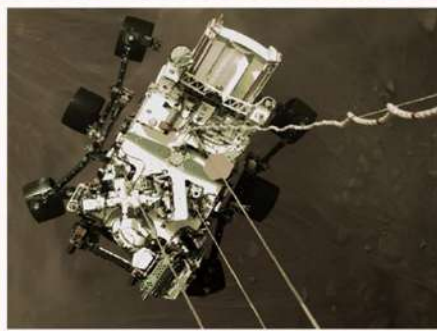


# TNPSC THERVUPETTAGAM

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## **TNPSC BITS**

- ❖ Cricketer Washington Sundar has been named as the Election Icon for Chennai district for the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly polls.
- ❖ Rajeev Ranjan Mishra has been appointed as 47<sup>th</sup> chief secretary of Tamil Nadu.
  - He is succeeding K Shanmugam.
- ❖ Bharat Biotech's Covaxin becomes the first Covid-19 vaccine from India to have its data published in Lancet study.
- ❖ Lieutenant General Chandi Prasad Mohanty becomes the new vice-chief of Army Staff by succeeding Lt General SK Saini.
- ❖ The Chief Electoral Officer of Meghalaya was selected for a Special Award for Information Technology applications in the state's Elections.
  - It was given by the Election Commission of India (ECI), for the National Best Electoral Practices Awards-2020.
- ❖ According to a report by Brand Finance, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has been ranked third most-valued IT services brand globally.
  - After TCS, Accenture and IBM follow the list.
- ❖ Bharti Airtel become the country's first telecom operator to successfully demonstrate live fifth-generation (5G) service.
  - It will be demonstrated over a commercial network in Hyderabad city.
- ❖ India received the third consignment containing three Rafale fighter jets on January 27.
- ❖ The fifth joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum was held recently in New Delhi.
- ❖ Reliance Jio has been ranked the fifth strongest brand globally behind the likes of Ferrari and Coca-Cola.
- ❖ Janet Yellen has been appointed as finance secretary of USA.
  - She is the first woman in American history to hold this position.
- ❖ The National Health Authority has appointed RS Sharma as the new Chief Executive Officer of Ayushman Bharat.
  - It also is called Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.
- ❖ The Prime Minister virtually inaugurated the Chauri Chaura Centenary celebrations on February 1, 2021.
  - He also released a postal stamp that will be dedicated to the centenary year.
- ❖ Larsen & Toubro (L&T) bagged a contract of the Mumbai Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project from the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited.





- ❖ Tamil Nadu won the second Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy cricket series by winning Baroda.
- ❖ Recently, Pakistan received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for its Basmati rice under its Geographical Indications Act 2020.
  - Pakistan is fighting a case in the European Union (EU) against India's move to get Basmati Rice as its product.
- ❖ Mount Merapi, the most active volcano of Indonesia has once again erupted recently.
  - The last major volcanic eruption of Mount Merapi occurred in the year 2010.
- ❖ Facebook Inc. has appointed Henry Moniz as its first-ever Chief Compliance Officer.
- ❖ The Union Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the Hydrogen Energy Mission will be launched in 2021-22.
- ❖ Amazon announced that it would step down Jeff Bezos from the CEO of the company.
  - Jassy will take over as the new CEO of the company.
- ❖ India hosted the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Defence Ministers' Conclave.
  - Theme of the conclave is 'Enhanced Peace, Security and Cooperation in the Indian Ocean'.
- ❖ The Sensex index was closing above the 50,000-point mark for the first time on February 03.
- ❖ Zoho's founder Sridhar Vembu has been appointed as member to the National Security Advisory Board.
- ❖ Reliance Industries Ltd has received the world's first consignment of 'carbon-neutral oil' from Oxy Low Carbon Ventures (OLCV).
  - OLCV is a division of United State oil major Occidental.
- ❖ The South Korea is going to set up the world's biggest offshore wind power complex.
  - It seeks to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.
- ❖ RBI will set up a 24\*7 helpline platform in order to strengthen the digital payment services in India.
- ❖ The PayPal solutions will stop offering the domestic payment services within India from April 1, 2021.
- ❖ The Ministry of AYUSH has formulated the Common Yoga Protocol training programme recently.



- ❖ The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Joint Working Group between India and Kingdom of Bahrain in the field of Renewable Energy held virtually.
- ❖ The Indian Army has laid the foundation stone of the tallest 'Iconic National Flag' at Gulmarg in Jammu and Kashmir.
  - The flag will be on a 100 feet-high pole.
- ❖ A book titled 'By Many a Happy Accident: Recollections of a Life' has been authored by the former Vice President of India M Hamid Ansari.
- ❖ The Odisha Government has decided to move Union Government to reiterate its demand for implementation of MS Swaminathan Committee recommendations regarding minimum support price (MSP) of all crops.
- ❖ United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres re-appointed Michael Bloomberg as his Special Envoy on Climate Ambition and Solutions.
- ❖ US has moved to re-join the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).
  - It was done three years after the former US President Donald Trump withdrew from that global body.
- ❖ Karnataka government declared Vijayanagara as the 31<sup>st</sup> district of that state.
- ❖ Indian bowler Ishant Sharma became the sixth Indian and third pacer from the country to take 300 wickets in Test cricket.
- ❖ The central government has launched a new Central Sector Scheme titled 'Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Produce Organizations (FPOs)'.
- ❖ New Zealand has officially suspended all diplomatic ties with Myanmar as it does not recognise the legitimacy of the new military-led government.
- ❖ China is celebrating Lunar New Year on February 12, 2021 as it ushered into the Year of the Ox.
- ❖ Athlete Hima Das has been appointed as a Deputy Superintendent of Police by the Assam government.
- ❖ The National Payments Corporation of India has announced to launch 'NPCI PayAuth Challenge'.
- ❖ The President of US announced sanctions on the military leaders in Myanmar.
  - The government would identify the first round of sanctions targets and impose the export controls.
- ❖ Tokyo 2020 Olympics chief Yoshiro Mori resigned recently.
- ❖ India and China agreed to disengagement of troops in North and South banks of Pangong Lake.
- ❖ February 12 is Abraham Lincoln's birthday and a museum dedicated to him is closed for the first time at USA.



- ❖ The Supreme Court said that, the inter-caste marriages can reduce caste and community tensions in India.
  - Special Marriages Act 1954 is used to register the inter-religious and inter-caste marriages in the country.
- ❖ Germany's Bayern Munich Team beat Tigres UANL in the final of the FIFA Club World Cup to lift their sixth title.
- ❖ China has banned BBC World News from broadcasting in the country for seriously violating its guidelines for reporting.
- ❖ Arora Akanksha, an Indian-origin employee at the UN has announced her candidacy to be its next Secretary-General.
- ❖ Puducherry launched a campaign named "Zero Covid by Feb28".
  - It aims to ensure that there are no COVID-19 cases by the end of February 2021 in the union territory.
- ❖ Meghna Pant has penned a new book "The Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Good News".
- ❖ The Prime Minister virtually laid the foundation stone of the Maharaja Suheldev Memorial in Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ The International Solar Alliance has announced Dr Ajay Mathur as its new Director-General.
- ❖ Justice Puligoru Venkata Sanjay Kumar has been sworn-in as the Chief Justice of Manipur High Court.
- ❖ Maharashtra government has signed an MoU with Flipkart to promote wooden toys, local artefacts, handicrafts.
- ❖ The former European Central Bank Chief Mario Draghi has been sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Italy.
- ❖ The UN Capital Development Fund has appointed Indian-origin investment and development banker Preeti Sinha as its Executive Secretary.
- ❖ Tata Group firm Tata Electronics signed a MoU with the Tamil Nadu government to set up a facility for manufacturing mobile components.
- ❖ Joe Biden announced the reversal of former President Trump's designation of Ansarallah's actions as a foreign terrorist organisation and specially designated global terrorist group.
  - It is known as Houthis Movement.
- ❖ The 11<sup>th</sup> IEA-IEF-OPEC Symposium on Energy Outlooks was held under the patronage of the Minister of Energy of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz bin Salman Al Saud.



- ❖ Ajay Malhotra became the first Indian to be elected as the Chairperson of the United Nations Advisory Committee of the Human Rights Council.
- ❖ Union Minister of Mines Prahalad Joshi and the state Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik, jointly inaugurated the production of iron ore in two mines in Odisha.
- ❖ Prime Minister addressed a Workshop on 'COVID-19 Management: Experience, Good Practices and Way Forward' with nearly 10 Neighbouring Countries.
  - He called for making a regional air ambulance agreement among neighbouring countries for "medical contingencies".
- ❖ Lt Gen B S Raju will be the new Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of the Indian Army.
- ❖ The Chief Minister of Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal has laid the foundation of the first skill university of eastern India in the Darrang district in Assam.
- ❖ Almost 60 years after Nagaland attained statehood, the national anthem was played inside its assembly for the first time.
  - Nagaland attained statehood on December 1, 1963, and was the 16th state of the Union.
- ❖ The state of Uttar Pradesh has become the first Indian State that has tabled the paperless budget.
- ❖ The Uttarakhand state government has brought an ordinance to give co-ownership rights to the women in the ancestral property of their husbands.
- ❖ Nicaragua has created a new National Ministry for Extra-terrestrial Space Affairs, The Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.
- ❖ The second edition of the Khelo India University Games 2021 is scheduled to be held in Karnataka.
- ❖ Progress MS-16, an unmanned Russian cargo space ship, docked at the International Space Station with a load of supplies.
- ❖ India and Maldives signs agreements for developing the naval harbour at Sifvaru - Uthuru Thilafalhu.
- ❖ The under-construction airport in Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh) will be named Maryada Purushottam Sriram Airport.
- ❖ Ishant Sharma becomes the second Indian Fast Bowler after Kapil Dev (131 Tests) to play 100 Tests.



## TAMIL NADU

### President's Police Medal

- ❖ Commissioner of Police, Chennai, Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal, and other two police officials from Tamil Nadu chosen for the award of the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.
- ❖ The other two officers chosen for the medal are
  - ADGP S. Davidson Devasirvatham and Inspector of Police,
  - P. Manikandakumar, Tamil Nadu Special Police (Battalion-IV), Kovaipudur.

### Chennai corporation innovation officer

- ❖ Azhagu Pandian Raja has been appointed as the first innovation officer of the civic body.
- ❖ It is becoming the first such appointee in the country.
- ❖ He is the Smart Cities Mission Fellow.
- ❖ He developed the Madras Waste Exchange and the Greater Chennai Corporation corona monitoring mobile app.

### Youngest Bal Puraskar winner

- ❖ The youngest awardee this year was Kumari Prasiddhi Singh.
- ❖ She is a 7-year-old social volunteer from Chengalpattu district.
- ❖ She is the founder of Prasiddhi Forest.
- ❖ She has been in the India Book of Records for being the youngest fruit forest creator in the country.
- ❖ She created eight fruit forests in government schools and public places and planted over 9,000 trees.





### **Aquatic quarantine centre**

- ❖ Union minister of fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying Giriraj Singh laid the foundation stone for the aquatic quarantine centre facility at Padappai.
- ❖ This centre will include a disease diagnosing laboratory, exclusively for freshwater organisms.
- ❖ The project also includes disinfection unit, water recirculation system, temperature control (heating and chilling) and aeration facilities.
- ❖ The main objective behind the Centre is to help in augmenting ornamental fish trade.

### **Integrated and Inclusive Public Grievance CM Helpline**

- ❖ For effective and speedy disposal of public grievances, the state government issued a Government Order on setting up of Integrated and Inclusive Public Grievance CM Helpline Management System (IIPGCMS).
- ❖ This system will help integrate the grievance redressal mechanisms and helplines of all departments and will bring them on a single platform.
- ❖ A help desk, with helpline number '1100' would be set up as part of the scheme.

### **TN State awards**

- ❖ Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami presented State awards on 72nd republic day.
- ❖ The floats by Health and Police departments won the first prize.
- ❖ Rural Development Depart got the second prize.
- ❖ Tourism and Information Technology departments won the third prize for the floats.
- ❖ Salem City Police Station, Thiruvannamalai City Police Station and Kotturpuram Police Stations received the top three ranking stations across the State.
- ❖ C Narayanasamy Naidu award for highest productivity in rice was given to G Selvakumar, North Srivilliputhur village.
- ❖ K.A. Abdul Jabbar from Coimbatore district received the Kottai Ameer Communal Harmony Award for 2021.
- ❖ Gandhi Adigal Police Medal to following four police personnel
  - T Magudeeswari - St Thomas Mount
  - N Selvaraju- Salem
  - S Shunmuganathan- Srivilliputhur and

- S Rajasekaran- Thiruvannamalai.
- ❖ Anna Medal for Gallantry awardees are
  - P. Mullai – The teacher who saved her 26 students from the LPG explosion
  - A. Prakash - Forest Veterinary Assistant Surgeon who involved in the rescue of an elephant that fell into a 60-feet deep well.
  - Loco Pilot J. Suresh - saved the lives of over 1,500 passengers on board the train.
  - R. Pugazendiran - saved the life of an injured policeman after a tree fell.

### **Memorial of former CM J Jayalalithaa**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami inaugurated a grand memorial built for former CM J Jayalalitha on 27<sup>th</sup> January in marina beach.
- ❖ It is modelled on a phoenix to depict her political resurgence against all odds.
- ❖ Her signature slogan "Makkalal Naan Makkalukkaga Naan" is brightly engraved on the mausoleum.



### **Smart and next gen bikes**

- ❖ Smart bikes and next generation bikes were launched by chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami at the Marina beach.
- ❖ It is the part of a Greater Chennai Corporation initiative.
- ❖ The battery-powered bikes can run for 45km once fully charged.
- ❖ It can also be pedalled.

POWERING NEW INTEREST			Pic: B A Raju
<b>Number of vehicles available</b> <b>1,000</b>	<b>HOW TO USE</b> ➤ Download Smart Bike app ➤ Register using personal details ➤ Pay through the app	 <p><b>GEARED UP:</b> People ride smart bikes at Marina on Thursday</p>	<b>SMART BIKE FEATURES</b> ➤ Smart bikes are battery-operated ➤ Can reach 25km/hr speed, run for 45km with full charge ➤ Aimed at aiding last-mile connectivity, long-distance travel
<b>Locations</b> 100 <b>TYPES OF RIDES</b> ➤ Smart bikes ➤ Next generation e-bikes			
<b>CHARGES</b> Smart bike   ₹1 /minute   Next gen bike   ₹5.50 for 30 minute & ₹9.90 for every extra hour			

### IIT-M cultural fest 'Saarang'

- ❖ Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M) has announced that the institute's annual cultural fest, Saarang will be held online this year.
- ❖ It is its first online edition.
- ❖ The theme of Saarang will be "Vintage Vogue".



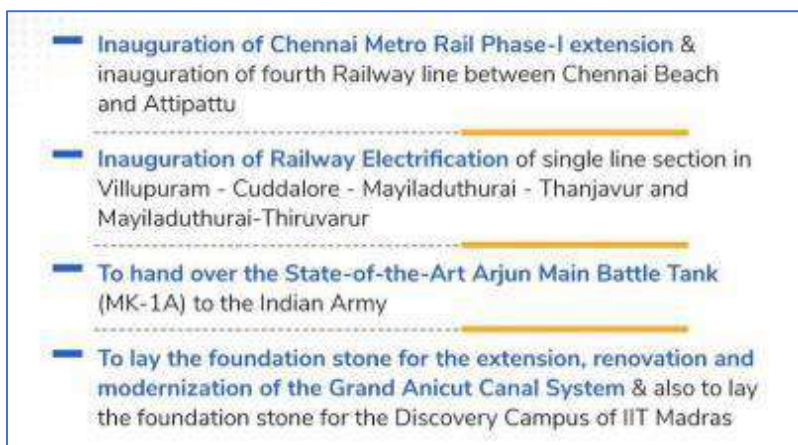
### New projects and schemes

- ❖ Tamil Nadu chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami launched a crop loan waiver scheme on 13th February.
- ❖ Government has also set a deadline for loans availed until January 31, 2021, for the waiver scheme.
- ❖ CM launched the seventh phase of excavations at the Keeladi site in Sivaganga district.
- ❖ He laid the foundation stone for construction of four check dams across the river Tamiraparani in Tuticorin district.



## Key projects by Prime Minister

- ❖ Prime Minister unveiled several key projects in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ He inaugurated the following:
  - Fourth Metro railway line between Chennai beach and Attipattu.
  - Railway electrification of single line section in Villupuram-Cuddalore-Mayiladuthurai-Thanjavur and Mayiladuthurai-Tiruvarur in Tamil Nadu.
  - Unveiled the foundation stone for the Discovery Campus of the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras.
  - Laid the foundation stone for the extension, renovation and modernisation of the Grand Anicut Canal System.



## New industrial and MSME policies

- ❖ The Tamil Nadu government on February 16 announced a new industrial policy.
- ❖ It aims to achieve four key objectives
  - Attract investments worth over ₹10-lakh crore (\$135 billion) by 2025,
  - Achieve annual growth rate of 15 per cent in the manufacturing sector during the policy period,
  - Increase contribution of manufacturing sector to 30 per cent of the state's economy by 2030 from 25 per cent now and
  - Create over 20 lakh jobs by 2025.

### MSME Policy

- ❖ The Chief Minister also unveiled a new MSME Policy to offer a vibrant ecosystem for MSMEs/Start-ups.
- ❖ It set a target to
  - Attract new investments worth ₹2-lakh crore by 2025 and



- Create additional employment opportunities for 20 lakh people.
- ❖ New MSMEs and start-ups will be exempted from approvals for establishment and operation for a period of three years based on self-certification.
- ❖ These unit shall have mandatory approval within a period of one year from the expiry of the 3-year period.
- ❖ The new policy has also enhanced ceiling for various subsidies provided to MSMEs.
- ❖ Also plug & play facilities, plots and sheds will be developed and made available to them on short term lease.

### **Oil & Gas sector projects in Tamil Nadu**

- ❖ PM Modi laid the foundation stone of key oil, gas sector projects in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ He dedicated the Ramanathapuram-Thoothukudi natural gas pipeline and Gasoline Desulphurisation Unit at Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited, Manali.
- ❖ He also laid the foundation stone of the Cauvery Basin Refinery at Nagapattinam.

### **Amazon Manufacturing Unit in Chennai**

- ❖ Amazon announced that it will start a manufacturing unit in Chennai.
- ❖ It will start producing of Amazon Fire TV Stick devices.
- ❖ The manufacturing unit will be set up in partnership with Foxconn's subsidiary, Cloud Network Technology.

### **Bonded Labour System Abolition Day**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu government has announced that it will observe February 9 as Bonded Labour System Abolition Day.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu is the first state in the country to make such an announcement.
- ❖ Union government enacted the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act on February 9, 1976.

### **Helpline No '1100'**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister launched a helpline service for expeditious redressal of people's grievances.
- ❖ Under this, the public may register their complaints by calling a toll-free number '1100.'

- ❖ Under this plan, people may also use a dedicated portal (CMHelpline.tnega.org).
- ❖ Alternatively, they may send complaints through e-mail at [cmhelpline@tn.gov.in](mailto:cmhelpline@tn.gov.in).
- ❖ Also, they can file by using a mobile app 'CMHelpline Citizen' on their smart phones and lodge their complaints.



### **Tamil Nadu Interim Budget**

- ❖ Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister O. Panneer selvam presented the interim Budget ahead of the State elections.
- ❖ TN's GSDP as per Revised Estimates 2020-21 is at Rs. 19.43 lakh crore.
- ❖ It is estimated to increase to Rs. 23.42 lakh crore in 2021-22.
- ❖ The government incurred an expenditure of ₹ 13,352.85 crore on the Covid response.
- ❖ It is providing accident-cum-life insurance cover for 55.67 lakh breadwinners from Below the Poverty Line (BPL) families.
- ❖ It enhanced medical insurance cover for government employees from 4 lakhs to 5 lakhs.
- ❖ Approval has been granted for constructing an industrial park at Kallapalayam in Coimbatore district.
- ❖ Around 40 lakh households will be provided with drinking water connection.
- ❖ The subsidy for roofing under the Prime Minister's housing scheme has been hiked to Rs. 70,000.
- ❖ The Computer Science subject will be taught to Students from 6th to 10th standard.
- ❖ The number of fire stations at Sivakasi, the fireworks hub of India, will be increased.



### Allocations

- ❖ An allocation of Rs 144 crore has been set aside for Amma Mini Clinics.
- ❖ For the Higher Education department, Rs 5,478.19 crore has been allocated.
- ❖ This is up 8.42%.
- ❖ Rs 688.48 crore allocated for the welfare of persons with disability.
- ❖ This is supposed to go towards a special project called RIGHTS.
- ❖ Rs. 6,683 crores were allocated for Coimbatore Metro project.
- ❖ Rs 7,217 crore were allocated for fisheries.
- ❖ School education sector allocated Rs. 34,181 crores.
- ❖ The allocation for Agriculture was increased by 7.8% in the Interim Budget Estimates for 2021-22.
- ❖ Rs. 1738 crore allocated towards the state's agriculture sector.
- ❖ Additional Rs. 5000 crores allocated towards crop loan waiver.
- ❖ Relief provided for loss of paddy due to natural disasters hiked from Rs. 13,000 per hectare to Rs. 20,000 per hectare.
- ❖ Rs. 4371 crores distributed to beneficiaries under the state marriage assistance scheme.
- ❖ Further, gold worth Rs. 1791 crore distributed to 12.5 lakh people over the last 10 years under the state marriage financing scheme

### Debt

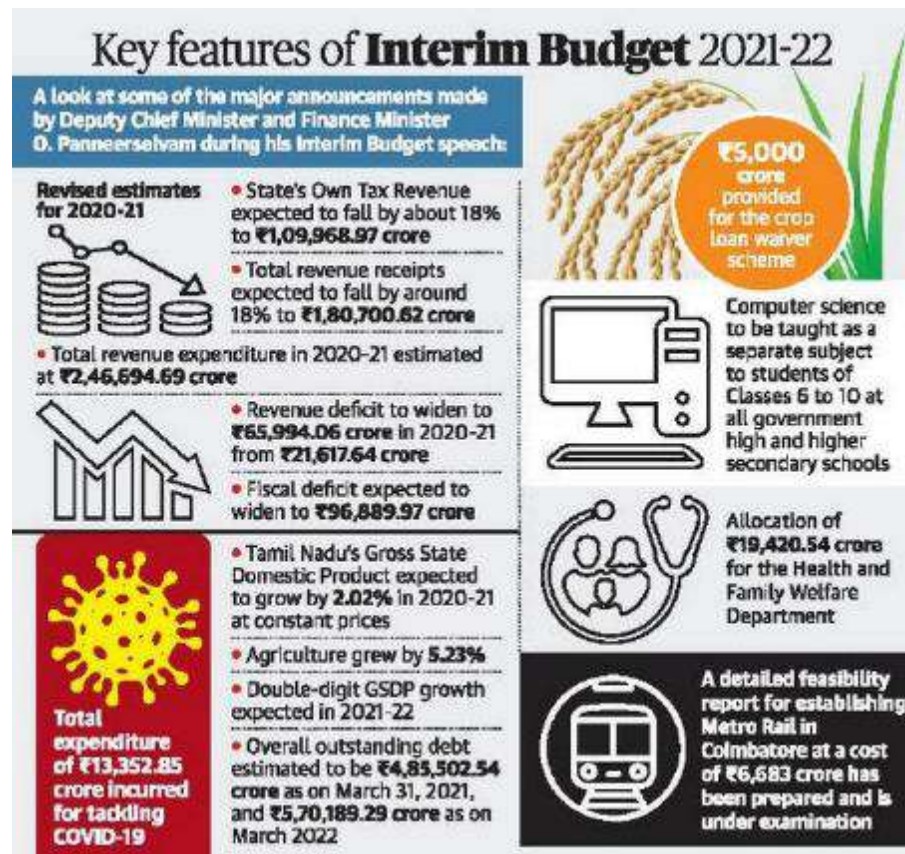
- ❖ Tamil Nadu's overall debt is estimated to be Rs. 5.70 lakh crore as on March 31, 2022.
- ❖ It is estimated to be Rs. 4.85 lakh crore as on March 31, 2021.
- ❖ The State is estimated to raise net debt of ₹84,686.75 crore to finance the fiscal deficit in 2021-22.

### Tax Revenue and fiscal deficit

- ❖ Interim budget estimates for 2021-22, State GST revenue: Rs. 45,395.50 crore, VAT: Rs. 56,413.19 crore, State Excise Duty: Rs. 9,613.91 crore.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu's share of central taxes was reduced to ₹23,039.46 crore in the Union Budget (revised estimates for 2020-21) from ₹32,849.34 crore in the Budget estimates for 2020-21.
- ❖ State's Own Tax Revenue is estimated to be Rs. 1.09 lakh crore in the Revised Estimates 2020-21.
- ❖ It is a decrease of Rs. 23,561 crores in the Budget Estimates 2020-21.
- ❖ This is estimated to increase to Rs. 1.35 lakh crore in 2021-22.



- ❖ The total revenue receipts are estimated at ₹2,18,991.96 crore.
- ❖ Budgeting for all ongoing salary, pension, interest and scheme related expenditure, the revenue expenditure is projected at ₹2,60,409.26 crore in the interim Budget estimates for 2021-22.
- ❖ The overall revenue deficit for 2021-22 is estimated to be ₹41,417.30 crore.
- ❖ TN's fiscal deficit is expected to widen to Rs. 96,889.97 crore in the Revised Estimates for 2020-21.
- ❖ It is 4.99% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
- ❖ It will be within the limits recommended by the 15th Finance Commission.



### GSDP

- ❖ Tamil Nadu is expected to register a positive GSDP growth of 2.02% in 2020-21 (which is based on constant prices in 2020-21), as opposed to a 7.7% negative growth projected at the all-India level.
- ❖ The strongest performer is the primary sector (agriculture), at 5.23%, with the livestock and fisheries sectors registering even stronger growth.
- ❖ The growth in the secondary sector is 1.25%, and in the services sector, 1.64% in 2020-21.

# NATIONAL

## NCLAT Chennai Bench

- ❖ The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Chennai Bench of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT).
- ❖ It will have the jurisdiction of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Lakshadweep and Puducherry.

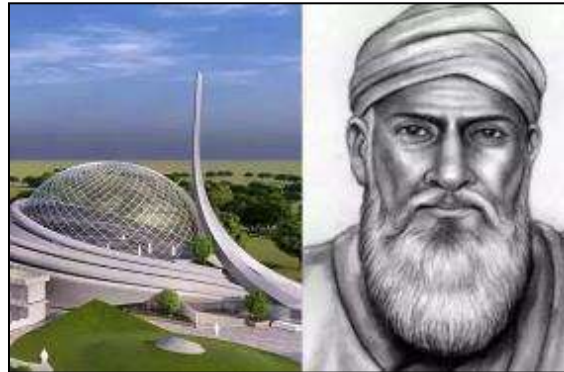


## Bangladesh army in Republic Day parade

- ❖ For the first time, a marching contingent of Bangladesh tri-services participated in the Republic Day Parade.
- ❖ It is commemorating the India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war
- ❖ That war led to the creation of Bangladesh.
- ❖ The 122-member contingent of the Bangladesh Armed Forces comprising soldiers of the Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force has participated in this.
- ❖ It was led by the contingent Commander Lieutenant Colonel Abu Mohammed Shahnnoor Shawon and his deputies.

## Ayodhya Mosque

- ❖ The mosque in Ayodhya district will be dedicated to Ahmadullah Shah.
- ❖ It will be built on the land in lieu of Babri Masjid.
- ❖ He earned the nickname of ‘Awadh’s Lighthouse of Rebellion’ during the first war of independence against the British in 1857.



### **National Non-Communicable Disease Monitoring Survey (NNMS)**

- ❖ It was recently released in India by the Ministry of health.
- ❖ The survey was conducted for the period of 2017-18.
- ❖ This is the first of its kind of a comprehensive survey on Non-Communicable Diseases.
- ❖ It covers the age groups of 15-69 years, males and females from the urban and rural areas.

#### **Key findings**

- ❖ Two in five adults have three or more risk factors for non-communicable diseases (NCD) in India.
- ❖ More than one in every four adults and 6.2% adolescents were overweight or obese.
- ❖ Three out of ten adults had raised blood pressure.
- ❖ 3 Percent had raised blood glucose.
- ❖ One in every three adults and more than one-fourth proportion of men were involved in tobacco consumption and consumed alcohol in past 12 months.

### **72<sup>nd</sup> Republic Day parade's unique features**

- ❖ India's 72nd R-Day parade have no chief guest after more than five decades.
- ❖ Troops deployed in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands participated along with India's first woman fighter pilot.
- ❖ A tableau of newly formed UT of Ladakh was displayed.
- ❖ The newly acquired multirole Rafale fighters also fly over Rajpath.
- ❖ There was no participation of military veterans and no stunts by motorcycle daredevils.

- ❖ Even the route of the parade has been curtailed till the National Stadium.
- ❖ The size of marching contingents has been reduced from regular 144 to 96.
- ❖ The number of spectators cut down to 25,000.
- ❖ For the first time A 122 - member Bangladesh contingent participated in the parade.

### **World's Fastest-growing Mature Tech Ecosystem**

- ❖ Bengaluru has been designated as the fastest-growing mature technology ecosystem in the world since 2016.
- ❖ This report has been prepared by London & Partners
- ❖ It analysed the data from Dealroom.co to determine the rankings.



- ❖ London has secured the second spot on the list.
- ❖ Munich, Berlin, and Paris have been ranked 3rd, 4th, and 5th respectively.
- ❖ Mumbai has attained the 6<sup>th</sup> spot in the report.
- ❖ Bengaluru has also been placed in the 6<sup>th</sup> position for tech venture capitalist (VC) investments in the world.
- ❖ Shanghai has topped this global list of tech venture capitalist (VC) investments.

### **Virtual Intelligence Tool - Tejas**

- ❖ National Informatics Centre Services Inc (NICSI) celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> years of the establishment.
- ❖ On that occasion, virtual intelligence tool 'Tejas' is launched by Electronics, Information Technology, and Communications Ministry.
- ❖ It will extract important information from data.
- ❖ It will help in improving policy decisions and efficiency of government's services.

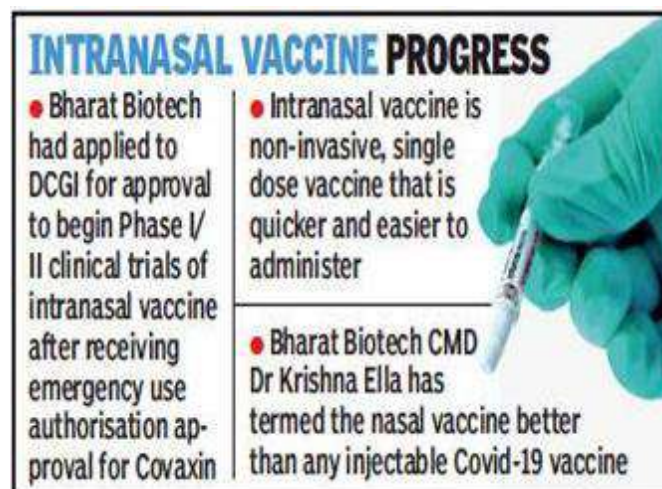


- ❖ It will also be ensuring the proper delivery of citizen-centric services.
- ❖ 'Work from Anywhere' portal was also launched along with Tejas.
- ❖ This portal allows employees to access applications like mail, e-office, calendar, and other departmental application from anywhere.
- ❖ NICS I is working under the National Informatics Centre.



### **Bharat Biotech's BBV154 vaccine**

- ❖ Bharat Biotech's BBV154 is the first publicized attempt at getting an intranasal Covid-19 vaccine.
- ❖ Vaccines are most commonly administered as injectable shots into the muscles or the tissue just between the skin and the muscles.
- ❖ But intranasal vaccines are the solution squirted or sprayed into the nostrils.
- ❖ It is inhaled instead of injecting it.
- ❖ It isn't the most common route of administering a vaccine.
- ❖ So far, only some flu shots are given this way.





## India's Agreement with IEA

- ❖ Framework for Strategic Partnership between the International Energy Agency (IEA) members and the Government of India was signed recently.
- ❖ This framework aims to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation.
- ❖ It will enhance global energy security, stability and sustainability.
- ❖ It would be a stepping stone towards India becoming a full member of the IEA.
- ❖ IEA is an autonomous intergovernmental organisation
- ❖ It is established in 1974 as per the framework of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

## Vaccine Maitri Initiative

- ❖ This initiative was launched by India
- ❖ It aims to gift COVID-19 vaccines to neighbouring countries.
- ❖ Recently, Sri Lanka and Bahrain have received the COVID-19 vaccines from India under this initiative.
- ❖ India has already delivered over 5 million doses to seven countries in the neighbourhood under this initiative.
- ❖ The 7 countries are Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Mauritius and Seychelles.
- ❖ Commercial supplies of Covishield have also been sent to Morocco, Brazil and Bangladesh.





### **National Marine Turtle Action Plan**

- ❖ It was released by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Ministry also released the 'Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines' along with the Marine Turtle Action Plan.
- ❖ Both these documents include the ways and measures to promote inter-sectoral action for conservation.

### **125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of "Prabuddha Bharat"**

- ❖ The 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration 'Prabuddha Bharata' was held on January 31, 2021.
- ❖ 'Prabuddha Bharata' is a monthly magazine of the Ramakrishna Order.
- ❖ This magazine was founded in the year 1896 by P. Aiyasami, B. R. Rajam Iyer, G. G. Narasimhacharya, and B. V. Kamesvara Iyer.
- ❖ It was started under the guidance of Swami Vivekananda.
- ❖ The journal was published in Chennai for 2 years.
- ❖ After that, the magazine started publishing from Almora.
- ❖ From April 1899, the magazine started publishing from Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata.

### **India Justice report-2020**

- ❖ It is prepared by the Tata Trusts in collaboration with the
  - Centre for Social Justice,
  - Common Cause,
  - DAKSH organisation,
  - Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy and
  - The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.
- ❖ The Report assesses the capacity of various states to deliver justice.
- ❖ Maharashtra was ranked topmost among 18 states for the second time in a row.
- ❖ It was followed by Tamil Nadu and Telangana.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh remains last.
- ❖ Amongst the smaller states, Goa remained at the top and Arunachal Pradesh at the bottom.



### Other findings

- ❖ Bihar leads the list of 25 states for employing most women in its police force (25.3%).
- ❖ It is the only state to have more than 20% women in the police force.
- ❖ Tamil Nadu has the highest percentage of women police officers (24.8%),
- ❖ It is followed by Mizoram (20.1%).
- ❖ Only 29% judges in High Courts across the country are women.
- ❖ But no state except Sikkim has over 20% women judges.
- ❖ Bihar, Uttarakhand, Tripura and Meghalaya have no woman judges in high courts.
- ❖ Karnataka is the only state to meet its quotas for SC, ST and OBC in both officer cadre and constabulary.

### **Kala Utsav**

- ❖ It is an annual function to promote arts in education.
- ❖ It was organised by the Ministry of Education.
- ❖ This programme was initiated under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA).
- ❖ RMSA has now been merged with other schemes.
- ❖ Now It was under 'Samagra Shiksha – an integrated scheme for school education'.

### **Winners of Republic Day tableaux**

- ❖ The Ram Temple tableau of Uttar Pradesh has bagged the first prize among all tableaux.
- ❖ It was on display during the Republic Day 2021.
  - Its theme was 'Ayodhya: Cultural Heritage of Uttar Pradesh'.
- ❖ The Tripura tableau won the second prize for the Republic Day parade.
- ❖ Uttarakhand's tableau was adjudged third among the states and union territories.
  - Its theme was 'Dev Bhoomi — The Land of the Gods'.
- ❖ The tableau of Central Public Works Department (CPWD) bagged a special prize for paying tribute to the fallen heroes of the armed forces.
  - Its theme was 'Amar Jawan'.



### **New minor forest produces under MSP**

- ❖ The government has decided to include 14 new minor forest produce items under the Minimum Support Price (MSP).
- ❖ The items included in the scheme are Tasar Cocoon, bamboo shoot, elephant apple dry, wild dry mushroom and malkangani seed.

### **8<sup>th</sup> India International Silk Fair**

- ❖ The Textiles Minister of India, Smriti Irani, inaugurated the 8th India International Silk Fair on the Virtual Portal.
- ❖ This fair is the biggest silk fair of India.
- ❖ The fair is being held under the virtual platform of Indian Silk Export Promotion Council.

### **Silks in India**

- ❖ India is the 2nd largest producer of Silk after China.
- ❖ India is also the largest consumer of silk across the world.
- ❖ Around 97% of the raw mulberry silk is produced in five states.
- ❖ These are Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Gujarat.
- ❖ Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh and Gobichettipalayam in Tamil Nadu were some of the first locations to establish the automated silk reeling units.
- ❖ In Tamil Nadu, mulberry silk cultivation is concentrated in Salem, Erode and Dharmapuri districts.



### **15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission report**

- ❖ The final report of the Fifteenth Finance Commission of India for FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26 was tabled in the Parliament.
- ❖ The Finance Commissions generally submit their reports for a five-year duration.
- ❖ The report has been organized in four volumes:
  - Volume I and II – Main report
  - Volume III: Focused on centre - it examines key departments in greater depth, with the medium-term challenges and the roadmap ahead.
  - Volume IV: Entirely focused on states - it analyses the finances of each State in great depth and has recommended state-specific considerations to address the key challenges that individual States face.

#### **Key recommendation**

- ❖ Maintaining vertical devolution at 41 per cent to maintain predictability and stability of resources.
- ❖ Spending on health by states should be increased to more than 8 per cent of their budget by 2022.
- ❖ Giving additional borrowing room to States based on performance in power sector reforms.

### **India's First 'Amputee Clinic'**

- ❖ India's first amputee clinic has been launched by the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh.
- ❖ It has been set up to improve the care of amputee patients by providing a wide range of services under one roof and with significant coordination.
- ❖ The amputee clinic will include all the specialities that help in patient care and rehab under one roof.

### **National Tribal Festival Aadi Mahotsav**

- ❖ The Vice President Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the "Aadi Mahotsav", a National Tribal Festival.
- ❖ It was organized by TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- ❖ It is a Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Crafts, Cuisine and Commerce.
- ❖ It is an annual initiative that was commenced in 2017.



## Aero India 2021

- ❖ The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of India's premier aerospace and defence exhibition, Aero India 2021 kickstarted in Bengaluru at Air Force Station Yelahanka.
- ❖ It held a combination of both physical and virtual exhibition.
- ❖ It is the biennial international event.
- ❖ This edition is the world's first hybrid aerospace show.

## Using mobile phones in Rajya Sabha

- ❖ The Rajya Sabha Chairman, recently warned MPs against using the mobile phones to record the proceedings of the House.
- ❖ Unauthorised recordings and its circulation on social media are a breach of Parliamentary privilege.
- ❖ It will be considered as contempt of the House.
- ❖ The Parliamentary rules does not allow the usage of mobile phones within Rajya Sabha chambers.

## Second most resilient economy in 2021

- ❖ India will emerge as the second most resilient economy in 2021.
- ❖ It is stated in the International Economic Resilience (IER) Rank.
- ❖ It is released by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI).
- ❖ The ranking has been topped by Germany, among the top-10 leading economies.
- ❖ South Korea is at the third position in the list.

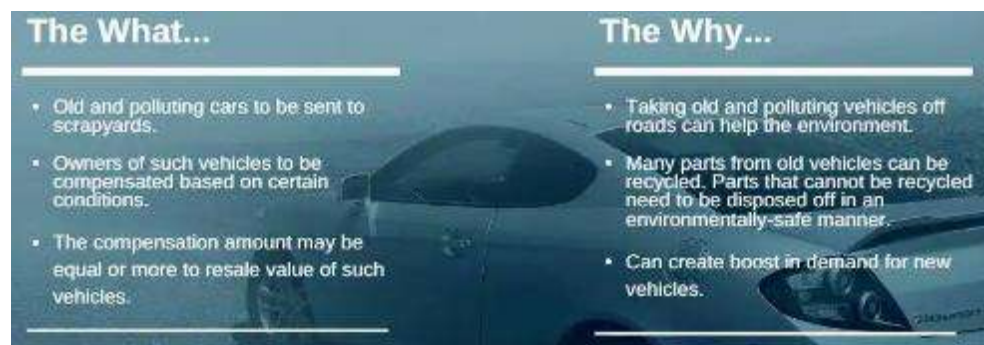
Top 10 Leading Economies	International Economic Resilience (IER) Rank	Real GDP growth Rate	Merchandise Export Growth	Current Account Balance % of GDP	General Govt. net lending / borrowing (% of GDP)	Gross Debt to GDP ratio	Aggregate of ranks of each leading indicator
Germany	1	7	5	1	2	3	18
India	2	1	1	6	8	4	20
South Korea	3	8	10	2	1	1	22
China	4	2	8	5	9	2	26
Canada	5	6	2	9	6	6	29
France	5	3	7	7	5	7	29
Japan	5	8	4	3	4	10	29
USA	5	4	3	8	6	8	29
Italy	6	9	6	4	3	9	31
UK	7	5	9	10	7	5	36

### **Yudh Abhyas joint military exercise**

- ❖ The 16<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Yudh Abhyas', India-US joint military exercise, will be held in Rajasthan.
- ❖ The drill has come days after the air forces of France and India held a 5-day joint exercise in Rajasthan.
- ❖ The joint military exercise near the India-Pakistan border aims at enhancing the interoperability and cooperation between the two armies.
- ❖ It will also be focusing on counter-terrorism operations under the United Nations mandate.

### **Voluntary Vehicle Scrappage Policy**

- ❖ This proposal was made during the presentation of the Union Budget for Financial Year 2022.
- ❖ It will help to scrap out the unfit and pollution-causing vehicles.
- ❖ It will also help in encouraging the fuel-efficient and environment-friendly vehicles.
- ❖ Thus, it will reduce the vehicular pollution and cut the India's huge oil import bills.
- ❖ The voluntary scrappage policy will be based on fitness tests.
- ❖ Life has been set at 20 years in case of private vehicles while 15 years have been set for commercial vehicles.
- ❖ This policy would apply to central and state government-owned vehicles from April 1, 2022.



### **Agricultural infrastructure and development cess (AIDC)**

- ❖ Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed the imposition of AIDC during her Union Budget 2021.
- ❖ The cess is not uniform and will vary from product to product.



- ❖ Cess of Rs 2.5 per litre on petrol and Rs 4 per litre on diesel are announced.
- ❖ Consequently, unbranded petrol and diesel will attract basic excise duty of Rs 1.4 and Rs 1.8 per litre respectively.
- ❖ Further, Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED) on unbranded petrol and diesel shall be Rs 11 and Rs 8 per litre respectively.
- ❖ Blended fuel will be exempted from cesses and surcharges.
- ❖ It includes M-15 petrol and E-20 petrol.

### **PM AatmaNirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana and the Mission Poshan 2.0**

- ❖ Finance Minister of India has announced two new centrally sponsored scheme namely,
  - The PM Aatma Nirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana and
  - The Mission Poshan 2.0
- ❖ This was announced in addition to the National Health Mission (NHM).
- ❖ PM Aatma Nirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana aims to establish additional health care and allied infrastructures.
- ❖ Mission Poshan 2.0 is aimed at improving and strengthening nutritional content, delivery and outcomes.
- ❖ This scheme will merge the Poshan Abhiyan and the Supplementary Nutrition Programme.
- ❖ The mission seeks to improve the nutritional outcomes across 112 Aspirational Districts.

### **New Asset Reconstruction and Asset Management Company**

- ❖ The Union Budget 2021 announced the creation of new asset reconstruction and asset management company.
- ❖ The new Asset reconstruction and asset management company will look after the Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) of stressed banks.
- ❖ New amendments will be incorporated so that the Asset reconstruction depositors can get easy and time-bound access to their savings.
- ❖ This in turn will help depositors in banks that are currently under stress.

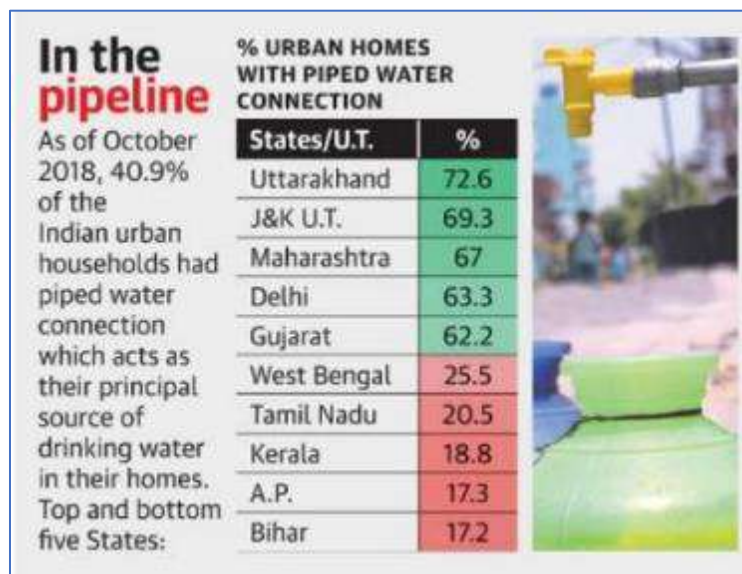
### **Electricity distribution reform programme**

- ❖ Rupees 3.05 trillion worth electricity distribution reform programme are announced in the Union Budget 2021.

- ❖ It will help in reducing the losses and improve the efficiency of electricity distribution companies (DISCOMs).
- ❖ A framework was also announced during the budget presentation.
- ❖ It allows a choice of electricity supplier to consumers.
- ❖ The government is also considering to table the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

### **Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban)**

- ❖ The urban water supply mission under the Jal Jeevan Mission was announced in the Budget.
- ❖ It would include rejuvenation of water bodies as well as 20% of supply from reused water.
- ❖ There is an estimated gap of 2.68 crore urban household tap connections.



- ❖ The Mission would seek to bridge that gap in all 4,378 statutory towns.
- ❖ It would also aim to bridge the gap of 2.64 crore sewer connections in the 500 cities.
- ❖ It will be under the existing Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT).
- ❖ This mission would include rejuvenation of water bodies to boost the sustainable freshwater supply.
- ❖ It would also include the creation of green spaces.

## **Mega Investment Textiles Parks (MITRA) Scheme**

- ❖ The Finance Minister has proposed setting up of a scheme of Mega Investment Textiles Parks (MITRA) Scheme.
- ❖ It aims to enable the textile industry to become globally competitive, attract large investments, and boost employment generation and exports.
- ❖ It will create world-class infrastructure with plug and play facilities to enable create global champions in exports.



## **National Horticulture Fair 2021**

- ❖ It is a five-day event.
- ❖ It was organised at the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR) campus.
- ❖ It held virtually as well as offline.
- ❖ The theme of the fair is 'Horticulture for Start-Up and Stand-Up India'.
- ❖ IIHR institute is a subsidiary of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).





### **First women team of CoBRA**

- ❖ 34 CRPF women personnel were inducted into the specialized jungle warfare commando force called CoBRA.
- ❖ The contingent would now be deployed in the anti-naxal operations grid of India.
- ❖ COBRA is a special operation unit of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) of India.
- ❖ The operation unit is skilled in the guerrilla tactics and jungle warfare.
- ❖ It was established in the year 2009 to counter the Naxalite problem.

### **MCA21 Version 3.0**

- ❖ Ministry of Corporate Affairs will launch the data analytics-driven MCA21 Version 3.0 by October 2021.
- ❖ MCA21 Version 3.0 system is the Mission Mode e-Governance project of India.
- ❖ This project will comprise of the additional modules for e-Adjudication, e-Consultation, and Compliance Management.



### **26 more Green Zone sites**

- ❖ The Central government has recently given the approval for 26 more green zone site for drones.
- ❖ The approval was given in the light of facilitating the operations by No-Permission-No-Take-off (NPNT) compliant drones.
- ❖ The approval was given by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Defence.
- ❖ The ministry has also given its nod for six green zone sites earlier.
- ❖ These approved sites will be enabled on the Digital Sky Platform now.
- ❖ After that, all Unique Identification Number holders would be given instant flight permissions online.



### **New Green Zone sites**

- Uttar Pradesh has the maximum number of 8
- 6 sites were approved in Jharkhand
- 4 in Chhattisgarh
- 2 in Telangana
- One in each of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, Gujarat; Odisha and Mizoram.

### **Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga project**

- ❖ The Prime Minister dedicated LPG import terminal to nation.
- ❖ It is 348 km Dobhi – Durgapur Natural Gas Pipeline section.
- ❖ It is part of the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga project.
- ❖ Totally, the pipeline length of 2540 km is under construction from the states of Uttar Pradesh to Odisha.
- ❖ Now this project has put West Bengal in to the project map.
- ❖ It aims to provide piped cooking gas to the households of Varanasi within next two years and to millions of others in neighbour states after one more year.

### **Length wise distribution**

- ❖ The state of UP gets the gas line of length 338 km.
- ❖ Bihar state will get about 441 km long line.
- ❖ Jharkhand gets 500 KM long.
- ❖ West Bengal will have the pipe line of length 542 km
- ❖ Odisha gets benefited by 718 km pipeline.

### **Dismantling of INS Viraat**

- ❖ The Supreme Court put on hold the further dismantling of INS Viraat.
- ❖ Envitech Marine Consultants Pvt Ltd has been looking to acquire the warship and convert INS Viraat into a maritime museum.
- ❖ It was acquired from the UK in 1986.
- ❖ Before that, INS Viraat had served as HMS Hermes in the Royal Navy.
- ❖ The carrier was decommissioned in 2017.
- ❖ Subsequently it was sold to Shree Ram group for scrapping.



## **Registered Unrecognized Political Parties**

- ❖ The number of registered unrecognised political parties has increased two-fold from 2010 to 2019.
- ❖ It is reported by Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).
- ❖ ADR is an Indian non-governmental organization
- ❖ It was established in 1999 and is situated at New Delhi.
- ❖ There are 2,360 political parties registered with the Election Commission of India.
- ❖ In that, 97.50% of them are unrecognised.
- ❖ From 1,112 registered unrecognised parties in 2010, the number has increased to 2,301 in 2019.
- ❖ The following are considered as unrecognised parties:
  - Either newly registered parties or
  - Those which have not secured enough percentage of votes in the assembly elections or General elections to become a state party or
  - Those which have never contested elections since being registered
- ❖ A recognised political party shall either be a National party or a State party if it meets certain conditions as prescribed.

## **SAKSHAM portal**

- ❖ The Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) launched a job portal called SAKSHAM.
- ❖ It aims to map the skills of workers as required by the MSMEs.
- ❖ It will help in eliminating the middlemen and labour contractors.
- ❖ The portal will also help in the development of skill cards for 'shramiks' (workers).

## **Seaweed Cultivation Mission**

- ❖ TIFAC (Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council) launched a Seaweed Cultivation Mission.
- ❖ It aims to encourage the commercial farming of seaweeds and its processing.
- ❖ The Seaweed Cultivation is also called as the kelp farming.
- ❖ It is the practice of cultivating and harvesting the seaweed.



### **Divya-Drishti 2021**

- ❖ Indian Army National Seminar-cum-Webinar, named as "Divya-Drishti 2021", was conducted recently.
- ❖ It was organised by the Centre for Land Warfare Studies.
- ❖ It was held on the title 'Multi-Domain Operations: Future of Conflicts'.

### **Manual scavengers Data**

- ❖ A total of 66,692 manual scavengers have been identified across the country.
- ❖ The highest number of manual scavengers have been identified in Uttar Pradesh at 37,379.
- ❖ It is followed by 7,378 in Maharashtra, 6,170 in Uttarakhand and 4,295 in Assam.
- ❖ 340 people have died while cleaning sewers and tanks in the last five years.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana and Karnataka have accounted for nearly 75 per cent of total deaths.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh (52), Tamil Nadu (43) and Delhi (36) were topping the list.
- ❖ Maharashtra had 34 such deaths, while Haryana and Gujarat had 31 each.

### **Resignation of Rajya Sabha MP**

- ❖ Trinamool Congress MP Dinesh Trivedi announced his resignation in the Rajya Sabha.
- ❖ He became a Rajya Sabha member even after his defeat in Barrackpore Lok Sabha elections in 2019.

### **Crop loss during 2017-2019**

- ❖ India has suffered a huge crop loss on 18.176 million hectares of land.
- ❖ It amounts to roughly 8.5 per cent of the total gross cropped area.
- ❖ The crop loss occurred due to floods in the year 2017 to 2019.
- ❖ Out of the losses, around 10.68 million hectares of land was affected in 2019 alone.
- ❖ As per the data, flood-prone states of Bihar, Assam and Uttar Pradesh observed the extreme floods.
- ❖ Extreme floods were also witnessed in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan.

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh was the hardest-hit in all the states.
- ❖ These states had zero crop loss in 2017 and 2018.
- ❖ But in 2019, it suffered the highest loss of 6.047 million hectares of land.

### **India's first CNG tractor**

- ❖ The Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari launched India's first CNG tractor.
- ❖ It can help the farmers save over Rs 1 lakh annually on fuel costs.
- ❖ It is Minister's diesel tractor, which he had bought in 2012.
- ❖ It has been converted to a CNG tractor jointly by Rawmatt Techno Solutions and Tomasetto Achille India.



### **TROPEX-21 Exercise**

- ❖ Theatre level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX-21) is the largest exercise of the Indian Navy.
- ❖ It aims at testing the combat readiness of the Indian Navy in a complex multi-dimensional scenario set in the context of the current geo-strategic environment.
- ❖ It is conducted once in 2 years.
- ❖ The first TROPEX was held in 2005

### **Business Confidence Index (BCI)**

- ❖ It is developed by the Delhi-based economic think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).
- ❖ According to the index, Business Confidence rose 29.6 per cent between second and third quarter of the current financial year.
- ❖ The rise was due to rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in different countries, including India.





### **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Residential Schools**

- ❖ To honour Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the Union government has decided to name residential schools and hostels funded under Samagra Shiksha scheme.
- ❖ These will be named as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose residential schools/hostels.
- ❖ So far, a total of 1063 residential facilities (383 residential Schools and 680 Hostels) were sanctioned to different States and UTs.
- ❖ Of these, 12 schools and 19 hostels are located in poll bound West Bengal.

### **Digital insurance policies**

- ❖ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has asked insurers to issue digital policies in Digilocker to their policyholders.
- ❖ This step will not only bring down the cost but also help speed up claim settlement process.
- ❖ Digilocker is an initiative under the Digital India programme by the government.
- ❖ Using this, citizen can get authentic documents/ certificate in digital format from original issuers of these certificates.

### **Vigyan Jyoti programme phase II**

- ❖ Department of Science and Technology (DST) commenced the second phase of Vigyan Jyoti programme.
- ❖ It is started on the occasion of International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11.
- ❖ It is an initiative to encourage girls to take interest in science and build career.
- ❖ It aims to create a level-playing field for the meritorious girls to pursue STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).
- ❖ It had been running successfully in 50 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNV) since December 2019.
- ❖ Now it has been expanded to 50 more JNVs for the year 2021-22.

### **Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship Programme (MGNF)**

- ❖ The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship recently rolled out this programme in all the districts India.
- ❖ This programme was earlier working across 69 districts.
- ❖ The Fellows under this Programme will acquire the academic expertise and technical competency.



- ❖ MGNF is a two-year fellowship programme.
- ❖ The fellows should be aged between 21 to 30 years to get enrolled.
- ❖ It has been designed under the SANKALP scheme.

### **Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav**

- ❖ The 11<sup>th</sup> Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav was inaugurated at West Bengal.
- ❖ It is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Culture.
- ❖ It is organised under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Programme, since 2015.
- ❖ It aims to celebrate the idea of unity in diversity.

### **Commercial Jute seed distribution scheme**

- ❖ The Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani has launched the commercial Jute seed distribution scheme.
- ❖ It was launched in the backdrop of MoU signed between the Jute Corporation of India and the National Seeds Corporation.
- ❖ The MoU 2020 was for the commercial distribution of 1 thousand Metric Tonne certified jute seeds in the year 2021-22.
- ❖ The Golden Fibre Revolution in India is associated to the jute production.

### **e-Chhawani Portal**

- ❖ The Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh has launched the e-Chhawani portal.
- ❖ Using this portal, the residents of Cantonment areas can now register their complaints with respect to the civic issues.
- ❖ The cantonment board is a civic administration body.
- ❖ It functions under the Ministry of Defence in India.
- ❖ The board is constituted of the elected members, ex-officio members and nominated members in accordance with the Cantonments Act-2006.

### **Amendments for Privatization**

- ❖ The Amendments will be made in the following two acts in order to facilitate the privatisation of public sector banks (PSBs).
  - Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act 1970 and,
  - Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980.



- ❖ These two acts had facilitated for the nationalisation of banks in two phases.
- ❖ Now, in order to privatise the PSU Banks, provisions of these Acts have to be changed.

### **Pey Jal Survekshan**

- ❖ The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched a Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan.
- ❖ This was launched under the Jal Jeevan Mission - Urban (JJM-U).
- ❖ It will be conducted in cities to ensure the equitable distribution of water and reusing the wastewater.
- ❖ It will also help in mapping the water bodies.
- ❖ This sarvekshan will be launched across 10 cities including Badlapur, Agra, Churu, Bhubaneswar, Madurai, Kochi, Patiala, Surat, Rohtak, and Tumkur.

### **Software applications for surveys**

- ❖ The Labour Minister, Santosh Gangwar, will launch the software applications for five all India surveys
- ❖ The survey will also include the data of migrant and domestic workers.
- ❖ The Minister will also release the instruction manuals with questionnaire for all the five All India Surveys.
- ❖ These All India five surveys include
  - On Migrant workers.
  - On Domestic Workers.
  - On Employment Generated by Professionals.
  - On Employment Generated in Transport Sector and
  - Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey.

### **Digital Intelligence Unit**

- ❖ The Ministry of Communications has decided to set up a Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU).
- ❖ It will act as a nodal agency to deal with complaints of unsolicited commercial communication (UCC) and cases of financial fraud, especially in the digital payments space.
- ❖ Apart from the DIU, a Telecom Analytics for Fraud Management and Consumer Protection (TAFMCP) will also be set up at all the 22 license service area levels.

- ❖ It would also ensure strict compliance of the Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preferences Regulations (TCCCPR) 2018.
- ❖ TCCCPR provides a revised regulatory framework aimed at regulating 'unsolicited commercial communication' (UCC) in India.

### **Mahabahu-Brahmaputra initiative**

- ❖ The Prime Minister virtually launched 'Mahabahu-Brahmaputra' initiative in Assam.
- ❖ The Launch of the Mahabahu-Brahmaputra initiative is going to be marked with the inauguration of the Ro-Pax vessel operations.
- ❖ The Ro-Pax vessel operations will be launched in between the Neamatighat & Majuli, Dhubri-Hatsingimari and North-South Guwahati.
- ❖ This initiative also includes the inauguration of the Inland Water Transport Terminal at Jogighopa.
- ❖ He laid the foundation stone for the Dhubri Phulbari bridge.
- ❖ This will be constructed over the Brahmaputra River connecting Dhubri in Assam to Phulbari, Tura, Rongram, and Rongjeng in Meghalaya.
- ❖ He also perform the bhumi puja for the construction of Majuli Bridge in Assam.

### **Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha**

- ❖ Senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge has become the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha.
- ❖ He had been the Congress leader in the Lok Sabha between 2014 and 2019.
- ❖ The incumbent Ghulam Nabi Azad's term ends on February 15.

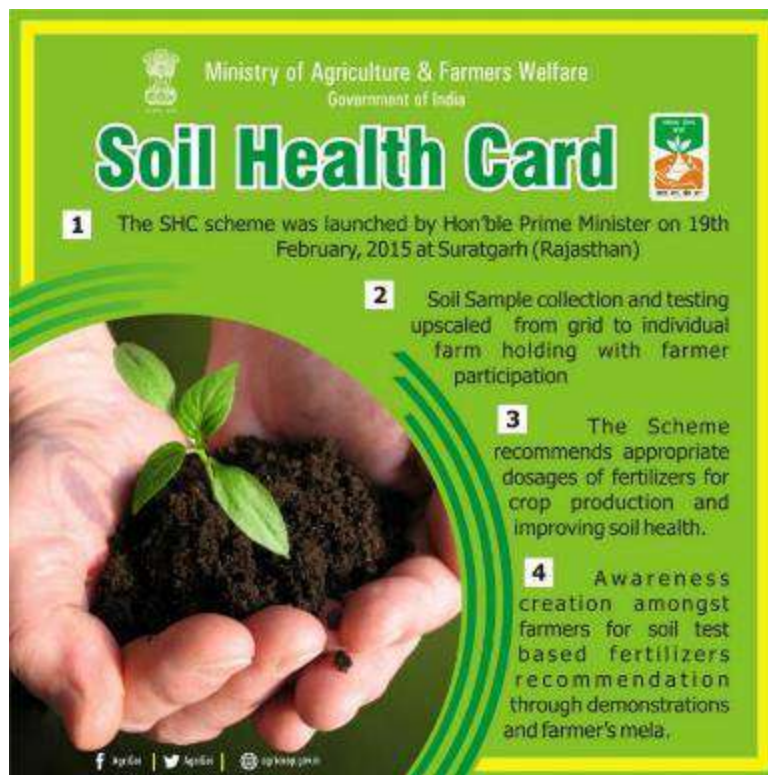


## Indian Sign Language dictionary

- ❖ The ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment released the 3rd edition of the Indian Sign Language (ISL) Dictionary.
- ❖ The new edition will comprise of 10,000 terms of daily.
- ❖ It will also include the academic, legal, medical technical, administrative and agricultural terms in it.
- ❖ The 2nd edition of the Indian Sign language was released in the year 2019 with 6,000 terms.
- ❖ Its first edition was released in the year 2018 with 3,000 terms.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Soil Health Card Day

- ❖ Every year, India observes the Soil Health Card Day on 19 February.
- ❖ It aims to commemorate the launch of the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, and create awareness about the benefits of the scheme.
- ❖ 2021 marks the sixth year of the launch of the SHC Scheme.
- ❖ Prime Minister launched the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme on 19th February 2015 at Suratgarh in Rajasthan.





## Go Electric Campaign

- ❖ The Union Minister of Road, Transport & Highways, Nitin Gadkari, had launched the 'Go Electric Campaign'.
- ❖ This campaign was launched in order to spread awareness with respect to the benefits of Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure.
- ❖ The campaign would also raise awareness regarding e-mobility and electric cooking across India.



## Nurturing Neighborhoods Challenge

- ❖ The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has announced the names of the 25 cities selected for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge
- ❖ It will be under the Smart Cities Mission.
- ❖ It is a 3-year initiative.
- ❖ It aims to work with Indian cities and their partners to pilot and scale ways to improve public space, mobility, neighbourhood planning,
- ❖ It also aims to access to early childhood services and amenities, and data management across city agencies.
- ❖ It propagates an early childhood centric approach among Indian cities.

## 100 percent Cashless Toll Collection

- ❖ National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has successfully achieved 100 percent cashless toll collection at the National Highway fee plazas in the entire country.
- ❖ All lanes across the fee plazas on National Highways have been declared as FASTag lanes in effect from February 16, 2021.
- ❖ The total penetration of FASTag has reached to 87 percent in the country till date.



### **Role in State's quota decisions**

- ❖ The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it has no role in the choices made by the Tamil Nadu government with regard to the provision of reservation for specific castes or communities in State government jobs and admissions.
- ❖ The Centre was responding to a petition challenging the constitutionality of the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Sc and ST (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act – 1993.
- ❖ It provides 69% reservation in the State.

### **Centre's stand**

- ❖ Inclusion or exclusion of any caste/community in the State List of SEBCs is the subject matter of the State government, and the Government of India has no role in the matter.
- ❖ It referred to the Constitution (One hundred and second Amendment) Act of 2018, which details the difference in the procedure for inclusion or exclusion of castes and communities in the State List for SEBCs and the Central List.
- ❖ The power to identify and specify SEBCs lies with Parliament only with reference to the Central List.
- ❖ Under the newly-inserted Article 342A of the Constitution (One hundred and second Amendment) Act of 2018, the President notifies the SEBCs in a State after consultation with the Governor.

### **First woman to be hanged**

- ❖ For the first in the history of independent India, a woman, convicted for killing seven members of her family.
- ❖ She was tried and awarded death by all the courts.
- ❖ She will be hanged at Mathura jail.
- ❖ Mathura jail is the only one in India which has the provisions for hanging a woman convict.
- ❖ The first female hanging house was built in Mathura jail almost 150 years ago.
- ❖ But no woman has been executed there since Independence.
- ❖ A woman from Lucknow called Ramshri was sentenced to death earlier on April 6, 1998.
- ❖ But her death sentence was commuted into life imprisonment.

## Haridwar Kumbh Mela 2021

- ❖ This year the Kumbh Mela will be organized from April 1 to April 30, 2021.
- ❖ The last Kumbh Mela was celebrated in Haridwar of Uttarakhand from Makar Sankranti.
- ❖ Kumbh Mela is held at four places at an interval of 12 years in India.
- ❖ There are 3 types of Kumbh namely Purna Kumbh Mela, Ardh Kumbh Mela and Maha Kumbh Mela.

## National Toy Fair

- ❖ The first-ever National Toy Fair will be starting from the February 27th.
- ❖ During this event, the Centre for Creative Learning (CCL), IIT Gandhinagar, will showcase its 75 toy creations in the fair.
- ❖ IIT Gandhinagar is the only IIT in the country running this centre for creative learning.
- ❖ The toy fair is being organised by the Ministry of Textiles.



## 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of Governing Council of NITI Aayog

- ❖ The Prime Minister chaired the sixth meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog.
- ❖ The agenda of the meeting included deliberations on agriculture, infrastructure, manufacturing, human resource development, service delivery at the grassroots level, and health and nutrition.
- ❖ The sixth meeting also witnessed the entry of Ladakh for the first time, in addition to the participation of Jammu and Kashmir as a UT.



### **Puducherry Government resign**

- ❖ V Narayana samy, the Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Puducherry, has submitted the letter of his council of ministers' resignation.
- ❖ The decision was taken as the Congress-led Government in the UT lost its majority (14 seats) in the Assembly.
- ❖ Following a series of resignations, the ruling government was reduced to a strength of 12.
- ❖ Two MLAs have resigned in January 2021 while another 2 MLAs resigned in February 2021.

### **Operational guidelines to Integrate NAFLD**

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has launched the operational guidelines to Integrate the Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) with National Programme for Prevention & Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS).

#### **NAFLD**

- ❖ It is an abnormal condition where fat accumulate in liver in the absence of secondary causes of fatty liver.
- ❖ It will also include the viral hepatitis, alcohol use or medications.

#### **NPCDCS**

- ❖ This programme was launched in the year 2010 to prevent and control major Non-Communicable Diseases.
- ❖ The programme focuses on human resource development, strengthening the infrastructure, early diagnosis, health promotion, management and referral.

### **Mission Indradhanush 3.0**

- ❖ The Union Health and Family Welfare Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan has launched the Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0.
- ❖ It aims to expand immunization coverage across the country.
- ❖ The focus of IMI 3.0 will be on children and pregnant women who missed their vaccine doses during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ Mission Indradhanush scheme was launched in 2014 to provide affordable and accessible healthcare to all citizens of the country.

### **Panels for autonomy**

- ❖ IIT Council has set up four panels for autonomy.
- ❖ This Council is the apex decision-making body of IITs.
- ❖ The panel will look after several issues ranging from funding to graded autonomy in the Indian Institutes of Technology.

### **26<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Hunar Haat'**

- ❖ The Defence Minister has inaugurated the 26th edition of 'Hunar Haat' in New Delhi.
- ❖ The theme of the event is "Vocal for Local".
- ❖ It is an initiative led by the Ministry of Minority Affairs to provide the supremely talented artisans and craftsmen a platform.



### **Skill center for fire safety training**

- ❖ It was inaugurated at Pilkhuwa in Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ This is the first of its kind in India.
- ❖ This facility has been created by Delhi based DRDO laboratory 'Centre for Fire, Explosive and Environment Safety (CFEES)'.

### **Maritime India Summit 2021**

- ❖ Prime Minister will inaugurate the virtual Maritime India Summit (MIS) 2021.
- ❖ The summit intends to be a powerful platform for international collaboration with partner countries for mutual exchange of knowledge and opportunities.
- ❖ FICCI is the industry partner for the summit.





## **8 toy manufacturing clusters**

- ❖ The government has approved eight toy manufacturing clusters.
- ❖ It aims to boost India's traditional toys industry.
- ❖ These clusters will manufacture toys made of wood, Lacquer, palm leaves, bamboo and fabric.
- ❖ 8 clusters will be formed in these states
  - Madhya Pradesh: 3
  - Rajasthan: 2
  - Karnataka: 1
  - Uttar Pradesh: 1
  - Tamil Nadu: 1.
- ❖ Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh already have 2 toy clusters.

## **Renaming of world's largest stadium**

- ❖ The world's largest cricket stadium at Motera in Ahmedabad was renamed the Narendra Modi Stadium.
- ❖ The rebuilt stadium is a part of the proposed, sprawling Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave.
- ❖ The enclave is spread in over 220 acres on the Sabarmati river bank in the north east area of Ahmedabad in Gujarat.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **World's largest current account surplus**

- ❖ China overtook Germany to become the country with the world's largest current account surplus in the year 2020.
- ❖ The current account surplus of China has doubled more than to \$310 billion in 2020.
- ❖ Japan ranked third with a current account surplus of \$158 billion.
- ❖ The United States remained the country with the world's largest current account deficit.



## **India and Nuclear Agreement**

- ❖ India recently made an announcement that it does not support the “Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”.
- ❖ However, India showed its support to the commencement of negotiations on a “comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention in the Conference on Disarmament”.
- ❖ It is the only multilateral disarmament negotiating forum that works on the basis of consensus.

## **The World Economic Situation and Prospects report**

- ❖ The report is released jointly by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), five United Nations Regional Economic Commissions and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).
- ❖ India’s economy is projected to grow at 7.3 per cent in 2021.

## **Alpha Global union**

- ❖ Google workers from all around the globe have formed an international union called the “Alpha Global”.
- ❖ The new union has been named after Google’s parent company Alphabet.
- ❖ The union was formed in coordination with Union Network International.

## **Jayati Ghosh**

- ❖ Indian development economist Jayati Ghosh is among 20 prominent personalities
- ❖ She was appointed by the United Nations to a high-level advisory board.
- ❖ This board will provide recommendations for the UN Secretary-General to respond to the current and future socio-economic challenges in the post-COVID-19 world.

## **UN Report on Ageing Dams**

- ❖ This report was titled ‘Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk’.
- ❖ As per this report, by 2050 most of the people on the Earth will live downstream of tens of thousands of dams built in the 20th century.
- ❖ There are 58,700 large dams across the world.
- ❖ Most of them were built between 1930 and 1970 with a design life of 50 to 100 years.

- ❖ This analysis also included dam ageing case studies from India, France, the U.S., Canada, Japan, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.
- ❖ 55% of the world's total large dams or around 32,716 large dams are found in just four Asian countries: India, China, South Korea, and Japan.
- ❖ The problem of dam ageing is confronted by 25 nations.
- ❖ 93% of large dams are located in these countries only.

### **Dam Ageing in India**

- ❖ More than 1,115 large dams in India will reach near the age of 50-years in the year 2025.
- ❖ Over 4,250 large dams in the country will be above 50-years in the year 2050.
- ❖ 64 large dams will be more than 150-years-old in the year 2050.
- ❖ If the Mullai periyar dam in Kerala fails, around 3.5 million people will be at risk.
- ❖ It was built over 100 years ago.

### **New Variant Assessment Platform**

- ❖ The United Kingdom has launched a New Variant Assessment Platform.
- ❖ It is the UK's world-leading genomics expertise.
- ❖ It will be offered to countries with fewer resources for identifying new variants of the COVID-19 virus.
- ❖ The platform will directly work on samples provided by other countries or will provide expert advice as necessary.
- ❖ Countries, where an existing channel is not available with the UK, can apply for assistance by contacting the WHO.

### **International Conference on Gender Equality**



- ❖ The second edition will explore ways to strengthen the economic potential of women and transgenders to equip them as sustainable entrepreneurs.
- ❖ The focal theme of the event will be 'Gender in Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Social Business: The Mediating Role of Empowerment'.
- ❖ It is being organized in collaboration with the UN Women (part of UN).

### **Indo-French Year of the Environment**

- ❖ Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has launched the Indo-French year of Environment along with his French counterpart.
- ❖ It will be based on 5 major themes over the period 2021-2022
  - Climate change,
  - Environmental protection,
  - Sustainable urban development,
  - Biodiversity conservation, and
  - The development of renewable energies and energy efficiency.





### **World Neglected Tropical Diseases**

- ❖ The second annual World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day was celebrated on January 30, 2021.
- ❖ The day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the 2012 London Declaration on NTDs.
- ❖ India also joined the world to combat the Neglected Tropical Diseases.
- ❖ Neglected Tropical Diseases are the tropical infections caused by viruses, protozoa, bacteria, and parasitic worms.

- ❖ These are the diseases that get less importance and treatment as compared to the major diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.
- ❖ NTDs affect over 1.7 billion people living in the poorest countries.
- ❖ Some of the NTDs are Buruli ulcer, Lymphatic filariasis, Rabies, Dengue and Chikungunya etc.

**Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) cause devastating health and economic problems** for the world's poorest people, maintaining a cycle of poverty and disease. CDC's Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria translates science into action.

-  Researching better **laboratory surveillance tools** and making them ready for use by country programs where these diseases are being eliminated
-  **Assisting countries** with implementing their programs and using new tools
-  **Providing global scientific leadership** on NTD elimination through collaborations with World Health Organization (WHO) and others

#BeatNTDs

## COVID-19 Performance Index

- ❖ Lowy Institute, an Australian think-tank, has recently released a COVID-19 “performance index”.
- ❖ As per the index, New Zealand is the best-performing country against COVID-19.
- ❖ Vietnam has been ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>.

RANK ▾	COUNTRY ▾	AVERAGE
1	 New Zealand	94.4
2	 Vietnam	90.8
3	 Taiwan	86.4
4	 Thailand	84.2
5	 Cyprus	83.3
6	 Rwanda	80.8
7	 Iceland	80.1



- ❖ Vietnam is followed by Taiwan, Thailand, and Cyprus on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> rank respectively.
- ❖ The index accessed the relative COVID-19 performance of 98 countries.
- ❖ India has been ranked 86<sup>th</sup> on the index while the United States has been placed at 94<sup>th</sup> position.
- ❖ The neighbouring countries of India, Sri Lanka has been ranked 10<sup>th</sup>, the Maldives at 25<sup>th</sup>, Nepal at 70<sup>th</sup>, Pakistan at 69<sup>th</sup>, and Bangladesh at 84<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ Brazil has been placed at the bottom of this index.

### **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**

- ❖ The government has notified the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) with a corpus of Rs 945 crore.
- ❖ It was released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- ❖ SISFS is a scheme aimed at providing financial assistance to startups for product trials, proof of concept, market-entry, prototype development, and commercialization.

### **Worst year on record**

- ❖ UN World Tourism Organization recently confirmed the Year 2020 as the 'worst year on record'.
- ❖ The global tourism suffered massively due to international travel bans implemented to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.
- ❖ It also noted that the COVID-19 crisis has put almost 100-120 million direct tourism jobs at risk.

### **Rare Mineral Found in Antarctica**

- ❖ A rare maritime mineral, Jarosite, has been found in the Antarctica ice.
- ❖ It was discovered after drilling deep into Antarctic ice.
- ❖ This supports the theory of presence of jarosite on MARS in a similar manner.
- ❖ The minerals are able to form in thick deposits on mars
- ❖ Because the planet is a lot dustier than Antarctica.

#### **Jarosite**

- ❖ Jarosite is a mineral from mars.
- ❖ It is scarcely seen on earth.



- ❖ It is a sulphate of potassium and iron.
- ❖ The mineral can be formed by both water and acidic conditions.
- ❖ It was first discovered on Mars in 2004 by a rover named “opportunity”.
- ❖ Other Jarosite minerals include silver, sodium, lead and ammonium.
- ❖ The mineral was described in 1852 by August Breithaupt for the first time.

### **UAE's new Citizenship Policy**

- ❖ The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has announced its new citizenship policy.
- ❖ The government has planned to offer citizenship to a select group of foreigners.
- ❖ It became the first Gulf Arab nation that formalized the process of giving expatriates in the bigger stake of the economy.
- ❖ UAE earlier used to give citizenship to some foreigners in special cases.
- ❖ They were given citizenship for providing service to the state.

### **EDISON Alliance**

- ❖ World Economic Forum (WEF) has announced the launch of an Essential Digital Infrastructure and Services Network (EDISON) Alliance.
- ❖ WEF will serve as the secretariat and platform for the EDISON Alliance.
- ❖ This Alliance aims to work towards ensuring global and equitable access to the digital economy.

### **Nepal government's hydropower project**

- ❖ Nepal has granted the contract for the construction of the lower Arun Hydro Project to Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam - SJVN of India.
- ❖ This contract given under the BOOT model - Build, Own, Operate, and Transfer.
- ❖ This Project has a projected capacity of 679 MW of electricity.
- ❖ It will be situated in the Bhojpur and Sankhuwasabha districts of Province 1.

### **Oxford Hindi word of 2020**

- ❖ ‘Aatmanirbharta’ has been named as the Hindi word of the year 2020 by Oxford Languages.
- ❖ It is implying the meaning of self-reliance.
- ❖ Previous Hindi words of the year are Aadhaar (2017), Nari Shakti (2018) and Samvidhaan (2019).



- ❖ The Oxford Hindi word of the year is chosen to reflect the ethos, mood, or preoccupations of the past year.

### **Myanmar coup 3.0**

- ❖ The Myanmar military grabbed power in a coup on February 1.
- ❖ This is the third time in the nation's history since its independence from British rule in 1948.
- ❖ In 1962, the military took over from a civilian government for the first time.
- ❖ That coup amended the official name in 1974 to the 'Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma'.
- ❖ Then in 1988, Myanmar's armed forces again took power in the country.
- ❖ This time it reversed the official name to 'Union of Burma'.
- ❖ But after one year, the ruler of that time adopted a law that replaced Burma with Myanmar.
- ❖ It made the country the 'Union of Myanmar'.

### **Neptune Declaration**

- ❖ "Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change" (Neptune Declaration) is joining more than 400 companies and organizations globally.
- ❖ It aims to work to ensure that the crew change crisis caused by COVID-19 is resolved as rapidly as possible.
- ❖ Its four major aims are
  - Recognize seafarers as key workers and give them priority access to COVID-19 vaccinations
  - Implement high-standard health protocols
  - Increase collaboration between ship operators and charterers to facilitate crew changes
  - Ensure airline connectivity between key maritime hubs for seafarers

### **U.K. to join Asia-Pacific free trade pact**

- ❖ U.K. government will join the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).
- ❖ It is one of the world's largest free-trade Partnership.
- ❖ It made up of 11 developed and emerging economies in the Pacific.
- ❖ U.K. left the European Union (EU) on January 31 last year.

### **State Administrative Council - Myanmar**

- ❖ The Military regime in Myanmar has established a new State Administrative Council.
- ❖ The administrative council is headed by the Army Chief General Min Aung Hlaing.
- ❖ It comprises of total 11 members.
- ❖ 8 out of 11 members are from the military.

### **World's First Energy Island.**

- ❖ Denmark has approved a project to build the world's first energy island, in the North Sea.
- ❖ It will produce and store enough green energy to meet the electricity needs of three million households in the European countries.
- ❖ The hub will strengthen the integration of Europe's power grids.
- ❖ Also, it will increase the renewable electricity production.
- ❖ It is necessary for a climate-neutral Europe.



### **World Sustainable Development Summit 2021**

- ❖ Indian Prime Minister has inaugurated the World Sustainable Development Summit 2021.
- ❖ The theme of the Summit is 'Redefining our common future: Safe and secure environment for all'.
- ❖ 2021 WSD Summit is the 20th edition of the flagship event.
- ❖ It was organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).



### Shahtoot dam agreement

- ❖ India and Afghanistan signed an agreement to build the Shahtoot Dam in Kabul.
- ❖ It aims to provide drinking water facility in the Afghan capital.
- ❖ It is one of the five river basins of Afghanistan.



### Trump's impeachment

- ❖ US Senate declares that the second impeachment of former President Donald Trump is constitutional.
- ❖ The first test was about the constitutionality of the trial.
- ❖ It was Trump's lawyers versus Democrat impeachment managers.



## AMAN exercise

- ❖ Pakistan Navy organised the Exercise Aman off the coast of Karachi.
- ❖ A total of 46 countries including US, China, Russia, UK, Turkey, Iran, Indonesia is participating.
- ❖ The exercise seeks to develop and practice Response Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for maritime infrastructure, assets.

## US-Mexico Border Wall Project

- ❖ The US President has revoked the emergency order that was issued by former President Donald Trump
- ❖ It was issued to construct the US-Mexico border wall.
- ❖ In 2019, the Trump administration had signed the executive order.
- ❖ That order has declared the national emergency so as to build US-Mexico border wall.
- ❖ The emergency was announced after repeated clash with the lawmakers regarding the funding for the project.



## Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

- ❖ Members of the COFI (Committee on Fisheries) 34<sup>th</sup> session supported the first-ever Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries & Aquaculture.
- ❖ COFI 34 is the 34th Session of UNFAO's Committee on Fisheries.
- ❖ The declaration calls for strong action to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- ❖ It has also emphasized on the importance of recovering from impacts of COVID-19 pandemic.



- ❖ COFI 34 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (adopted in 1995).
- ❖ This code is a key instrument guiding the drive towards sustainable fisheries and aquaculture around the world.

### **Pakistan War games**

- ❖ The Pakistan Army is holding a month-long exercise in the Thar Desert in Sindh province.
- ❖ It aims to prepare for conflict in an extreme desert environment.
- ❖ The exercise, codenamed 'Jidar-ul-Hadeed', began on January 28-February 28.

### **Senate acquits Trump from impeachment**

- ❖ The US Senate has acquitted former President Donald Trump for a second time.
- ❖ After a week of the impeachment trial, only 57 Senators, including seven Republicans voted to convict him.
- ❖ The 57-43 tally fell 10 votes short of the two-third majority needed to convict him.
- ❖ 67 votes need to allow the Senate to move to disqualify him from holding future office.

### **New START nuclear disarmament treaty**

- ❖ The United States has extended the "New START" nuclear disarmament treaty with Russia for a period of five years.
- ❖ The new strategic arms reduction treaty was formally signed on April 8, 2010.
- ❖ After ratification, it entered into force on 5 February 2011.
- ❖ The New START treaty was set to expire on February 5, 2021.
- ❖ But both the parties have further extended it for five more years, till February 2026.

### **Comprehensive economic cooperation and partnership agreement**

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a comprehensive economic cooperation and partnership agreement (CECPA) between India and Mauritius.
- ❖ It is a kind of a free trade agreement between India and Mauritius.
- ❖ It aims to liberalising the norms to boost a two-way commerce.



### **New Low-Carbon range of Concrete**

- ❖ ACC Ready Mix Concrete has introduced its new low carbon range of concrete named ECOPact.
- ❖ It is a Green Concrete for high-performing, sustainable and circular construction.
- ❖ It was launched in Mumbai and Hyderabad in the first phase.

### **Ebola Outbreak**

- ❖ Guinea's health agency announced that the country was in the midst of an Ebola "epidemic situation".
- ❖ The 2013-16 outbreak killed 11,300 people, mostly in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.
- ❖ The Ebola virus causes severe bleeding and organ failure.
- ❖ It is spread through contact with body fluids.

### **Anti-Radicalism Bill**

- ❖ The French parliament has approved the Anti-Radicalism bill in a bid to fight the Islamic radicalism.
- ❖ The bill seeks to strengthen the government oversight of mosques and religious schools.
- ❖ It will also take strong actions against the polygamy and forced marriage.
- ❖ The bill provides for measures with the aim of rooting out the Islamic radicalism.
- ❖ It is a part of the broader French efforts with the aim of fighting extremism.
- ❖ It will also promote respect for French values.

### **SAARC Virtual Meet**

- ❖ India will host the virtual health secretary-level meeting with the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
- ❖ During the meeting the members will discuss the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.
- ❖ Pakistan has also been invited to attend the meeting.
- ❖ Earlier the Coronavirus Emergency Fund was set up by the SAARC members in order to response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ❖ India had proposed to contribute USD10 million for the fund.
- ❖ SAARC was founded on December 8, 1985.
- ❖ It is headquartered at Kathmandu, Nepal.



### **Global Covid-19 Vaccination Plan**

- ❖ UN asked the G20 nations to prepare a “Global Covid-19 Vaccination Plan”.
- ❖ It stated that, the 10 wealthier countries have administered 75 percent of global vaccinations across the world.
- ❖ 130 poorer countries of the world have not received even a single dose of the vaccine.
- ❖ WHO’s COVAX scheme has signed the deal with Pfizer-BioNTech for 40 million doses of coronavirus vaccine for the poorer countries.

### **World Solar Bank**

- ❖ The International Solar Alliance (ISA) have planned to launch the World Solar Bank (WSB) at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow.
- ❖ It is scheduled for November 2021.
- ❖ It will support India’s attempt to secure its leadership in the climate arena.
- ❖ The headquarter of the World Solar Bank is expected to be set up in India.
- ❖ It will be first multilateral development bank that will be set up in India.
- ❖ The WSB have planned to disburse around \$50 billion to the member countries of ISA over next 10 years.

### **NASSCOM Technology and Leadership Forum 2021**

- ❖ The 29<sup>th</sup> edition of Nasscom Technology and Leadership Forum (NTLF) was organized recently.
- ❖ It is the flagship event of the National Association of Software and Service Companies.
- ❖ NTLF 2021 was organized with the overarching theme 'Shaping the future towards a better normal'.
- ❖ February 2021 marks the 29th year of NASSCOM Technology & Leadership Forum.

### **India-Australia circular Economy Hackathon**

- ❖ The Prime Minister addressed the valedictory function of the India Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE).
- ❖ The I-ACE was jointly organized by Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia.
- ❖ More than 200 participants in 39 teams from India and 33 teams from Australia took part in this.

### **Cairn Energy - Arbitration award**

- ❖ The Indian government has decided to appeal against the international arbitration award of worth \$1.2 billion.
- ❖ It was won by Cairn Energy Plc in the tax dispute.
- ❖ The Cairn Energy Plc had made transactions in 2006-07 that involved the entities in Jersey of USA.
- ❖ It led to capital gains for Cairn UK Holdings.
- ❖ This gain is taxable in India.
- ❖ So, the government alleges the company that the offshore transaction that was executed by Cairn was done with the aim of evading taxes.
- ❖ India had a tax demand of some Rs.104 billion.
- ❖ It also demanded an equal amount in penalty and interest accrued.

#### **A taxing journey**

A timeline of the conflict

**January 2014:** Income Tax Department seeks information from Cairn Energy about group reorganisation done in 2006

**March 2015:** Cairn Energy receives draft assessment order from I-T Department, citing **retrospective legislation to seek ₹10,247 crore** in taxes. Cairn reacts by filing a notice of dispute

**May 2018:** Pending arbitration proceedings, I-T Department begins selling Cairn shares to recover tax dues

**2018:** Three-member international arbitration tribunal concludes hearings in tax dispute

**December 23, 2020:** Cairn Energy wins arbitration

### **Asia Economic Dialogue**

- ❖ The Pune International Centre will co-chair this year's Asia Economic Dialogue.
- ❖ That will be addressed by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar.
- ❖ Other participants are Japan, Australia, Maldives, Mauritius and Bhutan.
- ❖ It will be co-hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Asia Economic Dialogue.
- ❖ Its theme is 'The post-COVID global trade and finance dynamics'.

### **11<sup>th</sup> World PetroCoal Congress 2021**

- ❖ 11<sup>th</sup> World PetroCoal Congress-International Conference and Expo 2021 was organized by the Energy and Environment Foundation.
- ❖ Theme of the event was "Petroleum-Coal-Gas: Towards a Win-Win Strategy for Producer and Consumer".





## World Future Fuel Summit 2021

- ❖ The World Future Fuel Summit and Expo 2021 was organized by the Energy and Environment Foundation.
- ❖ It is an annual summit to bring together global business leaders, future leaders (students), government, specialist exhibitors from globally.
- ❖ It showcases state-of-the-art technologies in clean future energy for globally.

## Women in Armed Forces

- ❖ Saudi Arabia has opened up the armed forces for Women.
- ❖ Now, the female recruits can now trade their abayas for military uniforms.
- ❖ However, the applicants married to non-Saudi citizens will not be eligible for the recruitment.
- ❖ As per the World Economic Forum's 2016 Global Gender Gap Report, the Saudi Arabia was ranked at 141 out of 144 countries with respect to gender parity.

## World's 1st Case of H5N8 Avian Flu

- ❖ Russia reported the first case of transmission of the H5N8 strain of avian flu to humans.
- ❖ The H5N8 is a sub-type of the Influenza A virus.
- ❖ It causes flu-like symptoms in birds and mammals.
- ❖ There was no sign yet of transmission between humans.
- ❖ Till now, it is largely restricted to birds and poultry.
- ❖ Recently, the samples of Crows from Maharashtra's Beed district were found positive for the H5N8 strain.

## NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21

- ❖ Indian Naval Ship Pralaya reached Abu Dhabi to participate in the Naval Defence Exhibition (NAVDEX 21) and International Defence Exhibition (IDEX 21).
- ❖ NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21 is one of the leading international naval and defence exhibitions of the region.
- ❖ Pralaya is the second ship of the indigenously built Prabal Class Missile Vessels.

## ECONOMY

### The Inequality Virus

- ❖ The Oxfam has recently published this report.
- ❖ It was released on the opening day of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.
- ❖ It finds that the COVID-19 pandemic has deepened the existing inequalities in India and across the world.
- ❖ India has been ranked at sixth in the world following the US, China, Germany, Russia and France.
- ❖ However, the richest billionaires in India have increased their wealth by 35 percent during the lockdown.



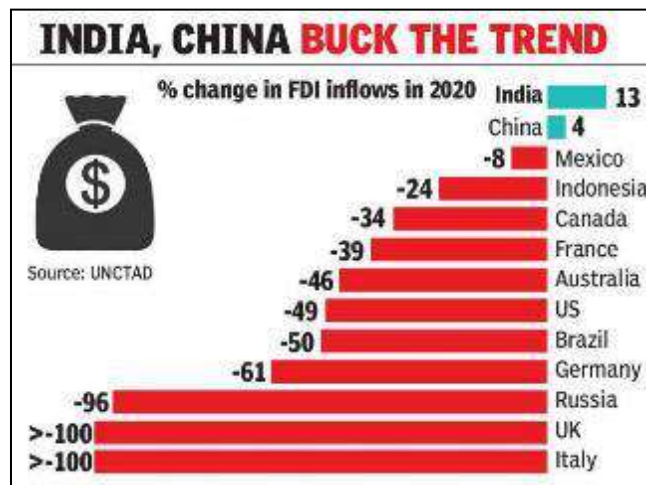
### National Mission for Edible Oil (NMEO)

- ❖ The Ministry of Agriculture has proposed this mission
- ❖ It aims to increase the domestic availability and reduce the import dependency.
- ❖ The mission has been proposed for next five years in the span of 2020-21 to 2024-25.
- ❖ It comprises of the three Sub-Missions

- ❖ These are with the objective of increasing the production of oilseeds and edible oils from the three sources.
  - Primary Sources - it includes the Annual Crops, Plantation Crops and Edible Tree Borne Oilseeds
  - Secondary Sources - it includes the Rice bran oil and Cotton seed oil.
  - Consumer Awareness to maintain the edible oil consumption constant at 19.00 kg per person per annum.
- ❖ In India, there is a requirement of 25 million tonnes of edible oils.
- ❖ The 60% of the requirement is met by the import.

### 13% rise in foreign direct investment

- ❖ India witnessed a 13% rise in foreign direct investment (FDI) to \$57 billion in 2020 compared to the previous year.
- ❖ The domestic figure was boosted by investments in the digital economy.
- ❖ China overtook the US as the largest recipient of FDI globally, according to an UNCTAD report.
- ❖ India and China were the only two countries which saw FDI rising in 2020.
- ❖ The rest of the world, including developed economies such as the UK and the US, saw sharp declines.



### India's New Central Bank Digital Currency

- ❖ RBI is in process of examining if India needs a new central bank digital currency (CBDC).
- ❖ It is also exploring ways to operationalise the digital currency.

- ❖ CBDC is a legal tender and a central bank liability in digital form.
- ❖ The digital currency is denominated in a sovereign currency.
- ❖ It also appears on the balance sheet of the central bank.
- ❖ This is an electronic version of currency.
- ❖ It can be converted or exchanged with the similar denominated cash and the traditional central bank deposits.

## World Economic Outlook 2021

- ❖ International Monetary Fund (IMF) has released the “World Economic Outlook, 2021” report.
- ❖ As per this report, India’s economy will expand by 11.5 percent in 2021.
- ❖ Previously it was predicted 8.8 percent growth.
- ❖ The growth has been predicted to be 6.8 percent for the year 2022.
- ❖ The economic growth of the world is projected at 4.2 percent in 2022.
- ❖ India will emerge as the only key nation to record double-digit growth.
- ❖ India will also reclaim the status of the world’s fastest-growing major economy.

<b>Latest World Economic Outlook</b>			
<b>Growth Projections</b>			
	ESTIMATE	PROJECTIONS	
(real GDP, annual percent change)	2020	2021	2022
<b>World Output</b>	-3.5	5.5	4.2
<b>Emerging Markets and Developing Economies</b>	-2.4	6.3	5.0
Emerging and Developing Asia	-1.1	8.3	5.9
China	2.3	8.1	5.6
India	-8.0	11.5	6.8
ASEAN-5	-3.7	5.2	6.0
Emerging and Developing Europe	-2.8	4.0	3.9
Russia	-3.6	3.0	3.9
Japan	-5.1	3.1	2.4
United Kingdom	-10.0	4.5	5.0
Canada	-5.5	3.6	4.1
Other Advanced Economies	-2.5	3.6	3.1

## Debt Overhaul Under G20 Common Framework

- ❖ Chad has become the first country to officially request a debt restructuring under a new common framework.
- ❖ It is also known as “G20 Common Framework” or “Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI).”

- ❖ It was introduced by China and other Group of 20 countries last year with the help of the Paris Club.
- ❖ Paris Club is a group of officials from major creditor countries
- ❖ This Club was established in 1956.

### **Gold demand hit 25-year low**

- ❖ Gold demand in India hit a 25-year low at 446.4 tonnes in 2020, due to the COVID-19 induced lockdown.
- ❖ It was compared with 690.4 tonnes in 2019.
- ❖ Total jewellery demand in India for 2020 was down by 42% at 315.9 tonnes.
- ❖ It was compared with 544.6 tonnes in 2019.
- ❖ Total investment demand for the calendar year was down by 11% at 130.4 tonnes
- ❖ It was in comparison with 145.8 tonnes in the previous year.
- ❖ India's gold demand dropped by over a third in 2020.

### **Risk-based internal audit (RBIA)**

- ❖ RBI on has introduced a risk-based internal audit (RBIA) system.
- ❖ It has made it mandatory for select non-banking financial companies and urban co-operative banks (UCBs).
- ❖ As per the norms, all the deposit-taking non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) with the asset size of Rs 5,000 crore will have to implement this system.
- ❖ The system is required to be implemented by March 31, 2022.

### **Savings account scheme for children**

- ❖ Federal Bank has announced the launch of "FedFirst".
- ❖ It is a special savings account scheme for children below 18 years of age.





- ❖ The account helps children develop healthy saving and spending habits.
- ❖ It will give them the freedom to save, spend and earn.

### One Nation One Ombudsman approach

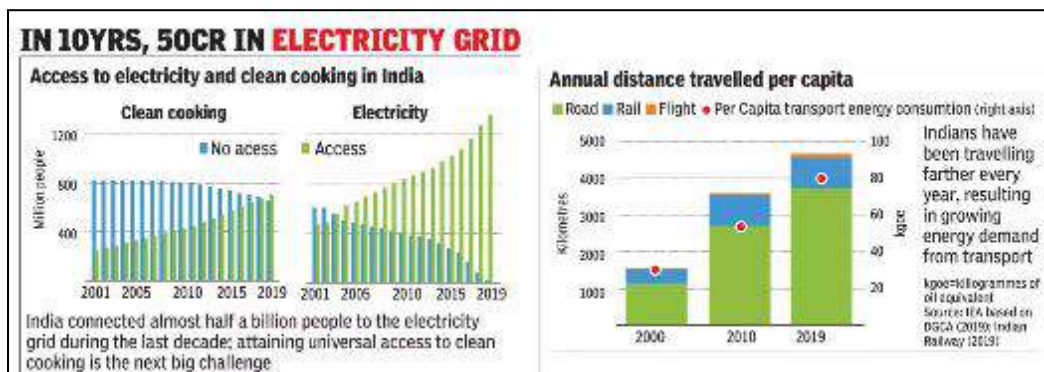
- ❖ RBI will integrate the consumer grievances redressal under a single ombudsman.
- ❖ It will replace the three grievance redressal schemes working at present.
- ❖ Presently, there are dedicated ombudsman schemes for the consumer grievance redressal in the banking, non-bank finance companies and digital transactions.

### Committee on Urban Co-operative Banks

- ❖ RBI has decided to set up an expert committee on Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs).
- ❖ The committee would involve all the stakeholders so as to provide a medium-term road map.
- ❖ The medium-term roadmap in turn will help to strengthen the sector.
- ❖ It will also enable the faster rehabilitation of UCBs.
- ❖ The committee will also examine other critical aspects related to these entities.
- ❖ The committee is being set in accordance with the provisions of the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2020.

### World's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest energy consumer by 2030

- ❖ International Energy Agency (IEA) has released a report recently titled India Energy Outlook 2021.



- ❖ As per this report, India will overtake the European Union as the world's third-largest energy consumer behind China and the US by 2030.
- ❖ This report also says that India is to make up a quarter of global demand growth during 2019-2040.



### **8-member expert panel**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India has constituted an eight-member expert committee on Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs).
- ❖ It aims to examine issues and suggest a road map for strengthening the sector.
- ❖ The committee will be chaired by the former RBI Deputy Governor N. S. Vishwanathan.

### **Corporate India Risk Index**

- ❖ ICICI Lombard has launched the 'Corporate India Risk Index'.
- ❖ This is intended to be a unified, standardised corporate risk index that spans industries and companies.
- ❖ This will help the companies to understand the level of risk that their business is facing.
- ❖ It will also assist in developing a successful risk aversion plan.

### **India contribution to pulses**

- ❖ India is contributing nearly 24 per cent of pulses to the global output.
- ❖ Also, India is the largest producer and consumer of pulses in the world.
- ❖ The country's pulses production has grown to 24 million tonnes (240 lakh tonne) from 14 million tonne (140 lakh tonne) in the last five-six years.

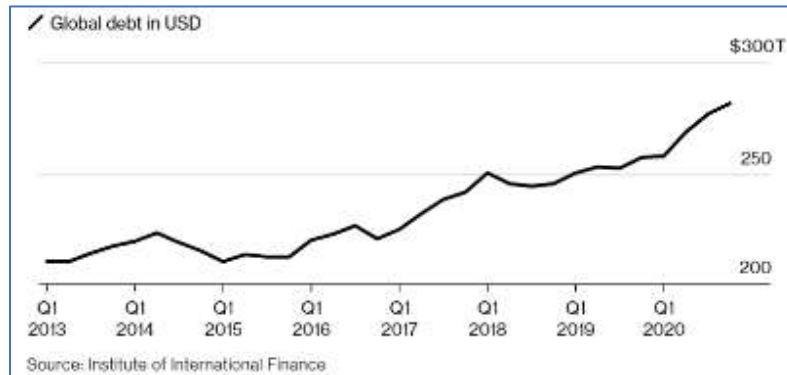
### **Takeover of DHFL**

- ❖ RBI approved the takeover of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd (DHFL) by Piramal Group.
- ❖ Now, the Piramal Group will require to take permission of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to take over the DHFL.
- ❖ DHFL is a deposit-taking housing finance company.
- ❖ It is the second housing finance company of India.
- ❖ Now this company stands bankrupt.

### **IIF Report on debt**

- ❖ The Institute of International Finance (IIF) has reported that, World debt reached record \$281 trillion at end of 2020.
- ❖ This accounts for more than 355 per cent of global GDP.

- ❖ This will increase by another \$10 trillion in the year 2021 since the political and social pressures pushes for more spending.
- ❖ This in turn will increase the debt load past \$92 trillion with the end of 2021.



### **State Bank of Sikkim under RBI**

- ❖ RBI has brought State Bank of Sikkim under its regulatory purview.
- ❖ It was not regulated by Reserve Bank of India unlike other banks till now.
- ❖ Till now, RBI had the right and obligation to function as banker to all the state government except for the state government of Sikkim.
- ❖ Now the bank will be regulated by the RBI on a par with other banks
- ❖ However, the bank's ownership structure will not change.

### **State Bank of Sikkim**

- ❖ It was established in 1968, as an autonomous body.
- ❖ It was wholly owned by Government of Sikkim.
- ❖ It was established under the State Bank of Sikkim Proclamation 1968.
- ❖ The bank provides treasury operations for the state government.
- ❖ It operates only within the jurisdiction of Sikkim.

### **India's top Trade Partner**

- ❖ China has again become India's top trading partner in the year 2020.
- ❖ The reason was because India was still dependent on the import of heavy machines, telecom equipment and home appliances from China.
- ❖ The provisional data from the trade between both the countries in the year 2020 stood at \$77.7 billion.
- ❖ However, the trade had decreased as compared to the 2019 trade total of \$85.5 billion.
- ❖ The bilateral trade gap of India with China was \$40 billion in the year 2020.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Akash-NG missile

- ❖ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully test-fired this Missile off the Odisha coast.
- ❖ Akash-NG is a medium-range mobile surface-to-air missile Défense system.
- ❖ The missile can intercept the aerial threats.
- ❖ It has the capability of targeting the aircraft up to 50-60 km away at altitudes of 18,000 meters.
- ❖ It is in operation with the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force.
- ❖ Recently the Cabinet Committee on Security cleared the exports of Akash Missile defence system.



### World Space Record

- ❖ SpaceX recently broke a world space record by launching 143 satellites.
- ❖ It beat India's record of deploying 104 satellites in February 2017.
- ❖ The launch vehicle for the SpaceX flight was the Falcon 9.
- ❖ The mission was designated as Transporter-1.
- ❖ The launch marks the first dedicated mission for SpaceX's SmallSat Rideshare Program.
- ❖ With the launched satellites, SpaceX aims at providing near-global broadband internet coverage all over the world by 2021.

### NASA Re-discovers 'Lost Galaxy'

- ❖ Hubble Space Telescope of NASA captured the images of the NGC 4535.
- ❖ It is also known as the "Lost Galaxy".
- ❖ This Galaxy was discovered in 1785 by William Herschel.



- ❖ William Herschel found the planet Uranus.
- ❖ The galaxy is located about 50 million light-years from Earth.
- ❖ It is one of the largest of some 2,000 galaxies in the Virgo Cluster.

### **Stardust 1.0 Rocket**

- ❖ Stardust 1.0 was launched from Loring Commerce Centre in Maine, United States
- ❖ It became the first-ever commercial space launch powered entirely by Biofuel.
- ❖ It is also the first-ever commercial launch for the US State Maine.
- ❖ The rocket is manufactured by Maine-based aerospace company bluShift.
- ❖ These rockets will help to launch small satellites called CubeSats into space in a way cheaper.
- ❖ Biofuel is non-toxic to the environment as compared to traditionally used rocket fuels.

### **First all civilian mission to space**

- ❖ SpaceX has announced the launch of its first all civilian mission to space.
- ❖ It is planning Falcon 9's launch of Inspiration4 mission.
- ❖ It is the world's first all-commercial astronaut mission to orbit.

### **World's Largest Radio Telescope**

- ❖ The Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) Council recently held its meeting.
- ❖ During the meeting, the council has approved the setting up of the world's largest radio telescope.
- ❖ Square Kilometre Array Observatory is a new intergovernmental organisation.
- ❖ Currently, the SKAO comprises of the organisations from the ten countries.

### **Upcoming Radio telescope**

- ❖ It can be used to detect the invisible gas and it has the potential to reveal areas of space that might have covered by the cosmic dust.
- ❖ It is different than the conventional optical telescopes in this regard.
- ❖ The Square Kilometre Array is the largest radio telescope across the world.
- ❖ The telescope will be set up in Africa and Australia.





### **Cyber Security incidents reported in 2020**

- ❖ More than 2.9 lakh digital banking cybersecurity incidents were reported in the year 2020.
- ❖ The data from the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).
- ❖ These incidents have increased as opposed to 2,46,514 incidents in 2019 and 1,59,761 incidents in 2018.

### **Mars ice mapping mission- NASA**

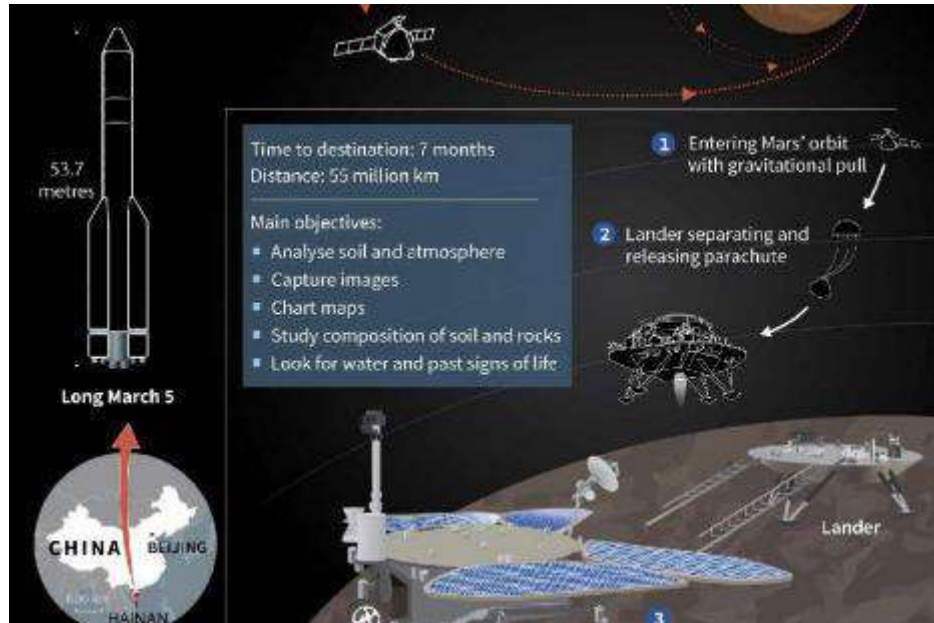
- ❖ NASA is planning to launch a robotic Mars ice mapping mission in collaboration with three international partners.
- ❖ The other 3 partners are:
  - Canadian Space Agency (CSA),
  - Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and
  - the Italian Space Agency (ASI)
- ❖ The mission could help identify potential science objectives for initial human missions to Mars.

### **Missile Ghaznavi**

- ❖ Pakistan successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile called Ghaznavi.
- ❖ It is a surface-to-surface short range ballistic missile.
- ❖ The ballistic missile has a striking capability of up to 290 kilometres.
- ❖ It has also test-fired the nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile Shaheen-III in January.
- ❖ This missile has the range of up to 2,750 kilometres.

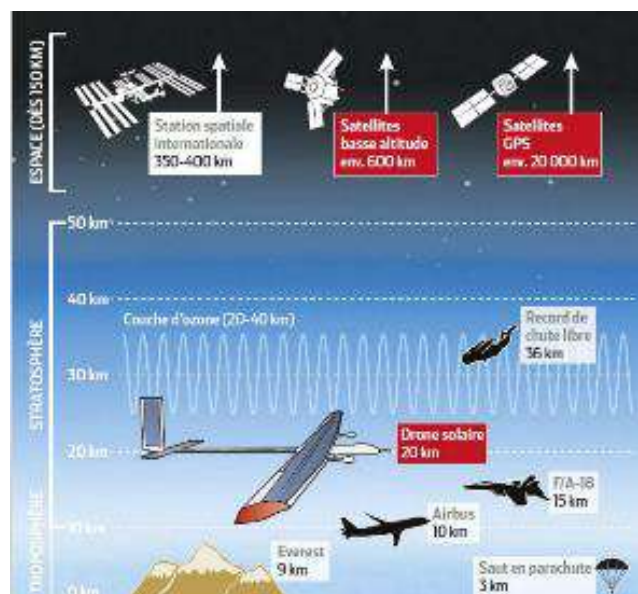
### **First image of Red Planet**

- ❖ China's Tianwen-1 space probe has sent back its first image of Mars.
- ❖ The image was released by the China National Space Administration (CNSA).
- ❖ The shows geological features of Mars including the Schiaparelli crater and the Valles Marineris, a vast stretch of canyons on the Martian surface.
- ❖ The spacecraft was launched in July 2020.
- ❖ The photo was taken about 2.2 million kilometres from Mars.



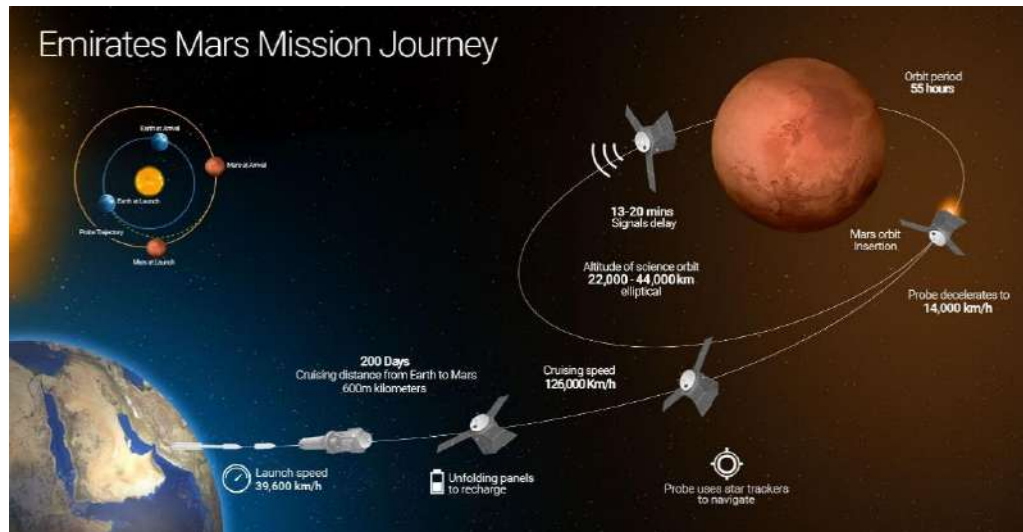
### High altitude pseudo satellite

- ❖ The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is developing a futuristic high altitude pseudo satellite with a start-up company.
- ❖ It is a first of its kind in the world.
- ❖ These satellites will be solar energised.
- ❖ It will be flying unmanned around 70,000 ft for 2-3 months and taking information.
- ❖ No country in the world has developed it yet.



## First Arab Mars Mission

- ❖ UAE's first mission to Mars has arrived at the red planet.
- ❖ It has successfully entered orbit on its first attempt.
- ❖ It is known as the Hope Probe.
- ❖ It has sent back a signal confirming it's in orbit.
- ❖ This achievement makes the UAE only the fifth country in history to reach Mars.
- ❖ Also, this is the Arab nation's first interplanetary mission.



## Concentration of Small Black Holes

- ❖ The astronomers have discovered a concentration of smaller black holes in the cluster NGC 6397.



- ❖ Small black holes were discovered instead of one massive black hole at the heart of the cluster.
- ❖ The cluster NGC 6397 is as old as the universe.
- ❖ The cluster is also known as Caldwell 86.
- ❖ It is located around 7,800 light-years away.

### **Humans in space policy 2021**

- ❖ The Indian Space Research Organisation unveiled a draft “humans in space policy 2021”.
- ❖ It would look at facilitating participation of non-traditional players in undertaking space activities.
- ❖ It also plans to tap startups and the local industry to build technologies for its human space programme.

### **Indigenous mapping solution**

- ❖ ISRO has joined hands with ‘MapmyIndia’ to develop a web mapping service like ‘Google Maps’.
- ❖ MapmyIndia is an Indian technology company that builds digital map data and navigation solutions provider.

### **Battle Tank Arjun Mark 1A**

- ❖ Prime Minister dedicated the Main Battle Tank Arjun Mark 1A to the nation.
- ❖ The tank has been fully designed and developed by the DRDO in close coordination with the Indian Army.
- ❖ The tanks will be produced by the Ordnance Factory Board's Heavy Vehicles Factory of Avadi, Chennai.





## **Huge Optical Flare**

- ❖ The Indian astronomers have reported one of the strongest flares from a feeding super massive black hole or blazar called BL Lacertae.
- ❖ They emit jets of charged particles travelling nearly at the speed of light.
- ❖ It also one of the most luminous and energetic objects in the Universe.
- ❖ Analysis of this flare can help trace the mass of the black hole and the source of this emission.
- ❖ It can also provide a lead to probe mysteries and trace events at different stages of evolution of the Universe.
- ❖ BL Lacertae blazar is 10 million light-years away.

## **India's new instant messaging platform**

- ❖ The National Informatics Centre (NIC) has launched an app called Sandes.
- ❖ This instant messaging platform is similar to WhatsApp.
- ❖ It can be used for any type of communications by anyone.
- ❖ It requires a mobile number or an email id to get registered with the app.

## **TIGER X-1**

- ❖ The Hyundai Motor Group have designed a walking car concept robot.
- ❖ It is being called as TIGER which stands for transforming intelligent ground excursion robot.
- ❖ The robot comprises of the wheels having capability to adapt to navigate in the challenging terrain.



- ❖ The ultimate mobility vehicle (UMV) uses its ability to walk when it gets stuck or when required to travel in the difficult terrain.
- ❖ It can connect with the drones.





- ❖ It can be used to carry goods for the delivery or aid packages in emergency situations.
- ❖ It can be used not only on Earth but on other planets as well.

### **PiMo - eBike**

- ❖ The Pi Beam launched the electric two-wheeler called 'PiMO'.
- ❖ IIT Madras has incubated this start-up team.
- ❖ The electric two-wheeler can charge faster than a smartphone.
- ❖ The affordable bike has a range of 50 km.

### **Astra Mark 2 Missile**

- ❖ India will start the testing of the Astra Mark 2 missile soon.
- ❖ The missile is capable to take down enemy aircraft from a range of 160 kms.
- ❖ The Astra Mark is beyond visual range air-to-air missile - BVRAAM.
- ❖ It flies over 4 times the sound speed at Mach 4.5.

### **INS Karanj**

- ❖ Indian Navy got its third Scorpene Submarine under project 75.
- ❖ It will be commissioned as INS Karanj.
- ❖ Total 6 submarines of the Indian Navy are being constructed under Project 75.
- ❖ The other two submarines that are delivered are - Khanderi and Kalvari.

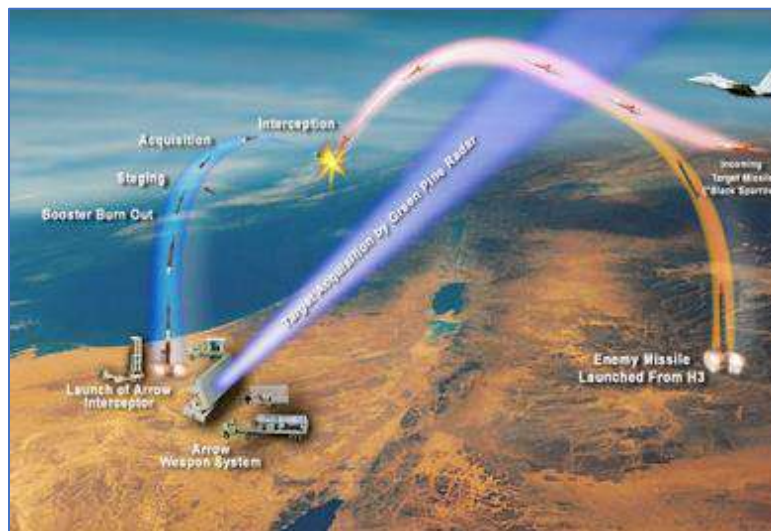
### **Arka Shubha variety**

- ❖ The Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (IIHR) has developed a new marigold variety called Arka Shubha.
- ❖ It is known to have the highest carotene content of 2.8%.
- ❖ Thus, these marigolds hold value even if spoiled due to the extraction of crude carotene.
- ❖ Crude carotene is often in high demand in the pharmaceutical sector.
- ❖ This marigold variety can also be used in poultry sector as feed for getting quality yolk.



### Arrow-4 missile shield

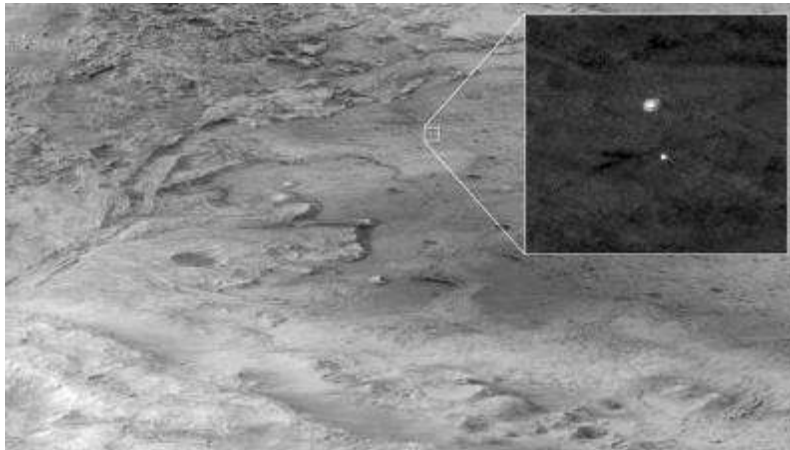
- ❖ Israel is developing a new ballistic missile shield named “Arrow-4” in collaboration with the United States.
- ❖ This missile is being developed as another layer in the defensive system by keeping an eye towards Iran.
- ❖ The Arrow-2 and Arrow-3 interceptors of Israel are already operational under the multi-layered system.
- ❖ This system can destroy the incoming missiles in the atmosphere and in space.
- ❖ It is a family of anti-ballistic missiles.



### Landing of Perseverance in Mars

- ❖ The USA's Nasa sent rover Perseverance successfully landed on the surface of Mars.
- ❖ The Perseverance will also collect samples of Martian Rocks from the Red Planet.

- ❖ After landing, two of the Hazard Cameras (Hazcams) captured views from the front and rear of the rover
- ❖ It sent photos of Mars, including a high-resolution colour selfie taken during its landing.
- ❖ A key objective for Perseverance's mission on Mars is astrobiology, including the search for signs of ancient microbial life.
- ❖ It will carry Ingenuity, the first ever helicopter to fly on Mars.
- ❖ This is the first time NASA will fly a helicopter on another planet or satellite.



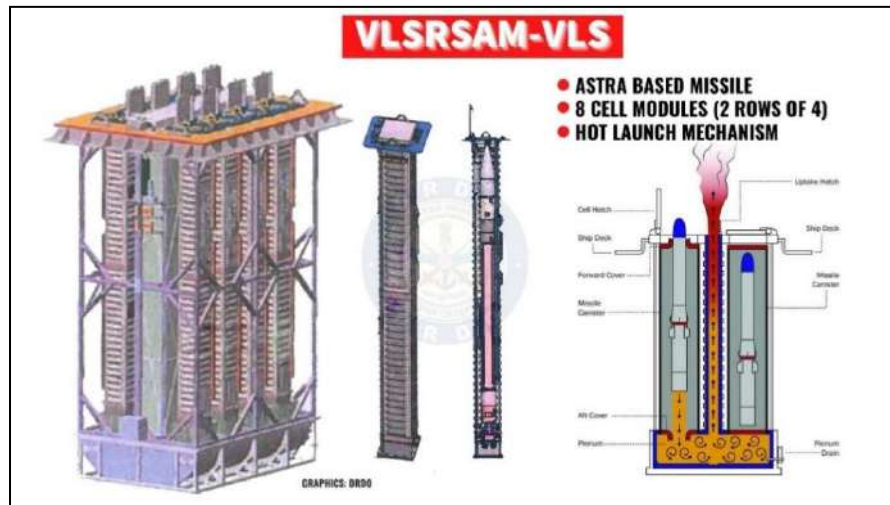
### **Clone of black-footed ferret**

- ❖ The US scientists have successfully cloned an endangered black-footed ferret using frozen cells from a long-dead wild animal.
- ❖ It is named as Elizabeth Ann.
- ❖ It is created from the cells of Willa, a black-footed ferret
- ❖ That has lived more than 30 years ago.
- ❖ This is the first time that the any native endangered species has been cloned in the United States.



## VL-SRSAM Missile System

- ❖ The DRDO conducted two successful launches of Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM).
- ❖ The VL-SRSAM is indigenously designed and developed by DRDO for Indian Navy
- ❖ It aims to neutralize various aerial threats at close ranges including sea-skimming targets.



## ICGS C-453 Interceptor boat

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICG) named as C-453 was commissioned into services in Chennai
- ❖ This was the 17<sup>th</sup> interceptor boats out of the 18.
- ❖ They are being indigenously built by Larsen & Toubro Ltd.

## First audio from Mars

- ❖ NASA, released the first audio from Mars.
- ❖ It was a faint crackling recording of the wind that was captured by Perseverance rover.
- ❖ NASA has also released the first video of landing of the rover.
- ❖ NASA had launched the Perseverance rover on July 30, 2020.
- ❖ The mission landed on MARS on February 18, 2021.





### Anti-tank Guided Missile

- ❖ India has successfully test-fired indigenously-developed anti-tank guided missile systems 'Helina' and 'Dhruvastra' in the Pokhran range.
- ❖ The Helina (Army version) and Dhruvastra (Airforce version) are helicopter-launched versions of third-generation anti-tank guided missiles.
- ❖ They are known as NAG Missile System.
- ❖ The missile systems have been designed and developed indigenously by the DRDO.
- ❖ Both the missiles can engage targets both in direct hit mode as well as top attack mode.
  - Top Attack Mode: The missile is required to climb sharply after launch and travel at a certain altitude, then plunge on top of the target.
  - Direct Attack Mode: The missile travels at a lower altitude, directly striking the target.





### **Spacecraft Named in Honor of mathematician**

- ❖ A space supply ship, Cygnus NG-15 cargo dubbed as 'S.S. Katherine Johnson.
- ❖ It has been named in honour of Katherine Johnson.
- ❖ She is a NASA mathematician.
- ❖ She played a major role in the success of the first U.S. crewed spaceflight, Mercury-Atlas 6 Mission.



## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Birds of the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve**

- ❖ Zoological Survey of India released this publication.
- ❖ It states that the Indian Sunderbans is home to 428 species of birds.
- ❖ Birds, like Masked Finfoot and Buffy fish owl, are recorded only here.



- ❖ Indian Sunderbans is part of the world's largest mangrove forest.
- ❖ It comprises of the Sunderban Tiger Reserve
- ❖ It is a World Heritage Site and Ramsar Site.
- ❖ It is home to Royal Bengal Tigers.

### Climate Adaptation Summit 2021

- ❖ It was hosted by the Netherlands government.
- ❖ By the year 2030, India will target 450 gigawatt of renewable energy capacity.
- ❖ The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference is also known as COP26.
- ❖ It is the 26th United Nations Climate Change conference.
- ❖ It will be held in Glasgow, Scotland in November, 2021.
- ❖ The United Kingdom will chair the summit.

### 16<sup>th</sup> Global Climate Risk Index 2021

- ❖ It was recently released by Germanwatch-a NGO based in Bonn, Germany.
- ❖ Mozambique and Zimbabwe are the two most affected countries by climate change in 2019.
- ❖ In the past 20 years (2000-2019), Puerto Rico, Myanmar and Haiti were the countries most affected by the impacts of weather events.
- ❖ In this index, India has been ranked at seventh position among the countries.
- ❖ As per the report, monsoon continued for a month longer than normal in India in the year 2019.

CRI 2000-2019 (1999-2018)	Country	CRI score	Fatalities	Fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants	Losses in million US\$ PPP	Losses per unit GDP in %	Number of events (2000-2019)
1 (2)	Puerto Rico	7.17	149.85	4.12	4 149.98	3.56	24
2 (12)	Myanmar	10.00	7 056.45	14.35	1 512.11	0.80	57
3 (13)	Haiti	13.67	274.05	2.78	392.54	2.30	80
4 (4)	Philippines	18.17	859.35	0.93	3 179.12	0.34	317
5 (14)	Mozambique	25.83	125.40	0.52	305.03	1.33	57
6 (20)	The Bahamas	27.67	5.35	1.56	426.86	3.81	13
7 (7)	Bangladesh	28.33	572.50	0.38	1 860.04	0.41	186
8 (5)	Pakistan	29.00	502.45	0.30	3 771.91	0.52	173
9 (8)	Thailand	29.83	137.75	0.21	7 719.15	0.82	146
10 (9)	Nepal	31.33	217.35	0.82	233.06	0.39	191

The 10 countries most affected from 2000 to 2019 (annual averages)

## Green Tax

- ❖ The Ministry of road transport has decided to impose the additional taxes.
- ❖ It will be on old vehicles that are no more fit on road.
- ❖ Green tax is also called as the pollution tax or environmental tax
- ❖ The decision was taken to curb pollution.
- ❖ It will also make the polluter to pay for creating pollution.
- ❖ It will also motivate people to switch to environment-friendly alternatives to the vehicles.
- ❖ Under the Green Tax norms, the transport vehicles older than eight years will be charged with the green tax at the time of renewal of fitness certificate.
- ❖ They will be charged at the rate of 10 to 25% of road tax.
- ❖ While, the Public transport vehicles like city buses will be paying lower Green Tax.
- ❖ However, the vehicles used in farming like tractor and harvester will be exempted from the tax.



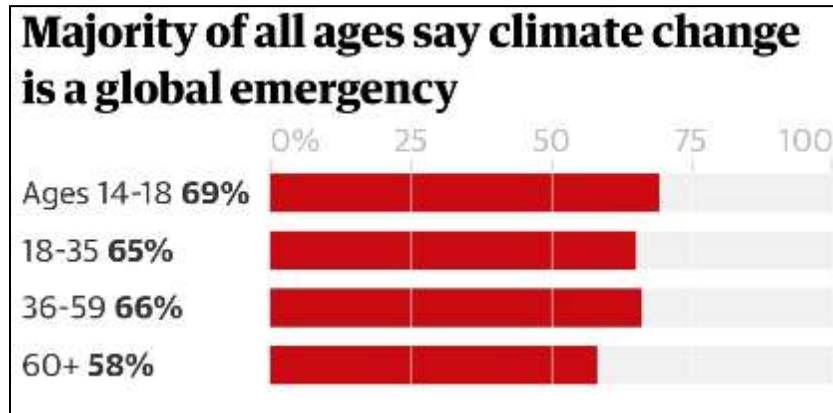
## UN Global Climate Survey

- ❖ United Nations has released its biggest ever opinion poll on climate change.
- ❖ It is called “UN Global Climate Survey”.
- ❖ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted the “Peoples’ Climate Vote” for 1.2 million people from 50 countries to prepare this report.

### Key Findings

- ❖ Two-thirds of people think it is a “global emergency”.
- ❖ 69% of people aged 14-18 said there is a climate emergency.

- ❖ 58% of those above 60 agreed with it.
- ❖ 65% in favour of renewable energy in US, 76% in Australia and 51% in Russia.
- ❖ The conservation of trees gets 60% support in Brazil while 57% in Indonesia.



### Global Climate Litigation Report 2021

- ❖ UNEP has released its “Global Climate Litigation Report 2021”.
- ❖ The report was published by the UNEP in cooperation with the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia University.
- ❖ The report highlights that the Climate litigation cases have increased in recent years.

#### Key Findings

- ❖ The climate cases have nearly doubled over the last three years.
- ❖ As per the data provided by the report, 884 cases were brought in 24 countries in 2017.
- ❖ As of 2020, cases have increased to 1,550 filed in 38 countries and the European Union courts.

### First Wetland Conservation and Management center

- ❖ New Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management (CWCM) will be set-up in Chennai soon.
- ❖ It aims to address the knowledge gaps and specific research needs for the conservation and management of wetlands.
- ❖ India has 42 Ramsar sites that have been designated as Wetlands of International Importance.
- ❖ They cover around 4.6% of Indian landmass.

### **Kaliveli Wetlands - Bird Sanctuary**

- ❖ Villupuram district administration in Tamil Nadu has issued the first declaration under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- ❖ The declaration was issued in a bid to declare Kaliveli wetlands as a bird sanctuary.
- ❖ It will boost their efforts to protect the wetland.
- ❖ The Kaliveli Wetlands is the second-largest brackish water lake in South India.
- ❖ The first largest is the Pulicat lake.
- ❖ The Kaliveli lake is connected to the Bay of Bengal through the Uppukalli Creek and the Edayanthittu sanctuary.
- ❖ The Southern part of this wetland was declared a reserved land in the year 2001.

### **51<sup>st</sup> tiger reserve for India**

Tiger reserves in TN	
Name	Area (In hectares)
Mudumalai	32,100
Kalakad Mundanthurai	70,654
Anamalai	95,859
Satyamangalam	79,349
Srivilliputhur-Megamalai	1,01,657.13

- ❖ The Centre has approved tiger reserve status for the sanctuaries spanning the forests of Meghamalai and Srivilliputhur in Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ This is home to 63 mammal species and 323 bird species.
- ❖ It will be India's 51st tiger reserve and 5<sup>th</sup> for Tamil Nadu.
- ❖ The Meghamalai Wildlife Sanctuary is spread across the districts of Theni and Madurai (Highwavys mountains and Cardamom Hills).
- ❖ The Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary lies along Kerala's Periyar Tiger Reserve.
- ❖ The last tiger reserve was notified six years ago in Arunachal Pradesh, Kamlang.

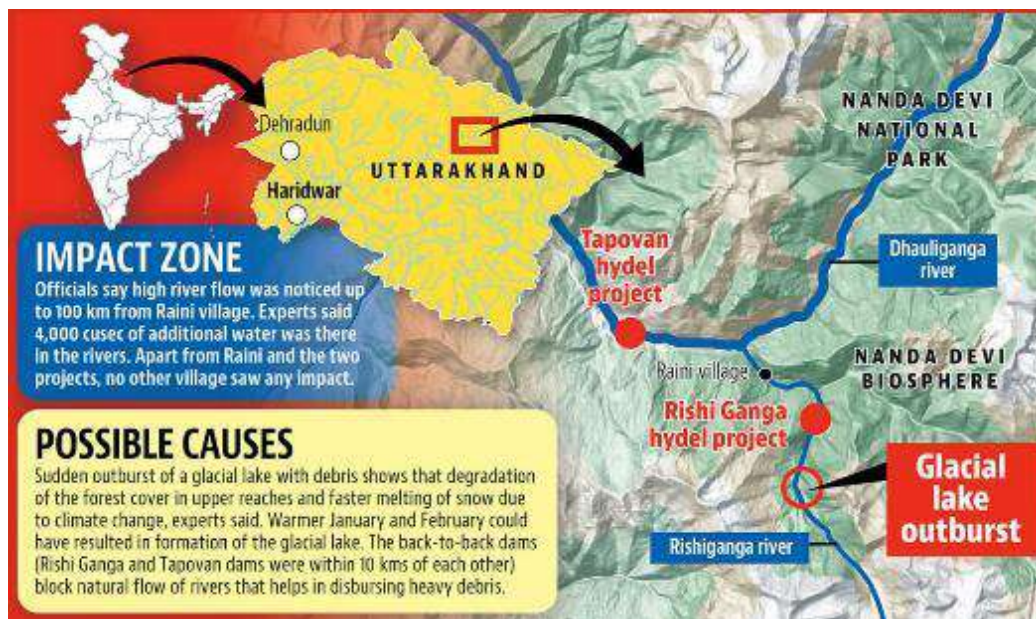


## Thunderstorm Research Testbed of India

- ❖ India's first thunderstorm research testbed will be established in Balasore, Odisha.
- ❖ It is being established with the objective to minimize the human fatalities and loss of property caused by the lightning strikes.
- ❖ It will be established in a collaboration among the
  - Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO),
  - Ministry of Earth Sciences,
  - Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and
  - India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- ❖ The Monsoon Testbed will also be set up near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The monsoon testbed would also be first-of-its-kind.

## Glacial Breach Triggered Floods

- ❖ An avalanche and flash floods are triggered in Alaknanda river in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand.
- ❖ It occurred after a glacial breach.
- ❖ This avalanche was caused probably due to glacial breach.
- ❖ The glacial breach also breached a lake in the Raini village in Chamoli district.



- ❖ The raini village is situated on the boundary of Nanda Devi biosphere reserve.
- ❖ Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE) is investigating the matter.

- ❖ It works under the Defence Research and Development Organisation.
- ❖ The breach has resulted into increase in water levels in the Dhauliganga river and the Rishi ganga,
- ❖ The avalanche has destroyed the Rishi Ganga hydel plant on the Rishiganga river.

### **India's first Geothermal Power Project**

- ❖ The first geothermal power project of India will be established at Puga village of eastern Ladakh.
- ❖ Puga village was identified as the hotspot of geothermal energy by the scientists.
- ❖ This geothermal project is known as Geothermal Field Development Project.

### **Public Platform to track Polluters**

- ❖ The Environment Ministry of China recently announced to set up a new Public Information Platform.
- ❖ It will allow the public to track emissions from the polluting enterprises.
- ❖ This Platform will help the authorities to prosecute the public who will break the rules.
- ❖ It will also prosecute the public in case they try to evade supervision.

### **Mandarin Duck**

- ❖ The Mandarin duck was spotted in Assam recently after 118 years.
- ❖ It is a colorful duck and it is having habitat of eastern China and southern Japan.
- ❖ The last Mandarin duck was spotted in Assam in the year 1902.

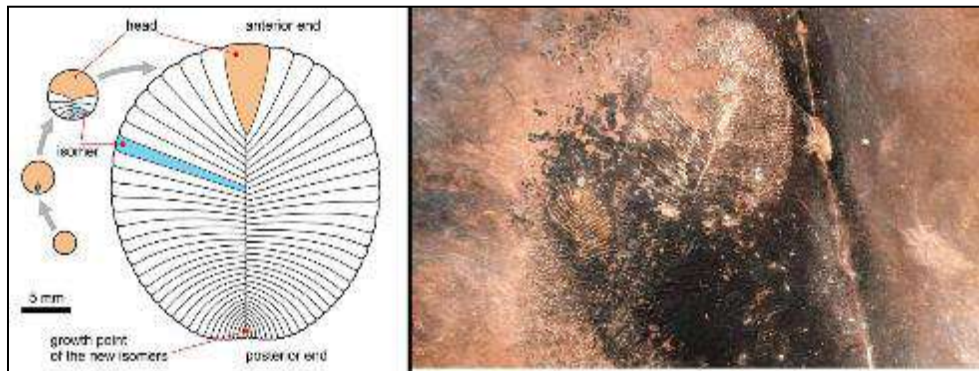


### 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Tamirabarani Waterbird Count

- ❖ It was conducted in waterbodies of Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Tenkasi districts.
- ❖ It showed a marginal increase in the numbers compared to the tenth edition of the count in 2020 when 24,411 birds from 74 species were spotted.
- ❖ This year, 26,868 birds belonging to 73 species, including thousands of migratory birds from Siberia and Mongolia, were recorded

### Fossils of 'Dickinsonia'

- ❖ Researchers have discovered three fossils of the earliest known living animal, the 550-million-year-old 'Dickinsonia'.
- ❖ It was discovered on the roof of the Bhimbetka Rock Shelters near Bhopal.
- ❖ One fossil is 17 inches long, the other two are much smaller.



### 1st Elevated Wildlife Corridor

- ❖ The Delhi-Dehradun Expressway will have the country's first Elevated Wildlife Corridor.
- ❖ The project will have a six-lane elevated wildlife corridor spanning 12 kilometres.
- ❖ It is focused on preservation of the wildlife as the expressway alignment crosses wildlife areas.





## **Nesting of Olive Ridley**

- ❖ The mass nesting of the Olive Ridley turtles has begun in Puducherry coastline.
- ❖ Puducherry coastline is among the migratory route to Odisha which are used by these turtles.
- ❖ The coastline is listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- ❖ These turtles commonly known as Pacific ridely sea turtle.
- ❖ Its IUCN status is vulnerable.
- ❖ It is also listed in Appendix I of CITES.



## **World's Smallest Reptile**

- ❖ The world's smallest species of reptiles have been found in Madagascar.
- ❖ It is a species of a chameleon and called Brookesia nana.
- ❖ It is the smallest species among the 11,500 known species of reptiles.
- ❖ The length of the chameleon is 22 mm that is 0.86 inches in all.



### **Oldest DNA recovery**

- ❖ The Scientists have recovered the oldest DNA on record from the teeth of Siberian Mammoths.
- ❖ The DNA was extracted from the molars of mammoths.
- ❖ These mammoths were found in the north-eastern Siberia some 1.2 million years ago.
- ❖ DNA was recovered and sequenced from the remains of three individual mammoths.
- ❖ The mammoths were among the large mammals who dominated Ice Age landscapes.
- ❖ Mammoths is the species of extinct elephantid of genus Mammuthus.



### **Rare Birds sighted in Mangalore**

- ❖ The rare birds namely the Yellow-Billed Babbler, Green Sandpiper and Grey-Necked Bunting were spotted in the Mangalore University.
- ❖ The team of birdwatchers spotted 108 species of birds in Mangalore University.
- ❖ The Mangalore University was running the campus bird count.
- ❖ The campus bird count is the part of the Great Backyard Bird Count.
- ❖ It is organised by the Bird Count of India.

### **Mass Migration of Blue Earthworms**

- ❖ The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) has prepared a report on two-way mass migration of the blue earthworms in the state of Meghalaya.
- ❖ The Uphill migration of the earthworms starts in April-May.
- ❖ With the onset of monsoon, they emerge from the rivers and streams.
- ❖ Downhill migration occurs during September-October when the vegetation starts to dry and temperature & humidity drop.
- ❖ The scientific name of the blue earthworm is Perionyx excavates.
- ❖ It is also called as composting worms, blues, or Indian blues.





### **US officially re-joins Paris Climate agreement**

- ❖ The United States has officially rejoined the Paris Agreement, under the Presidency of US President Joe Biden.
- ❖ Earlier, in November 2020, the US had officially exited the agreement on the order of then-President Donald Trump.
- ❖ The landmark Paris climate agreement was signed in 2015.
- ❖ As per this agreement, the countries are expected to enhance their commitments to curb greenhouse gas emissions every five years.
- ❖ The goals of the global pact are to limit global warming to well below 2°C.
- ❖ It also aims to pursue the efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

### **Ban on Vulture-Toxic Drugs**

- ❖ Bangladesh has become the first country that has banned the painkiller ketoprofen.
- ❖ This painkiller is used widely to treat the cattle.
- ❖ But this painkiller is toxic to vultures.
- ❖ The Indian government had banned the use of diclofenac for veterinary purpose in the year 2006.
- ❖ Oman became the first country in Arabian Peninsula to ban the veterinary use of diclofenac.

## **STATES**

### **School of Public Health - Rajasthan**

- ❖ Rajasthan has launched a new School of Public Health.
- ❖ The school was launched to make the policy intervention to build the public health capacity and skills.
- ❖ It will also help in bridging the gaps between education and practices in Rajasthan.
- ❖ The school has been named after the Indian Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR).

### **1<sup>st</sup> state with 2 Expressway airstrips**

- ❖ 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.

### **First Young Readers' Boat Library**

- ❖ The West Bengal Transport Corporation has launched the First Young Readers' Boat Library.
- ❖ The library has been launched in collaboration with a heritage book store.
- ❖ It has been launched on a boat
- ❖ It is making it the first of its kind initiative.
- ❖ The boat library will cruise on the Hooghly river.



### **5<sup>th</sup> state to complete Urban Local Bodies Reforms**

- ❖ Rajasthan has become the 5th state in the country to successfully complete the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) reforms.
- ❖ This was specified by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.
- ❖ Rajasthan now become eligible for additional reform linked borrowing.
- ❖ Other states that have completed the Urban Local Bodies Reforms include - Manipur, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana.

### **First Gender Park**

- ❖ The country's first "Gender Park" in Kerala will become functional soon.
- ❖ The three-tower "Gender Park" is a step of the state towards gender equality.
- ❖ It will become operational on February 11 coinciding with the second edition of the International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE-II).
- ❖ On that day, the foundation of the International Women's Trade and Research Centre (IWTRC) will also be laid down.



### **Kerala Looks Ahead**

- ❖ The Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan, inaugurated the "Kerala Looks Ahead".
- ❖ It is a three-day virtual global conclave.
- ❖ It seeks to lay down the roadmap for long-term development in Kerala.
- ❖ The conclave was hosted by the Kerala State Planning Board.
- ❖ The conference covered the nine themes of deliberations.

### **Kerala's First Human Milk Bank**

- ❖ Kerala's first Human Milk Bank, 'Nectar of Life', was opened at Ernakulam General Hospital.
- ❖ It is set up with the support of the Rotary Club of Cochin Global.
- ❖ It will ensure the availability of the breast milk for new-born babies who are not breastfed by their own mothers.

### Nectar of life

- Neonatology Forum (NNF), Kerala has proposed a breast milk bank

The newborns should be aggressively breastfed in the first hour

- Breast-feeding gives protection from many infections
- In all the neonatal intensive care units, about one-third of the babies would be preterm



- Breast Milk Bank project titled Nectar of Life has got support from Rotary International

Any lactating mother can donate to the bank

### Lithium deposits in Karnataka

- ❖ The Central Government has confirmed the presence of 1600 tonnes of lithium deposits in Mandya district of Karnataka.
- ❖ The survey was done on the surface and limited subsurface in the pegmatites of Marlagalla – Allapatna area.
- ❖ This Survey was done by the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD).
- ❖ The AMD is a constituent unit under the Department of Atomic Energy.
- ❖ The first Lithium plant of India has been set up at Gujarat in the year 2021.

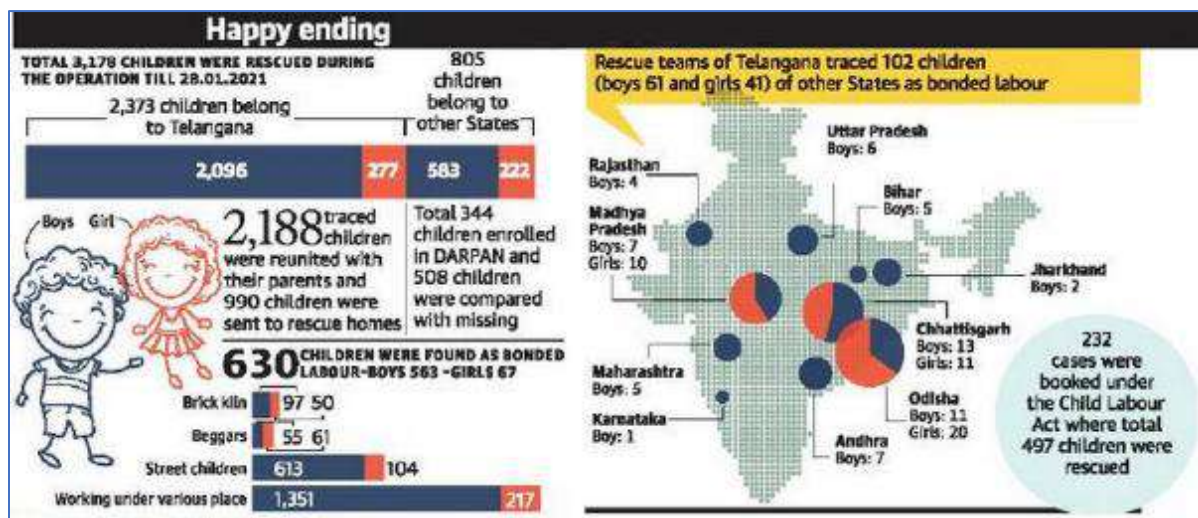
### India's first Igloo Cafe



- ❖ This is country's first café built of snow.
- ❖ It is Asia's biggest Igloo Café.
- ❖ It is located at the ski resort in Gulmarg, Kashmir.
- ❖ The resort is situated in the Pir Panjal Range of the Himalayas at an altitude of 2,650 metre.

### Operation smile

- ❖ Under 'Operation Smile - VII' from January 1 till January 29, 2021, the Cyberabad police of Telangana rescued as many as 389 children.
- ❖ Out of the total rescued children, 249 (222 boys and 27 girls) belong to the Telangana state, whereas 140 (114 boys and 26 girls) belong to 14 other states.
- ❖ Under 'Operation Smile', missing children details were entered in DARPAN app.
- ❖ This app is a unique facial recognition tool developed by the Telangana police.



### Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar mela

- ❖ The third phase of Chah Bagicha Dhan Puraskar mela held in Guwahati.
- ❖ The Assam government will be distributing the financial assistance to 7.5 lakh people who belongs to tea garden areas.
- ❖ This scheme was started by the Assam government in the year 2017- 18.





### 16-Digit Unicode To Identify Landholdings

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh government has introduced a system of issuing a unique 16-digit Unicode.
- ❖ This Unicode will be used to mark all kinds of landholdings in the state.
- ❖ The first 6 digits is based on the population of the land.
- ❖ Next 4 digits in the line would determine the unique identity of the land.
- ❖ Next 4 digits would be the number of divisions of the land.
- ❖ Lastly, 2 digits would contain the details regarding the category.
- ❖ The category (for Last 2 digits) of the land viz. residential, agricultural and commercial land can be identified.

### Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) scheme

- ❖ PPP is an 8-digit Unique Identity Card number meant for each family in Haryana.
- ❖ It enables smooth and automatic delivery of several citizen-centric services.
- ❖ The benefits, according to the schemes, shall automatically be transferred to the family using the same code.
- ❖ Due to the privacy concerns over this scheme, the government says enrolment is voluntary.
- ❖ It will ensure that not a single beneficiary is left out from the government benefits that they are entitled to.

### Implementation of e-cabinet

- ❖ Himachal Pradesh has become first State in the country to make the end-to-end processing of the cabinet paperless.

- ❖ It was done by implementing e-cabinet application.
- ❖ It deals issues like receipt of cabinet memo, finalization of cabinet meeting, advice received on cabinet memo for various level like Secretaries and Ministers.

### **Power Sector reforms – Andhra Pradesh**

- ❖ Andhra Pradesh has become the second State to implement the power sector reforms.
- ❖ The state has implemented the one of the three reforms that was brought in 2020.
- ❖ It also completed One Nation One Ration Card reform, Ease of Doing Business Reforms and Urban Local Bodies Reforms besides the power sector reforms.
- ❖ Before this, Madhya Pradesh undertook the reforms in the power sector.

### **Tapovan Vishnugad power plant**

- ❖ An avalanche near Tapovan in Uttarakhand has damaged a part of our under-construction hydropower project Tapovan Vishnugad.
- ❖ Earlier in the day, a glacier broke off in Joshimath in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district.
- ❖ That event caused a massive flood in the Dhauliganga river.
- ❖ The construction of the Tapovan–Vishnugad HEP began in November 2006.



### **Mukhyamantri Vigyan Pratibha Pariksha' Scheme**

- ❖ Under this scheme Rs 5,000 will be provided to 1,000 meritorious students of Class 9 in schools of Delhi as a science scholarship.
- ❖ The scholarship will provide a boost to science education in secondary classes at the school level.

### **‘Jalabhishekam’ Water Conservation Campaign**

- ❖ Rajnath Singh, Indian Defence Minister inaugurated 57,000 water structures under the “Jalabhishekam Water Conservation Campaign”.
- ❖ These water structures were constructed in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The conservation work will help to achieve the goal of water conservation and build a self-reliant Madhya Pradesh.

### **Completion of Urban Local Bodies reforms**

- ❖ Goa has become the 6<sup>th</sup> State in the country that have successfully completed the Urban Local Bodies reforms.
- ❖ These Urban Local Bodies reforms were set up by the Department of Expenditure.
- ❖ It aims to strengthening the finance of the Urban Local Bodies in States.
- ❖ These reforms would enable the ULBs to provide better public health and sanitation services to its citizens.
- ❖ The five other states - Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Rajasthan and Telangana.

### **COVID Warrior Memorial**

- ❖ Odisha government has decided to construct a Covid Warrior Memorial in Biju Patnaik Park at Bhubaneswar.
- ❖ It aims to recognize the sacrifice and services rendered by the Covid warriors who lost their lives fighting the pandemic.

### **Climate-resilient development pathway**

- ❖ Bihar signed a memorandum of understanding with the UNEP to achieve climate resilience and low carbon development by 2040.
- ❖ UNEP would lead a multi-stakeholder team to assess the carbon footprint of various sectors.
- ❖ Bihar is the first state of India which signed such kind of MOU.

### **Developmental projects in Kerala**

- ❖ PM inaugurated Propylene Derivative Petrochemical Project (PDPP) of oil major Bharat Petroleum in Kochi.
- ❖ He dedicated to the nation Ro-Ro vessels of Inland Waterways at Willingdon Islands.

- ❖ He inaugurated the Cochin Port Trust's International Cruise Terminal and Cochin Shipyard's Vigyan Sagar.
- ❖ It is India's first full-fledged international cruise terminal.
- ❖ He also laid the foundation stone of Cochin Port Trust's South Coal Berth.



### **Rajasthan Prison Rules – 1951**

- ❖ The Rajasthan government has amended the Rajasthan Prison Rules, 1951 recently.
- ❖ The move was aimed to do away with the caste-based assignment of labour.
- ❖ Earlier, every person entering to the prison are asked about his caste.
- ❖ Once their caste was identified, the menial jobs such as cleaning toilets, sweeping the prisons etc are assigned to them.

### **One Nation One Ration Card system reform**

- ❖ Punjab has become the 13th State in the country to successfully undertake "One Nation One Ration Card system" reform.
- ❖ Thus, the State has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs.1,516 crore through Open Market Borrowings.
- ❖ Permission for the same was issued by the Department of Expenditure of the Union.

SLNo.	State	Amount (Rs in crore)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2,525
2.	Goa	223
3.	Gujarat	4,352
4.	Haryana	2,146
5.	Karnataka	4,509
6.	Kerala	2,261
7.	Madhya Pradesh	2,373
8.	Punjab	1,516
9.	Rajasthan	2,731
10.	Tamil Nadu	4,813
11.	Telangana	2,508
12.	Tripura	148
13.	Uttar Pradesh	4,851

### Mini Museums

- ❖ The Kerala government has launched an initiative to establish and promote mini museums in state.
- ❖ The new museum movement has been started by the Keralam Museum.
- ❖ It is an organisation that build and modernise the museums.
- ❖ The government has also decided that the Bastion Bungalow at Fort Kochi will function as the Ernakulam District Heritage Museum.

### Mandu Festival

- ❖ “Mandu Festival” began at the historic town of Mandu in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ The festival is to showcase each and every aspect of the ancient Mandu city.
- ❖ During this festival, the newly constructed Dino Adventure Park and Fossils Museum in Mandu were inaugurated.





### **‘Maa’ canteens**

- ❖ The West Bengal government launched a new scheme to provide a cheap cooked meal to the poor across the state.
- ❖ It is called “Maa” canteens.
- ❖ It provides state-subsidised daily meals at lunchtime to the poor.



### **Kochi Water Metro project**

- ❖ The CM of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan, has inaugurated the first route and terminal buildings of Kochi Water Metro.
- ❖ This project connects the islands across the city with the help of state-of-the-art boats.
- ❖ Apart from the metro, the Chief Minister also opened the Panamkuttu Bridge.
- ❖ It is also known as Petta Bridge.
- ❖ He also launched the Integrated Urban Regeneration and Water Transport System (IURWT) project.
- ❖ IURWT project will renew the six major canals of 34 km in Kochi.

### **UP Abhyudaya scheme**

- ❖ The government of Uttar Pradesh has started UP Abhyudaya scheme to provide free coaching for competitive exams.
- ❖ Under this scheme, those students who are preparing for competitive examinations will get free coaching classes either online or physically.
- ❖ It includes JEE, NEET, NDA, CDS and UPSC.

### **KFC debit cards**

- ❖ Kerala Financial Corporation (KFC) will soon issue debit cards.
- ❖ KFC is a leading state-owned financial institution.

- ❖ These cards will be branded by public sector banks and cards will be issued in Rupay and platinum formats.
- ❖ It is for the first time in the country that a state government financial institution is issuing debit cards.

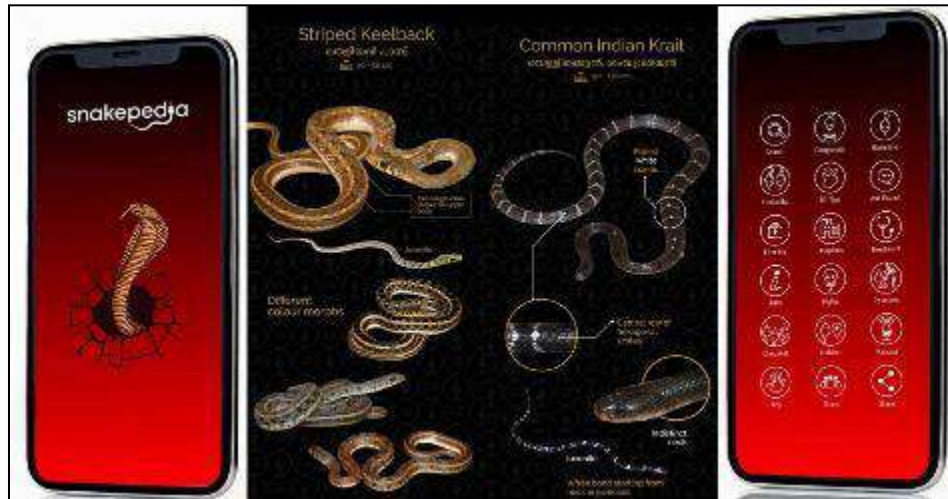
### **Tree City of the World**

- ❖ Hyderabad city (Telangana's Capital) has been recognised as a '2020 Tree City of the World'.
- ❖ This recognition given by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).
- ❖ Hyderabad has earned recognition in the Foundation's second year of the programme along with 51 other cities in the world.
- ❖ Most of the cities were from countries – USA, UK, Canada, Australia etc.
- ❖ It is the only City in India to get this recognition so far.



### **Snakepedia mobile app**

- ❖ A team of scientists, doctors and photographers in Kerala have launched a mobile application named "Snakepedia".
- ❖ It will present all relevant information on snakes, to help the public as well as doctors in treating snake bites.
- ❖ The main aim of the app is to help the public identify snakes, avail proper treatment on time for snakebites, bust myths about snakes, and protect snakes as well as snakebite victims.



### Package for Maa Samaleswari Shrine

- ❖ The state government of Odisha, has launched the development work for the SAMALEI Project.
- ❖ SAMALEI stands for Samaleswari Temple Area Management and Local Economy Initiatives.
- ❖ It aims to offer the divine experience to tourists & devotees.
- ❖ The project involves the development of 108 acres of land in & around the 16<sup>th</sup> century shrine of Maa Samaleswari, the presiding deity of western Odisha.

### Pugalur - Thrissur power transmission project

- ❖ Prime Minister inaugurates the 320 KV Pugalur (Tamil Nadu) - Thrissur (Kerala) power transmission project.
- ❖ It is a Voltage Source Converter (VSC) based High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Project.





- ❖ It has India's first HVDC link featuring state-of-the-art VSC technology.
- ❖ This VSC based system features integration of HVDC XLPE (cross-linked polyethylene) cable with overhead lines.
- ❖ This line saves right-of-way as well as has 35-40% less land footprint compared to conventional HVDC system.

### **100% tap water connections to schools**

- ❖ Telangana has provided tap water connections to all schools and anganwadis in the State.
- ❖ Nalgonda has the highest share of schools and anganwadis among all districts.
- ❖ Previously, the State had become the only one, along with Goa, to provide functional tap connections to all households.
- ❖ It was taken up under the 100-day special campaign of the Ministry of Jal Shakti under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

### **Renaming of Hoshangabad City**

- ❖ The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, has announced to rename the Hoshangabad city as Narmadapuram.
- ❖ Hoshangabad city was named after Hoshang Shah.
- ❖ He was the first ruler of Malwa.
- ❖ This district was the part of Nerbudda (Narmada) Division and Berar.
- ❖ Hoshangabad is famous for its beautiful ghats along the river Narmada river.

### **Kala Namak Rice' to Singapore**

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh is all set to export a consignment of 20 tonnes of Kala Namak rice to Singapore.
- ❖ The state government has also declared the rice as One District One Product of Siddharth Nagar.
- ❖ This rice is also called as Buddha Rice.
- ❖ Soon, the state will start observing the Kala Namak Rice festival.
- ❖ It also planned to set up a Kala Namak Rice Research Centre at Siddharth Nagar in association with the International Rice Research Centre, Varanasi.



### **India's First Digital University**

- ❖ A Digital University has been set up in Kerala's Technocity, Mangalapuram.
- ❖ It is the country's first Digital University in the Kerala state.
- ❖ It will focus on postgraduate programmes and research.

### **Road Constructed Using Plastic Waste**

- ❖ In a first-ever initiative in Tripura, the state has started using non-recyclable plastic waste in the construction of roads.
- ❖ It aims to reduce plastic waste and make the environment plastic-free.

### **Flower Processing Centre**

- ❖ The Horticulture Department of Karnataka will set up a flower processing centre in collaboration with the International Flower Auction Bangalore (IFAB).
- ❖ The centre will be set up in order to convert the unsold flowers into its useful products.
- ❖ Karnataka accounts for 75% of total flower production in India.
- ❖ The state also has India's first and only flower auction centre.

## **PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS**

### **Bihar's 'Cycle girl'**

- ❖ Bihar's Jyoti Kumari (16-year-old) was awarded the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar.
- ❖ She is known as Bihar's 'Cycle girl'.
- ❖ She had pedalled all the way from Gurugram to Bihar during the nationwide lockdown.
- ❖ Her father was seated on the Cycle carrier.

### **Best Electoral Practices Award**

- ❖ Election Commission of India has selected 17 officers and organizations for the "Best Electoral Practices Awards -2020"
- ❖ It was on the occasion of National Voters Day on January 25.





- ❖ Deceased IPS officer and Inspector General of Police of Purnea, Binod Kumar was also conferred this award.
- ❖ He had contracted Covid-19 infection during the review of election-related preparations in Purnea district.
- ❖ This led to his untimely demise.
- ❖ The e-EPIC (digital version of the electoral photo identity cards) was launched at the event.
- ❖ Radio Mirchi was conferred the national media award for the voter education and awareness.

### **The Little Book of Encouragement**

- ❖ Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama has come out with his new book titled 'The Little Book of Encouragement'.
- ❖ He has shared quotes and words of wisdom to promote human happiness in that book.

### **Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi**

- ❖ The year-long Birth Centenary celebrations of legendary classical singer Pandit Bhimsen Joshi began on February 04, 2021.
- ❖ He was an Indian vocalist from Karnataka.
- ❖ He is known for the khayal form of singing.
- ❖ He belongs to the Kirana gharana of Hindustani Classical Music.
- ❖ His concerts were advertised by posters in New York.
- ❖ This happened for the first time for a musician from India.
- ❖ He also organised the Sawai Gandharva Music Festival annually.
- ❖ He was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship in the year 1998.
- ❖ In 2009 he received, the India's highest civilian honour, Bharat Ratna.

### **Youngest female pilot**

- ❖ Ayesha Aziz, a 25-year-old from Kashmir is the youngest female pilot in the country.
- ❖ In the year 2011, Ayesha Aziz became the youngest student pilot to get a license at the age of 15.
- ❖ She underwent training to fly a MIG-29 jet at Russia's Sokol airbase.

### **First Woman chief of WTO**

- ❖ Nigerian-born Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is set to become the first woman and the first African to serve as the World Trade Organization chief.
- ❖ She was elected after withdrawal of the South Korea's candidate.
- ❖ The Six men have served as directors-general since its founding in 1995.



### **Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2021**

- ❖ Robert Irwin, an Australian wildlife photographer, has won the first prize in the Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice Award Contest.
- ❖ Robert won the award for the image titled 'bushfire'.
- ❖ It is the picture of the devastating Australian Bushfire in 2020.
- ❖ He captured using a drone, near the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve in Cape York, Queensland of Australia.
- ❖ The image shows a line of fire burning in between the bushes, dividing it into parts.



### **Voice of The Customer Award**

- ❖ Bangalore International Airport Limited's has bagged Airports Council International World's 'Voice of the Customer' award.
- ❖ This airport is also known as Kempegowda International Airport.
- ❖ It recognises the airports that continued to prioritise their customers and remained committed to ensuring that their voice was heard during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

### **Women Excellence Award 2021**

- ❖ Four young women fellows of National Science Academies have been awarded for excelling in science and engineering on the International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2021.
- ❖ The award given by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB).
- ❖ SERB is a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology.
- ❖ This award was launched in the year 2013.
- ❖ The winners are:
  - Dr. Shobhna Kapoor - Chemical Biology
  - Dr. Antara Banerjee - Health Sciences
  - Dr. Sonu Gandhi – Bio nanotechnology
  - Dr. Ritu Gupta - Nanotechnology

### **New ICC chief prosecutor**



- ❖ British human rights lawyer Karim Khan was elected as the new prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- ❖ He previously led a special UN probe into crimes by the Islamic State extremist group in Iraq.
- ❖ The United Nations has 193 member states but only 123 are in the ICC.

- ❖ ICC is the only permanent body investigating crimes against humanity.

### **Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award - 2020**

- ❖ S. Theodore Baskaran, a naturalist and an activist, has won the Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award, 2020.
- ❖ The award was instituted by the Sanctuary Nature Foundation.
- ❖ He was chosen for the award in the light of his dedication to the wildlife conservation.
- ❖ Earlier, he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award (Iyal Virudhu) for his writing on nature in Tamil.
- ❖ The award was given by the Canada Literary Garden in the year 2014 at Toronto.



### **Skoch CM of the Year**

- ❖ Andhra Pradesh's Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has been conferred the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year award.
- ❖ The award selection was based on study of project-level outcomes in various States.



## Prani Mitra and Jeev Daya awards 2021

Awards	Awardee
<b>Prani Mitra Award Individual</b>	Yogender Kumar, Manish Saxena, Shyam Lal Chaubisa
<b>Prani Mitra Award Shaurya</b>	Anil Gandas Late Smt. Kalpana Vasudevan, Coimbatore
<b>Prani Mitra Award – Life Time Animal Service</b>	Dr. R. M. Kharb, Dr. S. Chinny Krishna, Chennai Dr. S.R. Sundaram, Chennai
<b>Prani Mitra Award– Animal Welfare Organization</b>	World Sankirtan Tour Trust Shri Karuna Foundation Trust People for Animals
<b>Prani Mitra Award – Corporate</b>	Tata Trust Foundation
<b>JeevDaya Award – Animal Welfare Organization</b>	Dhyan Foundation Animal Aid Charitable Trust

- ❖ The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) conferred 14 Prani Mitra awards and Jeev Daya awards 2021.
- ❖ It recognizes individuals, organizations and corporates for their outstanding performance in the field of animal welfare.

## TIME magazine's list

- ❖ Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Azad has featured in TIME magazine's annual list of 100 "emerging leaders who are shaping the future".
- ❖ The list names as "2021 TIME100 Next".
- ❖ It also has five Indian-origin personalities:
  - Twitter's top lawyer Vijaya Gadde,
  - U.K.'s Finance Minister Rishi Sunak,
  - Instacart founder & CEO Apoorva Mehta,
  - Doctor & Executive Director of nonprofit Get Us PPE Shikha Gupta and
  - Founder of nonprofit Upsolve, Rohan Pavuluri.

## Book 'Maverick Messiah'

- ❖ The Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu released a book 'Maverick Messiah'.
- ❖ The book is a political biography of 'N T Rama Rao', the former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ It has been authored by senior journalist, Ramesh Kandula.





### **Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020**

- ❖ The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020.
- ❖ This is awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- ❖ WCCB got the award twice in three years.
- ❖ Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been awarded this year under the Innovation category.
- ❖ Earlier, the Bureau had received the award in 2018 under the same category.
- ❖ Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is a statutory multi-disciplinary body under the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2006.
- ❖ It was established in 2008 by the Government of India under the Ministry of Environment and Forests.
- ❖ It works to combat organized wildlife crime in the country.

### **World Leadership Congress**

- ❖ Sify Technologies's Kamal Nath has been named 'CEO of the Year' by the World Leadership Congress.
- ❖ This year, the Business Leader of the Year has celebrated its 19<sup>th</sup> Global edition of the award and the 4<sup>th</sup> India edition.
- ❖ PTC India Financial Services has bagged award in Financial Services category.

### **International Anti-corruption Champions Award**

- ❖ An Indian social activist, Anjali Bhardwaj has been selected for the "United State International Anti-Corruption Champions Award".
- ❖ Another 11 members were also recognised as anti-corruption champions.

- ❖ Anjali is the founder of ‘Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)’.
- ❖ It is a citizens’ group that promote transparency and accountability in government.
- ❖ It also encourages the active participation of citizens.



### **World HRD Congress Awards**

- ❖ Union Bank of India was awarded in various category at the 29th Global HRD Congress awards.
  - Best Service Provider in Human Resources.
  - Best institution for “Excellence in Learning & Development”.
- ❖ Its Chief General Manager Kalyan Kumar was named as “Chief Human Resources Officer of the Year”.



### **New Chairman of NCSC**

- ❖ Vijay Sampla took the charge of Chairman National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC).
- ❖ He has been the former Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment from 2014 to 2019.

- ❖ NCSC is an Indian Constitutional body.
- ❖ That has been established to provide safeguards against the exploitation of Scheduled Castes.
- ❖ It also, works for the socio-economic development of the scheduled castes and to prevent atrocities against them.
- ❖ Article 338 of the Indian constitution deals with National Commission for Scheduled Castes.

### **Youngest woman to row Atlantic**

- ❖ A British woman, Jasmine Harrison of England has become the youngest woman to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean.
- ❖ She achieved the feat by finishing top in the 2020 Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge.




## **SPORTS**

### **Ranji Trophy cricket**

- ❖ First time in 87 years, Ranji Trophy gets cancelled.
- ❖ It is the Indian domestic first-class cricket.
- ❖ It was started in 1892.
- ❖ It was cancelled in 1930-31 to 1931-34 (due to Civil Disobedience).
- ❖ India is the only country to host first-class cricket during the World Wars.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> highest wicket taker in Tests

- ❖ Ravichandran Ashwin surpassed Harbhajan Singh to become the second highest wicket-taker (268) in Tests played in India.
- ❖ Ashwin has so far taken 394 wickets from 76 Tests.
- ❖ Harbhajan is third in the overall standings with 417 wickets.
- ❖ Kumble is also India's leading wicket-takers in Tests with 619.



BOWLER	TESTS	WKTS	AVE	BEST	10WM	SR
A Kumble	63	350	24.88	10/74	7	59.4
R Ashwin	45	268	22.54	7/59	6	49.0
Harbhajan	55	265	28.76	8/84	4	64.1
Kapil Dev	65	219	26.49	9/83	2	55.7

## National record in the 20-km walk

- ❖ Priyanka Goswami, beat the national record in the 20-km walk.
- ❖ He did this feat at the 8<sup>th</sup> open national and 4<sup>th</sup> international race-walking championship.
- ❖ She crossed in a timing of 1:28:45.
- ❖ She broke Bhawna Jat's record of 1:29.54 set at the same event last year.
- ❖ Earlier Priyanka won two silver medals at national level in 2017-2018.
- ❖ She also bagged gold in the all-India railway competition (2018).
- ❖ She has participated in World Walk Championship in Italy (Rome) and in Asian Walk Championship Japan.










## National Table Tennis Title

- ❖ Manika Batra has won the 82<sup>nd</sup> Senior National Table Tennis Championship.
- ❖ It is a popular indoor recreation sport in the country.
- ❖ It is mostly played in the states of West Bengal, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat.
- ❖ In 2018, she was the only Indian who received “The Breakthrough Star Award” by ITTF.
- ❖ In 2020, she also received the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award.



## 200 wickets of left-handers

MOST WICKETS OF LEFT-HAND BATSMEN IN TESTS				
				
R ASHWIN	MUTTIAH MURALITHARAN	JAMES ANDERSON	GLENN McGRATH	SHANE WARNE
WICKETS				
200	191	190	172	172
% OF TOTAL WICKETS				
51.2%	23.9%	31.1%	30.6%	24.3%

- ❖ Ravichandran Ashwin has become the first player in the 143-year history of Test cricket to take 200 wickets against left-handed batsmen.



- ❖ He achieved this feat during India's second Test against England at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai.
- ❖ Ashwin has picked 391 wickets till now in his career.
- ❖ The second most successful bowler in Test cricket against left-handed batsmen is Sri Lankan Muttiah Muralitharan (191).

### **Australian Open 2021**

- ❖ Novak Djokovic, the world-number one Serbian Tennis player, won his 9th Australian Title.
- ❖ This is also the 18<sup>th</sup> Grand Slam win for Djokovic.
- ❖ It is just two behind from Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer.
- ❖ Naomi Osaka won her second Australian Open 2021 women's singles trophy and a fourth Grand Slam title.
- ❖ Osaka has won the Australian Open immediately after becoming the US Open champion in the previous year.
- ❖ This is the second time for such winning.
- ❖ Now she has two US Open titles (2018, 2020) and two Australian Open trophies (2019, 2021).



### **Adriatic Pearl Boxing Tournament**

- ❖ Babyrojisana Chanu (51kg) and Arundhati Choudhary (69kg) fetched two gold medals in the 30<sup>th</sup> Adriatic Pearl Tournament in Budva, Montenegro.
- ❖ Alfiya Pathan (+81kg), Vinka (60kg) and T Sanamacha Chanu (75kg) are the other Indian women boxers who secured gold medals earlier in this tournament.
- ❖ Indian women emerged as the top team with 10 medals (5 gold, 3 silver and 2 bronze).



## IMPORTANT DAYS

### Indian Coast Guard Day – February 01

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard is an armed force of India.
- ❖ It protects maritime interests and enforces maritime law.
- ❖ Indian Coast Guard was raised on February 1, 1977.
- ❖ But it was formally established on 18 August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act -1978 as an independent armed force.



### **World Wetlands Day - February 02**

- ❖ It is celebrated to raise global awareness about the vital role of wetlands for people and our planet.
- ❖ This day also marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2, 1971.
- ❖ In the year 2021, the day marked the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
- ❖ The theme for World Wetlands Day this year is 'Wetlands and Water'.



### **International Day of Human Fraternity - February 04**

- ❖ It aims to underline the importance of raising awareness about different cultures and religions, or beliefs, and the promotion of tolerance.
- ❖ UN General Assembly on 21 December 2020 adopted a resolution to observe this day.
- ❖ This year's theme is 'A Pathway to the Future'.

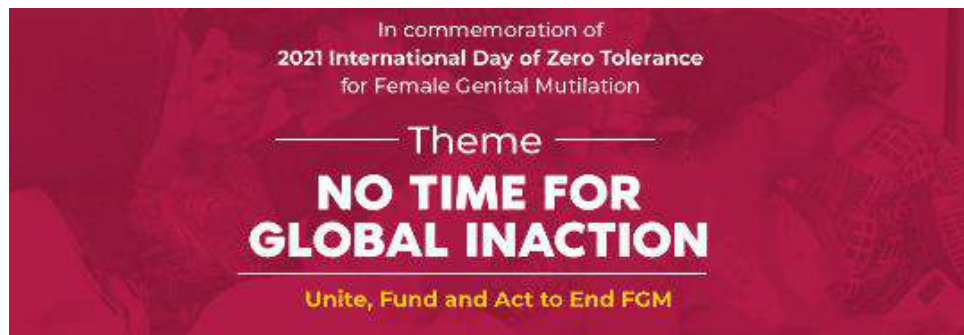
### **World Cancer Day - February 04**

- ❖ It is a global uniting initiative led by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).
- ❖ The theme for the World Cancer Day 2021 is 'I Am and I Will.'
- ❖ World Cancer Day originated in 2000 at the first World Summit Against Cancer, Paris.
- ❖ The Day was founded by the UICC.
- ❖ It was to support the goals of the World Cancer Declaration-2008.



## **International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation - February 06**

- ❖ This day spread awareness about Female Genital Mutilation.
- ❖ It is performed mainly in Africa, particularly in North-Eastern, Eastern and Western Africa.
- ❖ Against this practice WHO issued a joint statement together with the UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 1997.
- ❖ The theme for this year is "No Time for Global Inaction, Unite, Fund, and Act to End Female Genital Mutilation."



## **International Safer Internet Day (SID) – February 09**

- ❖ It was first initiated in 2004.
- ❖ It is as part of the EU's 'Better Internet for Kids' policy.
- ❖ Each year, the SID initiative aims to increase awareness about emerging online issues
- ❖ It includes concerns such as cyberbullying.
- ❖ It chooses a topic reflecting current concerns.
- ❖ The theme of this year is 'An internet we trust: exploring reliability in the online world'.



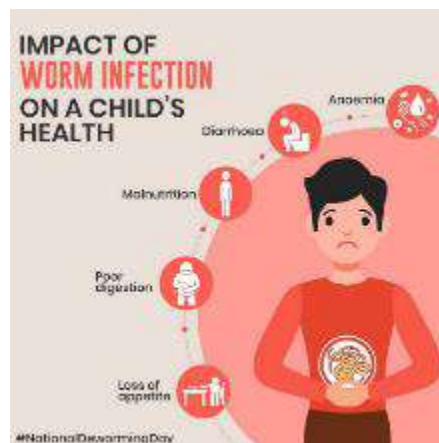
### **World Pulses Day – February 10**

- ❖ It recognizes the importance of pulse crops like chickpeas, dry beans and lentils as a global food.
- ❖ The UN Pulses Day resolution was adopted in 2013.
- ❖ The day is being celebrated since 2019.



### **National Deworming Day - February 10**

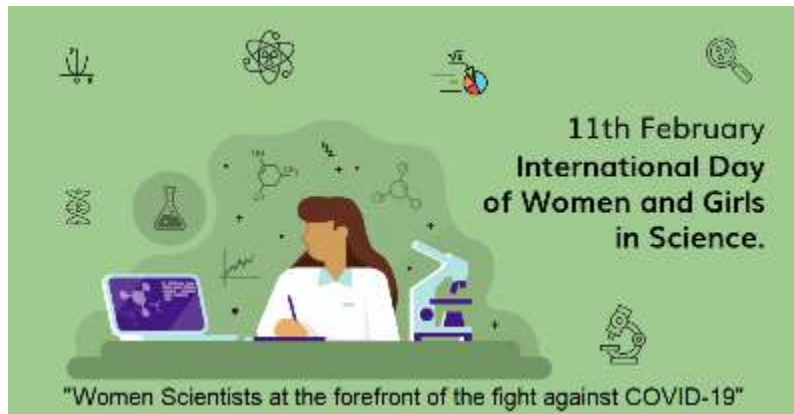
- ❖ Every year February 10 and August 10 are observed as the National Deworming Day (NDD).
- ❖ The day aims at eradicating intestinal worms among children within the age bracket of 1-19 years.
- ❖ These worms are also referred as Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STH).
- ❖ Intestinal worms are parasites that live in the human intestines and consume nutrients and vitamins that a toddler consumes.





## International Day of Women and Girls in science - February 11

- ❖ United Nations General Assembly in 2015 has decided to establish the International Day of Women and Girls in Science.
- ❖ It aims to promote gender equality in the field of science and technology.
- ❖ The theme of 2021 is "Women Scientists at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19".



## World Unani Day – February 11

- ❖ It aims to spread awareness about health care delivery through Unani system of medicine.
- ❖ It will be done through its preventive and curative philosophy.
- ❖ This day is celebrated every year to mark the birth anniversary of Hakim Ajmal Khan.
- ❖ He was an eminent Indian Unani physician and a noted freedom fighter.
- ❖ He was one of the founders of the Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi.
- ❖ First Unani Day was celebrated in 2017 at Central Research Institute of Unani Medicine (CRIUM), Hyderabad.





### **Financial Literacy Week - February 08 – 12**

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has conducted the Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every year since 2016.
- ❖ It will focus on 'Developing the credit discipline and encouraging availing of the credit from the formal financial institutions as it is required'.
- ❖ Theme of this year is "Credit Discipline and Credit from Formal Institutions".

### **National Productivity Day - February 12**

- ❖ The day is celebrated by the National Productivity Council (NPC) to promote productivity culture in India.
- ❖ This day marks the formation of NPC in 1958.
- ❖ NPC is an autonomous registered society under Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- ❖ National Productivity Week was also observed during February 12-18.

### **World Radio Day - February 13**

- ❖ In 2011, UNESCO's General Conference, at its 36th session, proclaimed February 13 as World Radio Day.
- ❖ It coincides with the anniversary of the United Nations Radio.
- ❖ The UN's international broadcasting service was established on February 13, 1946.
- ❖ This is 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- ❖ This year will be celebrated through three sub-themes.
- ❖ Evolution: The world changes, radio evolves so the radio is resilient and sustainable;
- ❖ Innovation: The world changes, radio adapts and innovates - radio adapts to new technologies and remains the go-to medium of mobility, accessible everywhere and to everyone;
- ❖ Connection: The world changes, radio connects - radio services our society during natural disasters, socio-economic crises, epidemics, etc.

### **World Pangolin day - February 13**

- ❖ World Pangolin Day is celebrated on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of February.
- ❖ This international effort raises awareness about pangolin species.

- ❖ Out of the eight species of pangolin, the Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) and the Chinese Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*) are found in India.
- ❖ Protection Status:
  - Indian Pangolin: Endangered
  - Chinese Pangolin: Critically Endangered.
- ❖ Both these species are listed under Schedule I, Part I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

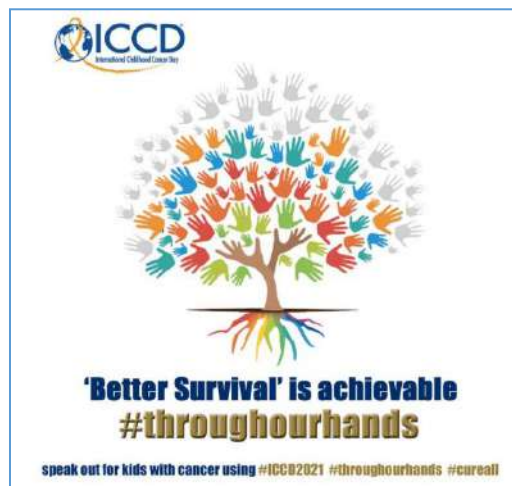


### **Sarojini Naidu Birth Anniversary/National Women's Day of India 2021**

- ❖ National Women's Day is celebrated on Sarojini Naidu's birthday.
- ❖ She was famous for her nickname 'Nightingale of India' or 'Bharat Kokila' because of her poems.
- ❖ This year is the 142nd birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu.
- ❖ She became the first woman governor of the United Provinces, the present Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ She was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1925 held at Kanpur.



## International Childhood Cancer Day - February 15



- ❖ It aims to raise awareness about childhood cancer.
- ❖ It also aims to express support for children and adolescents with cancer, the survivors and their families.
- ❖ On the landmark 20th edition, Childhood Cancer International (CCI) and the International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP) unveil a joint three-year campaign.
- ❖ The campaign is planned under the theme of #throughourhands.
- ❖ The CCI campaign is fully aligned with the #CureAll strategy.
- ❖ It was the landmark strategy by the WHO Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer (GICC).
- ❖ That was Launched in 2018.



### **International Epilepsy Day – February 08**

- ❖ The second Monday of February is observed as International Epilepsy Day.
- ❖ It is a special event which focuses on promoting awareness on epilepsy.
- ❖ Epilepsy is a neurological condition which can cause seizures.
- ❖ The severity of these seizures can differ from person to person.

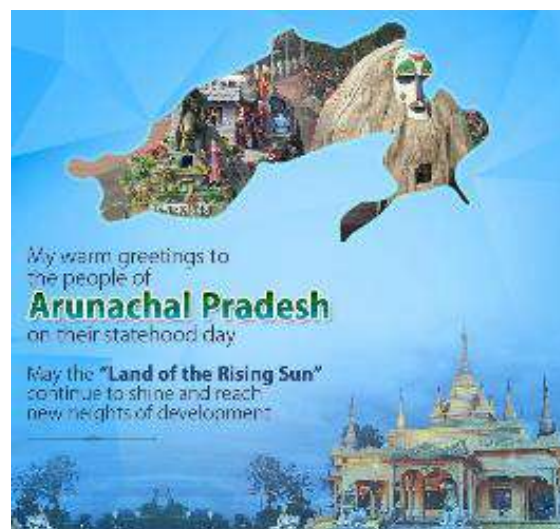
### **World Day of Social Justice - February 20**

- ❖ The day is dedicated to advantages and issues which can be tackled by Social Justice.
- ❖ This year, the day was celebrated under Theme: “A call for social justice in the Digital Economy”.



- ❖ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) started gave its approval to observe this day on November 26, 2007.

### **Arunachal Pradesh Foundation Day – February 20**





- ❖ Arunachal Pradesh became a full-fledged State on 20th February, 1987.
- ❖ Till 1972, it was known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA).
- ❖ It gained the Union Territory status on 20 January 1972.
- ❖ Then it was renamed as Arunachal Pradesh.

### **Mizoram state Day – February 20**



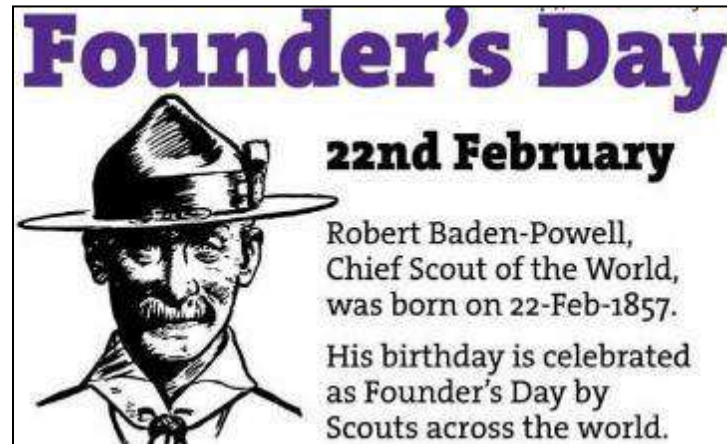
- ❖ The Mizo hills area became the Lushai Hills district within Assam at the time of independence.
- ❖ Further, in 1954, it was renamed the Mizo Hills District of Assam.
- ❖ After signing an accord with the moderates of the Mizo National Front, the Union Government established Mizoram with the status of a Union Territory in 1972.
- ❖ Mizoram was granted statehood by the State of Mizoram Act, 1986.
- ❖ The formalization of Mizoram State took place on 20th February, 1987.

### **International Mother Language Day – February 21**



- ❖ It aims to raise awareness regarding linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism.
- ❖ The theme of the Day this year is “Fostering multilingualism for inclusion in education and society”.
- ❖ It was proclaimed by the General Conference of UNESCO in November 1999.

### **World Scout Day – February 22**



- ❖ The World Scout Day celebrations commemorate the birth anniversary of Robert Baden-Powell.
- ❖ He was born in 1857.
- ❖ He is the founder of Scouting in 1908.
- ❖ Scouts is a voluntary non-political educational movement for young people.

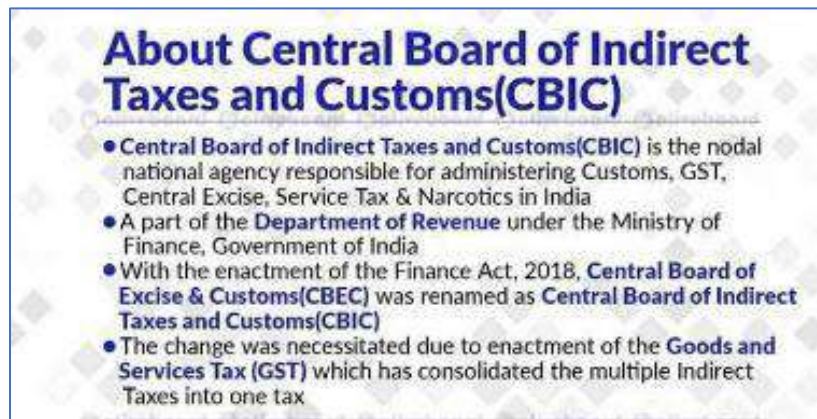
### **World Thinking Day – February 22**

- ❖ It is originally known as Thinking Day,
- ❖ It is celebrated by all Girl Scouts, Girl Guides and other girl groups worldwide.
- ❖ The day is observed to think about fellow brothers and sisters around the world,
- ❖ It aims to address their concerns and understand the true meaning of guiding.
- ❖ Theme for this year is ‘peacebuilding’.



### **Central Excise Day - February 24**

- ❖ The day is being celebrated to honour the service of Central Board of Excise and Custom (CBEC) to the country.
- ❖ The day is celebrated to commemorate the legislation of Central Excise and Salt act in 24 February, 1944.
- ❖ The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs is formerly known as the Central Board of Excise and Customs.
- ❖ Now the department is under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.



### **World NGO Day – February 27**

- ❖ The First World NGO Day was celebrated at Helsinki, the capital of Finland in 2014.
- ❖ In 2010, this Day was officially recognised by the member countries of the IX Baltic Sea NGO Forum Council of the Baltic Sea States in Lithuania.
- ❖ The aim of the day is to inspire and encourage people to be involved with NGOs for the betterment of society.

### **International Polar Bear Day – February 27**

- ❖ It is organized by Polar Bears International.
- ❖ It aims to raise awareness about the impact of global warming and reduced sea ice on polar bear populations.

### **India Protein Day - February 27**

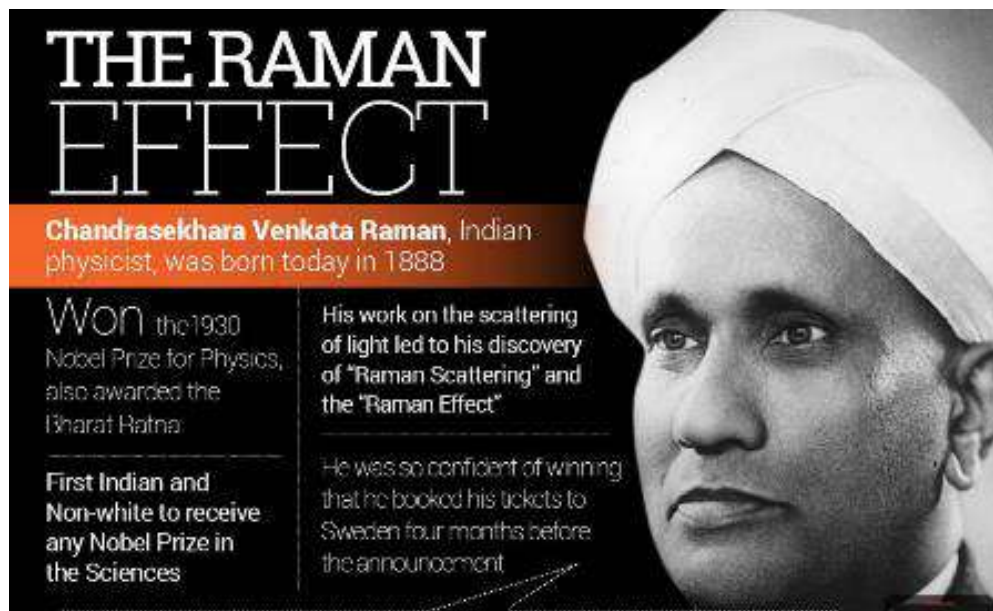
- ❖ It aims to rally towards the mission of protein awareness and sufficiency in India.
- ❖ Theme of this year is Powering with Plant Protein!

### **Rare Disease Day - February 28**

- ❖ It is observed on the last day of February each year.
- ❖ It to raise awareness for rare diseases and improve access to treatment and medical representation for individuals with rare diseases and their families.
- ❖ The European Organisation for Rare Diseases established the day in 2008.

### **National Science Day - February 28**

- ❖ It commemorates the discovery of Raman Effect by Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman.
- ❖ He received a Nobel Prize for this discovery in the year 1930.
- ❖ It is used to create awareness about the role of science in society.
- ❖ The theme for National Science Day 2021 is 'Future of STI: Impact on Education Skills and Work'.
- ❖ The first National Science Day was celebrated on 28 February 1987.





## MISCELLANEOUS

### Corruption perception index (CPI)

- ❖ It is released by Transparency International.
- ❖ India's rank has slipped six places to 86th among 180 countries in 2020.
- ❖ India was ranked at 80<sup>th</sup> position out of 180 countries in 2019.
- ❖ China ranks 78<sup>th</sup> and Pakistan ranked 124<sup>th</sup> on this list.
- ❖ New Zealand and Denmark rank at the first position.
- ❖ Somalia and South Sudan rank the lowest.



### Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index

- ❖ It was released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- ❖ The index measures the readiness in adopting the personalised healthcare of 11 health systems in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ❖ The health systems that were evaluated includes India, China, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, and New Zealand.
- ❖ Singapore was the best performer in this list.
- ❖ Taiwan bagged the second position.
- ❖ While Japan, and Australia stands at the third and the fourth position of the index respectively.
- ❖ India was ranked at 10<sup>th</sup> position.
- ❖ Indonesia was ranked last at 11<sup>th</sup> Rank.



## EIU Democracy Index 2020

- ❖ India slipped two places to 53<sup>rd</sup> position in the annual Democracy Index.
- ❖ It is published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- ❖ It analysed 167 countries.
- ❖ It classified 23 countries as full democracies, 52 as flawed democracies, 35 as hybrid regimes and 57 as authoritarian regimes.
- ❖ India's ranking has slipped from 27<sup>th</sup> in 2014.
- ❖ India is classified as a "flawed democracy" along with countries like the US, France, Belgium and Brazil.

Rank	Country	Score
1	Norway	9.81
2	Iceland	9.37
3	Sweden	9.26
53	India	6.61

## World Bank report on Road Accidents

- ❖ The World Bank recently published its report titled "Traffic Crash Injuries and Disabilities: The Burden on Indian Society".
- ❖ As per the report, India has only 1 per cent of the world's vehicles.
- ❖ But it accounts for 11 per cent of the global death due to road accidents.
- ❖ It stands highest death toll in the world because of road accident.
- ❖ The road crash deaths among rural poor households' accounts for 44 per cent.
- ❖ The road crash death among urban poor household's accounts for 11.6 per cent.

**Table 2.3: Number of accidents, Number of persons killed and those injured by the category of Roads in 2019**

Category of Roads	Length as on 31.3.18 (P)		Accidents		Persons killed		Persons injured	
	Kms	% age share in total	Number	% age share in total	Number	% age share in total	Number	% age share in total
National Highways	1,26,350	2.03	1,37,191	30.55	53,872	35.65	1,37,549	30.47
State Highways	1,86,908	3.01	1,08,976	24.27	38,472	25.46	1,11,831	24.78
Other roads	59,00,858	94.96	2,02,835	45.17	58,769	38.89	2,01,981	44.75
Total	62,15,797	100	4,49,002	100	1,51,113	100	4,51,361	100

### GI tag for Himalayan pink salt

- ❖ Pakistan has decided to register Himalayan pink salt as Geographical Indications.
- ❖ GI tag is a sign used on special products.
- ❖ That have a specific geographical origin and possess origin-based qualities and reputation in the region.
- ❖ The precious salt is extracted from the Salt Range in Punjab.
- ❖ It extends along the south of the Potohar Plateau and the north of the Jhelum River.
- ❖ Previously Pakistan is fighting a case in European Union against India's move to get Basmati rice registered as India's product.

