wing of the Central Reserve Police Force of India to deal with riot and crowd control situations.
- Founded: 11 December 1991
- Governing body: Ministry of Home Affairs (India)

➤ **Petroleum & Natural Gas Ministry launches SAKSHAM campaign to spread awareness about green energy**

- The Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry launched a month-long mass awareness campaign 'SAKSHAM' to spread awareness about green and clean energy.
- The pan-India campaign will focus on adoption of cleaner fuels.
- The campaign will spread awareness about seven key drivers that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had recently mentioned.
- They include moving towards a gas-based economy, cleaner use of fossil fuels, greater reliance on domestic sources to drive bio-fuels and increased use of electric vehicles.

➤ **PM Modi lay foundation stone of Ahmedabad Metro Rail Phase 2 and Surat Metro Rail Project**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi lay the foundation stone of Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II and Surat Metro Rail Project through video conferencing.
- The Metro Projects will provide an environment friendly 'Mass Rapid Transit System' to these cities.
- The estimated cost of phase two of Ahmedabad Metro project is 5384 crore rupees.
- Surat with a population of around 60 lakhs is the fastest growing city in India.
- Phase-I of Surat Metro Rail Project, with a total length of 40.35 kilometers comprises two corridors.

➤ **PM Modi pays tributes to MGR on birth anniversary**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to AIADMK founder and former Tamil Nadu chief minister M G Ramachandran on his birth anniversary.
- Born in 1917, MGR, as he became popularly known, was a Tamil film superstar who joined the C N Annadurai-led DMK and rose to be one of its popular faces.
- He formed his own party in 1972 following differences with M Karunanidhi.
- He worked as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for ten years between 1977 and 1987.
- In 1988, M.G.R. was awarded India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, posthumously.

➤ **India's first Labour Movement museum to open in Kerala's Alappuzha**

The country's first Labour Movement Museum, showcasing the history of world labour movement, would be launched in Kerala's houseboat tourism hub, Alappuzha.

- The museum will feature a huge repository of documents and exhibits that shaped the labour movements across the continents and impacted Alappuzha.

- The museum would be launched as part of the LDF government's second 100-day programme.
 - It will portray, through pictures, documents and other exhibits, the growth of the world labour movement and the history of Kerala's labour movement.
 - The Museums will open as soon as the restoration of heritage structures is complete.
- **Nitish Kumar inaugurates Bihar's first state bird festival 'Kalrav' at Jamui district's Nagi bird sanctuary**
- Chief minister Nitish Kumar inaugurated Bihar's first state bird festival 'Kalrav' at Nagi bird sanctuary in Jamui district, about 200 km south-east from the state capital.
 - Though the three-day bird festival began at a colorful event organized by the state's environment, forest and climate change department at the famous Nagi bird sanctuary near Nagi dam.
 - The festival, organized with an aim to create awareness among people about the birds especially migratory birds.
 - Spread in an area of 2.1 square kilometers, Nagi bird sanctuary is home to over 133 bird species. There are also a variety of dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies.
- **Union Ministers Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari Inaugurates National Road Safety Month 2021**
- The first-ever National Road Safety Month (January 18-February 17) was inaugurated by Union Minister for Defence Shri Rajnath Singh and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways & MSME Shri Nitin Gadkari.
 - It is the inaugural edition of the National Road Safety Month and is being held in place of National Road Safety Week, which was being observed since past few years.
 - The objective of the month-long programme is to build awareness about road safety and reduce road accidents in India.
 - It will be held till 17 February 2021.
 - During this period, nation-wide activities would be conducted throughout the country in association with State Govt./Union Territory administrations, NHAI, NHIDCL, OEMs and NGOs.
- **Health Minister Harsh Vardhan chairs 148th session of WHO Executive Board**
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare digitally chaired the 148th session of WHO Executive Board, through Video Conference.
 - The 148th session of the Executive Board has been organised from 18-26 January 2021.
 - The meeting provides a platform to bring together all member states to set the directions and agenda and continue striving for the objective of Health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
 - Also, the WHO has declared the Year 2021 as the Year of Global Solidarity and Survival.
- **Kerala launches 'One School, One IAS' Program to impart UPSC Civil Services free coaching for economically weak students**
- The Governor of Kerala, Arif Mohammad Khan officially launched the 'One School One IAS' program recently which aims to provide free coaching for UPSC Civil Services/ IAS Exams for poor meritorious students.

- The programme will be implemented by Vedhik Erudite Foundation with the support of sponsors.
 - Under the scheme free coaching will be provided to 10,000 financially weak meritorious students across Kerala for civil services and other competitive examinations.
 - This higher education platform will give the students a chance to completely redecorate their future plans and broaden their horizons.
- **Full team of Election Commission on 3-day visit to Assam to review poll preparedness**
- The full team of Election Commission of India (ECI) led by Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora is on a three-day visit to Assam to review the poll preparedness for the upcoming Assembly elections in the State.
 - After their arrival, the team held a meeting with the Chief Electoral Officer of Assam and Nodal Security officer.
 - Assam Governor: Jagdish Mukhi
 - Chief Minister: Sarbananda Sonowal
 - Legislature: 126 seats
 - Rajya Sabha : 7 seats
 - Lok Sabha: 14 seats
- **TRIFED and IFFDC enter into MoU to work together for tribal livelihood generation**
- The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) and Indian Farm Forestry Development Co-operative Ltd (IFFDC) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together for tribal livelihood generation.
 - The two organizations have agreed to partner with each other to organise training programmes for tribal artisans in the area of entrepreneurship skill and business development.
 - They will also collaborate further to identify and implement Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives and tribal development efforts.
 - Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (TRIFED) is a national level cooperative body under the administrative control of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.
 - It was established under the Multi-state co-operative societies act 1984 under the former Ministry of Welfare.
- **NDRF Raising Day: 19 January**
- The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) celebrates its Raising Day every year on January 19, since it came into existence on January 19, 2006.
 - In 2021, the NDRF is observing its 16th Raising Day.
 - NDRF is an Indian specialized force under the National Disaster Management Authority, constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, to carry out special response in situations of threatening disaster.
 - There are 12 NDRF battalions located in different parts of the country and comprises as many as 13,000 NDRF personnel who work to build a safer country.
 - Director Generals of NDRF: SN Pradhan
 - Parent department: Ministry of Home Affairs

- **India, France to hold bilateral Air exercise at Air Force Station in Jodhpur**
 - Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force will conduct a bilateral Air exercise, Ex Desert Knight-21 at Air Force Station Jodhpur.
 - The Air exercise will be till 24th January.
 - French side will participate with Rafale, Airbus A-330 Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT), A-400M Tactical Transport aircraft and approximately 175 personnel.
 - The Indian Air Force aircraft participating in the exercise will include Mirage 2000, Su-30 MKI, Rafale, IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft, AWACS and AEW&C aircraft.
 - It is unique as it includes fielding of Rafale aircraft by both sides and is indicative of the growing interaction between the two premier Air Forces.

- **Budget Session of Parliament to begin on 29th of January**
 - The Budget Session of the Parliament will begin on the 29th of this month.
 - The seating arrangements have been made in view of COVID-19 guidelines.
 - The Budget session will commence with President Ram Nath Kovind's address to the joint sitting of both the Houses.
 - This session every year starts with the President's Address to both Houses.
 - The Union Budget will be presented on 1st February.

- **Union Minister Kiren Rijiju assigned additional charge of Ministry of AYUSH**
 - Union Minister Kiren Rijiju has been assigned the additional charge of the Ministry of AYUSH.
 - During the hospitalization and treatment of AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik following a road accident, his portfolio related to the Ministry of AYUSH has been temporarily assigned to Mr Rijiju in addition to his existing portfolios.
 - The President has directed that this arrangement may continue till Mr Naik resumes his work related to the Ministry of AYUSH.

- **Govt. decides to celebrate birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as 'Parakram Diwas' on 23rd of January every year**
 - Government has decided to celebrate the birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as 'Parakram Diwas' on 23rd of January every year.
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the Parakram Diwas event in Kolkata and will inaugurate an exhibition there.
 - Another event is planned in Haripura, Gujarat where Netaji was elected president of Congress in 1938.
 - A High Level Committee, headed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been constituted to commemorate the birth anniversary of Netaji.

- **354th birth anniversary of Guru Govind Singh**
 - Guru Gobind Singh Jayanti is celebrated across India with great fervour and enthusiasm.
 - The main function is organised at Takhat Sri Harmandir Sahib Gurdwara, Patna Sahib, the birth place of Guru Gobind Singh.
 - Born at Patna Sahib in 1666, Guru Govind Singh was the 10th Sikh guru.
 - He succeeded his father Guru Tegh Bahadur ji as leader of Sikhs at the age of just nine.

- **Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani announces 'Horticulture Development Mission'**
 - Gujarat, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced the 'Horticulture Development Mission' (Bagayat Vikas Mission).
 - The aim of this mission is to double the income of farmers involved in medicinal and horticulture farming.
 - Under this mission, the waste land of the government will be given on 30-year lease for farming of horticulture and medicinal crops.
 - As per an estimate, the government has about 50,000 non-cultivated land waste lands.
 - The government will also offer priority assistance to lease owners for drip-sprinkler fountains.

- **1st consignment of green peas and white brinjals shipped on direct flight from Varanasi to Sharjah**
 - The first consignment of green peas and white brinjals of Varanasi has been shipped from direct flight from Varanasi to Sharjah in UAE.
 - After successfully exporting Langda and the Dussehri variety of mangoes and green chillies of neighbouring district Ghazipur to many districts it is time to taste the fresh green peas and white brinjal of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency Varanasi.
 - It will also open new avenues for farmers of the Poorvanchal region.
 - Earlier the consignments were sent from Varanasi to the ports of Gujarat and Mumbai and then they were shipped to other countries but with the start of direct cargo flight from Varanasi to Sharjah recently, the fresh products will reach directly to the markets abroad in less time.

- **Nagpur's Gorewada International Zoo to be renamed after Bal Thackeray**
 - The Maharashtra government has renamed Gorewada International Zoo in Nagpur as 'Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park'.
 - The zoological park will come up on nearly 2,000 hectares of forest land and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will inaugurate the Indian safari at the zoo on January 26.
 - Born on January 23, 1926, in Pune, Balasaheb Thackeray had begun his professional career as a cartoonist with the English-language daily 'The Free Press Journal'.
 - He later quit his professional job and founded the Shiv Sena in 1966 to advocate for the interests of the people of Maharashtra in Mumbai's political and professional landscape.
 - Thackeray was also the founder of the Marathi-language newspaper 'Saamana'.
 - Thackeray breathed his last on November 17, 2012, after suffering a cardiac arrest. He was 86.

- **NITI Aayog releases 2nd edition of India Innovation Index-2020**
 - The NITI Aayog released the second edition of the India Innovation Index-2020.
 - The index demonstrates the government's continued commitment towards transforming the country into an innovation-driven economy.
 - In the India Innovation Index-2020, the States and Union Territories have been divided into 17 Major States, 10 North-East and Hill States and nine Union Territories and Small States for effectively comparing their performance.
 - In the 2020 ranking, Karnataka retained its first position in the Major States category.

- Maharashtra moved one position higher and stood at 2nd spot while Tamil Nadu slid to 3rd position.
 - In the North East and Hill States category, Himachal Pradesh stands at first position followed by Uttarakhand and Manipur.
 - Delhi stands at the first position while Chandigarh retained its second spot in the Union Territories and small States category.
- **Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth to become the first Woman Fighter Pilot to take part in Republic Day Parade**
- Flight lieutenant Bhawana Kanth will create a historic moment when she will become the first woman fighter pilot to take part in the Republic Day parade on 26 January 2021.
 - She is one of the first women fighter pilots to be inducted in the IAF.
 - Kanth will be the part of the Indian Air Force's (IAF's) tableau in the parade.
 - The IAF tableau will showcase mock-ups of the light combat aircraft, light combat helicopter and the Sukhoi-30 fighter plane.
 - Currently Kanth is posted at an airbase in Rajasthan where she flies the MiG-21 Bison fighter plane.
- **Ministry of Minority Affairs to organise 24th Hunar Haat in Lucknow from 22nd January to 4th February**
- Ministry of Minority Affairs will organise the 24th Hunar Haat at Avadh Shilpgram, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh from 22nd January to 4th February with the theme of Vocal for Local.
 - Artisans and craftsmen from 31 States and Union Territories of the country will participate in the Hunar Haat.
 - About 500 artisans, craftsmen and culinary experts from different States will display and sell their exquisite handmade products.
 - Renowned artists of the country will perform cultural events on the theme of Atma Nirbhar Bharat every day at Hunar Haat.
- **Union Cabinet approves MoU between India, Uzbekistan for cooperation in field of Solar Energy**
- The Union Cabinet approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Uzbekistan for cooperation in the field of Solar Energy.
 - The main area of work under the MoU is to identify research, demonstration and initiation of pilot projects between the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, India and the International Solar Energy Institute, Uzbekistan.
 - The research and cooperation will primarily focus in the areas of Solar Photovoltaic, Storage Technologies and Transfer of Technologies.
 - Based on mutual agreement, both parties would work for implementation and deployment of pilot projects in International Solar Alliance (ISA) member countries.
- **Cabinet approves Rs 5,282 cr investment for Ratle Hydro Power Project in J&K**
- The Cabinet has given its approval for the investment of over 5200 crore rupees for 850 MW Ratle Hydro Electric (HE) Project located on river Chenab, in Kishtwar in the Union

Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

- This will be a new Joint Venture Company (JVC) of National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Ltd (JKSPDC) with equity contribution of 51 per cent and 49 per cent respectively.
 - The Ratle Hydro Electric Project shall be commissioned within 60 months.
 - The Power generated from the Project will help in providing balancing of Grid and will improve the power supply position.
- **3-day Ports Review Meeting named 'Chintan Baithak' to be held at Gujarat from 21st to 23rd of January**
- A three-day Ports Review Meeting named 'Chintan Baithak' will be held at Gujarat from 21st to 23rd of this month.
 - It will be chaired by Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Mansukh Mandaviya.
 - The Chintan Baithak will include sessions on exploring new vistas of urban transportation, effective implementation of SAROD-Ports and issues related to International Arbitrations.
 - The basic purpose of holding this Chintan Baithak is to evolve out of the box ideas for improving the performance and efficiency of our Major Ports, setting up of world-class infrastructure facilities at ports by adopting global benchmarks for reducing logistics costs, enhancing connectivity and Ease Of Doing Business.
- **Karnataka CM Yediyurappa launches Avalokana software**
- In Karnataka, Chief Minister B. S. Yediyurappa launched Avalokana software.
 - It will enable the government to access data on sanctions and expenditures incurred by 39 departments on 1,800 programmes implemented by them.
 - It is a transparent e-governance tool that will provide Assembly constituency-wise release of Government grants and allocations under different development programmes.
 - Going by which the Government can decide on releasing funds depending on the expenditure incurred by the department.
- **Foundation Day of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya: 21 January**
- The three north-eastern states of Tripura, Manipur, and Meghalaya celebrate their Foundation day on 21 January 2021.
 - The three states became full-fledged states under the North-Eastern region (Re-organisation) Act, 1971.
 - The erstwhile princely states of Tripura and Manipur were merged into Indian Union in October 1949 and became full-fledged states on January 21, 1972.
 - Meghalaya was part of Assam before becoming a full-fledged state under the North Eastern Region (Re-Organisation) Act, 1971.
- **Uttarakhand government increases MGNREGA working days from 100 to 150**
- The Uttarakhand government announced that the number of working days under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) will be increased from 100 to 150 days.
 - The entire cost will be borne by the state government.
 - This decision is a push from the government's side to encourage employment opportunities.

- NREGA was first proposed in 1991 by former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao.
 - Passed in Parliament in 2008, it aims to provide 100 days of wage employment to enhance livelihood security in rural areas.
 - Also, the 'Uttarakhand Aajeevika App' was also launched with the aim to help unemployed people with employment opportunities.
- **India sends 1 million doses of COVID vaccine to Nepal as gift under 'Vaccine Maitri' Initiative**
- India sent 1 million doses of a COVID vaccine to Nepal as a gift under the 'Vaccine Maitri' Initiative.
 - Previously India had sent 150,000 doses of 'Covisheild' vaccines to Bhutan and 100,000 doses to the Maldives.
 - In a major announcement, Indian Government said that it will send COVID-19 vaccines to Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles and supplies to Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Mauritius will commence after confirmation of necessary regulatory clearances.
- **ISRO to launch customised space-themed t-shirts, mugs, other merchandise**
- Along the lines of what American space agency NASA has done, the ISRO will come out with customised t-shirts, posters, coffee mugs, key chains, and posters etc.
 - The merchandise will revolve around several missions the Indian space agency has made possible from the time it was set up in 1969.
 - ISRO, through these collectibles, hopes to create awareness and enkindle an interest, particularly among students, in space and technology.
- **Transport Ministry, DRDO ink pact for geo-hazard management**
- The DRDO and the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) have joined hands to strengthen collaboration in the field of technical exchange and cooperation on sustainable geo-hazard management.
 - Both establishments will cooperate in the areas of mutual benefit, including conceptual planning of integrated avalanche and landslide protection schemes for all-weather connectivity in snowbound areas.
 - The MoRTH and DRDO will be cooperating in different mutually beneficial areas that are related to geohazard management.
 - This initiative aims at ensuring safety against the adverse effects of landslides as well as other natural calamities on the national highways of India.
- **Indian Railways Renames Howrah-Kalka Mail as Netaji Express**
- Indian Railways has renamed the Howrah-Kalka Mail as 'Netaji Express', in a tribute to freedom fighter Subhas Chandra Bose who is also known as 'Netaji'.
 - The Howrah-Kalka Mail train has been in service for more than 150 years, after coming into operation in the year 1866.
 - The Howrah-Kalka Mail runs between Howrah in West Bengal (Eastern Railway) and Kalka in Haryana(Northern Railway) via Delhi.

➤ **Five perish in fire at Serum Institute of India**

- The major fire that broke out at the Pune-based Serum Institute of India's building has led to the death of five people.
- Four people were evacuated from the building but after the fire was brought under control, five bodies were found by the jawans.
- The five people who died were suspected to be workers at the under-construction building.
- The fire, which broke out at SEZ 3 building in the Serum Institute premises.
- The 'Covishield' vaccine storage is sited at a distance from the blaze and that it had not been harmed by the fire.
- Serum Institute is the world's largest vaccine manufacturer. It is located in the city of Pune.

➤ **Parakram diwas: 23 January**

- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's 125th birth anniversary on 23 January 2021 is observed as Parakram Diwas.
- The day is celebrated to honour and remember Netaji's indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation.
- With the slogan "Give me blood and I will give you freedom", he awakened the country towards fighting against the British.
- Netaji built a force known as the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) giving the slogan of "Dilli Chalo".

➤ **Union Minister Arjun Munda Virtually Launches "Shramshakti" Portal for Migrant Workers**

- The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda launched a National Migration Support Portal "ShramShakti".
- The portal will help the government in smooth formulation of state and national level programs for migrant workers.
- Shram Shakti portal will address the data gap and empower migrant workers who generally migrate in search of employment and income generation.
- Government would also be able to link the migrant population with the existing Welfare Scheme- under Atam Nirbhar Bharat.
- The minister also launched "ShramSaathi", a training manual for migrant workers, to ensure that the process of livelihood migration is safe and productive.

➤ **Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurates 1st small-scale LNG supply infrastructure of Shell Energy India at Hazira, Gujarat**

- Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated the first small-scale LNG supply infrastructure of Shell Energy India at its LNG terminal at Hazira in Gujarat.
- This will now augment Shell's natural gas supply offerings in India to include supply of LNG via trucks.
- This infrastructure will also help support in the development of LNG as a clean transportation fuel.
- The Government of India is promoting natural gas through various policy and regulatory reforms towards making India- a gas-based economy by increasing the share of gas in India's primary energy mix to 15 per cent.

- **National Mini-Aadi Mahotsav commenced in New Moti Bagh, New Delhi**
 - With the coming of the Covid-19 vaccine, TRIFED has taken a step towards adapting to the new normal by resuming the Aadi Mahotsav.
 - The first Aadi Mahotsav post the pandemic is taking place between January 20-January 30, 2021 at GPRA Complex, New Moti Bagh, New Delhi.
 - The 10-day festival that celebrates several aspects of tribal culture has evinced a lot of interest and has seen much footfall in the first place.
 - The Aadi Mahotsav – A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Crafts, Cuisine and Commerce – has been a successful initiative that was commenced in 2017.
 - The festival was an attempt to familiarise the people with the rich and diverse craft, culture of the tribal communities across the country, in one place.
 - This is a trial run for the mega Aadi Mahotsav that will take place at Dilli Haat in New Delhi from 1 to 15 February, 2021.

- **Large scale Joint Military exercise – ‘Exercise Kavach’ to be conducted in coming week**
 - A large scale Joint Military exercise - Exercise Kavach involving assets of Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard will be conducted in the coming week under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command.
 - The exercise involves synergised application of maritime surveillance assets, coordinated air and maritime strikes, air defence, submarine and landing operations.
 - The joint force will execute multi-domain, high-intensity offensive and defensive manoeuvres in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
 - The tri-services exercise aims to fine tune joint war-fighting capabilities and Standard Operating Procedures towards enhancing operational synergy.

- **DRDO Successfully Test Flights indigenously developed Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon (SAAW)**
 - The DRDO successfully conducted captive and release trial of indigenously developed Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon (SAAW) from Hawk-I aircraft of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) off Odisha.
 - The 125 Kg class smart weapon SAAW was successfully test fired from Indian Hawk-Mk132 of HAL.
 - This was the 9th successful mission of SAAW conducted by DRDO till now and the first test conducted from the Hawk-i aircraft.
 - SAAW is indigenously designed and developed by DRDO’s Research Centre Imarat (RCI) Hyderabad.
 - It is capable of engaging ground enemy airfield assets such as radars, bunkers, taxi tracks, and runways among others, up to a range of 100 kms.

- **India’s longest Road Arch Bridge inaugurated in Meghalaya**
 - Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma inaugurated India’s longest road arch bridge “Wahrew Bridge” at Sohbar in East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya.
 - The arch bridge has been constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 49.395 crore under the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) of the Ministry of Development of North East Region (DoNER).
 - The iconic structure is expected to boost the tourism sector in the State.

➤ **Nation Girl Child Day: 24 January**

- The National Girl Child Day is observed every year on 24 January.
- The day is observed for focusing attention on ensuring equal opportunities to the girl child.
- Founded by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, in 2008, the annual celebration of National Girl Child Day is meant to provide support and opportunities to the girls of our nation.
- The day is celebrated by organizing various programs including awareness campaigns on Save the girl child, child sex ratios, and creating a healthy and safe environment for a girl child.

➤ **HM Amit Shah inaugurates 69th Plenary Meeting of North Eastern Council**

- In Shillong, the Union Home Minister, Amit Shah inaugurated the 69th Plenary Meeting of the North Eastern Council (NEC).
- Governors and Chief Ministers of the eight North Eastern States along with a large number of delegations of State Governments and Central Ministries were present at the meeting.
- The meeting will discuss various developmental projects currently in progress and future plans for the entire North Eastern region.

➤ **Final stage of Budget 2021-22 begins with Halwa Ceremony in Finance Ministry**

- The Halwa ceremony, marking the final stage of the budget making process for Union Budget 2021-22, was held in North Block, New Delhi.
- A customary Halwa ceremony is performed every year before the lock-in process of Budget preparation begins.
- The Union Budget will be presented in Parliament on 1st February.
- In an unprecedented initiative, Union Budget 2021-22 will be delivered in paperless form for the first time.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched the - Union Budget Mobile App, for hassle-free access of Budget documents by Members of Parliament and the general public using the simplest form of digital convenience.
- The mobile App facilitates complete access to 14 Union Budget documents, including the Annual Financial Statement, Demand for Grants and Finance Bill as prescribed by the Constitution.
- The App has a user-friendly interface with embedded features of downloading, printing and search.

➤ **Madhya Pradesh becomes first state to get additional funds for capital projects**

- Madhya Pradesh has become the first state to get additional funds for capital projects for successfully carrying out reforms in various citizen-centric areas.
- The Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has allocated additional 660 crore rupees to the state for capital expenditure for undertaking the One Nation, One Ration Card Reforms, Ease of Doing Business Reforms, and Urban Local Bodies Reforms.
- The Scheme is aimed at boosting capital expenditure by the State Governments who are facing a difficult financial environment this year due to a shortfall in tax revenue arising from the COVID 19 pandemic.

- **Uttar Pradesh foundation day: 24 January**
 - Uttar Pradesh celebrated its foundation day on 24 January.
 - Before Independence, Uttar Pradesh was called the United Provinces and it was on January 24, 1950, that the state got its present name.
 - The celebration of Uttar Pradesh Diwas was proposed by the governor Ram Naik in 2017.
 - This is the fourth edition of UP Diwas.
 - The day was started celebrating only after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath led government came to power in the state.
 - This year the theme of Uttar Pradesh Divas is 'Self-reliant Uttar Pradesh : Women, youths, Farmers: Development of all, Honour to All.' Sabka Vikas Sabka Samman.

- **India's largest multi-model logistic park to come up at Virochan Nagar in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat**
 - India's largest multi-model logistic park will come up at Virochan Nagar near Sanand in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat.
 - A Memorandum of Understanding-MoU was signed between the Gujarat Government and Adani Port and SEZ Ltd.
 - The proposed 1,450-acre park will also have a dedicated air cargo complex with 4.6-kilometre long runway to handle even large sized cargo aircraft.
 - It will provide direct air, rail and road connectivity. The park will have provision of direct rail connectivity with a dedicated freight corridor which is part of the Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor.
 - The multi-model logistic park will be set up with an estimated investment of Rs 50,000 crore.

- **Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurates new 4-lane Thaltej-Shilaj-Rancharda railway overbridge in Ahmedabad**
 - The Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the new 4-lane Thaltej-Shilaj-Rancharda railway overbridge in Ahmedabad city of Gujarat through video conferencing.
 - The new overbridge has been built at a cost of Rs 55 crore.
 - There was a big problem of traffic on more than one lakh railway crossings in the country.
 - Railway gates would open and close more than a 100 times a day, due to which the costly fuel and precious time was wasted.
 - In view of this, the Union government decided to launch a huge campaign in which the work of constructing overbridges or underbridges at these one lakh railway crossings was started.
 - This overbridge has been inaugurated under the same scheme.

- **GPS, Panic button mandatory in public passenger vehicles in Chhattisgarh**
 - In Chhattisgarh, GPS and panic buttons will be installed in all public passenger vehicles for the safety of women passengers.
 - A tracking device and command center will be set up to monitor the vehicles.
 - The GPS and panic button has been made mandatory by the Central Government in public passenger vehicles.

- The implementation of the scheme will cost around Rs. 15 crore. 60 percent of this expenditure will be borne by the Central Government and 40 percent by the State Government.
 - The Central Government has released about Rs 4 crore from the Nirbhaya Fund to the State Government.
 - All GPS will have two SIMs so that it remains connected to the network.
 - Three types of passenger vehicles - two-wheelers, e-rickshaws and auto rickshaws, will be exempted from GPS and panic button system.
- **Elon Musk's SpaceX creates new world record; launches 143 satellites on single rocket.**
- Elon Musk's SpaceX created a new world record by launching 143 satellites on a single rocket.
 - SpaceX has beaten the Indian space agency ISRO's record of deploying 104 satellites in a single launch in February 2017.
 - The launch vehicle for the SpaceX record-breaking flight was the Falcon 9 rocket.
 - The 143 satellites launched include commercial and government CubeSats, microsats and 10 Starlink satellites.
 - With these satellites, SpaceX aims to provide near-global broadband internet coverage all over the world by 2021.
 - SpaceX offered a very low price of 15,000 dollars per kilogram for each satellite to be delivered to a polar sun-synchronous orbit.
- **National Voters' Day: 25 January**
- The National Voters' Day (NVD) is observed every year on 25 January every year.
 - The Election Commission was founded in 1950 on this day.
 - The occasion was first celebrated in 2011.
 - This year's theme is "Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed".
 - One focus this year is highlighting the EC's feat of running elections safely during the pandemic.
 - The National Voters Day ceremony is aimed at increasing voter enrolment, with special focus on new voters.
- **National Tourism Day of India: January 25**
- Every year, January 25 is celebrated as National Tourism Day in India.
 - The day was established by the Government of India to promote tourism and raise awareness of the importance of tourism for the country's economy.
 - India is a country where ethnicity, practice, culture, etc changes with every kilometre as one moves from North to South.
 - It has mountains and the sea, which makes the country a distinct geographical entity.
 - This year, the theme of National Tourism Day is 'Dekho Apna Desh'.
- **122 Bangladesh Armed Forces personnel to participate in India's Republic Day parade**
- For the first time ever, a 122 member strong contingent of the Bangladesh Armed Forces will participate in the Republic Day parade.
 - The contingent comprises soldiers of the Bangladesh Army, sailors of the Bangladesh Navy and air warriors of the Bangladesh Air Force.

- This year India and Bangladesh celebrate 50 years of the establishment of diplomatic ties and Bangladesh celebrates 50 years of its independence.
 - Both sides have agreed to hold commemorative events in several other countries and also jointly organize events throughout the year.
- **UP govt to provide free coaching for JEE, NEET, NDA, UPSC and other exams under 'ABHYUDAYA'**
- Uttar Pradesh government will provide free coaching to students preparing for various competitive exams like JEE, NEET, NDA, CDS and UPSC.
 - Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced the launch of an ambitious, state-wide, free coaching facility - ABHYUDAYA from next month.
 - The free coaching facility program Abhyudaya will start from Basant Panchmi.
 - In the first phase, it will start in 18 divisional headquarters of the state, where coaching will be imparted physically and virtually.
 - The infrastructure of government schools, colleges and universities will be used for Abhyudaya coaching centres.
- **Uttar Pradesh Government launches 'Udyam Sarathi App' for Youths on the 71st Foundation Day of the State**
- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the 'Udyam Sarathi App' on the occasion of the 71st Foundation Day of the state.
 - The app will enable the youths to get every information related to self-employment and the job industry, across the state.
 - Udyam Sarathi App will comprise a varied range of data regarding business opportunities in different departments and sectors, including the state and Central governments, and anywhere and at any time.
 - It has been launched under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme.
- **Himachal Pradesh celebrates its golden jubilee statehood day on 25 January**
- Himachal Pradesh celebrated its golden jubilee statehood day on 25 January with full zeal across the state.
 - It was on this day in 1971 Himachal Pradesh became the 18th state of India.
 - Himachal became a Part 'C' state on 26 January 1950 with the implementation of the Constitution of India and the Lieutenant Governor was appointed.
 - Himachal Pradesh became a union territory on 1 November 1956.
 - In 1966, hilly areas of neighboring Punjab state were merged into Himachal and it was ultimately granted full statehood in 1971.
- **WIPRO group gears up to act as knowledge partner of Madhya Pradesh govt**
- In Madhya Pradesh, WIPRO group is all set to act as knowledge partner of the State Government.
 - The company has taken initiative for establishment of a university in the State. For this purpose, the State Government will extend all possible support to the Foundation.
 - The Wipro Group will also set up a Software Development Centre in Bhopal.
 - Azim Premji Foundation has been allotted 50 acres of land for the proposed university in Bhopal.

➤ **Joint Tri-service Exercise AMPHEX – 21 held in Andaman & Nicobar**

- A large-scale tri-service joint amphibious exercise AMPHEX – 21 was held in Andaman & Nicobar group of islands from 21 – 25 Jan 2021.
- The exercise involved participation of troops of Army, Navy as well as the Indian Air Force.
- The joint force executed multi-domain, high intensity offensive and defensive manoeuvres in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
- The Ex KAVACH for defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands was also a part of AMPHEX– 21.
- The exercise AMPHEX – 21 was aimed at validating India's capabilities to safeguard the territorial integrity of its island territories, enhance operational synergy and joint warfighting capabilities amongst the three Services.

➤ **Nation celebrates 72nd Republic Day**

- Nation celebrates its 72nd Republic Day on 26 January 2021.
- The main function was held at Rajpath in the National Capital where President Ram Nath Kovind took the salute of the parade.
- The Republic Day Parade ceremony commenced with Prime Minister Narendra Modi visiting the National War Memorial.
- The parade began from Vijay Chowk, as usual, but will culminate at the National Stadium instead of ending at the Red Fort.
- This year, there was no Chief Guest from Foreign countries due to the pandemic.
- The parade was commanded by Parade Commander, Lieutenant General Vijay Kumar Mishra, Ati Vishisth Seva medal, General Officer Commanding Delhi Area.

➤ **India Ranks 7th in Global Climate Risk Index 2021 of Germanwatch**

- India has been placed among the top 10 most affected countries by climate change, in the Global Climate Risk Index 2021 published by the Bonn-based environmental think tank Germanwatch.
- India ranked as the seventh worst-hit country in terms of climate change in 2019.
- The Global Climate Risk Index 2021 is the 16th edition of the annual report and has taken into account the data available for 2019 and from 2000 to 2019.
- The index analyses and ranks to what extent countries and regions have been affected by impacts of climate related extreme weather events (storms, floods, heatwaves etc.)
- Top 3 countries : Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Bahamas were the top three most affected countries in 2019 respectively.

➤ **DRDO conducts maiden launch of Akash-NG missile from Integrated Test Range off coast of Odisha**

- Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) has conducted the successful maiden launch of Akash-NG (New Generation) Missile from Integrated Test Range off the coast of Odisha.
- Akash-NG is a new generation Surface to Air Missile meant for use by Indian Air Force with an aim of intercepting high maneuvering low RCS aerial threats.
- The launch met all the test objectives by performing high maneuvers during the trajectory.

- The Akash-NG system has been developed with better deployability compared to other similar systems with canisterized launcher and much smaller ground system footprint.
- **UP becomes first Indian State to have 2 Expressway airstrips for landing & take-off of fighter planes**
- In Uttar Pradesh, a new 3,300-metre-long airstrip has been constructed near Kurebhar on Purvanchal Expressway.
 - With this new airstrip, Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in India having two airstrips on expressways.
 - Uttar Pradesh also has an airstrip on Lucknow-Agra Expressway.
 - Airstrips on expressways are designed to facilitate emergency landing and take-off of fighter planes.
- **Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches 'PANKH Abhiyan' for Girl Child**
- In Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched a new scheme 'PANKH Abhiyan' on 24 January, to mark the occasion of National Girl Child Day.
 - The scheme has been launched under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme for the empowerment and growth of the girl child.
 - 'PANKH Abhiyan' is a year long programme. The letter in the PANKH scheme stands for: 'P' – protection, 'A' – awareness of their rights, 'N' – nutrition, 'K' – knowledge, 'H' – health.
- **Tamil Nadu CM inaugurates Jayalalithaa Memorial in Chennai**
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palanisamy inaugurated Jayalalithaa Memorial at Chennai.
 - The grand memorial is built on a nine acre land situated on the shores of the Marina Beach.
 - The phoenix shaped memorial has a statue of Jayalalithaa and MGR with an artificial waterfall.
 - Jayaram Jayalalithaa was an Indian politician and film actress who served six times as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for over fourteen years between 1991 and 2016.
- **Maharashtra CM inaugurates Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park in Nagpur**
- In Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park in Nagpur.
 - The park has been developed by the State Forest Department and Forest Development Corporation.
 - It is spread across an area of 1,914 hectares and includes a wildlife sanctuary, Indian safari, African safari biodiversity park and night safari.
 - Adjacent to the park is the famous Gorewada Lake, which is a good place for bird watching.

➤ **PM Modi pays tributes to Lala Lajpat Rai on his birth anniversary**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has paid tributes to Lala Lajpat Rai on the occasion of his Birth Anniversary.
- Born in 1865, Rai was a noted freedom fighter from Punjab and came to be known as Punjab Kesari.
- Lala Lajpat Rai was one of the three in the Lal Bal Pal trio: Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal. He led a silent march against the Simon Commission in 1928.
- Lala Lajpat Rai was a follower of Dayanand Saraswati and helped establish the nationalistic Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School.
- Lala Lajpat Rai was the founder of a bank, which is now known as the Punjab National Bank.

➤ **Three more Rafale fighter jets join Indian Air Force**

- Country's Rafale squadron added a third batch of three fighter jets which arrived last night after flying non-stop from France.
- They flew over 7,000 Km with in-flight refuelling.
- The new jets will bolster the strength of the Indian Air Force's only Rafale squadron which is based in Ambala.
- This is the third set of deliveries of the aircraft to the IAF.
- India ordered 36 warplanes from France in September 2016 for 59,000 crore rupees under a government-to-government deal.
- With the new jets, the number of Rafales in the IAF's inventory has increased to 11.

➤ **PM Modi address World Economic Forum's Davos Dialogue**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the World Economic Forum's Davos Dialogue through video conferencing.
- More than 400 top industry leaders from across the globe attended the session, wherein the Prime Minister spoke on the Fourth Industrial Revolution - using technology for the good of humanity.
- The Davos Dialogues agenda marks the launch of the World Economic Forum's Great Reset Initiative in the post COVID world.

➤ **Thai Pooasam being celebrated by Tamils with traditional gaiety & fervor**

- Thai Pooasam is being celebrated by Tamils with traditional gaiety and fervor at Murugan temples all over the world.
- The occasion falls during the full moon day of the month of Thai.
- The word Thaipusam is a combination of the name of the month, Thai, and the name of a star, Pusam (Tamil word for Pushya).
- The festival commemorates the occasion when Parvati gave Murugan (aka Kartikeya) a Vel "spear" so he could vanquish the evil demon Soorapadman and his brothers.

➤ **Maharashtra CM launches Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy**

- In Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray formally launched the Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy.

- The government has decided to provide immediate electricity connection to farmers through the Krishi Pump Electricity Connection Policy and relief in interest on electricity bill arrears and relief in delayed charges.
 - He urged the farmers to clear the long pending dues as the government has been extending cooperation.
 - The Chief Minister also inaugurated Krishi Urja Abhiyan Policy Web Portal, Solar Energy Land Bank Portal, Maha Krishi Abhiyan App and ACF App prepared by the power discom Mahavitaran.
- **Kolkata gets its first boat library**
- A children's library on a boat was launched in Kolkata on Republic Day, a first of a kind initiative.
 - Children will be able to choose from a selection of 500 titles in English and Bengali on the Young Readers' Boat Library.
 - The idea behind the boat library is that one can read some good collection of books while appreciating the beauty of Kolkata, cruising on the Hooghly.
 - The boat library would take people on a three-hour- long trip.
 - A ride on the boat would cost ₹100 for adults and ₹50 for children.
 - The library will eventually host activities such as storytelling, dramatised readings, poetry sessions, book launches, music and more.
- **Textiles Committee of Ministry of Textiles signs MoU with Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan**
- The Textiles Committee of the Ministry of Textiles has signed a Memorandum of Understanding- MoU with Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan to boost export of Textile and Apparel to Japanese market.
 - The main objective of the MoU is to provide required support to textile's trade and industry for ensuring quality as per the requirement of Japanese buyers.
 - It is expected that the MoU will strengthen the bilateral trade by enhancing India's export of Textile and Apparels to Japan, which is the third largest export destination of the world.
- **India joins the World to light up Qutub Minar as sign of Unity to combat Neglected Tropical Diseases**
- India has joined the world to Light Up Qutub Minar as a sign of unity to combat the Neglected Tropical Diseases.
 - The second annual World NTD Day will be marked on 30th January.
 - The day highlights the global community's commitment to end the NTD.
 - More than 50 landmarks representing 25 nations across the world will be lit up to celebrate how far we have come together in beating the NTD.
 - One in five people around the world are affected by NTDs.
- **Beating Retreat, marking culmination of Republic Day celebrations, to be held at Vijay Chowk**
- The Beating Retreat ceremony which marks the culmination of the four-day long Republic Day celebrations will be held at the historic Vijay Chowk in New Delhi.

- As many as 26 performances will enthrall the spectators with captivating and foot-tapping music of the bands from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Central Armed Police Forces, CAPF.
 - This year, 15 Military Bands and 15 Pipes and Drums Bands from Regimental Centres and Battalions are participating in Beating the Retreat ceremony.
 - Beating Retreat is a centuries old military tradition dating from the days when troops disengaged from battle at Sunset.
 - As soon as the buglers sounded the retreat, the troops ceased fighting, sheathed their arms and withdrew from the battlefield.
- **PM Modi Chairs 35th PRAGATI Meet**
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the 35th PRAGATI meeting to review multiple projects, grievances and programmes.
 - PRAGATI stands for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation.
 - In the meeting ten agenda items were taken for review worth Rs. 54,675 crore, related to 15 states. These included nine projects and one programme.
 - Of the total 9 projects, 3 projects were from the Ministry of Railways, 3 from Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and 1 project each from Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Power Ministry and Ministry of External Affairs.
 - Prime Minister also reviewed the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana.
- **India Secures 86th Rank in Corruption Perception Index 2020**
- India has been ranked 86th among 180 countries in Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2020, released by Transparency International.
 - This year, India's rank has slipped six places compared to 2019, when it was ranked at 80th spot.
 - The CPI index ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people.
 - New Zealand and Denmark have jointly secured first position.
 - Somalia and South Sudan rank lowest at 179th position.
- **IIT Kanpur selects 20 students from J&K for two months online internship program**
- Students including 8 girls of Jammu and Kashmir have started their online internship program at Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur.
 - IIT Kanpur has decided for a two months online internship program after looking into the academic calendar of the students.
 - All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has signed MoU with IITs and IISERs for providing internship opportunities to students from Jammu & Kashmir in institutes to provide an exposure to the academic culture at higher learning institutes.
 - As part of the internship the students will be given exposure to various labs of IIT K and every week with a special lecture on latest technological advancements.
- **UP govt to set up India's first leather park in Kanpur**
- Uttar Pradesh government will establish the first leather park of the country in Kanpur district.

- The park is expected to provide employment to 50 thousand people directly and more than 1 lakh 50 thousand people indirectly.
 - The leather park will also have an effluent treatment plant of 20 million litre per day capacity so that it will not pollute the Ganga river.
 - With the establishment of leather park Kanpur City will be able to strengthen its position among the 10 big leather manufacturing states of the country.
 - More than 150 tanneries are expected to work here which will produce world class leather items including shoes, jackets and other accessories of export quality
- **Uttar Pradesh adjudged best tableau among 32 tableaux that participated in Republic Day Parade**
- Uttar Pradesh was adjudged the best tableau among the 32 tableaux that participated in the Republic Day Parade this year.
 - The tableau of Uttar Pradesh was based on the theme Ayodhya: Cultural Heritage of Uttar Pradesh.
 - Tableau of Tripura was adjudged the second best, which depicted promotion of eco-friendly tradition for achieving self-reliance in socio-economic parameters.
 - Among the nine tableaux from various Ministries, Departments and Paramilitary Forces, the Department of Biotechnology tableau won the top honour.
- **Nation pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his 73rd death anniversary**
- The nation pays homage to Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 73rd death anniversary.
 - The day is also observed as Martyrs' Day. He was assassinated on this day in 1948.
 - Films Division is paying tribute to the father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi by screening a film. Films being streamed is 'Gandhi Rediscovered'.
 - It is a 27 Min documentary in Hindi and English and discusses the scope of Swadeshi.
- **World Leprosy Day in India : 30 January**
- World Leprosy Day is an annual observance day celebrated on January 30th in India even though the world celebrates it on the last Sunday of the first month of the year.
 - The day is observed as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and to raise awareness about leprosy.
 - Notably, Mahatma Gandhi had worked day and night during his time to help the leprosy patients get some relief from the condition.
 - Leprosy is an infectious disease that is characterized by skin lesions, muscle weakness, numbness in your arms, feet, and legs. This chronic condition is caused by a bacterium called Mycobacterium leprae.
 - Also known as Hansen's disease, leprosy leads to nerve damage, severe disfigurement, and skin ulcers.
- **Rijiju celebrates 2nd edition of Fit India School Week**
- Union sports minister Kiren Rijiju attended a virtual event to celebrate the concluding week of the second edition of Fit India School Week programme.
 - The event started on December 1 and will conclude on January 31.
 - It was conducted with the aim to encourage kids to inculcate physical activity and sports in their daily routine as school is the first place where habits are formed.

- The Fit India School Week program was launched in November last year and saw participation from over 15,000 schools across the country.
 - Some fitness activities that were part of this year's school week programme were - aerobics, painting, quiz/debates, dance, step-up challenge among many others.
- **2021 to be Indo-French Year of the Environment**
- The Union environment ministry launched the Indo-French Year of the Environment.
 - The Indo-French Year of the Environment over the period 2021-2022 would be based on five main themes including environmental protection, climate change, biodiversity conservation, sustainable urban development, renewable energy and energy efficiency.
 - In a bilateral meeting between the French delegation and their Indian counterpart at the Environment Ministry, the two sides discussed issues related to climate change, biodiversity, blue economy, international solar alliance, cooperation in eliminating single-use plastic etc.
- **PM Modi to inaugurate Chauri Chaura Centenary celebrations virtually on Feb 4**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Chauri Chaura Centenary celebrations virtually on the 4th of February in Uttar Pradesh.
 - The Prime Minister will also release a postal stamp dedicated to the centenary year of the Chauri Chaura incident.
 - The families of martyrs and freedom fighters will also join celebrations for the historical event that took place on 4th February, 1922.
 - The Chauri Chaura incident took place on 4 February 1922 at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of the United Province (modern Uttar Pradesh) in British India.
- **PM Modi to address 125th Anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata' on Jan 31**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the 125th Anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata'.
 - The event is being organized by Advaita Ashrama situated at Mayavati Ashram in Uttarakhand.
 - Prabuddha Bharata, a monthly journal of the Ramakrishna order started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896.
 - The journal 'Prabuddha Bharata' has been an important medium for spreading the message of India's ancient spiritual wisdom.
 - Its publication was started from Chennai erstwhile Madras where it continued to be published for two years after which it was published from Almora.
 - Later, in April 1899, the place of publication of the Journal was shifted to Advaita Ashrama and it has been continuously published from there since then.
- **L&T bags an up to Rs 2,500-cr contract for Mumbai Ahmedabad bullet train**
- Infrastructure company Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has received an up to Rs 2,500-crore contract for Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed rail corridor project.
 - The company did not provide value of the contracts but said the orders fall under "significant" category which range between Rs 1,000 crore and Rs 2,500 crore as per its classification of contracts.
 - The order is to procure, fabricate, assemble, paint and transport 28 bridges.

- The bullet train project or the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail corridor is being executed by the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL).
- **Lucknow Metro becomes first metro to use UV rays to sanitise train coaches**
 - The Lucknow Metro has become the first metro in the country to use ultraviolet (UV) rays to sanitise train coaches. “
 - The step was taken in the wake of Covid pandemic to provide its passengers a safe and secure journey. “
 - UP Metro Rail Corporation, UPMRC got the idea from the New York Metro's experiment to sanitise trains with UV lamp rays. “
 - The step is similar to the process which is used to sanitize the hospital's operation theatre. “
 - UPMRC contacted a firm which makes sanitizing equipment and developed a UV lamp which can sanitize a metro coach in just 30 minutes. “
 - DRDO approved the equipment in October last year and Lucknow Metro has become the first metro to use this to sanitize the coaches.
- **India ranks 10th in EIU's Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index**
 - India has been ranked 10th among 11 Asia Pacific countries in a newly-launched 'Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index' by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). “
 - The index aims to measure the progress of each of the 11 countries towards adopting personalised healthcare, enabling the right care to be made available to the right person at the right time. “
 - Overall, Singapore has topped the index. It is followed by Taiwan (2nd), Japan (3rd) and Australia (4th). “
 - Indonesia was the last ranked country at 11th in the index.
- **Centre Approves 'Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**
 - The Central Government has approved 'Start-up India Seed Fund Scheme' (SISFS),
 - The program aims to provide financial assistance to start-ups for product trials, market-entry, proof of concept, prototype development and commercialization. “
 - The total budget allocated under this is Rs 945 crore. “
 - The scheme will become operational from April 1, 2021. “
 - The scheme will be implemented by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DIIT). “
 - The funds under the scheme will be disbursed through the selected incubators across the country.
- **India's First 'Gender Park' to be inaugurated in Kozhikode, Kerala**
 - The state government of Kerala will launch the first of its kind three-storeyed 'Gender Park' in Kozhikode, to promote gender equality and empowerment in the state. “
 - The overall cost of establishing the park is around Rs 300 crore and it spreads over 24 acre land. “
 - This new Gender Park will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan during the second edition of the International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE-II), which will be held from February 11 to 13, 2021. “

INTERNATIONAL

- **Australia changes word in national anthem to honour indigenous people**
 - On new year eve, Australia has changed one word in its national anthem to reflect “the spirit of unity” and the country’s Indigenous population.
 - The second line of the anthem, Advance Australia Fair, has been changed from "For we are young and free" to "For we are one and free."
 - Governor-General David Hurley has agreed to the Commonwealth's recommendation to make an amendment to the anthem.

- **Iran plans to enrich uranium to up to 20% purity**
 - UN nuclear watchdog - International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has revealed that Iran plans to enrich uranium to up to 20 percent purity at Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant. 9660654677
 - It would take Iran's nuclear enrichment program to pre-2015 levels, when it entered the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with the P51 countries.
 - Iran was prohibited enrichment at the Fordo facility until 2031.
 - It also committed to converting the underground facility into a nuclear, physics and technology centre.

- **World Braille Day: 04 January**
 - The World Braille Day, is observed every year on January 4, to commemorate the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of Braille.
 - The day recognize the right of access to braille by blind people and to raise awareness of the importance of braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people.
 - Louis Braille was born on 04 January 1809 in northern France.
 - He lost his both eyes in an accident, at the age of 3. This resulted into the invention of 6 dots which is popularly known as braille.

- **U.S. Congress passes ‘Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act’ for Pakistani women**
 - The U.S. Congress passed the ‘Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act’.
 - The aim of this act is to increase the number of scholarships for Pakistani women in higher education under a merit and needs-based programme.
 - The bill requires the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to award at least 50% of scholarships under a Pakistan-based higher education scholarship programme to Pakistani women, from 2020 to 2022.

- **16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention will be organised on 9th January**
 - The 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention is being organized on 9th January in virtual format in the backdrop of COVID pandemic.
 - The theme of the Convention this year is "Contributing to Atma Nirbhar Bharat".
 - The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and will feature a keynote address by the Chief Guest Chandrikapersad Santokhi, President of Suriname.

➤ **Pakistan Successfully Test Fires Indigenously Developed Rocket System**

- Pakistan successfully conducted the test-flight of an indigenously developed Guided Multi Launch Rocket System, capable of precisely delivering conventional warheads.
- Fatah-1 weapon system can hit targets up to a range of 140 km.
- Last February, amid heightened tensions with India, Islamabad carried out a successful test of its Ra'ad-II cruise missile.
- A month earlier, Pakistan tested the Ghaznavi ballistic missile, which has a range of 290 kilometers (180 miles), just days after India tested its submarine-launched K-4 ballistic missile.
- Relations between the nuclear-armed neighbors have worsened since New Delhi revoked Jammu and Kashmir's semi-autonomous status and imposed a lockdown in August 2019.

➤ **Japan commits ₹2,113 cr support for Covid relief efforts**

- The Government of Japan has committed Official Development Assistance loan of 30 billion Japanese Yen which is approximately two thousand one hundred 13 crore rupees loan to support India's efforts at providing social assistance to the poor and vulnerable households, severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This programme loan aims to support India's efforts to provide coordinated and adequate social protection to the poor and vulnerable across the country against the severe impacts of COVID-19 pandemic.
- India and Japan have had a long and fruitful history of bilateral development cooperation since 1958.
- In the last few years, the economic cooperation between India and Japan has strengthened and grown into strategic partnership.

➤ **World Hindi Day 2021: 10 January**

- World Hindi Day is celebrated every year on January 10.
- The day marks the anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference which was inaugurated on January 10, 1975 by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.
- However, the celebration of first World Hindi Day was commenced on 10 January 2006 by former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.
- Hindi is not only the country's most-spoken language, but it is the third most-spoken language in the world with 615 million speakers after English, Mandarin, according to the UN.
- While January 10 is celebrated as World Hindi Day, September 14 is celebrated as Hindi Divas or National Hindi Divas in India.
- National Hindi Divas is celebrated on September 14 to commemorate the adoption of Hindi as an official language of India by the Constituent Assembly.

➤ **Central African Republic president Touadera wins reelection**

- Faustin-Archange Touadera was re-elected as the president of the Central African Republic with more than 53% votes.
- The 63-year-old president has been in power since 2016 but has struggled to seize control of vast parts of the nation from armed militias.

- The Central African Republic, a producer of gold and diamonds, has a population of 4.7 million.
 - Capital: Bangui
 - Currency: Central African CFA franc.
- **Indonesian plane carrying over 50 passengers on board crashed**
- A passenger plane of Indonesia's Sriwijaya Air carrying more than 50 people on board crashed into waters off Jakarta.
 - The aircraft crashed near the Thousand Islands.
 - The Thousand Islands (officially Kepulauan Seribu) are a chain of islands to the north of Jakarta's coast.
 - It forms the only regency of Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia.
 - It consists of a string of 342 islands stretching 45 km (28 mi) north into the Java Sea at West Jakarta Bay and in fact north of Banten Province.
- **Indian sailors stuck in China owing to Covid-19 set to return soon**
- 23 Indian sailors onboard Indian ship M. V. Jag Anand, which has been stuck at Chinese port of Jingtang since June 2020, has finally got respite as the ship is all set to sail to Chiba, Japan for a crew change.
 - This was announced by Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.
 - Indian bulk cargo vessel MV Jag Anand has been on anchorage near Jingtang port in Hebei province of China since June 13 and it has 23 Indian sailors.
 - Another vessel, MV Anastasia, with 16 Indian nationals as its crew is on anchorage near Caofeidian port in China since September 20.
 - Both these vessels have been waiting for discharge of their cargo and there is a growing stress on the crew members on account of the long delay.
- **Bangladesh to be country of focus at 51st International Film Festival of India**
- Bangladesh will be the country of focus at the 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) starting at Goa on January 16.
 - Four films from Bangladesh have been included in this section to recognise the cinematic excellence and contribution of the country.
 - The country of focus section will include Jibandhuli directed by Tanvir Mokammel, Meghmaller directed by Zahidur Rahman Anjan, Under Construction by Rubaiyat Hossain and Sincerely Yours, Dhaka by Nuhash Humanyun, Syed Ahmed Shawki and 9 other individual directors.
 - The festival will conclude on 24th January. It is being organised in a hybrid format considering the Corona pandemic.
- **Japan aerospace agency to launch H3 rocket in 2021**
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency- JAXA announced that it will launch its flagship rocket H3 to pave the way for the next generation of transportation technologies.
 - Japan's H3 launch vehicle is its new flagship rocket that aims at achieving high reliability, flexibility, and higher-cost performance.
 - The launch capability of H3 to the geostationary transfer orbit (GTO) will be the highest ever.

- As per JAXA, it will be exceeding that of existing H-IIA and H-IIB launch vehicles.
- **Armed Forces Veterans Day: 14 January**
 - In India, the Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14 January since 2017.
 - The day is observed to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation.
 - The day is observed as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 January 1953.
 - 2021 marks the 5th Armed Forces Veterans Day.
- **Donald Trump becomes first US President to be impeached twice**
 - Donald Trump has become the first US president to be impeached twice.
 - The House of Representatives voted to charge him with inciting last week's mob attack on the US Congress.
 - Trump was impeached by 232 - 197 vote by the US House on a single charge of incitement of insurrection that left five dead and the Capitol ransacked.
 - It was supported by all Democrats and 10 Republicans, including Liz Cheney.
- **Sadyr Japarov wins Kyrgyzstan's Presidential Election with Landslide Vote**
 - Sadyr Japarov, has won Kyrgyzstan's Presidential election by a landslide victory.
 - The 52-year-old won 79% of the total votes cast.
 - He would assume the charge of the office from 28 January 2021.
 - Kyrgyzstan Capital: Bishkek
 - Currency: Kyrgyzstani som
- **At least 42 killed as strong quake rocks Indonesia's Sulawesi island**
 - In Indonesia a powerful earthquake has rocked Sulawesi island, killing at least 42 people, with more feared dead as rescuers search for survivors.
 - The 6.2-magnitude earthquake struck yesterday, just hours after an earlier, smaller tremor.
 - Indonesia has a history of devastating earthquakes and tsunamis, with more than 2,000 killed in a 2018 Sulawesi quake.
- **North Korea unveils new submarine-launched ballistic missile**
 - North Korea has unveiled a new submarine-launched ballistic missile described by state media as the world's most powerful weapon.
 - Pyongyang unveiled the missile during a military parade.
 - The weapon's actual capabilities remain unclear, as it is not known to have been tested.
 - The photos show that the SLBM is labelled Pukguksong-5, which means it's an upgrade to the Pukguksong-4 unveiled in the military parade in October, 2020.
- **Kite festival Shakrain celebrated in Dhaka**
 - The traditional festival of Shakrain was celebrated in several parts of Dhaka.
 - The kite flying competition is followed by a winter cake festival -- pithapuli in which rice cake pudding is eaten by people.

- This is a centuries old tradition in several parts of Bangladesh celebrated on the last day of the Bengali month of Paush.
- **United States maintains terrorist designation of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tayyiba**
 - The United States has reviewed and maintained the terrorist designations of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi (LJ), along with ISIL Sinai Peninsula (ISIL-SP) and several other organisations.
 - The US Department of State said that it has amended the terrorist designations of LJ and ISIL Sinai Peninsula (ISIL-SP) to include additional aliases.
 - LeT, which carried out the 2008 Mumbai terror attack, was designated as a terrorist organisation by the United States in December 2001.
 - Lashkar-e-Taiba is one of the largest Islamist terrorist organizations in Pakistan.
 - Leader: Hafiz Saeed
- **Google Doodle honours Basketball inventor Dr James Naismith**
 - Google Doodle honoured the illustrious legacy of Dr James Naismith, the inventor of the game of Basketball.
 - The Canadian-American Dr James Naismith was indulged in many professions at the same time. He was a professor, sports coach, a doctor, a physical educator and a Christian Chaplain as well.
 - 130 years ago, in 1891, Dr Naismith invented the game of Basketball and wrote its original 13 rules in the pages of a Springfield College newspaper, 'The Triangle'.
 - The game was introduced on December 21, 1891.
 - In 1959, the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame was introduced in Springfield, Massachusetts, in his honor, and he was an inaugural inductee.
- **At 18 million, India has largest diaspora in the world: UN**
 - The Indian diaspora is the largest in the world, with 18 million people from the country living outside their homeland in 2020.
 - The United Arab Emirates, the US and Saudi Arabia host the largest numbers of migrants from India.
 - Other countries with a large diaspora included Mexico and Russia (11 million each), China (10 million) and Syria (8 million).
 - India's large diaspora is distributed across a number of major countries of destination, with the UAE (3.5 million), the US (2.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (2.5 million) hosting the largest numbers of migrants from India.
 - Other countries hosting large numbers of migrants from India included Australia, Canada, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar and the UK.
- **US designates UAE, Bahrain as 'Major Strategic Partners'**
 - The United States has recently designated the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the "major strategic partners" of the country.
 - This has been announced before the formal transition of the president's office from Donald Trump to Joe Biden.
 - Designation as strategic partners will strengthen the existing partnership between the United States, the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates.

- Both the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates have been a part of various United States-led coalitions in the last 30 years.
 - It also represents the commitment to the security and economic cooperation of the countries.
- **Britain invites PM Modi to attend G7 Summit to be held in June this year**
- The United Kingdom has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend the G7 Summit as a guest.
 - The G7 Summit is to be held in June this year.
 - The G7, made up of the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the US and the EU, is the only forum where the world's most influential and open societies and advanced economies are brought together for close-knit discussions.
 - Terming India as 'pharmacy of the world', the UK lauded the efforts regarding the production of coronavirus vaccine.
- **US Sanctions Russia Ship Over Nord Stream 2 Gas Pipeline**
- The US informed German officials of its plans to impose sanctions on the Russian pipe-laying vessel 'Fortuna' over its involvement in the construction of the Russian-led Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia to Germany.
 - The Baltic Sea pipeline is reported to be more than 90% complete.
 - Construction was suspended in late 2019 after the US imposed sanctions. Russia resumed work on the pipeline in December 2020.
 - Nord Stream 2 is a gas pipeline project.
 - Its purpose is to bring Russian gas under the Baltic Sea direct to Germany.
- **Yoweri Museveni wins sixth term as Uganda's President**
- Uganda's incumbent President Yoweri Museveni has been declared as the winner of the country's presidential election for 2021.
 - Museveni secured 58.64 percent of the total votes cast, to win the sixth term as the President.
 - The 76-year-old leader has served as the President of the Republic of Uganda since 1986, and is one of Africa's longest-serving presidents.
 - Uganda capital: Kampala
 - Currency: Ugandan shilling
- **Joe Biden takes over as President, Kamala Harris as Vice President of US**
- Joe Biden took oath as the 46th President of the United States of America at a ceremony in the US Capitol building in Washington.
 - 78 year old Biden has become the oldest US President in history.
 - His deputy Kamala Harris was also sworn in as 49th Vice-President of the country.
 - The daughter of immigrants from Jamaica and India, Kamala Harris made history as America's first woman and first person with south Asian roots to take the office of the Vice President.
 - Mr Trump along with Melinia Trump left White House for Florida ahead of the oath taking ceremony, handing over the charge to the Biden administration.

➤ **International Day of Education: 24 January**

- International Day of Education is an annual international observance day held on January 24 and is dedicated to education.
- On December 3, 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming January 24 as International Day of Education.
- This year the closure of schools, universities, and other learning institutions, as well as the interruption of many literacy and lifelong learning programmes, has affected the lives of 1.6 billion students in over 190 countries.
- 2020 theme 'Recover and revitalize education for the COVID-19 generation'

➤ **Mongolian Prime Minister Khurelsukh Ukhnaa & his Government Resigns**

- The Prime Minister of Mongolia, Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, has resigned along with his entire government, following protests and public outrage over the government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The 52-year-old served as the Prime Minister of Mongolia from 4 October 2017 to 21 January 2021.
- Khurelsukh, of the Mongolian People's Party, won a landslide election last June, but the country has been plagued by political instability.
- The protests erupted over what some Mongolians saw as the inhumane treatment of a COVID-19 patient and her newborn baby.
- Mongolia: Capital: Ulaanbaatar
- Currency: Mongolian tögrög

➤ **Nepal PM KP Sharma Oli expelled from ruling Communist Party over dissolution of Parliament**

- Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has been expelled from the ruling Communist Party over his decision to dissolve the Parliament.
- The decision to expel Oli from the party was taken by the Central Committee at a meeting held.
- The move comes amid repeated threats by the rival faction leaders who had said that they would revoke Oli's membership over his decision to dissolve the Nepal Parliament.
- Nepal plunged into a political crisis on December 20 last year after the Prime Minister Oli, in a surprise move, recommended dissolution of Parliament amidst a tussle for power with former PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda.
- Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari accepted the recommendations and Parliamentary elections are scheduled for April 30 and May 10.

➤ **International Customs Day: 26 January**

- The International Customs Day (ICD) is observed on 26 January every year.
- The objective of this day is to recognise the role of customs officials and agencies and focus on the working conditions and challenges that customs officers face in their jobs.
- The day was instituted by the World Customs Organization (WCO) to commemorate the day in 1953 when the inaugural session of the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC) was held in Brussels, Belgium.
- In 1994 the CCC was renamed World Customs Organization (WCO).
- World Customs Organization (WCO) headquarter- Brussels, Belgium

- Theme 2021: “Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience”.
- **International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust: 27 January**
 - International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust (International Holocaust Remembrance Day) is observed on 27 January every year.
 - The day commemorates the anniversary of the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War.
 - A genocide occurred during World War II in which Nazi Germany, aided by its collaborators, systematically murdered some six million European Jews, around two-thirds of the Jewish population of Europe, between 1941 and 1945.
 - The theme of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2021 is “Facing the Aftermath: Recovery and Reconstitution after the Holocaust”
- **Italian PM Conte resigns**
 - Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte resigned after losing his Senate majority, plunging the country into political uncertainty just as it's battling the pandemic and a recession.
 - He tendered his resignation to President Sergio Mattarella, the ultimate arbiter of Italian political crises, who invited him to stay on in a caretaker capacity pending discussions on what happens next.
 - Italy was the first European country to face the full force of the Covid-19 pandemic and has since suffered badly, with the economy plunged into recession and deaths still rising by around 400 a day.
 - Parts of the country remain under partial lockdown, the vaccination programme has slowed and a deadline is looming to agree plans to spend billions of euros in European Union recovery funds.
- **Portugal President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa wins second term**
 - The incumbent President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa has won a second five-year term after winning the 2021 Portuguese presidential election with landslide victory.
 - The 72-year-old former leader of the Social Democratic Party won 61 percent of the total votes.
 - He is serving as the President of the country since 9 March 2016, and would start his second term on March 9, 2021
 - Portugal Capital – Lisbon; Currency – Euro
- **China surpasses United States as largest recipient of FDI**
 - China was the largest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2020, according to a report released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
 - China overtook the United States to gain the top position in 2020.
 - The country attracted \$163 billion inflows in 2020, compared to \$134 billion attracted by the United States,
 - However, in 2019, the United States had received \$251 billion in inflows and China received \$140 billion.
 - Overall, the global FDI had fallen by 42% in 2020, attracting an inflow of an estimated \$859 billion, compared to \$1.5 trillion in 2019.

➤ **Indonesia's most active volcano Mt Merapi erupts again**

- Indonesia's most active volcano erupted with a river of lava and searing gas clouds flowing 1,600 meters (5,250 feet) down its slopes.
- It was Mount Merapi's biggest lava flow since authorities raised its danger level in November.
- The 2,968-meter (9,737-foot) volcano is on the densely populated island of Java and near the ancient city of Yogyakarta.
- It is the most active of dozens of Indonesian volcanoes and has repeatedly erupted with lava and gas clouds recently.
- Merapi's last major eruption in 2010 killed 347 people.
- Indonesia, an archipelago of 270 million people, is prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity because it sits along the Pacific "Ring of Fire," a horseshoe-shaped series of seismic fault lines around the ocean.

➤ **Martian mineral, rare on Earth, found locked in Antarctic ice**

- Jarosite, a mineral from Mars scarcely seen on Earth has been unearthed from Antarctic ice.
- The discovery was made after drilling deep into the Antarctic ice.
- The name of the mineral is 'jarosite', it is a sulfate of potassium and iron.
- It can be formed by both water and acidic conditions.
- These conditions are rarely found on Mars, according to NASA.
- Jarosite was first discovered on Mars in 2004 by a rover named 'opportunity'.
- After that discovery, it was found in several other locations on Mars.

➤ **India, Japan hold fifth joint meeting of Act East Forum in New Delhi**

- India and Japan held the fifth joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum in New Delhi.
- The Act East Forum reviewed progress of ongoing projects in the North Eastern Region of India in various areas including connectivity, hydropower, sustainable development, harnessing of water resources, and skill development.
- They discussed several ongoing new projects under India-Japan bilateral cooperation and also exchanged views on cooperation in new areas such as healthcare, agro-industries and SMEs, bamboo value chain development, smart city, tourism and people-to-people exchanges.
- Act East Forum was established in 2017.

➤ **Bangladesh sends 3rd Batch of Rohingya refugees to Bhashan Char Island**

- The third batch of Rohingya refugees living in camps at Cox's Bazar district sailed for relocation at the newly developed facility at the Bhashan Char island in Bangladesh.
- In the earlier two rounds, close to 3500 Rohingya refugees have already been sent to the Bhashan Char facility.
- The relocation to Bhashan Char was started on December 4 last year.
- The Bhashan Char island is about 24 kilometres from the land point at Hatiya and 52 kilometres from Patenga which takes about 3-4 hours to cover by ship.
- Bhashan Char is an uninhabited island where the government of Bangladesh Navy has built shelter houses for more than one lakh Rohingya refugees at an estimated cost of Tk. 2,300 crore under its Ashrayan 3 project.

- Currently more than a million Rohingya are living in refugee camps in Bangladesh after fleeing the military crackdown in the Rakhine province of Myanmar in August 2017.
- **UK applying to join Asia-Pacific free trade pact CPTPP**
 - The UK is applying to join a free trade area made up of 11 Asia and Pacific nations, under its post-Brexit plans.”
 - The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) trade agreement formed in 2018 which includes Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. “
 - In total, it covers a market of around 500 million people, generating more than 13% of the world's income.
- **Nepal decides to award hydropower project to India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam**
 - Nepal has decided to award the contract for construction of 679 megawatt Lower Arun Hydropower Project to India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN). “
 - The project was awarded to the SJVN under the Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) delivery method. “
 - Similar to the Arun III hydel project, which will provide 21 per cent free power to Nepal during the concession period, the developer of the Lower Arun hydel project should also prioritise providing certain percent of power free of cost. “
 - The developer will hand over the ownership of the project to the government of Nepal after 20 years of commercial operation.

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

➤ **Judicial Activism and judicial overreach**

- The Supreme Court act staying implementation of three farm laws was seen by many as an act of judicial activism /overreach
- Judicial activism is a judicial philosophy that motivates judges to depart from the traditional precedents in favour of progressive and new social policies. It manifested when the Supreme Court (or High Court) becomes an activist and compels the authority to act and sometimes also direct the govt., govt. policies and also administration

➤ **The Ministry of Home Affairs tightened oversight on funds received by non-governmental organisations(NGOs)**

- MHA has laid out a series of guidelines and charter to make NGOs and banks comply with new provisions of the amenable foreign contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010
- The charter for banks says that “donations received in Indian rupees” by NGOs from “any foreign source even if that sources is located in India at the time of such donation “should be treated as “foreign contribution”.

➤ **There are multiple investigation worldwide going on the abuse of monopolistic power by the Big Tech firms like Facebook, Google etc.**

- Although many of Big tech companies started in the USA, they have established a global presence, and are continually looking to expand into markers currently not penetrated.

➤ **As per a recent report by UK-based privacy and security research firm TOP 1 OVPN, internet shutdown in 2020 cost India \$2.8 , almost 70 % of the total loss of \$4 bn to the world economy.**

- Economic impact of internet shutdowns, see in India was more than double the combined cost for the next 20 countries in the list
- India continued the restrict internet access more than any other country- over 75 times in 2020

➤ **The Vice- President of India has suggested all corporates to encourage whistle- blowing mechanism and provide adequate safeguards for the protection of whistle-blowers**

- Whistleblowing is the act of drawing attention to an authority wrongdoing, misconduct, corruption, fraud unethical activity within public, private or third sector organisations.

BUSINESS

- **India and ADB sign USD 10 million PRF to help expand horticulture production and farm household income in Himachal Pradesh**
 - India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a USD 10 million project readiness financing (PRF) to help finance piloting activities and design and capacity building for an ensuing project that aims to expand horticulture production and farm household income in Himachal Pradesh.
 - The PRF project will support advance actions to achieve a high level of project readiness through detailed design activities.
 - The ensuing project, to be designed by the PRF, will support development of subtropical horticulture, including cultivation of fruits and vegetables, in the state's southern region which is currently lagging due to limited access to perennial water sources.

- **India and ADB sign USD 231 million loan to augment electricity generation capacity in Assam**
 - India and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a USD 231 million loan to augment electricity generation capacity in the State of Assam through construction of a 120 MegaWatts hydroelectric power plant that will enhance availability of electricity for households.
 - This is the third tranche loan for the ongoing Assam Power Sector Investment Programme that was approved by the ADB Board in July 2014.
 - The programme, including its two previous tranches, focuses on enhancing capacity and efficiency of the energy generation and distribution systems in Assam to improve electricity service to end users.

- **J&K UT Administration signs historic MoU with NAFED**
 - In Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Territory Administration signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED), an apex organization of marketing cooperatives for agricultural produce.
 - The MoU is seen as a game changer for the Horticulture sector in the Union Territory.
 - High Density plantation of Apple, Walnut, Cherry, Flowers etc has potential to increase the income of farmers by three to four times.
 - After signing of the MoU, NAFED to cover 5,500 Hectares at a cost of Rs 1,700 crore in the next five years with major focus on Apple, Walnut, Cherry, Pear and other significant horticulture products.
 - NAFED will also set up 20 Farmer-Producer Organizations, one in each district, in the next three months.

- **Bajaj becomes world's most valuable two-wheeler company**
 - Bajaj Auto has become the first two-wheeler company across the globe to cross a market capitalisation of ₹1-lakh crore (around \$13.6 billion).
 - The statement from Bajaj Auto claims that this market valuation is considerably higher than all other domestic two-wheeler companies.
 - The company's share closed at ₹3,479 giving it a market capitalisation ₹1,00,670.76 crore.

- The company claims that it has achieved this milestone as it celebrates the 75th year of its operations.
- **Bajaj Auto becomes world's most valuable two-wheeler company**
 - Indian multinational two-wheeler and three-wheeler manufacturing company, Bajaj Auto, has become the most valuable two-wheeler company in the world.
 - It crossed a market capitalization of more than Rs. 1 lakh crore, on January 01, 2021.
 - Bajaj's share price on NSE closed at Rs. 3,479 per share on the first day of 2021, leading to a market capitalization of more than Rs 1,00,670.76 crore.
 - Bajaj Auto HQ: Pune, Maharashtra.
- **World Bank approves \$105 million loan to improve Waterways in West Bengal**
 - The World Bank has signed a \$105 million project with the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal to improve the inland water transport infrastructure in Kolkata, West Bengal.
 - The West Bengal Inland Water Transport, Logistics and Spatial Development Project will improve passenger and freight movement across the Hooghly river.
 - It will also improve accessibility in the Kolkata Metropolitan Area, enhance the quality of life of its residents and contribute to the growth of the state's logistics sector.
 - Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee
 - Governor: Jagdeep Dhankhar
- **IDFC Mutual Fund unveils new campaign asking savers to become investors**
 - IDFC Mutual Fund announced the launch of its latest pan-India investor awareness campaign #PaisoKoRokoMat, nudging savers to become investors.
 - With this new campaign, IDFC Mutual Fund aims to shift the conversation regarding wealth creation from the traditional to the contemporary.
 - The 360-degree campaign focuses on looking beyond the traditional ways of growing your money and using your goals to allocate your money across asset classes and investment solutions.
 - The campaign has been conceptualised and created by TBWAIndia.
- **Bandhan Bank launches 'Shaurya Salary Account' to provide banking services to Defence personnel**
 - Private lender Bandhan Bank has launched 'Bandhan Bank Shaurya Salary Account' to provide banking and financial services to the personnel of the Armed Forces and Paramilitary services.
 - Bandhan Bank Shaurya Salary Account comes with a host of convenience and ease of banking with internet and mobile banking.
 - They will be offered other preferential services such as six per cent interest on balance over Rs one lakh, unlimited free ATM transactions across ATMs, waiver of issuance and annual charge on Shaurya Visa Platinum Debit Card and unlimited free NEFT/RTGS/IMPS/DD transactions.

➤ **BSNL, MTNL turn EBITDA positive in first half of FY21**

- State-owned telecom companies BSNL and MTNL turned EBITDA positive in the first half of the financial year 2020-21.
- While EBITDA of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) rose to ₹602 crore during the first half of 2020-2021, that of MTNL stood at ₹276 crore.
- Both organisations expect to reduce their losses by 50 per cent when compared to 2019-20.
- EBITDA stands for Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization.
- It is a metric used to evaluate a company's overall financial performance. EBITDA is a measure of profits.

➤ **RBI forms working group on digital lending**

- The Reserve Bank of India has set up a working group to study digital lending activities of the regulated and unregulated players.
- The group will suggest steps to regulate digital lending including online lending platform and mobile lending.
- The six-member panel comprising four RBI internal and two external members is expected to submit its report within three months.
- Jayant Kumar Dash, Executive Director, RBI will be chairman of the group.

➤ **Varun Kapur, Samiya Imad Farooqui and 4 other Indians shuttlers confirm Top-10 spots in latest world junior rankings of BWF**

- In badminton, promising Indian shuttlers Varun Kapur and Samiya Imad Farooqui along with four other Indians have confirmed Top-10 spots in the latest world junior rankings of Badminton World Federation (BWF).
- Seventeen-year-olds Varun Kapur and Samiya Imad Farooqui lead the way, being ranked world No. 2 in the boys' and girls' singles, respectively.
- Varun moved four places ahead in the men's rankings while Samiya took a six-spot jump.
- The BWF rankings released earlier this week, especially in the women singles category, saw Indian domination with three more shuttlers-Tasnim Mir (4), Treesa Jolly (8) and Aditi Bhatt (10)-earning themselves a place in the Top-10.

➤ **ICICI Bank ties up with fintech Niyto to issue prepaid cards to MSMEs**

- ICICI Bank, a leading Indian private sector bank, and Niyto, a new age fintech company announced a tie-up to issue prepaid cards to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) workers.
- MSMEs will now be able to get 'ICICI Bank Niyto Bharat Payroll Card' powered by Visa, for their blue-collar workers.
- With this, MSMEs can upload the salaries of their workers on the card, which the workers can then utilise as per their need seamlessly.
- The 'ICICI Bank Niyto Bharat Payroll Card' allows an individual to receive funds up to Rs 1 lakh into the card account.

- It offers convenience and safety of digital banking to the blue-collar workforce while providing a state-of-the-art salary disbursement solution to the employers.
- **YES Bank launches wellness themed credit card**
 - Yes Bank has announced its partnership with Aditya Birla Wellness Private Limited to launch the 'YES BANK Wellness' and 'YES BANK Wellness Plus' Credit Cards – aimed at the holistic health, self-care and wellness of consumers.
 - This is an innovative step to encourage and promote self-care, mental and physical well-being.
 - Consumers can now enjoy the bouquet of complementary health benefits by simply registering on the Aditya Birla Multiply App.
 - Benefits include reward points, diet plans, consultations etc.
- **Axis Bank launches Aura Credit Card with health, wellness benefits**
 - Private sector lender Axis Bank has unveiled a credit 'AURA' exclusively loaded with several health and wellness benefits for its users at an affordable price.
 - The curated and affordable health and wellness offering from Axis Bank has partners like IndusHealth Plus, a health check-up company and Practo, an online medical consultation platform.
 - Cardholders will be eligible for a discount on annual medical check-up via IndushealthPlus.
 - With Practo, the card will provide up to four free online video consultations per month, with 24*7 access to doctors across all 21 specialties and not just limited to general physicians.
 - List of specialties range from the most common ones like dermatology and cardiology to alternative medicine practices like Ayurveda and homeopathy.
- **Airtel Payments Banks launches 'safe pay' to curb online frauds**
 - Airtel Payments Bank launched a mode of safe digital transactions to protect customers from online frauds.
 - Airtel SafePay is an additional wall that will prevent online frauds when customers transact through UPI (unified payment interface) or net-banking using the Airtel Payments Bank.
 - The new payment gateway, which is free of cost, will offer protection against phishing, stolen credentials or passwords, and phone cloning.
 - Airtel Safe Pay will allow customers of the payments bank to conduct digital transactions across merchants, online retailers, and transfer money.
- **India's GDP to contract 8% this fiscal: FICCI Economic Outlook Survey**
 - India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to contract by 8 per cent in 2020-21, according to the latest round of FICCI's Economic Outlook Survey.
 - The annual median growth forecast by the industry body is based on responses from leading economists representing industry, banking and financial services sector.
 - The median growth forecast for agriculture and allied activities has been pegged at 3.5 per cent for 2020-21.

➤ **IMF projects over 11 per cent growth rate for India in 2021**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected an 11.5 per cent growth rate for India in 2021.
- It makes India the only major economy of the world to register double-digit growth this year amidst the coronavirus pandemic.
- With the latest projections, India regains the tag of the fastest developing economies of the world.
- The IMF said that in 2020, the Indian economy is estimated to have contracted by eight per cent.
- In its latest World Economic Outlook Update, China is next with 8.1 per cent growth in 2021 followed by Spain (5.9 per cent) and France (5.5 per cent).

➤ **TCS is third most valued IT services brand globally: Brand Finance**

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has been ranked third most-valued IT services brand globally, after Accenture and IBM, according to a report by Brand Finance.
- Four Indian IT services companies -- TCS, Infosys, HCL and Wipro -- secured spots in the top-10 global tally.
- Third-ranked TCS is rapidly closing the gap with IBM following a healthy 11% brand value increase to USD 15 billion.
- Accenture retained the title of world's most valuable and strongest IT services brand with record brand value of \$26 billion, while IBM continued at the second place with brand value of \$16.1 billion.

DEATH

- **Veteran broadcaster Indira Joseph Venniyoor passes away**
 - Veteran broadcaster Indira Joseph Venniyoor passed away.
 - She was a renowned broadcaster, All India Radio veteran & first English news announcer of Travancore Radio when its English service began in 1949.
 - She was the wife of well-known literary scholar & art critic the late E.M.J. Venniyoor.

- **Former Union Minister and senior Congress leader Buta Singh passes away**
 - Former Union Minister and senior Rajasthan Congress leader Buta Singh has passed away.
 - The veteran politician Buta Singh served as Home Minister of India in the Rajiv Gandhi government from 1986 to 1989.
 - He had also served as the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.
 - Buta Singh was a four-time MP from Jalore-Sirohi Lok Sabha constituency.
 - He served as the Chairperson of the National Commission For Schedule Cast from 2007 to 2010.

- **Veteran Odia music director Shantanu Mohapatra passes away at 84**
 - Legendary Odia music director Shantanu Mohapatra has passed away due to old age-related ailments.
 - Mohapatra has been associated with the Odia music industry for almost 60 years.
 - He has many firsts to his credits in the field of Odia music as a music composer.
 - Shantanu Mohapatra was the first Odia music director to work with acclaimed singers and music composers of the Hindi film industry like Lata Mangeshkar , Mohd Rafi, Manna Dey, etc.

- **Former Maharashtra Minister Vilas Patil Undalkar passes away**
 - Former Maharashtra cabinet minister and seven-time Congress MLA Vilas Patil Undalkar has passed away, following a brief illness.
 - The veteran Congressman, Undalkar, who was popularly known as 'kaka', was elected seven times from Karad-South Assembly constituency for a record 35 consecutive years, from 1980 to 2014.
 - Undalkar held the Cooperation and Law and Justice portfolios in the State Cabinets during the previous Congress-led state governments.

- **Ace mountaineer Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar passes away**
 - Ace mountaineer Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar, who played an iconic role to help India secure the Siachen Glacier, has passed away due to age-related illness.
 - He is known as 'Siachen saviour' because it was he who first detected the cartographic aggression of Pakistan in the Siachen glacier area.
 - He was the first Indian to climb Mount Nanda Devi.
 - He was nicknamed 'Bull' for relentlessly charging into everything he did.
 - Col Kumar was the recipient of various awards such as the Kirti Chakra, Padma Shri, Arjun award and the McGregor medal.

➤ **Oldest living first-class cricketer Alan Burgess passes away**

- The world's oldest living first-class cricketer Alan Burgess has passed away at the age of 100.
- A right-hand batsman and slow left-arm bowler, Alan appeared in 11 first-class matches for Canterbury from 1940/41 to 1951/52 and also for New Zealand Services in England in 1945.
- He took 6-52 on debut against Otago at Lancaster Park in a match that began on Christmas Day 1940.
- "Otago's Iain Gallaway, aged 98, is now NZ's oldest surviving first-class cricketer.

➤ **Renowned Fashion Designer Satya Paul Dies**

- Satya Paul, a renowned fashion designer and the founder of an acclaimed fashion label, died at the age of 78.
- Paul made a name for himself in Indian fashion by introducing prints on textiles in an era in which embroidery was still considered the high point.
- He started the brand 'Satya Paul' in 1985 with entrepreneur Sanjay Kapoor.
- Paul was also among the first designers to expand his repertoire to accessories, cufflinks, totes and wallets were as much a part of his brand identity as the clothes.

➤ **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's niece Chitra Ghosh passes away**

- Chitra Ghosh, the youngest daughter of Sarat Chandra Bose and niece of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, passed away.
- She made pioneering contributions to academics and community services and dedicated her life in serving the people, teaching & inspiring the youth.
- Professor Bose was the former head of the political science department at Lady Brabourne College in Kolkata

➤ **Congress Leader and Former Kerala Minister Ramachandran passes away at 84**

- Veteran Congress leader and former state minister of Kerala, K K Ramachandran has passed away.
- He was popularly known as Ramachandran Master.
- He had represented the party as an MLA six times, which included three times from Kalpetta and thrice from Sultan Bathery Assembly constituency.
- Ramachandran was Minister for Food & Civil Supplies in the A K Antony Government from 1995 and Health Minister in the Oommen Chandy Government from 2004.

➤ **Former Gujarat CM Madhavsinh Solanki dies aged 94**

- Former Gujarat chief minister and ex-Union minister Madhavsinh Solanki (94) passed away.
- Born on July 30, 1927, the leader was the chief minister of Gujarat four times and also Union external affairs minister.
- Under his leadership, the Congress rode to power in the Gujarat assembly in 1985, winning 149 of the 182 seats -- an electoral feat that has not been matched so far.

- **Renowned astrophysicist Professor Shashikumar Madhusudan Chitre passes away at 84**
 - Renowned astrophysicist Professor Shashikumar Madhusudan Chitre passed away.
 - A recipient of Padma Bhushan, he was a stalwart of the Indian astronomy community, particularly solar physics.
 - He retired as a senior professor from the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, in 2001.
 - He was the driving force behind the establishment of the University of Mumbai – Department of Atomic Energy Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences (UM-DAE CEBS).
 - Prof. Chitre also served on the boards of the Nehru Centre trust and the JN Tata trust for several years.

- **Senior Telugu journalist Turlapati Kutumba Rao passes away at 87**
 - Veteran journalist and Padma Shri awardee Turlapati Kutumba Rao passed away.
 - Kutumba Rao, who became a journalist at 14, served as Secretary to the first Chief Minister of Andhra state, Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu, in the 1950s.
 - He was also an author and orator, and held the Guinness World Record for presiding over more than 10,000 public meetings.
 - Rao had addressed more than 20,000 events during his career that spanned over six and a half decades.
 - He was considered a 'walking Encyclopedia' on politics and Telugu movies for his in-depth knowledge of the subjects.
 - The Government of India conferred the Padma Shri on Kutumba Rao in 2002.

- **Pulitzer Prize-winning author & journalist Neil Sheehan passes away**
 - Pulitzer Prize-winning author & journalist Neil Sheehan passed away.
 - He covered the Vietnam War for United Press International and the Times from 1962 to 1966.
 - He won a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award in 1989 for “A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam.”

- **Social activist and Padma Shri awardee D Prakash Rao passes away**
 - Noted social activist and Padma Shri winner, D Prakash Rao has passed away following a brain stroke.
 - He was awarded Padma Shri in 2019 by the government of India for his contribution towards boosting the value of education among slum children and orphans.
 - Despite having only a modest tea stall in Cuttack, he ran a small school to provide education to slum kids free of cost.
 - He was also an avid blood donor having donated blood to the needy many times over during his entire life.

- **Former MP B. S. Gnanadesikan passes away due to prolonged illness in Chennai**
 - Former Member of Parliament B. S. Gnanadesikan passed away due to prolonged illness at a private hospital in Chennai.
 - He served as Rajya Sabha Member from the Congress Party twice from 2001 to 2013.
 - He was also the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee Chief.

- He resigned from the Congress and joined the Tamil Maanila Congress led by G. K. Vaasan.
 - He was working as the Deputy Leader of TMC. The party is now in alliance with NDA.
- **Legendary Indian classical musician Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan passes away**
- Legendary Indian classical musician and Padma Vibhushan awardee Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan.
 - He was born on March 3, 1931 in Badaun in Uttar Pradesh.
 - He got his basic classical music training from his father and later studied music under his cousin, Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan.
 - He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1991, followed by Padma Bhusan in 2006 and Padma Vibhushan in 2018.
 - In 2003 he was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi award, the highest Indian recognition given to practicing artistes.
- **World renowned oncologist Dr V Shanta passes away**
- Dr. V. Shanta, the world renowned oncologist passed away due to brief illness in Chennai.
 - Dr. Shanta is the Chairperson of Adyar Cancer Centre.
 - She joined the hospital in 1955 as a trainee and went on to become the Head of the Institution which expanded far and wide to deal with the deadly disease in a more precise manner.
 - Dr. Shanta's contribution to the field of oncology, had earned her the Magsaysay, Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan awards.
- **Malayalam actor Unnikrishnan Namboothiri passes away**
- Veteran Malayalam actor Unnikrishnan Namboothiri has passed away while contracting COVID-19.
 - Unnikrishnan made his acting debut in 1996 with Desadanam.
 - He became a household name among the Malayalam film audience for his performance as a witty grandfather in Kalyanaraman (2002).
 - He is well known for movies like Kaikudunna Nilavu (1998), Kaliyattam (1997), Pammal K Sambandam (2002), Sadanandante Samayam (2003), Madhuranombarakattu (2000), Rappakal (2005), and Pokkiri Raja (2010).
- **Popular Bhajan Singer, Narendra Chanchal, passes away**
- The iconic Indian Bhajan singer Narendra Chanchal, who specialized in religious songs and hymns, has passed away. He was 80.
 - Some of his ever popular bhajans include Chalo Bulawa Aaya Hai, Tune Mujhe Bulaya Sherawaliye, Ambe Tu Hai Jagadambe Kali, Hanuman Chalisa, Sankat Mochan Naam Tiharo, Ram Se Bada Ram Ka Naam among others.
 - Besides several bhajans, Chanchal had also given voice in several Hindi films as well.
 - He sang a Bollywood song Beshak Mandir Masjid for the 1973 film Bobby and won Filmfare Best Male Playback Award.

➤ **1995 Nobel Chemistry Prize Winner Paul Crutzen passes away at 87**

- The Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul J. Crutzen, has passed away. He was 87.
- Dr. Crutzen won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995, jointly with Mario J. Molina and F. Sherwood Rowland, for their work in atmospheric chemistry, particularly concerning the formation and decomposition of ozone. “
- He was known for his work on the ozone layer and climate change and for popularizing the term ‘Anthropocene’ to describe a proposed new era when human actions have a drastic effect on the Earth.

➤ **Animals guitarist Hilton Valentine dies at the age of 77**

- The Animals guitarist Hilton Valentine, who created one of the most famous riffs in pop music in the 1960s, died at the age of 77. “
- The British band's version of blues standard The House of The Rising Sun topped the UK and US charts in 1964. “
- The Animals' record label ABKCO Music described Valentine as a ‘pioneering guitar player influencing the sound of rock and roll for decades to come’. “
- Valentine co-founded the Animals in Newcastle in 1963 alongside singer Eric Burdon, bassist Chas Chandler, organist Alan Price and drummer John Steel.

BOOKS

- **“My Years with Rajiv: Triumph and Tragedy” book written by Wajahat Habibullah**
 - Wajahat Habibullah has penned a book, “My Years with Rajiv: Triumph and Tragedy”.
 - He has also mentioned the Babri Masjid issue, the Bofors, LTTE insurgency and the Shah Bano case in this book.
 - He has also written about the efforts of the Rajiv Gandhi government in dealing with Pakistan.
 - In this book, he has written about the achievements of Rajiv Gandhi including reforms in education, Technology Missions, economic reforms, Punjab, Assam and Mizoram accords, etc.

- **RBI officer R. Giridharan authors debut novel ‘Right Under our Nose’**
 - R Giridharan, a general manager at RBI has come out with his debut novel titled “Right Under our Nose”.
 - The book revolves around murder and politics, wherein, a murderer eliminates scientists right under the nose of the police and leaves forensics baffled.
 - The book has been published by Rupa Publications.

- **Najma Heptulla Releases book titled ‘Making of a General-A Himalayan Echo’**
 - Manipur Governor Dr Najma Heptulla released a book titled “Making of a General-A Himalayan Echo”.
 - The book has been authored by (Retd) Lt General Konsam Himalay Singh, in which he has conveyed his dreams and views as well as also highlighted about Manipur, the “Land of Emeralds”.
 - The book is the memoir of Lt Gen (Dr) Himalay Singh who has traced his journey from a small village in Manipur to becoming the first person from North East India to hold the rank of a Three Star General of the Indian Army.

- **Goa CM Pramod Sawant releases book ‘Manohar Parrikar – Off The Record’**
 - The Chief Minister Pramod Sawant recently released a book titled ‘Manohar Parrikar – Off the Record’, written by senior journalist Shri Waman Subha Prabhu.
 - Through this book, the author narrates the multi-faceted personality of late Parrikar, based on the collection of memories held by Waman Prabhu who happened to be with late Parrikar during the journey of his life.
 - Manohar Gopalkrishna Prabhu Parrikar was an Indian politician who served as Chief Minister of Goa from 14 March 2017 until his death.
 - Previously, he was Chief Minister of Goa from 2000 to 2005 and from 2012 to 2014 and from 2017 to 2019.
 - He also served as the Minister of Defence from October 2014 to March 2017.



APPOINTMENTS

➤ **Umesh Sinha appointed as Deputy Election Commissioner**

- The Union Government has appointed Umesh Sinha as the deputy election commissioner in the Election Commission of India.
- Sinha, a 1986-batch IAS officer (retired) of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, was the secretary general in the commission prior to this.
- He has been appointed on contract basis for a period of six months from January 01, 2021 to June 30, 2021.
- With this, the ECI now has 4 deputy election commissioners. The other three are Sudeep Jain, Chandra Bhushan Kumar, and Ashish Kundra.

➤ **Justice Pankaj Mithal sworn in as new Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh High Court**

- Justice Pankaj Mithal has been appointed as the new Chief Justice (CJ) of the Common High Court for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh.
- Chief Justice Mithal replaces Chief Justice Gita Mittal, who has retired recently.
- Chief Justice Mithal was administered the oath of office by Lieutenant Governor of J&K, Manoj Sinha.

➤ **Ashish Pethe appointed as new Chairman of GJC**

- The All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC), has appointed Ashish Pethe as its new Chairman.
- Apart from this, Saiyam Mehra has been appointed as Vice Chairman.
- Both of them have been appointed for a period of two years.
- GJC is the national apex body of the gems and jewellery industry across India. Its headquarter is at Mumbai, Maharashtra.

➤ **Sanjay Kapoor Elected as New President of All India Chess Federation**

- Sanjay Kapoor has been elected as the President of the All India Chess Federation (AICF).
- Bharat Singh Chauhan has been re-elected as the Secretary' of AICF and Naresh Sharmahas been elected as Treasurer.
- Apart from the president, secretary and treasurer, six vice-presidents and six joint secretaries were also elected.
- All India Chess Federation (AICF) headquarter – Chennai.

➤ **Alexander Ellis appointed as new British High Commissioner to India**

- Alexander Ellis has been appointed as the new British High Commissioner to India in succession to Sir Philip Barton.
- Mr Ellis will take up his appointment this month.
- He was holding the portfolio of Deputy National Security Adviser in the UK.
- Mr. Ellis has earlier served in Lisbon and Brazil as well.

- **Justice Hima Kohli becomes first woman Chief Justice of Telangana HC**
 - Justice Hima Kohli has become the first woman Chief Justice of Telangana High Court following her swearing-in.
 - Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan has administered oath to her at a special ceremony held at the Darbar Hall of Raj Bhavan in Hyderabad.
 - Justice Hima Kohli, a postgraduate from the Delhi University, studied Law on the same campus and enrolled herself in the Bar Council in 1984.
 - She was serving as the Executive Chairman of Delhi State Legal Services Authority and also as a Member of National Law University Governing Council.

- **Indian-American Raj Iyer takes charge as US Army's first Chief Information Officer**
 - Indian-American Dr Raj Iyer has been appointed as the first Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the US Army, since the creation of the position by the Pentagon in July 2020.
 - Iyer currently serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary of the Army.
 - He will supervise an annual budget of USD 16 billion for the US Army's IT operations.

- **JK Maheshwari sworn in as Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court**
 - Justice Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari was sworn in as the new Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court.
 - Governor Ganga Prasad administered the oath of office to Justice Maheshwari during a function held in Raj Bhavan.
 - Chief Justice Arup Kumar Goswami of the Sikkim High Court has now been transferred for appointment as the Andhra Pradesh High Court's Chief Justice.
 - Sikkim Chief Minister: PS Golay
 - Governor : Ganga Prasad

- **UN Rights Body elects Fiji in First Ever Presidential Vote**
 - The UN Human Rights Council elected Fiji's ambassador as its 2021 president in an unprecedented secret ballot after a diplomatic stand-off blocked the usual consensus decision.

 - Fiji's ambassador in Geneva, Nazhat Shameem Khan, who served as the council's vice president in 2020 and is considered a rights champion, won with 29 out of 47 votes.
 - She ran against two other candidates from the UN's Asia-Pacific regional group of countries: Bahrain's ambassador Yusuf Abdulkarim Bucheeri and his counterpart from Uzbekistan, Ulugbek Lapasov, who received 14 and four votes respectively.
 - Fiji Capital: Suva
 - Currency: Fijian dollar

- **TEPC appoints Sandeep Aggarwal as new Chairman**
 - The Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) has appointed Sandeep Aggarwal as the new Chairman.
 - TEPC is an independent body set up by the government to promote and develop the export of telecom equipment and services.

- Aggarwal is also the Chief Mentor of PHDCCI's Telecom Committee, besides being the Chairman of Telecom Equipment Manufacturers Association (TEMA) and President of Railway Cable Development Association.
- **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw selected as one of USIBC vice-chair**
 - The US-India Business Council (USIBC) has selected three top corporate leaders as the Vice-Chairs of 2021 Global Board of Directors of USIBC with immediate effect.
 - The three new appointees will now work with USIBC President Nisha Biswal and the Council's policy directors, for strengthening US-India commercial relationship for the future.
 - The three newly appointed VCs are: Biocon Executive Chairperson: Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Amway CEO: Milind Pant, Vice-chair at Nasdaq: Edward Knight.
 - The Council advocates for strengthening the US-India commercial relationship for the future.
- **PM Modi unanimously chosen as next Chairman of Shree Somnath Trust**
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi was unanimously chosen as the next Chairman of Shree Somnath Trust.
 - Mr Modi was named to the top post during a virtual meeting of Shree Somnath Trust which was attended by the Prime Minister.
 - The post of chairman of the trust had fallen vacant following the death of Keshubhai Patel, former chief minister of Gujarat, in October 2020.
 - The Somnath temple (also known as the Deo Patan) located in Gujarat.
 - It is believed to be the first among the twelve jyotirlinga shrines of Shiva.
- **Sundaram Finance names Rajiv Lochan as MD**
 - The board of Sundaram Finance has named Rajiv Lochan (director Strategy) as managing director with effect from April 1.
 - Sundaram Finance Ltd has made top-level changes as the current managing director T.T. Srinivasaraghavan will be retiring on March 31, 2020.
 - While the current deputy managing director Harsha Viji will assume the office of executive vice-chairman, and take responsibility for the overall strategy and direction of Sundaram Finance Ltd., and other group companies in financial services.
- **Siddhartha Mohanty to take over as Managing Director of LIC**
 - The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Siddhartha Mohanty as the new managing director (MD) of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).
 - He will assume charge with effect from February 1, 2021, till his superannuation on June 30, 2023.
 - He will replace TC Suseel Kumar, who will retire on January 31, 2021.
 - Mohanty is currently serving as the managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of LIC Housing Finance.
- **Dhanlaxmi Bank appoints JK Shivan as MD & CEO**
 - Dhanlaxmi Bank has appointed JK Shivan as the next managing director and CEO of the bank.

- The bank Board had moved a resolution on December 26, as asked by RBI, for shareholders approval via electronic voting, for the appointment of Shivan as the next managing director and CEO the bank.
- The last MD and CEO of the bank Sunil Gurbaxaniwas voted out from the post of managing director and CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank by more than 90% of the shareholders on October 1.
- The bank is currently managed by a committee of directors(COD) and RBI has given the bank four months to appoint a new head.

➤ **Indian American Congressman Ami Bera re-named as Chair of House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee**

- In the US, veteran Indian-American Congressman Ami Bera has been re-elected as chairman of the House Foreign Subcommittee on Asia, Pacific, Central Asia and Non-proliferation.
- He is honored to be elected again to Chair the House Foreign Subcommittee.
- Bera is the longest-serving Indian American currently in Congress.

SPORTS

➤ **Khelo India Ice Hockey tournament begins in Chiktan, Kargil**

- In Kargil Ladakh, Khelo India Ice Hockey Tournament is being organised at Chiktan by Zonal Physical Education Officer Chiktan.
- For the first time the women team of Chiktan also participated in the Khelo India Games in Kargil district.
- There are 13 teams from different villages of Chiktan participating in the tournament, which include 11 men's teams and 2 women's teams.

➤ **Claire Polosak becomes first female match official in men's Test match**

- Australia's Claire Polosak created history by becoming the first female match official to officiate a men's Test match.
- She took up the fourth umpire's role in the third Test between Australia and India at the Sydney Cricket Ground.
- The 32-year-old already has the distinction of being the first woman on-field umpire in a men's ODI match in ICC's Division 2 league between Namibia and Oman played at the Windhoek in 2019.
- Polosak's international umpiring career began in 2015 with appointment to the ICC Women's T20 Qualifying tournament in Thailand. This led to appointment to the Women's T20 World Cup in India.

➤ **13-day Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sport & Youth festival 2021 to begin from Jan 18**

- The UT administration is promoting far-flung and snowbound Zaskar as a winter tourism destination.
- A 13-day Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sport & Youth festival 2021 to begin from 18th January.
- Starting from 18th till 30th January , Chadar Trek in Zaskar river, meditation, yoga, ice skating, Hockey, snow skiing, climbing, traditional Archery, snow scooter, biking, Yak and horse riding, Snow sculpting and food and cultural festivals.
- The Zaskar River is a major tributary of the Indus River, which flows entirely with Ladakh, India.

➤ **Srinagar's first-ever snowshoe run organised to boost winter sports**

- A new snowshoe run and interaction programme was held in Srinagar for the first time.
- The programme was held during the heavy snowfall season in the state.
- The event was organised by the Snowshoe Federation of India to boost winter sports in the Kashmir region.
- The game that is usually played in regions of Europe attracted athletes from various parts of Kashmir.

- **13-day Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sport & Youth festival 2021 begins in Ladakh**
 - In Ladakh, the inaugural edition of the Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sport & Youth Festival 2021 kicked off on 18th January 2021.
 - The 13- Day Zaskar Winter Sports Festival aims to open a new arena in Ladakh for adventure and Nature loving tourists and a boost for local Youth to hone up their skills in winter sports to represent India.
 - A series of snow based activities will be held for the next 13 days to promote tourism and economic activities in the Snow bound, picturesque Zaskar.

- **Syed Mustaq Ali Trophy 2020-21 to be played in Ahmedabad from 26-31 January**
 - In Cricket, Syed Mustaq Ali Trophy 2020-21 will be played from 26-31 January, at Sardar Patel Stadium, Ahmedabad.
 - As per schedule, four quarter finals will be played from 26-27 January, two semi finals on January 29, with the final scheduled on January 31.
 - The Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy is a Twenty20 cricket domestic championship in India, organized by the Board of Control for Cricket in India, among the teams from Ranji Trophy.

- **ICC announces Player of the Month awards to recognise best performances of both male & female cricketers**
 - In Dubai, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the introduction of the ICC Player of the Month awards.
 - The award will recognise and celebrate the best performances of both male and female cricketers across all forms of international cricket throughout the year.
 - An independent ICC Voting Academy comprising former players, broadcasters, and journalists from around the world, will team up with fans to vote for the ICC Men's Player of the Month and ICC Women's Player of the Month.

- **Zaskar Winter Sports and Youth Festival, 2021 concludes**
 - In Kargil Ladakh, the first ever Zaskar Winter Sports and Youth Festival, 2021 concluded at Munskit Chumik Zaskar. “
 - 13 days Zaskar Winter and Youth Festival 2021 featured various cultural and sports activities like ice hockey, snow skiing, horse riding, yak riding, ice climbing, snow sculpture, archery matches, local food festival, yoga and meditation sessions and other related activities. “
 - Around 700 people from various different parts of Zaskar participated in the event. “
 - The Zaskar River is the major tributary of the Indus River, and it flows entirely with Ladakh, India.

AWARDS

- **Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda to receive SKOCH Challenger Award virtually**
 - Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda virtually received SKOCH Challenger Award conferred to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for e-Governance.
 - The award has been given to the Ministry for its IT-led initiatives and other transformational initiatives leading to outcome-based performance improvement.
 - The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has taken up several transformational initiatives recently.
 - It has digitised all the processes leading to a paperless office, monitoring is data driven and a performance dashboard on a real time basis.
 - Skoch Challenger Awards, instituted in 2003, salute people, projects and institutions that went the extra mile to make India a better nation.

- **Biswajit Chatterjee awarded 'Indian Personality of the Year' at IFFI**
 - Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Prakash Javadekar, announced a new 'Indian Personality of the Year' award, which he announced was being conferred upon veteran actor, director and singer Biswajit Chatterjee.
 - Chatterjee will be presented the award in March, along with winners of the National Film Awards.
 - IFFI also chose Bangladesh as the country in focus for this year.
 - To mark the 100th birth anniversary of Bangladesh's first president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, India and Bangladesh will be co-producing a film titled 'Bangabandhu'.
 - The 'Lifetime Achievement' this year was given to Italian cinematographer Vittorio Storaro.

- **Nihal Sarin wins Gazprom Brilliancy Prize**
 - Indian chess prodigy Nihal Sarin has won the Gazprom Brilliancy Prize.
 - The award is given to the best game from the FIDE Online World Cadets and Youth Championship played during December.
 - Sarin had beaten Francesco Sonis 1.5-0.5 in the Open Under-18 section on the way to winning the gold medal at the event.
 - The Brilliancy Prize is probably like the Golden Ball in a FIFA World Cup.

- **Rajendra Kumar Bhandari selected for Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar**
 - Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society and Dr. Rajendra Kumar Bhandari have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for their excellent work in Disaster Management.
 - Union Home Ministry announced the award every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
 - The award carries a cash prize of 51 lakh rupees and a certificate in case of an institution and five lakh rupees and a certificate in case of an individual.
 - Dr. Rajendra Kumar Bhandari is among the pioneers in India who laid the foundation of scientific studies on geo hazards in general and landslides in particular.

- **Maha Vir Chakra awarded to Galwan valley hero Col Santosh Babu posthumously**
President has approved awards of 455 Gallantry and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel and others.
 - These include one Mahavir Chakra, 5 Kirti Chakras, 5 Vir Chakras.
 - Colonel B Santosh Babu, the Commanding Officer of 16 Bihar Regiment, who lost his life during the Galwan Valley clash last year, will be posthumously awarded with Maha Vir Chakra.

- **Padma Awards for 119 achievers including S P Balasubramaniam, Ram Vilas Paswan and former Japanese Premier Shinzo Abe**
 - On the eve of 72nd Republic Day, the Government announced the Padma Awards.
 - Seven persons will get Padma Vibhushan.
 - They include former Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, sculptor Sudarshan Sahoo and Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan.
 - Eminent Singer late S P Balasubramaniam will be awarded the 2nd highest civilian award posthumously.
 - Ten persons will get Padma Bhushan.
 - They include former Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan, Singer K S Chithra, prominent poet Chandrashekhara Kambara and retired Civil Servant Nripendra Misra. Former Gujarat Chief Minister late Keshubhai Patel , Former Assam Chief Minister late Tarun Gogoi and Former Union Minister late Ram Vilas Paswan will be honoured with Padma Bhushan posthumously.
 - 102 persons will get Padma Shri.

- **'Into the Darkness' bags Golden Peacock award**
 - The 51st edition of International Film Festival of India (IFFI) was held from 16 January to 24 January 2021 at Shyamaprasad Stadium near Panaji in Goa.
 - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the festival was held in hybrid mode, there was physical and virtual screening of 50 films out of 224 films across various categories.
 - Bangladesh was the of focus in the festival.
 - Denmark's 'Into the Darkness' which portrays dilemmas of the Danish population against the backdrop of World War II took home the coveted Golden Peacock at the 51st International Film Festival of India (Iffi).
 - Assamese film 'Bridge' by Kripal Kalita about the struggles of villagers living across a swelling river became the only Indian film at the 51st Iffi to win an award.

Legal Maxims

1. Coram Non Judice- Before one who is not a judge.

Explanation- Coram non judice is Latin Legal Maxim meaning for “not before a judge,” is a legal term basically used to indicate a proceeding which is legal in nature that is outside the authority of a judge (without a judge), with improper presence, or without legal jurisdiction. Any indictment or sentence passed by a tribunal/court which has no authority to try an accused of that particular offence, is clearly in violation of the law of the land and would be termed as Coram non judice.

***Case Reference* :-** A. Viswanathan V. R. Narayanaswamy Substituted By V.R. Ranganathan & Others

2. *Corpus humanum non recipit aestimationem*- A human body is not susceptible of appraisal.

Explanation- Corpus humanum non recipit aestimationem is a latin legal term meaning that the human body that is Corpus is above all the price. In other words the maxim is trying to put forth that a living body of a human is not likely to be appraised.

3. Crescente malitia crescere debet et poena-Vice increasing, punishment ought also to increase.

Explanation- Crescente malitia crescere debet et poena is a latin legal maxim which means that as the vice increases, the penalty or punishment must also increase. It calls for a tit for tat approach in criminal law. It accords penalty for an offence proportionate to the evil that is being committed by the accused. In other words, it states that punishment for a crime must increase as the malice behind the crime increases.

4. Injuria Sine Damno and Damnum Sine Injuria- Maxim refers to the established principles and prepositions. That is the general rules or principles or guidelines laid down and which are to be followed by the general public. Maxims are very useful, as with the help of this particular point of law can be understood clearly and precisely and also used for the proper solution of the cases. Maxims are very widely used in various branches of law and so in the law of torts.

Case Reference:- Mogul Steamship Co. Vs. McGregor Gow and Co.

5. De die in diem- From day to day.

Explanation- The above term is a Latin term it means from day to day. In earlier times, the term was used to refer to an action occurring from day to day. It denotes a continuous right of action.

Case Reference :- Lt. Col., S.J. Chaudhary vs. State

6. ACTORI INCUMBIT ONUS PROBANDI

Meaning- The burden of proof lies on the plaintiff.

Explanation- The general principle that a party who brings up a particular issue is the one who has the burden of proof comes from Latin phrase actori incumbit onus probandi. The claimant

bears the burden of proof , which has to prove , the aspects of their claim.

E.g . A had to undergo treatment for her physical and mental harassment. Later, A applied for divorce on the basis of cruelty. In this case, A has to prove that B has caused the injury of physical and mental assaults against her to prove her case before the court. Thus, the maxim *actori incumbit onus probandi* is applicable.

7. ACTIONABLE PER SE

Meaning - The very act is punishable and no proof of damage is required.

Explanation- Actions that do not require the allegations or proof of additional facts to constitute a cause of action. Such a tort is actionable simply because it happened. In such actions, the plaintiff does not have to prove that he suffered any damages in order to have a cause of action. Tort claims normally require proof of damages. If you haven't suffered any loss, you have no claim. A tort that is actionable per se does not require proof of damages to be actionable; such a tort is actionable simply because it happened.

8. *Debet esse finis litium* : There must be an end of litigations. A law suit cannot continue in an infinite manner.

9. *Debile fundamentum fallit opus* : A weak foundation destroys the super structure.

CURRENT AFFAIRS
PRELIMS QUESTIONS

1. Which country has hosted the 4th 'One Planet Summit' in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank?
 - (a) Philippines
 - (b) Switzerland
 - (c) France**
 - (d) United Kingdom

2. Which country's PM Juri Ratas has resigned over a corruption scandal?
 - (a) Estonia**
 - (b) Latvia
 - (c) Lithuania
 - (d) Finland

3. Sadyr Japarov has been appointed as the President of which country?
 - (a) Egypt
 - (b) Azerbaijan
 - (c) Uzbekistan
 - (d) Kyrgyzstan**

4. RBI has imposed Rs 2 crore fine on which of the following Bank for non-compliance with certain provisions of directions concerning interest rate on deposits?
 - (a) Standard Chartered Bank
 - (b) Barclays Bank
 - (c) Deutsche Bank**
 - (d) HSBC Bank

5. Which of the following Bank's license has been recently canceled by RBI?
 - (a) Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank**
 - (b) Mapusa Urban Co-op Bank
 - (c) Apna Sahakari Co-Op
 - (d) Mehsana Urban Co-Op Bank

6. In which state, Magh Bihu has been celebrated on 15 January 2021?
 - (a) Assam**
 - (b) Madhya Pradesh
 - (c) Jharkhand
 - (d) Kerala

7. Which of the following organization has received Kayakalp Award for the 3rd time?
 - (a) AIIMS Patna
 - (b) AIIMS Bhubaneswar**
 - (c) AIIMS Delhi
 - (d) AIIMS Guwahati

8. With which of the following country India has signed an MoU for Scientific and Technical Cooperation?
- (a) Iraq
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 - (c) **UAE**
 - (d) Saudi Arabia
9. Heritage Conservation Committee has cleared approved the construction of new Parliament building. Who was the chairman of the Heritage Conservation Committee?
- (a) Subhash Chandra Khuntia
 - (b) **Kamran Rizvi**
 - (c) G Kishan Reddy
 - (d) Jayant Kumar Dash
10. Who has been appointed the head of the working group on digital lending formed by RBI?
- (a) Preeti Pant
 - (b) Shashi V Vempatti
 - (c) Amit Shah
 - (d) **Jayant Kumar Dash**
11. Indian Army has signed a pact to procure high-altitude drones from ideaForge for how much amount?
- (a) \$10 million
 - (b) **\$20 million**
 - (c) \$25 million
 - (d) \$40 million
12. Which Ministry has launched a "SAKSHAM" awareness campaign recently to spread awareness about green energy?
- (a) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
 - (b) **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**
 - (c) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
 - (d) Ministry of Labour and Employment
13. In how many districts, the third Phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) has been launched?
- (a) 432
 - (b) 550
 - (c) **600**
 - (d) 711
14. In which city "Prarambh: Startup India International Summit" has been inaugurated by Piyush Goyal?
- (a) Dehradun
 - (b) **Bhubaneshwar**

- (c) Lucknow
(d) **New Delhi**
15. By which year India has planned to achieve the target of 20% ethanol-blending with gasoline?
(a) 2023
(b) **2025**
(c) 2027
(d) 2030
16. With which country, India has recently signed an MoU to enhance cooperation in ICT, including 5G tech?
(a) South Korea
(b) Vietnam
(c) **Japan**
(d) Taiwan
17. The United Nations has recently released the report “International Migration 2020 Highlights”. According to the report, Which country’s diaspora is the largest in the world?
(a) Russia
(b) Japan
(c) USA
(d) **India**
18. Which bank has partnered with Aditya Birla Wellness Private Limited to launch a wellness themed credit card?
(a) IDFC Bank
(b) RBL Bank
(c) **Yes Bank**
(d) Kotak Mahindra Bank
19. Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan has passed away recently. He was a/an .
(a) **Musician**
(b) Poet
(c) Kathak dancer
(d) Classical singer
20. Where will be India’s first ‘Labour Movement Museum’ set up?
(a) **Alappuzha, Kerala**
(b) Kevadia, Gujarat
(c) Haldibari, West Bengal
(d) Bhubaneshwar, Odisha
21. PM Modi has flagged 8 trains to boost connectivity to Statue of Unity. Where is Statue of Unity located?
(a) Ahmedabad, Gujarat
(b) Bhavnagar, Gujarat

- (c) Anand, Gujarat
(d) Kevadia, Gujarat
22. Name the recipient of India's first COVID-19 Vaccine.
(a) Ashiesh Roy
(b) Suneet Sharma
(c) Umesh Sinha
(d) Manish Kumar
23. Which ministry has won the SKOCH Challenger Award) under "Transparency in Governance" during the 70th SKOCH Summit?
(a) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
(b) Ministry of Tribal Affairs
(c) Ministry of External Affairs
(d) Ministry of Jal Shakti
24. Which country has won the presidency of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) for 2021?
(a) Bali
(b) Mauritius
(c) Maldives
(d) Fiji
25. How much loan has been provided by Asian Development Bank (ADB) to upgrade power distribution system in Bengaluru?
(a) \$89 million
(b) \$100 million
(c) \$120 million
(d) \$185 million
26. Which bank has recently launched WhatsApp banking services?
(a) Bank of India
(b) State Bank of India
(c) **Bank of Baroda**
(d) Canara Bank
27. Which of the following automobile company has tied up with Karnataka Bank for vehicle finance?
(a) Mahindra
(b) TVS Motors
(c) Honda Motors
(d) Tata Motors
28. World Braille Day is annually celebrated on
(a) 1 January
(b) 2 January

(c) 3 January

(d) 4 January

29. Who has become India's 67th chess Grandmaster by winning the third and final norm at a tournament in Italy?

(a) Audi Ameya

(b) D Gukesh

(d) M Pranesh

(e) Leon Mendonca

30. What was the rank of Mukesh Ambani in Bloomberg Billionaires Index 2021?

(a) 4

(b) 6

(c) 8

(d) 12

31. Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar passed away recently. He was a/an .

(a) Mountaineer

(b) Stuntman

(c) Journalist

(d) Scriptwriter

32. Which state is going to host the 4th Global Ayurveda Festival from March 12, 2021?

(a) Tamil Nadu

(b) Madhya Pradesh

(c) Assam

(d) Kerala

33. In which city, Assam Rifles Public School is located, which has become the first Sports School announced under the Khelo India scheme in the North-East region?

(a) Dispur

(b) Shillong

(c) Itanagar

(d) Aizawl

34. Which country has passed the 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' to increase the number of scholarships for Pakistani women in higher education?

(a) India

(b) France

(c) Russia

(d) United States

35. Who among the following has cancelled the 2021 Republic Day visit as chief guest?

(a) Joe Biden

(b) Vladimir Putin

(c) Boris Johnson

(d) Donald Trump

36. What is the rank of India in the COVID-19 “performance index” released by the Lowy Institute?
- (a) 48th
 - (b) 63rd
 - (c) 86th**
 - (d) 117th
37. Which country was ranked the best performing country in the COVID-19 “performance index” released by the Lowy Institute?
- (a) New Zealand
 - (b) Vietnam
 - (c) Denmark
 - (d) Both a & b**
38. Cloris Leachman passed away recently. She was a/an
- (a) Costume Designer
 - (b) Actress**
 - (c) Radio astronomer
 - (d) Lawyer
39. Who has Inaugurated “Aadi Mahotsav”, a National Tribal Festival being organized by TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs?
- (a) M Venkaiah Naidu**
 - (b) Rao Inderjit Singh
 - (c) Arjun Munda
 - (d) Narendra Modi
40. Which magazine’s 125th Anniversary has been addressed & celebrated on January 31, 2021 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi?
- (a) Akhand Jyoti
 - (b) Prabuddha Bharat**
 - (c) Oriental Magazine
 - (d) Navjivan
41. Which state has topped the justice delivery in India 2020, according to the second edition of the India Justice Report?
- (a) Gujarat
 - (b) West Bengal
 - (c) Haryana
 - (d) Maharashtra**
42. In which city, Young Readers’ Boat Library has been launched recently?
- (a) Mumbai
 - (b) New Delhi
 - (c) Hyderabad
 - (d) Kolkata**

43. In which city, 5th Joint Meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum was held?
- (a) Shanghai
 - (b) Mumbai
 - (c) **New Delhi**
 - (d) Tokyo
44. Martyrs Day or Shaheed Diwas is observed on every year.
- (a) 27 January
 - (b) 28 January
 - (c) 29 January
 - (d) **30 January**
45. On which day World Leprosy Day is observed every year?
- (a) Last Thursday of January
 - (b) Last Friday of January
 - (c) Last Saturday of January
 - (d) **Last Sunday of January**
46. Which of the following space agency has recently found the NGC 4535 which is also known as the “Lost Galaxy”?
- (a) ISRO
 - (b) **NASA**
 - (c) Roscosmos
 - (d) CNSA
47. Ministry of Defence has signed a contract with which of the following company to supply indigenously developed 10 Lynx U2 Fire Control systems for Indian Navy?
- (a) Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)
 - (b) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)
 - (c) **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**
 - (d) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)
48. Implementation of FASTag has been made mandatory with effect from 1st January, 2021. The hybrid lanes of fee plazas on National Highways will remain operational till
- (a) 15th January, 2021
 - (b) 31st January, 2021
 - (c) 1st February, 2021
 - (d) **15th February, 2021**
49. What was the Revenue collected from Goods and Services Tax (GST) in December?
- (a) ₹1.04 lakh crore
 - (b) **₹1.15 lakh crore**
 - (c) ₹1.06 lakh crore
 - (d) ₹1.17 lakh crore

50. Which of the following has become an Associate Member of the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) recently?
- (a) Asset Management Association of China
 - (b) European Fund and Asset Management Association
 - (c) **International Financial Services Centres Authority**
 - (d) Bahamas International Securities Exchange
51. Who has been appointed as the Chief Justice of Odisha High Court?
- (a) Sanjib Banerjee
 - (b) Hima Kohli
 - (c) **S Muralidhar**
 - (d) Pankaj Mithal
52. Hima Kohli has been appointed as the Chief Justice of which state's High Court?
- (a) **Telangana**
 - (b) Andhra Pradesh
 - (c) Karnataka
 - (d) Assam
53. Who has taken over the charge of the new Chairman & CEO of the Railway Board?
- (a) V K Yadav
 - (b) Navin Agarwal
 - (c) A K Sikri
 - (d) **Suneet Sharma**
54. Name the Chairman of ISRO who has got one-year extension till January 2022.
- (a) Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan
 - (b) U R Rao
 - (c) G Satheesh Reddy
 - (d) **Kailasavadivoo Sivan**
55. Which state has launched a crop relief scheme- Kisan Fasal Rahat Yojana?
- (a) West Bengal
 - (b) **Jharkhand**
 - (c) Maharashtra
 - (d) Chhattisgarh
56. Which country has recently changed a word in its National Anthem to honor indigenous people?
- (a) Italy
 - (b) France
 - (c) **Australia**
 - (d) Spain

57. PM Modi has laid the foundation stone of Light House projects (LHPs). LHPs has been conceptualized by which ministry?
- (a) Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
 - (b) Environment, Forests and Climate Change
 - (c) Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
 - (d) Housing and Urban Affairs**
58. Which organization has provided \$231 million loan to enhance power generation capacity in Assam?
- (a) World bank
 - (b) Asian Development Bank**
 - (c) International Monetary fund
 - (d) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
59. Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India has signed a \$10 million project readiness financing (PRF) to support horticulture project in which state/UT?
- (a) Telangana
 - (b) Assam
 - (c) Jammu & Kashmir
 - (d) Himachal Pradesh**
60. Name the President of Suriname who was among 30 “Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2021” awardees.
- (a) Chandrika Persad Santokhi**
 - (b) Eugene Rhuggenaath
 - (c) Priyanca Radhakrishnan
 - (d) Arvind Phukan
61. Who has Inaugurated 26th Kolkata International Film Festival?
- (a) Narendra Modi
 - (b) Mamata Banerjee**
 - (c) Ram Nath Kovind
 - (d) Jagdeep Dhankhar
62. ICRA has projected India's real GDP at in FY2022.
- (a) 6.4%
 - (b) 8.6%
 - (c) 9.4%
 - (d) 10.1%**
63. Death anniversary of Lal Bahadur Shastri is observed in India on .
- (a) 11 January**
 - (b) 12 January
 - (c) 13 January
 - (d) 14 January

64. On which date National Human Trafficking Day is annually observed in India?
(a) 7 January
(b) 8 January
(c) 9 January
(d) 11 January
65. Madhavsinh Solanki has passed away recently. He was the former Chief Minister of which state?
(a) Bihar
(b) Karnataka
(c) Gujarat
(d) Uttar Pradesh
66. Government of India has recently placed order of 11 million doses of which of the following COVID-19 vaccine?
(a) Covishield
(b) AZD1222
(c) Covaxin
(d) HGCO19
67. Who among the following has been appointed as the Chairperson of a 10-member empowered committee for COVID-19 vaccine administration?
(a) Arun Goel
(b) R S Sharma
(c) G Satheesh Reddy
(d) M S Ananth
68. Name the biennial Maritime security, coastal defence exercise whose second edition began on 12 Jan.
(a) Sahyog-Kaijin
(b) Malabar
(c) Milan
(d) Sea Vigil
69. Brickwork Ratings has projected India's GDP at in FY22.
(a) 3.5%
(b) 4.7%
(c) 7.4%
(d) 11.0%
70. What was the rank of India in the Henley Passport Index 2021?
(a) 11th
(b) 35th
(c) 54th
(d) 85th

JANUARY' 2021

71. What was the theme for 11th National Voters Day 2021?
- (a) Empowering Young and Future Voters
 - (b) No Voter to be left behind
 - (c) Inclusive and qualitative participation
 - (d) Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed**
72. International Day of Education is celebrated every year on .
- (a) 21 January
 - (b) 22 January
 - (c) 23 January
 - (d) 24 January**
73. What was the theme for International Day of Education 2021?
- (a) Celebrating education's role for peace and development
 - (b) Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation**
 - (c) Learning for people, planet, prosperity and peace
 - (d) Indigenous Peoples' Right to Education
74. Who has won the women's singles titles in Thailand Open badminton 2021?
- (a) Sofia Kenin
 - (b) Nozomi Okuhara
 - (c) Ashleigh Barty
 - (d) Carolina Marin**
75. Who has won the men's singles titles in Thailand Open badminton 2021?
- (a) Viktor Axelsen**
 - (b) Anders Antonsen
 - (c) Dominic Thiem
 - (d) Alexander Zverev
76. What is the name of the tax to be levied on older, polluting vehicles which has been approved by the Union minister for road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari?
- (a) White Tax
 - (b) Eco Tax**
 - (c) Green Tax
 - (d) Environment Tax
77. Kaja Kallas is going to become the first woman PM of which of the following country?
- (a) San Marino
 - (b) Estonia**
 - (c) Monaco
 - (d) Luxembourg
78. A 122-member contingent from which of the following country's armed forces was a part of the Republic Day parade 2021?
- (a) France
 - (b) UAE**

(c) **Bangladesh**

(d) Australia

79. FDI in India rose to \$57 billion in 2020, according to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

(a) 10%

(b) 11%

(c) 12%

(d) **13%**

80. What is the growth forecast in FY21 for India's gross domestic product (GDP), according to the latest round of FICCI's Economic Outlook Survey?

(a) -5.4%

(b) -6.5%

(c) -7.3%

(d) **-8.0%**

81. India's economy is projected at in FY21, according to the UN.

(a) -5.2%

(b) -7.8%

(c) **-9.6%**

(d) -11.0%

82. Who was the recipient of Mahavir Chakra during the 72nd Republic Day celebrations?

(a) **Santosh Babu**

(b) Sanjiv Kumar

(c) Pintu Kumar Singh

(d) Shyam Narayan Singh Yadava

83. How many peoples have been awarded "Padma Vibhushan" in Padma Awards 2021?

(a) **7**

(b) 10

(c) 52

(d) 78

84. In which of the following field, S P Balasubramaniam has been given the Padma Vibhushan Award 2021?

(a) Public Affairs

(b) **Art**

(c) Medicine

(d) Science and Engineering

85. Who among the following has NOT been awarded the Padma Bhushan award 2021?

(a) Tarun Gogoi

(b) Keshubhai Patel

(c) Kalbe Sadiq

(d) **Narinder Singh Kapany**

86. Which of the following state has celebrated its 50th Statehood day on January 25, 2021?

- (a) Telangana
- (b) Uttar Pradesh
- (c) Himachal Pradesh**
- (d) Assam

87. India celebrated its Republic Day on 26th January 2021.

- (a) 69th
- (b) 70th
- (c) 71st
- (d) 72nd**

88. Uttar Pradesh celebrates its Statehood Day on .

- (a) 23 January
- (b) 24 January**
- (c) 25 January
- (d) 26 January

89. Which state's CM has launched 'PANKH Abhiyan' for Girl Child?

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) West Bengal
- (c) Madhya Pradesh**
- (d) Gujarat

90. World War II drama "Into the Darkness" has won the Golden Peacock Award in the 51st International Film Festival of India. The movie "Into the Darkness" is of which of the following country?

- (a) Denmark**
- (b) Argentina
- (c) Japan
- (d) China

91. The chairman of the Jury of the 51st International Film Festival of India, Pablo Cesar is the filmmaker of which country?

- (a) Russia
- (b) Argentina**
- (c) Denmark
- (d) Japan

92. In which state, PM will lay Foundation Stone of the permanent campus of IIM Sambalpur on 2 January?

- (a) Telangana
- (b) Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Karnataka
- (d) Odisha**

93. Which company has signed a contract with the Indian Navy for the Initial supply of 20 indigenously developed Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation Dazzlers (Laser Dazzlers)?
- (a) Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML)
 - (b) Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**
 - (c) Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)
 - (d) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
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 - (d) Assam

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- (a) V K Yadav
- (b) Navin Agarwal
- (c) A K Sikri
- (d) Suneet Sharma**
- (e) Praful Patel

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- (a) Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan
- (b) U R Rao
- (c) G Satheesh Reddy
- (d) Kailasavadivoo Sivan**

102. Which country has hosted the 4th 'One Planet Summit' in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank?

- (a) Philippines
- (b) Switzerland
- (c) France**
- (d) United Kingdom

103. Which country's PM Juri Ratas has resigned over a corruption scandal?

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- (b) Latvia
- (c) Lithuania
- (d) Belarus

104. Sadyr Japarov has been appointed as the President of which country?

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- (b) Azerbaijan
- (c) Uzbekistan
- (d) Kyrgyzstan**

105. RBI has imposed Rs 2 crore fine on which of the following Bank for non-compliance with certain provisions of directions concerning interest rate on deposits?

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- (b) Barclays Bank
- (c) Deutsche Bank**
- (d) ICICI Bank

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- (a) Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank**
- (b) Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank
- (c) Mapusa Urban Co-op Bank
- (d) Apna Sahakari Co-Op Bank

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- (a) **Assam**
- (b) Madhya Pradesh
- (c) Tamil Nadu
- (d) Jharkhand

108. Which of the following organization has received Kayakalp Award for the 3rd time?

- (a) AIIMS Patna
- (b) **AIIMS Bhubaneswar**
- (c) AIIMS Delhi
- (d) AIIMS Bhopal

109. With which of the following country India has signed an MoU for Scientific and Technical Cooperation?

- (a) Iraq
- (b) Qatar
- (c) **UAE**
- (d) Lebanon

110. Heritage Conservation Committee has cleared approved the construction of new Parliament building. Who was the chairman of the Heritage Conservation Committee?

- (a) Subhash Chandra Khuntia
- (b) **Kamran Rizvi**
- (c) S Y Quraishi
- (d) G Kishan Reddy

111. Who has been appointed the head of the working group on digital lending formed by RBI?

- (a) Ram Vinay Sahi
- (b) Preeti Pant
- (c) Shashi V Vempatti
- (d) **Jayant Kumar Dash**

112. What was the Rank of India in Global Firepower Index 2021?

- (a) **4**
- (b) 11
- (c) 24
- (d) 32

113. Which country has topped in the Global Firepower Index 2021?

- (a) China
- (b) Russia
- (c) **United States**
- (d) Japan

114. Which organization has organized the Davos Agenda Summit 2021?

- (a) Amnesty International
- (b) Confederation of Indian Industry

- (c) World bank
- (d) World Economic Forum**

115. What was the theme for Davos Agenda Summit 2021?

- (a) Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World
- (b) Better capitalism
- (c) The Great Reset
- (d) Stakeholders for a cohesive and sustainable world**

116. Who among the following has been chosen for Press Club of Bangalore awards?

- (a) Azim Premji
- (b) Devi Shetty
- (c) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw
- (d) Both a & b**

117. Consider the following statements about the Caracal wild cat:

1. In India, the presence of these cats is restricted to Madhya Pradesh.
 2. They are listed as endangered in the IUCN Red List. Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2**

118. Consider the following statements:

1. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations.
 2. The Codex Alimentarius Commission is responsible for the implementation of the food standards of FAO and WHO.
 3. The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) is the initiative of FAO.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3**

119. Consider the following statements with reference to spectrum allocation:

1. Publicly available assets like spectrum are owned by the Union government only.
2. The sold frequencies of the spectrum are allocated for limited time only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

120. With reference to digital service tax (DST), consider the following statements:

1. India is the only country that imposes digital service tax.
2. In India 2% digital service tax is levied on trade and services by non-resident e-commerce

operators.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only**
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

121. Consider the following statements:

1. Part XXI of the Indian Constitution deals with the temporary, transitional and special provisions.
2. This part of the constitution formed the basis of Special Status of J&K.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 and 2

122. Consider the following statements about Mongolia:

1. It is a landlocked country bordered by only Russia in the north and China in the south.
2. Nomadic- Elephant is a code name of the defence exercise between India and Mongolia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

123. Which of the following organisations is responsible for the implementation of the Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of the Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) project?

1. United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)
2. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
3. Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3**

124. With reference to World Trade Organization (WTO), consider the following statements:

1. Currently, public distribution programmes of developing countries are included under Amber Box.
2. The Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM) was the result of the Uruguay Round multilateral trade negotiations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

125. With reference to Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan to India, consider the following statements:

1. It is an interest free loan with a repayment period of 15 years.
2. It supports the Indian government's programmes such as Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only**
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

126. Consider the following statements:

1. Schedule 5th of Indian Constitution deals with the provisions regarding the administration and control of Scheduled and Tribal Areas of Assam.
2. Article 244A of Indian constitution envisages formation of an autonomous state comprising certain tribal areas in Assam.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only**
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 and 2

127. What was India's rank on Henley and Partners Passport Index 2021?

- (a) 99th
- (b) 77th
- (c) 85th**
- (d) 88th

128. How many US Presidents have been removed from office through impeachment?

- (a) Three
- (b) Two
- (c) One
- (d) None**

129. Rare metal vanadium has been found in which Indian state?

- (a) Assam
- (b) Meghalaya
- (c) Nagaland
- (d) Arunachal Pradesh**

130. The New Foreign Trade Policy will come into effect from which date?

- (a) March 31st
- (b) April 1st**
- (c) March 1st
- (d) February 1st

131. The global stockpile of the Ebola vaccine is being created in which nation?
(a) Greenland
(b) Germany
(c) **Switzerland**
(d) Italy
132. The United States has re-designated which nation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism?
(a) Ukraine
(b) Turkey
(c) Iran
(d) **Cuba**
133. Which nation's military contingent will take part in India's Republic Day Parade 2021?
(a) France
(b) Russia
(c) UK
(d) **Bangladesh**
134. Renowned fashion designer Satya Paul passed away on January 6, 2021. He was known for giving a modern look to which traditional outfit?
(a) **Saree**
(b) Dhoti
(c) Suit
(d) Lehenga
135. Protestors violated the security of which nation's Capitol Building on January 6, 2021?
(a) India
(b) France
(c) UK
(d) **US**
136. Which state rolled out the launch pad scheme?
(a) Telangana
(b) Bihar
(c) Uttar Pradesh
(d) **Madhya Pradesh**
137. The centre has decided to form a committee for the protection of language, culture and land of which region?
(a) J&K
(b) **Ladakh**
(c) Puducherry
(d) Lakshadweep

138. Which state government will initiate the world's largest floating solar project by 2023?

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) Karnataka
- (c) Gujarat
- (d) Madhya Pradesh**

139. The potential first case of a new and deadly 'Disease X' has been discovered in which nation?

- (a) Uganda
- (b) Angola
- (c) Zambia
- (d) Democratic Republic of Congo**

140. Which nation has sanctioned international protocol to abolish death penalty?

- (a) Armenia
- (b) Turkmenistan
- (c) Afghanistan
- (d) Kazakhstan**

141. Which nation recently released its draft Arctic Policy?

- (a) Russia
- (b) US
- (c) France
- (d) India**

142. Which nation is working to develop first wooden satellites to reduce space junk?

- (a) Russia
- (b) US
- (c) Japan**
- (d) India

143. The well-preserved remains of Ice Age Woolly Rhino were found in which nation?

- (a) Russia**
- (b) Antarctica
- (c) Greece
- (d) Iceland

144. Which nation has gained the top spot in the Test rankings?

- (a) New Zealand**
- (b) England
- (c) India
- (d) South Africa

145. Which state has topped the India Innovation Index 2020 among the NE/ Hilly states?

- (a) Meghalaya
- (b) Manipur**

- (c) Uttarakhand
- (d) Himachal Pradesh**

146. Which Union Territory/ City state topped the India Innovation Index 2020?

- (a) Delhi**
- (b) Daman & Diu
- (c) Puducherry
- (d) Andaman & Nicobar Islands

147. Who has been given the additional charge of the AYUSH Ministry?

- (a) Piyush Goyal
- (b) Prakash Javadekar
- (c) Kiren Rijiju**
- (d) Dr. Harsh Vardhan

148. Gujarat state government has renamed which fruit as 'Kamalam'?

- (a) Kiwi
- (b) Rambutan
- (c) Dragon Fruit**
- (d) Mangosteen

149. The Union Cabinet has approved an agreement for cooperation in the field of Solar Energy with which nation?

- (a) Kazakhstan
- (b) Uzbekistan**
- (c) Tajikistan
- (d) Afghanistan

150. Which state's Chief Minister launched Avalokana software?

- (a) Telangana
- (b) Karnataka**
- (c) Maharashtra
- (d) Kerala

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Inquiry Office : B-9, Shop No. 1, Commercial Complex Basement, Main Road,
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