
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

1st March to 7th March, 2021

PREFACE

Dear Students,

The 'Current Affairs' section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the Week. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfill aspirations.

Happy Reading

Team CL



Career
Launcher

National



Shri Vijay Sampla assumes charge of Chairman National Commission for Scheduled Castes

- **Shri Vijay Sampla assumed the charge of Chairman National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)** in New Delhi. Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar, Union Minister Shri Som Prakash, former Chairman of NCSC, BJP MP Hans Raj Hans and other members of Commission were also present on the occasion.
- **Shri Vijay Sampla** has been the **former Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment** from 2014-19. Shri Vijay Sampla served as Chairman, Punjab Dalit Vikas Parishad; state coordinator, Anusuchit Jati Aarakshan Bachao Manch and also as Chairman, Bharat Gaurav. He served as Chairman, Khadi and Village Industries Board, Punjab from 2009-12 and subsequently his name was recommended for Rashtrapati Award.

The National Commission for Scheduled Castes is an Indian constitutional body established with a view to provide safeguards against the exploitation of Scheduled Castes and Anglo Indian communities to promote and protect their social, educational, economic and cultural interests, special provisions were made in the Constitution. Article 338 of the Indian constitution deals with National Commission for Scheduled Castes. Article 338 A deals with National Commission for Scheduled tribes. The first Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was set up in August 1978 with Bhola Paswan Shastri as Chairman and other four members. On the 89th Amendment of the Constitution coming into force on 19 February 2003, the National Commission for scheduled Tribes has been set up under Article 338A on bifurcation of erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution. The first National Commission for Scheduled Castes was constituted in 2004 with Suraj Bhan as the chairman. The fifth schedule of Indian constitution deals with the administration and control of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Service condition and tenure is determined by President of India. Article 341 deals with notification of Scheduled Castes and Article 342 deals with notification of Scheduled Tribes.

The second edition of Global Bio-India organised from 1-3 March 2021 on digital platform

- The Biotechnology sector has emerged as an integral part of the Indian economy over the past few decades, and the **Government of India is playing a transformative and catalytic role in building a USD 150 billion bio-economy by 2025.**
- The sector is recognized as one of the **key drivers for India to achieve its USD 5 trillion target.** To showcase the strength and opportunities of the India's biotechnology sector at national level and to the global community, the second edition of Global Bio-India will be organised from 1-3 March 2021 on digital platform.
- **The theme for this year is "Transforming lives" and tag line "Biosciences to Bioeconomy".**
- Global Bio-India is one of the largest biotechnology stakeholders' conglomerates that is **being co-organised by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India** along with its Public Sector Undertaking, **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)** in partnership

with industry association Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE) and Invest India.

- **The first edition of Global Bio-India 2019 at New Delhi** was a huge success that saw participation from over 25+ countries, 190 exhibitors, 2500+ delegates, 300+ start-ups, 50+incubators, 60+ Research Institutes, 800+ Bio-partnering meetings and representation from 9 states.
- **Global Bio-India 2021 has representatives from 50+ countries with Switzerland being the partner country and Karnataka as its state partner** till date. More partners are expected to join this biotechnology event.

Biobased economy, bioeconomy or biotechonomy refers to **economic activity involving the use of biotechnology and biomass in the production of goods, services, or energy**. The terms bioeconomy (BE) and bio-based economy (BBE) are sometimes used interchangeably. However, it is worth to distinguish them. **Biobased economy takes into consideration the production of non-food goods**, whilst **bioeconomy covers both bio-based economy and the production and use of food and feed**.

City Innovation Exchange (CiX) launched for fostering innovation in Urban Ecosystem

- **The City Innovation Exchange (CiX) platform** was launched by Shri Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs at an online event in New Delhi.
- The platform will be a **significant addition to the growing innovation ecosystem of India and focuses on fostering innovative practices in cities**. CiX, through an ‘open innovation’ process, engages with innovators to design-test-deliver on solutions to pressing urban challenges. This initiative is among the ongoing efforts of the Government to realise Prime Minister’s vision of New and AtmaNirbhar Bharat, by making cities more self-reliant and enabled to meet the needs of and provide services to their citizens.
- **Designed on the philosophy of ‘everyone is an innovator’**, the platform will **bring together Citizen Organisations-Academia- Businesses- Government to co-create for the future of Urban India** in a transparent and sustainable manner. **The Smart Cities Mission will partner and effectively collaborate with Startup India, Atal Innovation Mission, AGNI and other initiatives in the Indian Innovation ecosystem**.
- **The City Innovation Exchange (CiX) will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges**. The platform will ease the discovery, design& validation of solutions through a robust, transparent and user centric process that will reduce barriers for innovators and cities to discover fitting solutions.
- **Built on the concept of ‘open innovation’**, the platform will **help in the flow of ideas ‘outside in and inside out’**, enhancing the skills and capacity required to deliver smart urban governance. Through interaction with the Academia and Businesses/Startups, the platform will benefit cities in the transfer of ideas from ‘labs’ to real environment. Similarly, by helping urban governments interact with citizens, the platform will ensure adoption of tested solutions that will be impactful and sustainable.
- The platform in due time will **help our cities in adopting solutions that will enhance the quality of life for its residents and significantly improve the Ease of Doing Business**. The Platform has more than 400 start-ups, 100 smart cities, more than 150 challenges statements and over 215 solutions at the time of launch.

Hardeep Singh Puri is the current Civil Aviation Minister of India and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in India. He is a 1974 batch Indian Foreign Service officer who served as the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations from 2009 to 2013. He formerly served as President of the United Nations Security Council and he represents Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh.

Himachal Pradesh CM Jai Ram Thakur launches ‘e-Parivahan Vyavstha’

- **Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched ‘e-Parivahan Vyavstha’** of the State Transport Department to provide faceless services to the people of the State regarding Driving Licence/Registration Certificates/Permits etc.
- While addressing the people on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that the State Government **first started e-Vidhan Sabha, then e-Budget** and now it has **started e-cabinet**. He said the e-Parivahan was a step forward in this direction.

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh declared Dharamshala as the second capital of the state after Shimla, making it the **third Indian state to have more than one capital**. The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital. While Maharashtra has Mumbai and Nagpur as its capitals, Srinagar and Jammu are the respective summer and winter capitals of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

BCI sets up India's first law teacher training institute

- The Bar Council of India (BCI) took the initiative to set up India's first law teacher training institute - Indian Institute of Law (IIL) - in collaboration with Kalinga Institute of Industrial Training (KIIT) at Bhubaneswar, a move that drew praises from three Supreme Court Judges - Justices U U Lalit, B R Gavai and V Ramasubramanian.
- Justices Lalit and Gavai would become CJIs in the next few years. IIL, being set up by the BCI through its trust (BCIT) with the support of KIIT, will be a **model institute of law teachers' academy for promoting continuous legal education and research along with skill development of law teachers and practising lawyers**. The first-of-its kind institute will facilitate young law school teachers of the country and advocates to enhance their expertise, professional skills and acumen.

Bar Council of India is a statutory body established under the section 4 of Advocates Act 1961 that regulates the legal practice and legal edition in India. Its members are elected from amongst the lawyers in India and as such represents the Indian bar. It prescribes standards of professional conduct, etiquettes and exercises disciplinary jurisdiction over the bar. In March 1953, the 'All India Bar Committee', headed by S. R. Das, submitted a report which proposed the creation of a bar council for each state and an all-India bar council as an apex body. As per the Advocates Act, the Bar Council of India consists of members elected from each state bar council, and the Attorney General of India and the Solicitor General of India who are ex officio members.

Thaawarchand Gehlot launched "Sugamya Bharat App" & handbook entitled "Access- The Photo Digest"

- Minister for Social justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot virtually launched "Sugamya Bharat App" and a handbook entitled "Access- The Photo Digest". The App and the handbook have been developed by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Sugamya Bharat App is a means for sensitizing and enhancing accessibility. It provides for five main features of which four are directly related to enhancing accessibility. They include registration of complaints of inaccessibility across the broad pillars of built environment, transportation sector and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ecosystem, positive feedback of examples and best practices worth emulating being shared by people as jan-bhagidhari; Departmental s; and guidelines and circulars related to accessibility. The fifth feature is a special feature meant only for Divyangjan for COVID related issues.
- DEPwD has also prepared a handbook entitled "Access - The Photo Digest" with a collection of photographs from across different States and UTs. This Book is envisaged as a tool and guide to sensitise stakeholders about 10 basic features of accessibility and related good-bad practices in easy to understand pictorial form.

Thaawar Chand Gehlot is currently serving as the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment in the NDA Government. He is currently the Leader of the House in the upper house of Indian Parliament. He is a member of the Rajya Sabha, upper house of Indian Parliament, representing the state of Madhya Pradesh.

Nitin Gadkari launches Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas

- Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari launched the Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas at a function in New Delhi. Mr Gadkari said that implementation of FASTag at toll plazas has improved electronic toll collections and facilitated ease of doing business.

- The government has made **FASTag mandatory from the 15th February midnight** and **any vehicle not fitted with it will be charged double the toll at electronic toll plazas across the country.**

FASTag is an **electronic toll collection system in India, operated by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI).** It employs **Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly from the prepaid or savings account** linked to it or directly toll owner. It is affixed on the windscreen of the vehicle and enables to drive through toll plazas without stopping for transactions. The tag can be purchased from official Tag issuers or participating Banks and if it is linked to a prepaid account, then recharging or top-up can be as per requirement. **As per NHAI, FASTag has unlimited validity.**

Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry launches field assessment of Swachh Survekshan -2021

- Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry **launched the field assessment of Swachh Survekshan -2021** at a web event in New Delhi. This will be the **sixth edition of the annual cleanliness survey.**
- **Swachh Survekshan was introduced in 2016** as a competitive framework to **encourage cities to improve the status of urban sanitation** while encouraging large scale citizen participation.
- **The journey that started in 2016 with only 73 cities with million plus population** has grown manifold, with 434 cities in 2017, 4,203 cities in 2018, 4,237 cities in 2019 and 4,242 cities in 2020.
- Every year, the on-field assessment takes place between 4th January to 31st January. **However, this was delayed by two months due to the COVID pandemic** and will now be conducted between 1st to 28th of March. The Swachh Survekshan framework is redesigned innovatively every year, to ensure that the process becomes more robust.

Swachh Survekshan (Cleanliness survey) is an **annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation in villages, cities and towns across India.** It was **launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which aimed to make India clean and free of open defecation by 2 October 2019.** The first survey was **undertaken in 2016 and covered 73 cities (53 cities with a population of over a million, and all state capitals);** by 2020 the survey had grown to cover 4242 cities and was **said to be the largest cleanliness survey in the world.** The surveys are **carried out by Quality Council of India.**

Uttarakhand CM launches “Gharoki Pechan, Chelik Naam” scheme from Nainital

- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched “Gharoki Paachan, Chelik Naam” (daughter’s name is a home’s identity) programme** and development schemes worth Rs 42 crore in Nainital. Nainital MP Ajay Bhatt, along with various other officials, was present to welcome the chief minister in the town.
- This scheme has been launched in Nainital and will be extended to entire Uttarakhand in the coming weeks. Rawat said the government is **working towards women empowerment and 32,000 women groups of the state are being linked with self-employment to make them self-reliant.**

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the **Devbhumi**, due to many **Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres** found throughout the state. **On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh.** **Trivendra Singh Rawat served as the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand till March 10, 2021.** **Tirath Singh Rawat is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand since March 10, 2021.** **Baby Rani Maurya is serving as the current governor of Uttarakhand since 26 August 2018.** The winter capital of Uttarakhand is **Dehradun**, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. **Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand.** The **High Court of the state is located in Nainital.**

India’s first digital university to focus on creating tech leaders

- **In a first, India has become home to a digital university.** The **Kerala University of Digital Sciences, Innovation and Technology (KUDSIT)** is established by upgrading the **Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Kerala (IIITMK),** which was set up in 2000.
- It will focus on **four key themes required for digital world leadership – Computing, Artificial Intelligence, Sustainability and Entrepreneurship.”**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 'Maritime India Summit 2021'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 'Maritime India Summit 2021' through video conferencing. The three-day Summit was held till 4th of March. The Maritime India Summit is being organized by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways on a virtual platform www.maritimeindiasummit.in
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India will invest 82 billion dollars in port projects by 2035. Prime Minister has emphasized on creating world class maritime infrastructure through various reforms to achieve the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The Summit has visualized a roadmap for India's Maritime sector for next decade and will work to propel India to the forefront of the Global Maritime Sector. Denmark is the partner country for the three-day summit.
- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani and his Andhra Pradesh counterpart YS Jaganmohan Reddy also joined the event via video conferencing. Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of State (MoS) Ports, Shipping and Waterways (Independent Charge) in his opening remark said that the summit is one of the biggest virtual summit in the world with the participation of 1.7 lakhs participants from more than 100 nations.

India is strategically located on the world's shipping routes with a coastline of approximately 7,517 km. Maritime transport handles around 70% of India's trading in value terms. The Government launched the ambitious Sagarmala Programme in March 2017, with the vision of port-led development and growth of logistics-intensive industries. Under Sagarmala Programme, \$123 bn would be invested across 415 projects across India. India has become the fourth country in the world to have its independent Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) recognized by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) as part of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS). IRNSS will facilitate at least 2500 merchant vessels, including small fishing vessels in Indian waters, to use the system within an area of nearly 1500 km from the Indian boundary.

Madhya Pradesh Finance Minister Jagdish Devda presents state annual budget

- Madhya Pradesh finance minister Jagdish Devda presented a paperless state annual budget of around 2 lakh 41 thousand 375 crores. Special attention in the budget is given to infrastructure, education, employment, farmers and women.
- This time there will be no new tax nor will any existing tax rate to be increased. This is the first budget of the fourth term of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan. The focus of the budget is on making Madhya Pradesh self-reliant.

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Nicknamed the "Heart of India" due to its geographical location in India. Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area after Rajasthan. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was made as a separate state. MP has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. The current governor of Madhya Pradesh is Anandiben Patel. Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.

Bengaluru and Shimla among 'Most liveable' cities across country; Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri issues Ease of Living Index

- Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri announced the release of the final rankings of Ease of Living Index-2020 and the Municipal Performance Index-2020 in New Delhi in an online event.
- The rankings under Ease of Living Index-2020 were announced for cities with a population of more than a million and cities with less than a million people. In all, 111 cities participated in the assessment exercise that was conducted last year.
- Bengaluru emerged as the top performer in the Million Plus category, followed by Pune, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Surat, Navi Mumbai, Coimbatore, Vadodara, Indore and Greater Mumbai. In the Less than Million category, Shimla was ranked the highest in ease of living, followed by Bhubaneswar, Silvassa, Kakinada, Salem, Vellore, Gandhinagar, Gurugram, Davangere and Tiruchirappalli. Similar to the Ease of Living Index index, the assessment framework under Municipal Performance Index-2020 has classified municipalities based on their population, Million plus and less than Million Population.

- In the Million plus category, Indore has emerged as the highest-ranked municipality, followed by Surat and Bhopal. In the Less than Million category, New Delhi Municipal Council has emerged as the leader, followed by Tirupati and Gandhinagar.
- The Municipal Performance Index examined the sectoral performance of 111 municipalities with Delhi being assessed separately for NDMC, and the three Municipal Corporations across five verticals which comprise of 20 sectors and 100 indicators in all totality. The five verticals under Municipal Performance Index are Services, Finance, Policy, Technology and Governance.

IAF joins multinational air exercise in UAE

- The Indian Air Force is for the first time participated in the annual multinational large force employment warfare exercise, Desert Flag VI, hosted by the United Arab Emirates Air Force.
- The air show at Galle Face in Colombo has seen the participation of an IAF contingent comprising Suryakiran aerobatic team, Sarang helicopter display teams and Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA). The aim of the exercise is to provide operational exposure to the participating forces while training them to undertake simulated air combat operations in a controlled environment.

Indian Air Force (IAF) is the air arm of the Indian Armed Forces. Its complement of personnel and aircraft assets ranks fourth amongst the air forces of the world. Its primary mission is to secure Indian airspace and to conduct aerial warfare during armed conflict. It was officially established on 8 October 1932 as an auxiliary air force of the British Empire which honoured India's aviation service during World War II with the prefix Royal. After India gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1947, the name Royal Indian Air Force was kept and served in the name of Dominion of India. With the government's transition to a Republic in 1950, the prefix Royal was removed. The President of India holds the rank of Supreme Commander of the IAF. Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria is the current Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force.

Education Minister congratulates 12 Indian Institutions on securing position in top 100 in QS World University Rankings

- Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has congratulated 12 Indian Institutions on securing a position in top 100 in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2021. These institutions are IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Madras, IIT Kharagpur, IISC Bangalore, IIT Guwahati, IIM Bangalore, IIM Ahmedabad, JNU, Anna University, University of Delhi, and O P Jindal University.
- IIT Madras has been ranked 30th in the world for Petroleum Engineering, IIT Bombay has been ranked 41st and IIT Kharagpur has been ranked 44th in the world for Minerals and Mining Engineering, and University of Delhi has been ranked 50th in the world for Development Studies.

The Ministry of Education (MoE), previously the Ministry of Human Resource Development (1985-2020), is responsible for the implementation and formulation of the National Policy on Education approved by Union cabinet of India and to ensure that it is implemented in letter and spirit. The Ministry is held currently by Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank. He represents the Haridwar Parliamentary constituency of Uttarakhand in the 17th Lok Sabha. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is the First Minister of Education in the Indian. He is commonly remembered as Maulana Azad; the word Maulana is an honorific meaning 'Our Master' and he had adopted Azad (Free) as his pen name.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's first World Skill Centre in Bhubaneswar

- Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's first World Skill Centre at Mancheswar Industrial Area, Bhubaneswar. With an aim to make Odisha the global capital of trained manpower, each floor of the 18 storey #WSC building will be dedicated to different skills and trades.
- World Skill Center (WSC), a premier advance skill training institute, is being modelled around leading TVET Institute, ITE (Institute of Technical Education) Singapore and seeks inspiration from World Skills, Russia and GIFTS (Global Institute for Transferring Skills), South Korea.
- WSC is being established under the Odisha Skill Development Project assisted by the Asian Development Bank with ITE Education Services (ITEES), Singapore as a knowledge partner.

Odisha government to set up new department to strengthen SHGs in state

- **Odisha government will set up a new department, namely the Department of Mission Shakti.** A proposal to this effect has received the nod of the state cabinet. The new department will **work towards strengthening the ‘self-help group’ initiatives** already taken by departments and agencies by bringing them all under one platform to ensure greater focus and synergy and to avoid duplication in activities.

The **modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936**, as a province in British India. The **ancient kingdom of Kalinga**, which was invaded by the **Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE** resulting in the **Kalinga War**, coincides with the borders of **modern-day Odisha**. **Konark Sun Temple** is a **13th-century CE** sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres **northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha**, India. The temple is attributed to king **Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty** about 1250 CE. **Ganeshi Lal** is current **Governor of Odisha**. **Naveen Patnaik** is the current and **14th Chief Minister of Odisha**.

India, Norway to jointly work in marine spatial planning for next 5 yrs

- **India and Norway have agreed to jointly work in the area of marine spatial planning in the oceanic space for the next five years.** The two countries have decided to extend support for sustainable ocean resources utilisation to advance economic and social development in coastal areas.
- **The initiative known as Marine Spatial Planning will be implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences through National Centre for Coastal Research for India.**

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated ‘Maitri Setu’ between India and Bangladesh

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated ‘Maitri Setu’ between India and Bangladesh** on 9th March 2021 via video conferencing. Prime Minister also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple infrastructure projects in Tripura during the event.
- **The bridge ‘Maitri Setu’ has been built over Feni River which flows between Indian boundary in Tripura State and Bangladesh. The name ‘Maitri Setu’ symbolizes growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between India and Bangladesh.**
- **The construction was taken up by the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd at a project cost of Rs. 133 Crores. The 1.9 Km long bridge joins Sabroom in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh.** It is poised to herald a new chapter for trade and people to people movement between India and Bangladesh. With this inauguration, **Tripura is set to become the ‘Gateway of North East’ with access to Chittagong Port of Bangladesh, which is just 80 Kms from Sabroom.**

Meghalaya launches online registration portal for migrant workers

- **In Meghalaya, the State Government launched the online registration portal for migrant workers under the Meghalaya Identification Registration (Safety and Security) of Migrant Workers Act 2020**, in a function organized by the Labour Department in Shillong.
- **The portal enables the migrant workers and persons or contractors employing migrant labourers or workers to register them, failing which they will be liable to a fine of up to 5000 rupees.** Registration through the portal can be made from any part of the country, or through the common service centres or a help desk at the registration office with a payment of 50 rupees.

Meghalaya is a state in Northeast India. Meghalaya was formed by carving out two districts from the state of Assam: the United Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills, and the Garo Hills on 21 January 1972. Shillong is the capital of Meghalaya, which means “The Abode of Clouds”. Shillong remained the capital of undivided Assam until the creation of the new state of Meghalaya on 21 January 1972, when Shillong became the capital of Meghalaya, and Assam moved its capital to Dispur in Guwahati. Conrad Kongkal Sangma is the current Chief Minister of the State of Meghalaya. Satya Pal Malik is the current Governor of Meghalaya.



Georgia gets new PM and opposition leader gets arrested

- Protesters set up tents outside Georgia's parliament building and blocked the capital's main avenue to oppose the arrest of the leader of the country's main opposition party. The demonstration came hours after police stormed the headquarters of the United National Movement and **arrested its chairman, lawmaker Nika Melia**
- Before the police raid, **parliament members named a new Prime Minister, replacing one who opposed arresting Mr. Melia** because of concern it would escalate the country's political crisis. Mr. Melia faces charges of inciting violence during protests in 2019. He had been free on bail. **The new Prime Minister, Irakli Garibashvili, said the politician's arrest was justified.**
- During the October election, the Georgian Dream party, which has **governed Georgia for the last eight years, tallied the largest share of votes at 48%**. But opposition parties refused to recognize the results, claiming the count was manipulated. **Georgian Dream was created by a tycoon who made his fortune in Russia, Bidzina Ivanishvili**, but its popularity has dwindled steadily amid the country's economic problems.

Georgia is a country located at the intersection of Eastern Europe and Western Asia. Tbilisi is the capital and the largest city of Georgia. Salome Zourabichvili is currently serves as the 5th President of Georgia. The lari is the currency of Georgia.

Australia passes law making Facebook, Google Pay for News

- Australia's parliament passed a world-first law to force digital giants such as Facebook Inc. and Google pay local publishers for news content – a move that may unleash more global regulatory action to limit their power.
- Regulators globally have been closely watching the legislation as they **grapple with the advertising dominance of Facebook and Google, who now face the prospect of similar measures cascading around the world.**
- The Parliament passed the **final amendments to the so-called News Media Bargaining Code** agreed between Treasurer Josh Frydenberg and Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg.

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Australia's capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Scott Morrison is serving as the current Prime Minister of Australia. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. The country's other major metropolitan areas are Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, and Adelaide. Australia is a highly developed country, with the world's fourteenth-largest economy.

Sri Lanka offers to develop new port terminal with India, Japan amid differences

- Sri Lanka offered to develop a container terminal of Colombo port with investors from India and Japan, almost a month after it cancelled a tripartite agreement signed in 2019 on developing another facility with the two other countries.
- Caving in to pressure from labour unions, Sri Lanka decided on February 1 to scrap the agreement signed with India and Japan on developing the East Container Terminal (ECT) of Colombo port.

- The unions had **opposed a joint venture with Indian and Japanese investors holding a 49% stake**. A meeting of the **cabinet decided to develop the West Container Terminal (WCT) of Colombo port** as a public-private limited company with parties nominated by the Indian and Japanese governments.

SLINEX (Sri Lanka India Naval Exercise) are a series of naval exercises between the Indian Navy and the Sri Lanka Navy. The first ever SLINEX exercise took place in 2005. Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from the India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte is the official, administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka. Gotabaya Rajapaksa is the current President of Sri Lanka. Mahinda Rajapaksa is the Prime Minister. The rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka.

Australia building world's first platypus sanctuary

- **Australian conservationists unveiled plans to build the world's first refuge for the platypus**, to promote breeding and rehabilitation as the **duck-billed mammal faces extinction due to climate change**.
- The Taronga Conservation Society Australia and the New South Wales State government said they would **build the specialist facility, mostly ponds and burrows for the semi-aquatic creatures**, at a zoo 391 km (243 miles) from Sydney, by 2022, which could house up to 65 platypuses.
- **Unlike other famous Australian animals such as the koala or kangaroo, the beaver-like platypus is rarely seen in the wild** due to its reclusive nature and highly specific habitat needs. The furry, web-footed animal, along with the echidna, is one of just two egg-laying mammals, and generally lives around small streams and slow-moving rivers in cooler temperatures.

Multiple sclerosis patient sues Austria over health impact of climate change

- **A man in Austria with a temperature-dependent form of multiple sclerosis** is taking his government to court in an effort to force it to do more against climate change.
- The case being filed next month before the **European Court of Human Rights** is supported by the **environmental group Fridays for Future**, which is helping to crowdfund the legal costs.
- It comes weeks after the Strasbourg-based court said it would continue to **fast-track a case by brought six young Portuguese activists** who argue European governments **aren't cutting greenhouse emissions in line with the requirements of the 2015 Paris climate accord**.
- The court, whose jurisdiction covers all countries that have ratified the **European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**, is also hearing a separate case brought by a group of elderly Swiss women.

Austria is a landlocked East Alpine country in the southern part of Central Europe. **Vienna** is the national capital, largest city, of Austria. **Sebastian Kurz** has served as **Chancellor of Austria** since January 2020. **Alexander Van der Bellen** is the current President of Austria. **Euro** is the official currency of it.

World's first ice hotel that doesn't melt even in summer

- **Ice Hotel 365** is built in the small village of Jukkasjärvi, in Northern Sweden, 200 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle.
- **The skeleton of the hotel is made of steel and concrete and is covered with 2,000 square metres of insulation**. The roof has 20-centimetre insulation to protect the ice from melting in summers.

Bangladesh launches national app portal

- **The Government of Bangladesh has launched its national app portal bdapps.com**. The agreement between the ICT division of the government of Bangladesh and the telecom company Robi was signed in Dhaka. Through this agreement, **BDApps will be established as the hub of the ICT division for application developers**.
- Under the agreement, the **ICT division will collaborate with bdapps to organise exclusive boot camps and software development events in the country**. **BDApps** is the largest mobile application platform in Bangladesh hosting more than 23,000 apps developed by 12,000 developers.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country's largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. Sheikh Hasina is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh. India shares its longest international border with Bangladesh (4,096-kilometer) (2,545-mile).

Dubai offers first cultural visa in the world

- Dubai is a global hub of culture, art and creativity. The Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum embraced a new system to permit the first cultural visa in the world, a golden visa.
- This initiative will provide a great opportunity to writers, artists, creators and talents across the world. Dubai cultural visa can act as a bridge between the global cultural talents and an extravagant platform towards recognition and success. This initiative will contribute to elate the cultural economy as well as attract and empower talent from across the world.

Abu Dhab is the capital and the second most populous city of the United Arab Emirates (the most populous being Dubai), and also capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. Khalifa Al Nahyan is the current President of the United Arab Emirates. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. United Arab Emirates dirham is the currency of the United Arab Emirates. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the west and south and by Oman to the east and northeast. The land border with Qatar in the Khawr al Udayd area is a source of ongoing dispute.

China to push for building 'Polar Silk Road' in Arctic Ocean

- As the ice-covered parts of the Arctic Ocean melt due to climate change, China has flagged its interest to take part in building "Polar Silk Road", raising prospects for the emergence of a new sea route.
- China will participate in the pragmatic cooperation on the Arctic and the building of a "Polar Silk Road". Connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the Transpolar Sea Route (TSR) will cut across the centre of the Arctic Ocean, passing close to the North Pole. While it could significantly reduce distances for global trade, it remains frozen over for most of the year, making it much harder to traverse than the two Arctic shipping routes currently available – the Northern Sea Route and the Northwest Passage.

UN General Assembly adopts India's resolution to declare 2023 as International Year of Millets

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed gratitude to all the nations who initiated and co-sponsored the resolution on 'International Year of Millets' at the United Nations. In a tweet, Mr Modi said, India is honoured to be at the forefront of popularising Millets, whose consumption furthers nutrition, food security and welfare of farmers. India sponsored UN resolution on International Year of Millets 2023 was adopted by consensus in the United Nations General Assembly.
- The 193-member UN General Assembly has unanimously adopted the resolution sponsored by India, declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets, aimed at raising awareness about the health benefits of the grain.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. Under the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions. The permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (also known as the Permanent Five, Big Five, or P5) are China (formerly the Republic of China), Russia (formerly the Soviet Union), France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Antonio Guterres is a Portuguese politician and diplomat who is serving as the current and ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations. Previously, he was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees between 2005 and 2015.



IRDAI sets up panel to relook guidelines on information, cybersecurity

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has formed a working group committee to relook its information and security guidelines amid the exponential increase in cyberattacks across the globe in the wake of covid-19. “The economic situation owing to Covid-19 pandemic has seen an exponential increase in cyber-attacks across the globe and in particular, the financial sector.
- The 14-member committee will be headed by Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) chairman Janakiram. AR Nithiyanantham, CGM-IT, Irdai will be member convener of the Working Group. The committee has to submit its report in two months.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is an autonomous, statutory body tasked with regulating and promoting the insurance and re-insurance industries in India. It was constituted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of India. The agency's headquarters are in Hyderabad, Telangana, where it moved from Delhi in 2001. IRDAI is a 10-member body including the chairman, five full-time and four part-time members appointed by the government of India. Dr. Subhash C. Khuntia assumed office of Chairman, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India in May 2018.

50 FPOs supported by NABARD and Karnataka link to Unified Market Platform of Rashtriya e-Market Services in Bengaluru

- In Karnataka, 50 Farmer Producer Organisations, FPOs supported by NABARD and state Government were linked to Unified Market Platform of Rashtriya e-Market Services in Bengaluru.
- The online e-market platform has helped trading 81 million metric tonnes of agricultural commodities worth Rs 2,14,287 crore benefitting 21.2 million farmers.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 10,000 Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs) all over the country, on 29 February, 2020 in Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh.
- FPOs is a Producer Organisation (PO) where the members are farmers. Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is providing support for the promotion of FPOs. FPOs help in the collectivization of such small, marginal and landless farmers in order to give them the collective strength to deal with such issues.
- Members of the FPO will manage their activities together in the organization to get better access to technology, input, finance and market for faster enhancement of their income.

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is an apex development finance institution fully owned by Government of India. The bank has been entrusted with “matters concerning policy, planning, and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India”. NABARD is active in developing & implementing Financial Inclusion. NABARD was established on the recommendations of B.Sivaraman Committee (by Act 61, 1981 of Parliament) on 12 July 1982 to implement the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Act 1981. Shri G R Chintala is the Chairman of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). It is headquartered in Mumbai.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in association with ICICI Bank and ValetEZ has enabled Brookfield Mall as India's first Contactless Mall in Bangalore

- **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in association with ICICI Bank and ValetEZ** has enabled **Brookfield Mall as India's first Contactless Mall in Bangalore** making parking seamless and ready. Brookfield Mall is one of the earliest malls in Bengaluru, located in the Brookfield neighbourhood in the city.
- Popular among the Brookfield community and beyond, the mall has a fine mix of essential and lifestyle retail stores and entertainment options. **ICICI Bank is the acquiring bank for this project as per the partnership with NPCI.**
- With this, **the Bank will debit parking charges from the FASTag account of the commuters** and then credit them to the partner's bank account. **ICICI Bank was the first to launch the innovative service of FASTag nationally, on the Mumbai – Vadodara corridor, way back in 2013.**

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India. **Founded in 2008**, the NPCI is a not-for-profit organisation registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, **established by Reserve Bank of India & IBA.** It is **headquartered in Mumbai.**

India's first machine tool park ready for investors in Karnataka

- Karnataka, which is home to **India's first Aerospace SEZ, electronics city and several IT parks**, is now ready with **India's first integrated machine tool park.**
- The park, spread over 530 acres at Vasanthnarasapura, about 90 kms from Bengaluru, is **developed under the scheme of Enhancement of Competitiveness in Indian Capital Goods Sector (ECICGS), jointly by the state government and the Department of Heavy Industries, Government of India.**
- The Indian Machine Tools Manufacturers Association (IMTMA) has provided the **technical assistance to the country's biggest machine tool park** which is ready for occupation. Both the state and central governments have set up a special purpose vehicle **named Tumakuru Machine Tool Park (TMTP) to develop the new industrial cluster.**

With 209 billionaires, India ranks third in 10th Hurun Global Rich List 2021

- **India climbed up to third spot in the Hurun Global Rich List 2021 with 209 billionaires – 40 more than last year – with Mukesh Ambani seeing his wealth up 24 per cent to 83 billion dollars (about Rs. six lakh crore)** on the back of a surge in value of energy and telecom giant Reliance.
- **Gautam Adani and family saw his wealth almost double to 32 billion on the back of Adani Green Energy growing to a 20 billion valuation. Shiv Nadar & family saw his wealth rise to 27 billion dollars, up 10 billion dollars, backed by a 66 per cent increase in the share price of the software and services giant HCL.**
- **N R Narayana Murthy was up 35 per cent to 3.1 billion dollars. His son-in-law Rishi Sunak is the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, the most powerful person in British government after the Prime Minister. Pankaj Munjal and family of cycle manufacturer Hero Cycles made to the list for the first time with 1.2 billion dollars on the back of surging e-bike demand in India.**

India urges WTO members to reach consensus on TRIPS waiver proposal

- **India has urged WTO members to reach consensus on a proposal on waiver of certain provisions in a multilateral agreement on intellectual property to deal with COVID-19 crisis**, stating that one cannot continue to engage in endless discussions when millions of lives are lost to the pandemic.
- In October 2020, **India and South Africa submitted a proposal suggesting a waiver for all WTO members on the implementation, application and enforcement of certain provisions of the TRIPS Agreement in relation to the prevention, containment or treatment of COVID-19.**
- The agreement on **Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights or TRIPS** came into effect in **January 1995.** It is a **multilateral agreement on intellectual property (IP) rights such as copyright, industrial designs, patents and protection of undisclosed information or trade secrets.**

World Trade Organization (WTO) is an intergovernmental organization that regulates and facilitates international trade between nations. It officially commenced operations on 1 January 1995, pursuant to the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement, thus replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that had been established in 1948. The WTO is the world's largest international economic organization, with 164 member states representing over 96% of global trade and global GDP. The WTO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is a Nigerian-American economist and international development expert who has served since March 1, 2021 as Director-General of the World Trade Organization. She is the first woman and the first African to hold the office.

MCX signs MoUs with NSE, India INX, NSDL and CDSL

- **Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with National Stock Exchange of India (NSE), India INX International Exchange (IFSC) (India INX), National Securities Depository (NSDL) and Central Depository Services (India) (CDSL) for setting up Market Infrastructure Institutions comprising of International Bullion Exchange, Clearing Corporation and Depository at Gujarat International Financial Trade (GIFT) City in lines with the Government of India objective to make India a price setter in bullion through GIFT International Finance Service Centre (IFSC) and in accordance with the International Financial Services Centres Authority (Bullion Exchange) Regulations, 2020 and other applicable laws.

The Multi Commodity Exchange of India Limited (MCX), India's first listed exchange, is a state-of-the-art, commodity derivatives exchange that facilitates online trading of commodity derivatives transactions, thereby providing a platform for price discovery and risk management. The Exchange, which started operations in November 2003, operates under the regulatory framework of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). It was established in 2003 and is based in Mumbai. It is India's largest commodity derivatives exchange.

Nasscom launches program to accelerate AI-led innovation in India

- **Nasscom** launched an 'AI Gamechangers' program to promote artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation in the country, the apex body of the IT industry. Microsoft is the innovation partner for the program, As part of the 'AI for India' mission, the program seeks to recognize impactful and scalable AI-based innovation in the country.
- **Nasscom** and Microsoft will work closely to develop and promote the AI Gamechangers program, built on a shared commitment towards accelerating the adoption of AI across key sectors.

National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) is an Indian non-governmental trade association and advocacy group focused mainly on Information Technology (IT) and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. Established in 1988, NASSCOM is a non-profit organisation. NASSCOM initiated a program called '10,000 Startups' in 2013. The purpose of 10000 Startup is to support and impact 10,000 startups in India by 2023. UB Pravin Rao is the current Chairman and Debjani Ghosh is the first women and current President of NASSCOM.

SBI Card customers can now make transactions on Jio Pay platform

- **SBI Cards and Payment Services (SBI Card)** is available on the Jio Pay service, allowing customers to do their transactions on the platform through credit. The SBI Card portfolio has been enabled on the Jio Pay service from March 2, 2021, SBI Card said in a regulatory filing.
- **Currently, only cards issued in Indian territory are enabled on the Jio Pay service**, it said. However, customers can transact using their SBI Card through the Jio Pay service in international locations as well.

On April 1, 2017, the State Bank of India, which was India's largest bank, merged with five of its associate banks (State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore), and with the Bharatiya Mahila Bank. Dinesh Kumar Khara is the current chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI). Imperial Bank of India was the oldest and the largest commercial bank of the Indian subcontinent, and was subsequently transformed into State Bank of India in 1955.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announces Project Development Cell for Biotechnology

- Commerce and Industry Minister **Piyush Goyal** announced **Project Development Cell for Biotechnology**. Mr. Goyal made this announcement in **Global Bio-India 2021 conclave**, a three-day event focusing on different aspects of biotechnology which has been organized by DBT-BIRAC.
- The Minister added that we should extend our support to the start-ups to implement their ideas at the ground level to become commercially viable. **Mr. Goyal also released Indian Bio-economy Report by ABLE, and Biotech Investment Potential for Indian States Report by IFC.**

Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently taking charge as **Minister of Railways, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**. He was elected as the **BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha** on 3 June 2016.

SBI Mutual Fund launched SBI International Access - US Equity FoF

- **SBI Mutual Fund** has announced the launch of **SBI International Access - US Equity FoF**, an open-ended **Fund of Fund** scheme that would invest in mutual fund scheme/ETFs that further invests in the US markets.
- The underlying scheme of investment would be **Amundi Funds - US Pioneer Fund**, with an investment process that fully integrates ESG (Environment, Social Governance) ethos. The fund will be managed by **Mohit Jain**. The NFO will be open for subscription till March 15.

Singapore top source of FDI in Apr-Dec into India

- **Singapore** was the **top source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India** in the **first nine months of FY21** at **\$15.7 billion**, followed by the **US** at **\$12.82 billion** with **Mauritius** at the third position at **\$3.47 billion**.
- **Gujarat** garnered the highest share of FDI in the period at **\$21.23 billion** followed by **Maharashtra** at **\$13.63 billion**. **India's high foreign inflows** come at a time when the **global FDI collapsed in 2020, falling 42% to an estimated \$859 billion from \$1.5 trillion in 2019**, according to UNCTAD. Such a low level was last seen in the 1990s and is more than 30% below the investment trough that followed the 2008-2009 global financial crisis, the intergovernmental body said earlier this year.
- **Computer software and hardware** was the **biggest gainer and garnered FDI worth \$24.38 billion** in the April-December period of FY21. **Construction** witnessed the **second largest FDI inflows at \$7.14 billion**. Services sector that includes banking, financial and insurance, drew **\$3.85 billion** of FDI during the period. FDI equity inflows were **\$21.46 billion** in the quarter ended December 31, 2020 with October receiving the lowest inflows at **\$5.33 billion** in the quarter.

'FDI' or 'Foreign Direct Investment' means investment through capital instruments by a person resident outside India –in an unlisted Indian company or in ten per cent or more of the post-issue paid-up equity capital on a fully diluted basis of a listed Indian company. In India, foreign investment can be made mainly under two routes: **Automatic Route:** Under the Automatic Route, the non-resident investor or the Indian company does not require any approval from Government of India for the investment. **Reserve Bank of India is in charge of Automatic Route. Government Approval Route:** Under the Government Approval Route, prior to investment, approval from the Government of India is required. **A foreign direct investment (FDI) is an investment in the form of a controlling ownership in a business in one country by an entity based in another country.**

ICICI Bank targeting to serve 20 lakh customers of rival banks through app

- Private sector lender **ICICI Bank** said **10 lakh customers of rival banks** are using its mobile application for transactions. The lender expects the number of such customers, who are **using the app for instant UPI-based payments and recharges, to double in the next three months**, the company said in a statement.
- The bank is using **NPCI's interoperable in infrastructure to serve customers of other banks** as well through its app called **"imobile pay"**. Users like the **'Pay to Contacts' feature the most**. The functionality enables users to send money either to a mobile number or a UPI ID of their friends/contacts, to any payment app or a digital wallet.

ICICI Bank Limited is an **Indian multinational banking and financial services company** headquartered in **Mumbai, Maharashtra** with its registered office in **Vadodara, Gujarat**. **ICICI Bank** was **established by the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI)**, an Indian financial institution, as a wholly-owned subsidiary in 1994. **ICICI Bank** is one of the **Big Four banks of India** others banks are **SBI, Bank of Baroda and HDFC**. **Sandeep Bakhshi** is the **current MD & CEO, ICICI Bank** since October 2018.

HDFC ERGO's new Business Kisht Suraksha to protect MFIs from natural calamities

- **HDFC ERGO General Insurance** has introduced **Business Kisht Suraksha** — a **unique cover aimed at protecting the balance sheet of MFIs, financial institutions and banks** in the event of a catastrophe or natural disaster.
- It aims to **limit the impacts on the balance sheet of financial institutions**, due to non-payment of EMIs by borrowers, resulting out of listed calamities such as floods, earthquakes, cyclones, etc, the insurer said.
- **Business Kisht as a product can be customised as per the needs of an individual MFI or financial institution**. The product can also be tailor-made depending on the geographical presence of the borrower, MFI or any financial institution basis the perils/climatic conditions that the location is prone to.
- Additionally, **MFIs or financial institutions also have the option of selecting the number of EMIs** that might need insurance coverage concerning the lenders' exposure.

HDFC ERGO is a **51:49 joint venture firm** between **HDFC and ERGO International AG**, one of the insurance entities of the **Munich Re Group** in **Germany** operating in the insurance field under the **BFSI** sector. The company offers products in the retail, corporate and rural sectors. The retail sector products are health, motor, travel, home, personal accident, and cybersecurity policy. Corporate products include liability, marine, and property insurance. Rural sector caters the farmers with crop insurance and cattle insurance. **It is based in Mumbai.**

India, 17 countries face U.S. anti-dumping tax

- The **U.S. Department of Commerce** is **preparing to tax aluminium sheet exporters from 18 countries after determining** that they had **benefited from subsidies and dumping**. The **US International Trade Commission (ITC)**, an independent body, **must approve the final decision by April 15 to impose anti-dumping or countervailing duties**, a department statement said.
- The investigation, launched under the **Donald Trump administration**, had been **requested by nearly a dozen U.S. aluminium alloy manufacturers, including Arconic and Aleris Rolled products**, which felt they were being harmed by competing imports at lower prices.
- President **Joe Biden's administration** **determined that imports from Germany in particular (\$287 million in 2019) benefited from dumping ranging from 40% to 242%.**
- **The same is true for aluminium alloy sheets from Bahrain (\$241 million)**, which the administration said benefited from pricing below the cost of production or the local market of 83%. **Imports from India (\$123 million in 2019) have benefited from subsidies for 35% to 89%, according to the U.S. investigation.**

An anti-dumping duty is a protectionist tariff that a domestic government imposes on foreign imports that it believes are priced below fair market value. Dumping is a process wherein a company exports a product at a price that is significantly lower than the price it normally charges in its home (or its domestic) market.



Inventions/Discoveries

‘Space hurricane’ spotted above Earth for the first time

- Scientists have revealed in a new study that they spotted a “space hurricane” spinning over 125 miles above the North Pole for the first time ever in 2014. These observations were uncovered during retrospective analysis by scientists at the University of Reading, as part of a team led by Shandong University in China, that confirmed the hurricane.
- Large, swirling storms called hurricanes hit frequently in the Earth’s low atmosphere, but they were not known to occur in the upper atmosphere. Scientists have for the first time observed a space hurricane in Earth’s upper atmosphere. An international team of scientists led by Shandong University in China confirmed their existence that shed new light on the relationship between planets and space.
- Researchers analysed observations made by satellites in 2014 to reveal a long-lasting hurricane, resembling those in the lower atmosphere, in the polar ionosphere and magnetosphere with surprisingly large energy and momentum deposition despite otherwise extremely quiet geomagnetic conditions. The analysis allowed a 3D image to be created of the 1,000 km-wide swirling mass of plasma several hundred kilometres above the North Pole, raining electrons instead of water.

A space hurricane is a huge, funnel-like, spiral geomagnetic storm that occurs above the polar Ionosphere of Earth, during extremely quiet conditions. They are related to the aurora borealis phenomenon, as the electron precipitation from the storm’s funnel produces gigantic, cyclone-shaped auroras. Scientists believe that they occur in the polar regions of planets with magnetic fields.

Kaveri Seeds becomes world’s first seed producer to have over a lakh acres in production

- Kaveri Seeds Company said it has become the first seed producer in the world with more than one lakh acres under seed production in a country.
- The bulk of the newly acquired seed production area is dedicated to the non-cotton sector and mostly towards high-margin hybrid rice, maize and vegetable seeds, and nearly half of the land is located in and around the Telugu states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, India’s largest listed producer of hybrid seeds said.

Andhra Pradesh Governor congratulates ISRO scientists for accomplishing the mission

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the primary satellite Amazonia-1 of Brazil along with 18 co-passenger satellites. The satellites were launched atop the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C51) from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) Sriharikota Range (SHAR). Notably, this is ISRO’s first mission of 2021 and the first time a Brazilian satellite was launched into space by an Indian rocket.
- The Amazônia-1, which weighs 637 kilograms, is the first Earth observation satellite entirely developed by Brazil. It is optimized to peer at the cloud-covered region of its namesake, the Amazon forest since it has infrared capabilities that allow it to look at the forest cover regardless of the weather.

- **Brazil plans to use the satellite to “alert deforestation” in the region**, Brazil’s National Institute for Space Research (INPE) said in an Amazonia 1 mission description.
- This confirms the **infinite potential of the India-Brazil partnership to overcome our development challenges through high technology**. The launch also marked the first dedicated mission of ISRO’s commercial arm NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL).
- The 18 co-passenger satellites include four from ISRO’s Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (three UNITYsats from the consortium of three Indian academic institutes and SKI’s SD SAT). The 14 others are from ISRO’s commercial arm, NewSpace India (NSIL).
- **Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan has congratulated scientists of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for accomplishing the mission with successful launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C51 (PSLV-C51) and placing 19 satellites including Amazonia-1 of Brazil in sun synchronous orbit.**
- Governor Harichandan **hailed the scientists for the 53rd flight of PSLV C-51, the first commercial mission in 2021 and said the mission has added another feather in the cap of ISRO.**

ISRO is the space agency of India headquartered in the city of Bangalore. ISRO was formed in 1969. ISRO built India’s first satellite, Aryabhata, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975. Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan is current the chairperson of the ISRO. Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) or Sriharikota Range (SHAR) is a rocket launch centre operated by ISRO. It is located in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

Russia launches satellite to monitor climate in Arctic

- **Russia launched its space satellite Arktika-M on a mission to monitor the climate and environment in the Arctic** amid a push by the Kremlin to expand the country’s activities in the region.
- **The Arctic has warmed more than twice as fast as the global average over the last three decades** and Moscow is seeking to develop the energy-rich region, investing in the Northern Sea Route for shipping across its long northern flank as ice melts.

Exotic earthworm found in Karnataka for the first time

- **An exotic and highly invasive earthworm — Amynthes alexandri of the Megascolecidae family — has been collected and reported for the first time from Karnataka.** Its original home is believed to be Southeast Asia.
- It has been found to be distributed at four sites in the State — Hosabale and Hosanagara in Shivamogga district, Kaimara in Chikkamagaluru district, and Konaje in Dakshina Kannada.
- Earlier, **the same earthworm was recorded in 15 States/Union Territories in India**, according to a study published in the January issue of the Canadian journal Megadrilogica, an international scientific journal devoted to publishing earthworm studies from across the world.

Indian Scientists design & develop low-cost optical spectrograph

- **Indian Scientists have designed and developed a low-cost optical spectrograph.** The spectrograph can locate sources of faint light from distant quasars and galaxies.
- It is **one of the largest astronomical spectrographs in the country** and has been **successfully commissioned on the 3.6-Metre Devasthal Optical Telescope near Nainital Uttarakhand**. Dr Amitosh Omar, scientist at the research institute ARIES, who led the project team spoke to All India Radio on this development.

Genomic analysis

- To better understand **how the virus is mutating and its protein biology (proteins are made using genetic information)**, an IISc. team led by Utpal Tatu, Professor in the Department of Biochemistry, carried out a **comprehensive “proteo-genomic” investigation** – a series of analyses of SARS-CoV-2 isolates.
- The isolates or viral samples were **recovered from nasal secretions of three consenting COVID-19 RT-PCR positive individuals in Bengaluru**. The genomic analysis was **done using next generation sequencing (NGS)**, a technology that **allows for rapid sequencing of the entire genome**.

- A team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc.) has identified multiple mutations and unique proteins in isolates of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. WHO first learned of this new virus on 31 December 2019, following a report of a cluster of cases of 'viral pneumonia' in Wuhan, People's Republic of China. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are, Fever, Dry cough and Fatigue. The standard diagnosis method is by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) from a nasopharyngeal swab. In India, the first case was reported in Kerala.

Delhi among top three states with most contaminated sites, says Pollution Control Board

- The national capital stands third on the list of states and Union territories with most contaminated sites, according to the Central Pollution Control Board data.
- There are 112 sites in India contaminated by toxic and hazardous substances. Besides, there are 168 sites that may be contaminated but require investigation and confirmation, as per the CPCB. Odisha tops the list with 23 contaminated sites, followed by Uttar Pradesh (21) and Delhi (11).

First project to map genomes in Indian Ocean

- A 30-member team of scientists and researchers from the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) in Panaji and another 30 crew members onboard its research vessel Sindhu Sadhana will spend the next three months traversing the course of over 10,000 nautical miles in the Indian Ocean on a research project to reveal the internal working of the body of the ocean at a cellular level.
- The first-of-its-kind research project in the country is aimed at understanding the biochemistry and the response of the ocean to climate change, nutrient stress and increasing pollution. Conceptualised over the last two to three years, the research project has been undertaken at a cost of Rs 25 crore and will take three years to complete, NIO Director Sunil Kumar Singh said.
- The research project that was flagged off at Visakhapatnam on 10 March 2021 will see the team of 30 scientists and researchers — including six women — course the Indian Ocean from India's east coast, all the way to Australia, then onward towards Port Louis in Mauritius and up to the border of Pakistan, off India's west coast, gathering samples for genome mapping of microorganisms in the Indian Ocean. The researchers will collect samples from various stretches of the ocean at an average depth of about 5 km.
- Just like gene mapping is carried out on blood samples collected from humans, the scientists will map these in the bacteria, microbes found in the ocean. The mapping of the Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and Ribonucleic acid (RNA) will show the nutrients present in them, and also those lacking in different parts of the ocean.

DRDO successfully carries out flight demonstration based on SFDR technology

- Defence Research and Development Organisation has successfully carried out a flight demonstration based on Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet technology from Integrated Test Range Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- During the test, many new technologies were proven, including Solid Fuel based Ducted Ramjet technology. Successful demonstration of Solid Fuel based Ducted Ramjet technology has provided DRDO with a technological advantage which will enable it to develop long range air-to-air missiles. At present, such technology is available only with a handful of countries in the world.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the current Chairman of DRDO.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

PM Modi delivered inaugural address virtually at 2nd Khelo India National Winter Games

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the **inaugural address at the 2nd Khelo India National Winter Games through video conferencing**. The Games continued till 2nd March.
- The event has been **organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council** and the Winter Games Association of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The sports activities included **alpine skiing, nordic ski, snowboarding, ski mountaineering, ice hockey, ice skating, ice stock etc.** Twenty Seven States, Union Territories and Boards are participated in the games.

Indian shuttlers Varun Kapur, Malvika Bansod win Uganda International titles

- Indian shuttlers **Varun Kapur and Malvika Bansod** registered hard-fought wins to clinch the men's and women's singles titles respectively at the 2021 Uganda International in Kampala.

Vinesh Phogat bags Gold in Ukraine wrestling event

- Indian wrestler **Vinesh Phogat** has won the gold medal in the women's 53-kg category at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine.
- Since the coronavirus halted all competitions last year, it was the **first competition for Vinesh, who is the only Indian woman wrestler to have qualified for the Tokyo Games.**

Odisha will host the 2020-2021 Hero Indian Women's League

- **Odisha will host the 2020-2021 Hero Indian Women's League the All India Football Federation.** The dates for the tournament are yet to be finalised and will be announced soon, the football body added.
- **AIFF president Praful Patel thanked the Odisha government for agreeing to play host to the event.** "The government of Odisha has been a great supporter of Indian football.

Mary Kom appointed as Chairperson of AIBA's champions & veterans committee

- **Six-time world champion pugilist Mary Kom** has been appointed as the Chairperson of the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) champions and veterans committee.
- **AIBA President Umar Kremlev said this in a letter to the 2012 Olympic bronze-medallist. Mary Kom was elected by the Board of Directors of AIBA.** The Committee consists of most respected worldwide boxing veterans and champions who have achieved significant results and who are ready to share their experience.

J&K tops medals tally at Khelo India Winter National Games in Gulmarg

- **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir topped the medals tally in the second edition of Khelo India Winter National Games. J&K won 11 gold, 18 silver and 5 bronze medals.**
- The five-day mega sports event which **began on 26th of February** concluded in the famous ski resort of Gulmarg in the north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Pollard hits six sixes off hat-trick man Dananjaya

- **West Indies captain Kieron Pollard became only the third man to hit six sixes in an international over during the four-wicket victory over Sri Lanka.**
- **The feat came in the sixth over of a bizarre West Indies innings, bowled by off-spinner Akila Dananjaya who moments earlier in his previous over had been celebrating taking a hat-trick.**
- **Pollard followed in the footsteps of South Africa's Herschelle Gibbs against the Netherlands in the 2007 World Cup and India's Yuvraj Singh, who also achieved the feat in the 2007 Twenty20 World Cup against England.**

India beats England in final Cricket Test match, Qualifies for World Test Championship Final

- **India defeated England in the final Cricket test match at Ahmedabad to enter the final of the inaugural edition of the World Test Championship.** Cricket fans enjoyed India's win against formidable England by an innings and 25 runs in the fourth and final test match at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. With this win, India clinched the four-match series 3-1 and sealed a place in the final of the inaugural edition of the World Test Championship.
- **India will play their inaugural World Test Championship final against New Zealand at Southampton's Ageas Bowl Stadium from June 18-22,** BCCI president Sourav Ganguly confirmed on Monday. Initially, the final was supposed to be held at the Lord's but Southampton, with a five-star facility inside the stadium, will make it easier for both the ICC and the England and Wales Cricket Board to create a bio-bubble for the two teams.

First-ever White Water Rafting Festival organised in J&K's Doda

- **In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the first-ever adventure sports event, Chenab White Water Rafting Festival organised by the Doda District Administration** in coordination with Bhaderwah Development Authority (BDA) and J&K Adventure group culminated at Premnagar Shibnote in Doda amid overwhelming response from the people.

MISCELLANEOUS

India's first Grade-Separated Urban Expressway

- Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said he is hopeful that the **construction work on the country's first grade-separated urban expressway, Dwarka Expressway, worth Rs 8,662 crore** will be completed before 15 August 2022.
- The minister was reviewing the **progress work on the 29 km long expressway, which links Dwarka in the national capital, Delhi to Gurugram**. According to the minister, the Dwarka Expressway will immensely help reducing air pollution in Delhi-NCR. Also, it is the first instance of a project where the plantation of around 12,000 trees has been undertaken.

UP airport has bagged ACI's first prize for best services

- **Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport at Babatpur in Varanasi**, the Parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, **bagged first prize in the category of Airport Service Quality (ASQ) by the Airport Council International (ACI)**.
- **Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, Ahmedabad** was adjudged the second and **Chowdhary Charan Singh International Airport, Lucknow** bagged the third prize for providing the best airport services in the country. About 22 airports across the country were chosen by the ACI during its survey between January 2020 and December 2020.

NIM and Pune-based team up to offer India's first mountaineering diploma course

- The **Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM)** and **Pune-based Guardian Giripremi Institute of Mountaineering (GGIM)** has teamed up to offer the country's first mountaineering diploma course. The one-year-long course would commence from June this year. The institutes signed an MoU regarding this last month.

India's first 'Transgender Community Desk' opens in Telangana's Gachibowli

- In what is claimed to be the **first-of-its-kind gender inclusive community policing initiative in the country**, **Cyberabad police inaugurated a 'Transgender Community Desk'** at Gachibowli police station. Commissioner of Police V.C. Sajjanar said the desk will be managed by a police liaison officer and a transgender person who is designated as community coordinator.

Anantapur, Nellore receive PM Kisan Award

- **Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** presented the prestigious **Prime Minister's Kisan National Award** to **Nellore Collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu**. The district was ranked first in resolving grievances received under **PM Kisan portal**, an official release said. The award was presented during the second anniversary of the PM-Kisan Yojana in New Delhi.

Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha TV merges, now to be known as Sansad TV

- **Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha TV** have been merged and now it will be known as **Sansad TV**. Retired IAS officer **Ravi Capoor** has been appointed as its Chief Executive Officer.
- **Sansad TV** will telecast live proceedings of both the **Upper and Lower Houses** on two different channels during simultaneous sitting of the Houses. The decision has been taken jointly by the **Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, M. Venkaiah Naidu**, and **Speaker of Lok Sabha, Om Birla**, based on the report of a committee set up to look into the integration of the two channels.

Principal Scientific Adviser to GOI launches Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship

- The Office of the **Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India** under its **Waste to Wealth Mission** has launched the **Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship** to recognize students, community workers or Self-Help Groups, SHGs and municipal or sanitary workers who are engaged in tackling the enormous challenge of waste management, scientifically and sustainably. The **Waste to Wealth Mission** is one of the **nine national missions** of the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council, PM-STIAC.

- Targeted to encourage community participation, the Swachhta Saarthi Fellowships invites applications from students and community workers who have done previous work or are currently engaged in waste management activities, including awareness campaigns, surveys and studies.

Mumbai local train: Indian Railways install MTRC system, commuters to get real-time updates

- Indian Railways' Western Railway zone has introduced the Mobile Train Radio Communication (MTRC) system which will play an important role in preventing train accidents through effective communication.
- The Mobile Train Radio Communication system is an effective and technologically advanced communication system which facilitates an instant and constant interaction of train crew with the Control Centre and the Station Master.

2-day national seminar on NEP and its Implementation concludes in Bhopal

- A two-day national seminar on National Education Policy and its Implementation, organised by Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication, Bhopal, NITI Aayog and Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal concluded.

Union Education Minister inaugurates the New Delhi World Book Fair 2021 – Virtual Edition

- Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' inaugurated the New Delhi World Book Fair 2021 – Virtual Edition.
- The Minister appreciated that 'National Education Policy-2020' is the theme of New Delhi World Book Fair 2021. Speaking on NEP, the Minister said, it has emerged as world's biggest reform, which will develop India not only as the Knowledge hub but will also help in making learners ideal and global citizens.

All-women crew of MT Swarna Krishna makes history

- In an attempt to acknowledge the efforts of women in breaking down the stereotypes in erstwhile male-dominated maritime sector, Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has flagged off an all-women crew onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel MT Swarna Krishna, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. This is the first time in the world maritime history that a ship is being sailed by all women officers.

Government to form Centre of Excellence in gaming & other related areas in collaboration with IIT Bombay

- Government has decided to form Centre of Excellence in gaming and other related areas in collaboration with IIT Bombay. Addressing the opening ceremony of virtual exhibition and prize announcement of Khel Khel Mein through video conference, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, IIT will start the courses from this year itself.

Maritime India Summit-2021 celebrates 'Chabahar Day' on March 4

- India commemorated 'Chabahar Day' on March 04, 2021 on the margins of the Maritime India Summit-2021 which is being held from March 2-4, 2021, the MEA said in a statement. Chabahar Day was commemorated on the sidelines of the Second edition of International Maritime Summit-2021 in the virtual format.
- In 2018, Iran and India had signed an agreement worth USD 85 million to develop the Chabahar Port in south-eastern Iran. The port is located in the Gulf of Oman, and provides an alternative route for trade between India and Afghanistan. The Chabahar port is a key connectivity project to boost trade ties among India, Iran, and Afghanistan.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Virat Kohli Becomes First Indian to Breach 100-Million Followers Mark on Instagram

- **Virat Kohli becomes the first Indian person to breach the 100-million followers' mark on Instagram.** Kohli, who is the **most followed Indian on Instagram**, has **almost 40 million more followers than the second person on the list who is Priyanka Chopra with 60.8 million.**
- **Kohli is also the most followed cricketer on Instagram** while he is the **fourth on the list of athletes across all sports.** The top on the list **Cristiano Ronaldo** who is also the **most followed on Instagram with 265 million Instagram.**
- **Barcelona captain Lionel Messi is second on the list with 186 million followers,** while **Brazil star forward Neymar is on third with 147 million followers.**

Indian American Naureen Hassan named first VP, COO of Federal Reserve Bank of New York

- **Indian American Naureen Hassan has been named as the first vice president and chief operating officer (COO) of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.**
- Hassan, a 25-year veteran of the financial services industry, has served in various capacities with expertise in strategy, digital transformation, and cybersecurity. **The appointment, effective March 15, was approved by the board of governors of the Federal Reserve System.**

AWARDS

PM Narendra Modi receives global energy and environment leadership award

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the CERAWeek global energy and environment leadership award** during an annual international energy conference. The Prime Minister also delivered the keynote address at the CERAWeek Conference-2021, which was held virtually from March 1 to 5, its organiser, IHS Markit.
- **The CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award was instituted in 2016. CERAWeek was founded in 1983 by Daniel Yergin and is held in Houston annually.**

Governor selected for global women of excellence award

- **Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan has been selected for “Top 20 global women of excellence – 2021” award of the multi-ethnic advisory task force headed by US Congressman Danny K. Davis.** The award was presented to her at the ninth annual Congressional International Women’s Day Gala at Illinois in USA on March 7.
- **She was chosen by the jury for advocating women’s rights, gender parity and women’s equality. US Vice-President Kamala Harris was among the 19 other awardees, all of whom were selected from a host of nominations all over the world.**

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Wildlife Day 3 March

- On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** decided to proclaim **3 March, the international day of the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** on the planet raise awareness and benefits fauna and flora in 1973, as **World Wildlife Day**, which was proposed by **Thailand**, to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora.
- **World Wildlife Day** was celebrated in **2021** under the theme “**Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet**”, as a way to highlight the central role of forests, forest species and ecosystems services in sustaining the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people globally, and particularly of Indigenous and local communities with historic ties to forested and forest-adjacent areas.

National Safety Day 2021

- **National Safety Day** is observed on **March 4** every year to commemorate the foundation of the **National Safety Council**, which aims to raise awareness about safety measures that need to be undertaken to prevent accidents and mishaps.
- The theme of **National Safety Day** of **2021** is “**Learn from disaster and prepare for a safe future**”.

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The Hindu
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QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following Indian International Airports bagged first prize in the category of Airport Service Quality (ASQ) by the Airport Council International (ACI)?
(a) Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport
(b) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport
(c) Indira Gandhi International Airport
(d) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
2. Which of the following states launched 'e-Parivahan Vyavstha' of the State Transport Department to provide faceless services to the people of the State regarding Driving Licence/Registration Certificates/Permits etc.?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Uttar Pradesh
3. Who among the following assumed the charge of Chairman National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)?
(a) Shri Vijay Sampla (b) Shri Hansraj Hans (c) Shri Anand Prasad (d) Shri Subrat Narayanan
4. Which of the following Indian districts was ranked first in resolving grievances received under PM Kisan portal?
(a) Patna (b) Surat (c) Nellore (d) Mysuru
5. The City Innovation Exchange (CiX) will connect cities to innovators across the _____ to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges.
(a) National ecosystem (b) National unity (c) National planning (d) National adaptation
6. Recently, Irakli Garibashvili was appointed as the new Prime Minister of:
(a) Georgia (b) Finland (c) Sweden (d) Mongolia
7. Which of the following countries parliament passed a world-first law to force digital giants such as Facebook Inc. and Google pay local publishers for news content – a move that may unleash more global regulatory action to limit their power?
(a) New Zealand (b) Australia (c) Canada (d) USA
8. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has formed a working group committee to relook its information and security guidelines amid the exponential increase in cyberattacks across the globe in the wake of covid-19. The 14-member committee will be headed by:
(a) Amit Mohan (b) Deepak Chandra (c) Janakiram (d) Abhishek Ranjan
9. Which of the following companies has become the first seed producer in the world with more than one lakh acres under seed production in a country?
(a) Suhas Seeds Company
(b) Godavari Seeds Company
(c) Kaveri Seeds Company
(d) Ganga Seeds Company
10. Who among the following received the CERAWEEK global energy and environment leadership award during an annual international energy conference?
(a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(b) President Ramnath Kovind
(c) Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar
(d) Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar
11. Recently, The Bar Council of India (BCI) took the initiative to set up India's first law teacher training institute - Indian Institute of Law (IIL) - in collaboration with Kalinga Institute of Industrial Training (KIIT) at _____.
(a) New Delhi (b) Pune (c) Bhubaneswar (d) Hisar

12. Recently, Minister for Social justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot virtually launched _____ and a handbook entitled “Access- The Photo Digest”.
- (a) “Saubhagya Bharat App” (b) “Suramya India App”
(c) “Sugamya Bharat App” (d) “India Swagya App”
13. Who among the following launched the Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas at a function in New Delhi?
- (a) Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar
(b) Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah
(c) Union Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman
(d) Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari
14. Recently Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry launched the field assessment of Swachh Survekshan -2021 at a web event in New Delhi. Every year, the on-field assessment takes place between _____ January.
- (a) 1st to 31st (b) 1st to 15th (c) 4th to 31st (d) 15th to 31st
15. Recently, National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in association with ICICI Bank and ValetEZ has enabled Brookfield Mall as India’s first Contactless Mall in _____ making parking seamless and ready.
- (a) Bengaluru (b) New Delhi (c) Chennai (d) Hyderabad
16. India’s first machine tool park is ready for investors in _____.
- (a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Maharashtra (d) Tamil Nadu
17. Recently, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has accomplished the mission with successful launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C51 (PSLV-C51) and placing 19 satellites including _____ of Brazil in sun synchronous orbit.
- (a) Amazonia-1 (b) Amazonia-6 (c) Brazilia-15 (d) Braziliaca-333
18. Which of the following countries launched its space satellite Arktika-M on a mission to monitor the climate and environment in the Arctic to expand the country’s activities in the region?
- (a) Germany (b) Russia (c) Sweden (d) China
19. Who won the gold medal in the women’s 53-kg category at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine?
- (a) Smita Das (b) Geeta Phogat (c) Vinesh Phogat (d) Babita Phogat
20. Who has become the first Indian person to breach the 100-million followers’ mark on Instagram?
- (a) Priyanka Chopra (b) Deepika Padukone
(c) Mahendra Singh Dhoni (d) Virat Kohli
21. Which of the following states launched “Gharoki Paachan, Chelik Naam” (daughter’s name is a home’s identity) programme recently?
- (a) Haryana (b) Punjab
(c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Uttarakhand
22. Recently, Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha TV have been merged and now it will be known as _____.
- (a) Sansad TV (b) Parliament TV
(c) Bhartiya Sansad TV (d) Sansad 2021 TV
23. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated ‘Maritime India Summit 2021’ through video conferencing. Which is the partner country for the three-day summit?
- (a) Sweden (b) Norway (c) Finland (d) Denmark
24. Recently, Sri Lanka offered to develop a container terminal of _____ with investors from India and Japan.
- (a) Hambantota Port (b) Galle Port (c) Colombo Port (d) Trincomalee Port

25. The exercise 'Desert Flag' is an annual multinational large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the _____ Air Force.
 (a) United Arab Emirates (b) Saudi Arabia
 (c) Israel (d) Jordan
26. Recently, India climbed up to _____ spot in the Hurun Global Rich List 2021 with 209 billionaires – 40 more than last year.
 (a) Second (b) Third (c) Fifth (d) Seventh
27. The agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights or TRIPS came into effect in _____.
 (a) 1975 (b) 1982 (c) 1995 (d) 1998
28. Recently, An exotic and highly invasive earthworm *Amyntas alexandri* of the *Megascolecidae* family has been collected and reported for the first time from _____.
 (a) Maharashtra (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Chhattisgarh
29. Which of the following states will host the 2020-2021 Hero Indian Women's League the All India Football Federation?
 (a) Jharkhand (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Odisha
30. World Wildlife Day was celebrated in year 2021 on:
 (a) 1st March (b) 3rd March (c) 5th March (d) 7th March
31. Which of the following countries conservationists unveiled plans to build the world's first refuge for the platypus, to promote breeding and rehabilitation as the duck-billed mammal faces extinction due to climate change?
 (a) New Zealand (b) Australia (c) Spain (d) Italy
32. To set up International Bullion Exchange at GIFT City, _____ has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) recently.
 (a) India INX International Exchange (b) Multi Commodity Exchange of India
 (c) National Securities Depository (d) Central Depository Services
33. Which of the following states recently announced scheme for 1 lakh 75 thousand fishermen of the state and have been linked with accident insurance scheme?
 (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Haryana
34. Recently, Indian Railways _____ has introduced the Mobile Train Radio Communication (MTRC) system which will play an important role in preventing train accidents through effective communication.
 (a) Western Railway zone (b) Eastern Railway zone
 (c) Northern Railway zone (d) Southern Railway zone
35. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India will invest 82 billion dollars in port projects by _____.
 (a) 2024 (b) 2027 (c) 2035 (d) 2040
36. Which of the following launched an 'AI Gamechangers' program to promote artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation in the country, the apex body of the IT industry?
 (a) Nasscom (b) SEBI
 (c) SIDBI (d) NASDAQ
37. Recently, Indian Scientists have designed and developed a low-cost optical spectrograph. One of the largest astronomical spectrographs in the country has been successfully commissioned near _____.
 (a) Nainital Uttarakhand (b) Manali Himachal Pradesh
 (c) Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh (d) Leh, Ladakh

38. Who has been appointed as the Chairperson of the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) champions and veterans committee recently?
 (a) Mary Kom (b) Vijender Singh (c) Yogeshwar Dutt (d) Sushil Kumar
39. Which of the following Union Territories / States topped the medals tally in the second edition of Khelo India Winter National Games?
 (a) Ladakh (b) Sikkim (c) Goa (d) Jammu and Kashmir
40. National Safety Day is observed on _____ every year to commemorate the foundation of the National Safety Council.
 (a) March 2 (b) March 4 (c) March 6 (d) March 8
41. How many Indian Institutions have secured a position in top 100 in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2021?
 (a) 5 (b) 8 (c) 12 (d) 24
42. The Indian Air Force is for the first time participated in the annual multinational large force employment warfare exercise _____ hosted by the United Arab Emirates Air Force.
 (a) Desert Flag VI (b) Desert Eagle IV (c) Desert King VIII (d) Triumph Tiger III
43. Name the Indian state governor who has been selected for "Top 20 global women of excellence - 2021" award of the multi-ethnic advisory task force headed by US Congressman Danny K. Davis.
 (a) Anandiben Patel (b) Baby Rani Maurya (c) Anusuiya Uikey (d) Tamilisai Soundararajan
44. Recently, Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri announced the release of the final rankings of Ease of Living Index-2020 and the Municipal Performance Index-2020. Which of the following cities emerged as the top performer in the Million Plus category?
 (a) Ahmedabad (b) Bengaluru (c) Surat (d) Indore
45. Recently, The Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) and Pune-based Guardian Giripremi Institute of Mountaineering (GGIM) has teamed up to offer the country's first mountaineering diploma course. Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) is located in:
 (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Uttarakhand (d) Jammu & Kashmir
46. Which of the following had started a new system to permit the first cultural visa in the world, a golden visa?
 (a) Dubai (b) Melbourne (c) Abu Dhabi (d) Napier
47. Name the mutual fund which has announced the launch of an International Access - US Equity FoF, an open-ended Fund of Fund scheme that would invest in mutual fund scheme/ETFs that further invests in the US markets.
 (a) ICICI Mutual Funds (b) HDFC Mutual Funds
 (c) SBI Mutual Funds (d) Punjab National Bank Mutual Funds
48. Recently, A team of researchers from the _____ has identified multiple mutations and unique proteins in isolates of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
 (a) AIIMS New Delhi (b) IIT Kanpur
 (c) Indian Institute of Science (IISc.) Bengaluru (d) IIT Delhi
49. Recently, Chabahar Day was commemorated on the sidelines of the Second edition of International Maritime Summit-2021 in the virtual format on:
 (a) 1st March (b) 3rd March (c) 4th March (d) 7th March
50. Recently, UN General Assembly adopts India's resolution to declare 2023 as _____.
 (a) International Year of Wheat (b) International Year of Millets
 (c) International Year of Linseed (d) International Year of Bajra

51. India's first World Skill Centre was inaugurated in:
(a) Shillong (b) Lucknow (c) Ranchi (d) Bhubaneswar
52. India's first grade-separated urban expressway is:
(a) Yamuna Expressway (b) Ganga Expressway
(c) Purvanchal Expressway (d) Dwarka Expressway
53. Who recently inaugurated the New Delhi World Book Fair 2021 – Virtual Edition?
(a) Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' (b) Shri Narendra Modi
(c) Shri Ramnath Kovind (d) Shri Prakash Javadekar
54. Name the Indian American who has been named as the first vice president and chief operating officer (COO) of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York recently.
(a) Naureen Hassan (b) Niharika Duli (c) Anamika Lal (d) Nahida Ahmed
55. The World's first ice hotel that doesn't melt even in summer is built in:
(a) Iceland (b) Sweden (c) Denmark (d) Norway
56. Which of the following countries has recently launched its national app portal bdapps.com?
(a) Bhutan (b) Bangladesh (c) Bermuda (d) Barbados
57. Which of the following banks is using NPCI's interoperable in infrastructure to serve customers of other banks as well through its app called "imobile pay"?
(a) HDFC Bank (b) Axis Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) RBL Bank
58. Which of the following countries was the top source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India in the first nine months of FY21 at \$15.7 billion?
(a) USA (b) Mauritius (c) Canada (d) Singapore
59. Who has become only the third man to hit six sixes in an international over of cricket?
(a) Kieron Pollard (b) Martin Guptill (c) Aaron Finch (d) Rishabh Pant
60. Recently, Defence Research and Development Organisation has successfully carried out a flight demonstration based on _____ Ducted Ramjet technology from Integrated Test Range Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
(a) Solid Fuel (b) Liquid Fuel (c) Gas Fuel (d) Aerosol Fuel
61. Which of the following states will set up a new department, namely the Department of Mission Shakti?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Odisha
(c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
62. Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated 'Maitri Setu' between _____ on 9th March 2021 via video conferencing.
(a) India and Bangladesh (b) India and Nepal
(c) India and Sri Lanka (d) India and Bhutan
63. In what is claimed to be the first-of-its-kind gender inclusive community policing initiative in the country, Cyberabad police inaugurated a 'Transgender Community Desk' at Gachibowli police station in _____.
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka
(c) Telangana (d) Maharashtra
64. Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has flagged off an all-women crew onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel _____ the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
(a) MT Swarna Kamal (b) MT Swarna Krishna
(c) MT Swarna Nauka (d) MT Swarna Kalash

65. Recently, As the ice-covered parts of the Arctic Ocean melt due to climate change _____ has flagged its interest to take part in building “Polar Silk Road”, raising prospects for the emergence of a new sea route.
(a) Russia (b) Japan (c) China (d) USA
66. Recently, HDFC ERGO General Insurance has introduced _____ a unique cover aimed at protecting the balance sheet of MFIs, financial institutions and banks in the event of a catastrophe or natural disaster.
(a) Business Kisht Suraksha (b) Business Montly Surakshit
(c) Vyapar Kisht Suraksha (d) Business Kisht Prabhaw
67. Recently, Scientists have for the first time observed a space hurricane in Earth’s _____ atmosphere.
(a) Upper (b) Middle (c) Lower (d) Both in middle and lower
68. The U.S. Department of Commerce is preparing to tax aluminium sheet exporters from _____ countries after determining that they had benefited from subsidies and dumping.
(a) 10 (b) 12 (c) 15 (d) 18
69. According to the Central Pollution Control Board data, which of the following states topped the list of most contaminated sites?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Jharkhand (d) Odisha
70. Name the two cricket teams which entered the final of the inaugural edition of the World Test Championship.
(a) India and New Zealand (b) England and Australia
(c) India and Australia (d) New Zealand & Australia



ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport at Babatpur in Varanasi, the Parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, bagged first prize in the category of Airport Service Quality (ASQ) by the Airport Council International (ACI).
2. b Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur launched 'e-Parivahan Vyavstha' of the State Transport Department to provide faceless services to the people of the State regarding Driving Licence/Registration Certificates/Permits etc.
3. a Shri Vijay Sampla assumed the charge of Chairman National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) in New Delhi.
4. c Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar presented the prestigious Prime Minister's Kisan National Award to Nellore Collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu.
5. a The City Innovation Exchange (CiX) will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges.
6. a Irakli Garibashvili is a Georgian politician and the current Prime Minister of Georgia.
7. b Australia's parliament passed a world-first law to force digital giants such as Facebook Inc. and Google pay local publishers for news content – a move that may unleash more global regulatory action to limit their power.
8. c The 14-member committee will be headed by Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) chairman Janakiram.
9. c Kaveri Seeds Company said it has become the first seed producer in the world with more than one lakh acres under seed production in a country.
10. a Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the CERAWeek global energy and environment leadership award during an annual international energy conference.
11. c The Bar Council of India (BCI) took the initiative to set up India's first law teacher training institute - Indian Institute of Law (IIL) - in collaboration with Kalinga Institute of Industrial Training (KIIT) at Bhubaneswar, a move that drew praises from three Supreme Court Judges - Justices U U Lalit, B R Gavai and V Ramasubramanian.
12. c Minister for Social justice and Empowerment Thawarchand Gehlot virtually launched "Sugamya Bharat App" and a handbook entitled "Access- The Photo Digest".
13. d Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari launched the Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas at a function in New Delhi.
14. c Every year, the on-field assessment takes place between 4th January to 31st January.
15. a National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in association with ICICI Bank and ValetEZ has enabled Brookfield Mall as India's first Contactless Mall in Bengaluru making parking seamless and ready.
16. b India's first machine tool park is ready for investors in Karnataka.
17. a Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan has congratulated scientists of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for accomplishing the mission with successful launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C51 (PSLV-C51) and placing 19 satellites including Amazonia-1 of Brazil in sun synchronous orbit.

18. **b** Russia launched its space satellite Arktika-M on a mission to monitor the climate and environment in the Arctic amid a push by the Kremlin to expand the country's activities in the region.
19. **c** Indian wrestler, Vinesh Phogat has won the gold medal in the women's 53-kg category at XXIV Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine.
20. **d** Virat Kohli becomes the first Indian person to breach the 100-million followers' mark on Instagram. Kohli, who is the most followed Indian on Instagram, has almost 40 million more followers than the second person on the list who is Priyanka Chopra with 60.8 million.
21. **d** Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched "Gharoki Paachan, Chelik Naam" (daughter's name is a home's identity) programme and development schemes worth Rs 42 crore in Nainital.
22. **a** Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha TV have been merged and now it will be known as Sansad TV.
23. **d** Denmark is the partner country for the three-day summit.
24. **c** Sri Lanka offered to develop a container terminal of Colombo port with investors from India and Japan, almost a month after it cancelled a tripartite agreement signed in 2019 on developing another facility with the two other countries.
25. **a** Exercise Desert Flag is an annual multinational large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the United Arab Emirates Air Force.
26. **b** India climbed up to third spot in the Hurun Global Rich List 2021 with 209 billionaires – 40 more than last year.
27. **c** The agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights or TRIPS came into effect in January 1995. It is a multilateral agreement on intellectual property (IP) rights such as copyright, industrial designs, patents and protection of undisclosed information or trade secrets.
28. **c** An exotic and highly invasive earthworm — *Amyntas alexandri* of the Megascolecidae family — has been collected and reported for the first time from Karnataka. Its original home is believed to be Southeast Asia.
29. **d** Odisha will host the 2020-2021 Hero Indian Women's League the All India Football Federation.
30. **b** On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) decided to proclaim 3 March, the international day of the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on the planet raise awareness and benefits fauna and flora in 1973, as World Wildlife Day, which was proposed by Thailand, to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora.
31. **b** Australian conservationists unveiled plans to build the world's first refuge for the platypus, to promote breeding and rehabilitation as the duck-billed mammal faces extinction due to climate change.
32. **b** To set up International Bullion Exchange at GIFT City. Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with National Stock Exchange of India (NSE).
33. **a** Finance Minister said that 1 lakh 75 thousand fishermen of the state have been linked with accident insurance scheme. Budget proposes to double the income of fishermen.
34. **a** Indian Railways' Western Railway zone has introduced the Mobile Train Radio Communication (MTRC) system which will play an important role in preventing train accidents through effective communication.
35. **c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India will invest 82 billion dollars in port projects by 2035.

- 36. a** Nasscom launched an 'AI Gamechangers' program to promote artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation in the country, the apex body of the IT industry. Microsoft is the innovation partner for the program, As part of the 'AI for India' mission, the program seeks to recognize impactful and scalable AI-based innovation in the country.
- 37. a** One of the largest astronomical spectrographs in the country and has been successfully commissioned on the 3.6-Metre Devasthal Optical Telescope near Nainital Uttarakhand.
- 38. a** Six-time world champion pugilist Mary Kom has been appointed as the Chairperson of the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) champions and veterans committee.
- 39. d** Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir topped the medals tally in the second edition of Khelo India Winter National Games. J&K won 11 gold, 18 silver and 5 bronze medals.
- 40. b** National Safety Day is observed on March 4 every year to commemorate the foundation of the National Safety Council, which aims to raise awareness about safety measures that need to be undertaken to prevent accidents and mishaps.
- 41. c** Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has congratulated 12 Indian Institutions on securing a position in top 100 in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2021.
- 42. a** The Indian Air Force is for the first time participated in the annual multinational large force employment warfare exercise, Desert Flag VI, hosted by the United Arab Emirates Air Force.
- 43. d** Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan has been selected for "Top 20 global women of excellence – 2021" award of the multi-ethnic advisory task force headed by US Congressman Danny K. Davis.
- 44. b** Bengaluru emerged as the top performer in the Million Plus category, followed by Pune, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Surat, Navi Mumbai, Coimbatore, Vadodara, Indore and Greater Mumbai.
- 45. c** The proposal to have a mountaineering Institute at Uttarkashi was mooted by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India and the Government of Uttar Pradesh in 1964. Uttarkashi was specially selected as the home of NIM, primarily because of its close proximity to the Gangotri region in western garhwal, which undoubtedly has the best climbing and training potential in India and perhaps in the world. The Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) and Pune-based Guardian Giripremi Institute of Mountaineering (GGIM) has teamed up to offer the country's first mountaineering diploma course.
- 46. a** Dubai is a global hub of culture, art and creativity. The Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum embraced a new system to permit the first cultural visa in the world, a golden visa.
- 47. c** SBI Mutual Fund has announced the launch of SBI International Access - US Equity FoF, an open-ended Fund of Fund scheme that would invest in mutual fund scheme/ETFs that further invests in the US markets.
- 48. c** A team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc.) has identified multiple mutations and unique proteins in isolates of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
- 49. c** Maritime India Summit-2021 celebrates 'Chabahar Day' on March 4.
- 50. b** UN General Assembly adopts India's resolution to declare 2023 as International Year of Millets.
- 51. d** Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's first World Skill Centre at Mancheswar in Bhubaneswar
- 52. d** The 29-km expressway, which connects Dwarka in Delhi to Gurugram, has been constructed under the Bharatmala Project. Nitin Gadkari made an inspectional visit to Dwarka Expressway. "He reviewed the progress of India's First Grade Separated Urban Expressway, Dwarka Expressway".

- 53. a** Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' inaugurated the New Delhi World Book Fair 2021 – Virtual Edition.
- 54. a** Indian American Naureen Hassan has been named as the first vice president and chief operating officer (COO) of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.
- 55. b** Ice Hotel 365 is built in the small village of Jukkasjärvi, in Northern Sweden, 200 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle.
- 56. b** The Government of Bangladesh has launched its national app portal bdapps.com.
- 57. c** ICICI bank is using NPCI's interoperable in infrastructure to serve customers of other banks as well through its app called "imobile pay".
- 58. d** Singapore was the top source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India in the first nine months of FY21 at \$15.7 billion, followed by the US at \$12.82 billion with Mauritius at the third position at \$3.47 billion.
- 59. a** West Indies captain Kieron Pollard became only the third man to hit six sixes in an international over during the four-wicket victory over Sri Lanka.
- 60. a** Defence Research and Development Organisation has successfully carried out a flight demonstration based on Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet technology from Integrated Test Range Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- 61. b** Odisha government will set up a new department, namely the Department of Mission Shakti.
- 62. a** Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated 'Maitri Setu' between India and Bangladesh on 9th March 2021 via video conferencing.
- 63. c** In what is claimed to be the first-of-its-kind gender inclusive community policing initiative in the country, Cyberabad police inaugurated a 'Transgender Community Desk' at Gachibowli police station in Telangana.
- 64. b** In an attempt to acknowledge the efforts of women in breaking down the stereotypes in erstwhile male-dominated maritime sector, Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has flagged off an all-women crew onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel MT Swarna Krishna, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- 65. c** As the ice-covered parts of the Arctic Ocean melt due to climate change, China has flagged its interest to take part in building "Polar Silk Road", raising prospects for the emergence of a new sea route.
- 66. a** HDFC ERGO General Insurance has introduced Business Kisht Suraksha — a unique cover aimed at protecting the balance sheet of MFIs, financial institutions and banks in the event of a catastrophe or natural disaster.
- 67. a** Scientists have for the first time observed a space hurricane in Earth's upper atmosphere.
- 68. d** The U.S. Department of Commerce is preparing to tax aluminium sheet exporters from 18 countries after determining that they had benefited from subsidies and dumping.
- 69. d** Odisha tops the list with 23 contaminated sites, followed by Uttar Pradesh (21) and Delhi (11).
- 70. a** India defeated England in the final Cricket test match at Ahmedabad to enter the final of the inaugural edition of the World Test Championship.