

---

# MANTHAN

---

**A General Awareness Weekly**

**8<sup>th</sup> February to 14<sup>th</sup> February, 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



### A glacier break is suspected to have caused the flash floods in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district

- A glacier break is suspected to have caused the flash floods in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district. Last October, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), which is headed by PM Narendra Modi, had issued detailed guidelines on how to reduce and deal with disasters caused by what is scientifically called Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs).
- When glaciers melt, the water in glacial lakes accumulates behind loose, natural "glacial/moraine dams" made of ice, sand, pebbles and ice residue. A GLOF refers to the flooding that occurs when the water dammed by a glacier or a moraine is released suddenly.
- According to NDMA, glacial retreat due to climate change occurring in most parts of the Hindu Kush Himalaya has given rise to the formation of numerous new glacial lakes, which are the major cause of GLOFs. Since glaciers in the Himalayas are in a retreating phase, glacial lakes are growing and pose a potentially large risk to downstream infrastructure and life.
- NDMA has recommended use of Synthetic-Aperture Radar imagery to automatically detect changes in water bodies, including new lake formations, during the monsoon months. It has said methods and protocols could also be developed to allow remote monitoring of lake bodies from space.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is the apex statutory body for disaster management in India. The NDMA was formally constituted on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2006, in accordance with the Disaster Management Act, 2005 with Prime Minister as its Chairperson and nine other members, and one such member to be designated as Vice-Chairperson. NDMA is responsible for framing policies, laying down guidelines and best-practices for coordinating with the State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) to ensure a holistic and distributed approach to disaster management. The responsibility of managing disasters in India is that of the State Government. The 'Nodal Ministry' in the central government for management of natural disasters is the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). In terms of Section 6 (2) (i) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act, 2005), National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), on being satisfied that the country is threatened by the spread of COVID – 19 pandemic, has been directing Union Home Secretary, being the Chairperson of the National Executive Committee (NEC), to take measures and to issue necessary guidelines so as to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the country. Accordingly, NEC has been issuing guidelines about the Lockdown and Unlock phases in the country from time to time.

### Balasore to get India's first thunderstorm research testbed

- Odisha's Balasore will get India's first thunderstorm research testbed, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said. The objective of setting up the thunderstorm testbed is to minimise human fatalities and loss of property due to lightning strikes.
- First-of-its-kind monsoon testbed is also being planned near Bhopal. The thunderstorm testbed will be established in a collaboration between the Ministry of Earth Sciences, IMD, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

- **IMD Director-General Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra**, while speaking with a private television channel, also revealed that a first-of-its-kind monsoon testbed is also being planned near Bhopal. Mohapatra, often referred to as the ‘Cyclone Man of India’ for his accurate prediction of cyclones in the Indian subcontinent, pointed out that many lives are lost in Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand due to lightning strikes every year between April and June.

**The India Meteorological Department (IMD)** is an agency of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India. It is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology. IMD is headquartered in Delhi and operates hundreds of observation stations across India and Antarctica. Regional offices are at Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, Nagpur, Guwahati and New Delhi. IMD is also one of the six Regional Specialised Meteorological Centres of the World Meteorological Organisation. It has the responsibility for forecasting, naming and distribution of warnings for tropical cyclones in the Northern Indian Ocean region, including the Malacca Straits, the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf. The first meteorological observatories were established in India by the British East India Company. These included the Calcutta Observatory in 1785, the Madras Observatory in 1796 and the Colaba Observatory in 1826.

### **Uttar Pradesh announces 16-digit Unicode to identify landholdings**

- The Unicode number of the land will be 16 digits with the first six digits based on the population of the land. Every piece of land in the state will have its own unique identity from now onwards that would check cases of land disputes and save people from falling into the trap of fraudsters.
- The Unicode number of the land will be 16 digits with the first six digits based on the population of the land, the next 4 digits determining the unique identity of the land. The digits from 11 to 14 will be the number of the division of the land. The last 2 digits will have the details of the category, through which, the agricultural, residential and commercial land will be identified.

**Uttar Pradesh** is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state's Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

### **Centre allocates Rs 16,000 cr for Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana**

- Government has allocated 16 thousand crore rupees for Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana for 2021-22 to boost the safety of farmers' crops. Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Ministry said, this will ensure maximum benefit of crop insurance reaches to farmers.
- The Ministry said, this is a budgetary increase of around 305 crore rupees as against the previous fiscal year 2020-21, which reiterates the government's commitment towards growth of agriculture sector in the country.
- The scheme extends coverage for the entire cropping cycle from pre-sowing to post-harvest including coverage for losses arising out of prevented sowing and mid-season adversities. Government had approved this flagship crop insurance scheme, five years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
- The scheme was conceived as a milestone initiative to provide a comprehensive risk solution at the lowest uniform premium across the country for farmers. The Ministry said, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana is globally the largest crop insurance scheme in terms of farmer participation and 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in terms of premium. Over five crore 50 lakh farmer applications are received on year-on-year basis.

**Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** launched on 13 January 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is an insurance service for farmers for their yields. It was formulated in line with One Nation–One Scheme theme by replacing earlier two schemes National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS) by incorporating their best features. It aims to reduce the premium burden on farmers and ensure early settlement of crop assurance claim for the full insured sum.

## Prime Minister inaugurated 'World Sustainable Development Summit' 2021

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the World Sustainable Development Summit 2021 on 10<sup>th</sup> of February via video conferencing. The theme of the summit is 'Redefining Our Common Future: Safe and Secure Environment for All'.
- The 20<sup>th</sup> edition of The Energy and Resources Institute's (TERI) flagship event- the **World Sustainable Development Summit** was held online from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> February. The summit brought together a wide number of governments, business leaders, academicians, climate scientists, youth and the civil society in the fight against climate change.
- Energy and industry transition, adaptation and resilience, nature based solutions, climate finance, circular economy, clean oceans and air pollution, are amongst the range of topics to be discussed during the summit. **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and Ministry of Earth Sciences** are key partners of the summit.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals** are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". Formerly known as the **World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED)**, the mission of the **Brundtland Commission** is to **unite countries to pursue sustainable development together**. The **SDGs were set in 2015** by the United Nations General Assembly and are **intended to be achieved by the year 2030**. They are included in a UN Resolution called the **2030 Agenda or what is colloquially known as Agenda 2030**. **The 17 SDGs are:** (1) No Poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and Well-being, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality, (6) Clean Water and Sanitation, (7) Affordable and Clean Energy, (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth, (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, (10) Reducing Inequality, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, (12) Responsible Consumption and Production, (13) Climate Action, (14) Life Below Water, (15) Life On Land, (16) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, (17) Partnerships for the Goals.

## First Indo-US combat drill of Biden era commenced in Rajasthan

- **India and the US are kicked off a major combat exercise in Rajasthan in the first such bilateral wargame** after the **Biden administration took charge** in Washington and reiterated India's role as a key partner in the Indo-Pacific as well as the **need to strengthen the "Quad"**. The 14-day exercise is **focused upon joint training on Counter Insurgency and terrorism** under the United Nation's mandate.
- The '**Yudh Abhyas**' exercise, which is being held at the **Mahajan Field Firing ranges** from February 8 to 21, will once again underscore the continuing upward trajectory in defence cooperation with the US, which enjoys bipartisan support among the Democrats and Republicans. "The aim is to further **enhance interoperability in counter-terrorist operations in a semi-urban, semi-desert terrain**, along with attack helicopters and infantry combat vehicles".
- A number of aerial platforms including **newly inducted indigenous Advance Light Helicopter WSI 'RUDRA', MI - 17, Chinooks, Stryker Vehicles of US Army and BMP-2 Mechanised Infantry Combat Vehicles of Indian Army**, will be utilised in the exercise.

**Yudh Abhyas** is a joint military exercise, bilaterally occurring between India and the US. It started in 2002 and is undertaken by the armies of both countries to **promote defence cooperation**. The **Yudh Abhyas exercise took place from 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at Joint Base Lewis McChord in Washington, USA**. India and the US participate in the following joint exercises apart from Yudh Abhyas: **1. Cope-India (Air Force), 2. Vajra Prahar (Special Forces) and A few multilateral exercises that India and the US participate in are: MALABAR, RED FLAG and RIMPAC.**

## Major Port Authorities Bill 2020 passed by Rajya Sabha

- **Rajya Sabha passed the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020. The Bill aims to provide for the regulation, operation and planning of Major Ports in India** and to vest the administration, control and management of such ports upon the Boards of Major Port Authorities and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. **Minister of State for Ports Mansukh L. Mandaviya** had said that the Bill was moved so that India's major ports can compete with major world-class ports.



**India has a coastline spanning 7516.6 kilometres, forming one of the biggest peninsulas in the world. According to the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, around 95 per cent of India's trading by volume and 70 per cent by value is done through maritime transport. It is serviced by 13 major ports (12 Government-owned and one private) and 187 notified minor and intermediate ports. Port Blair which was notified as major port in 2010 was removed of its status recently. Government of India plans to modernise these ports and has approved a project called Sagarmala.**

### **Govt launches new Central Sector Scheme titled 'Formation and Promotion of 10,000 FPOs'**

- **The Ministry of Agriculture has said that the government has launched a new Central Sector Scheme titled 'Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Produce Organizations (FPOs)' and it has committed resources in this regard with a budgetary provision of Rs 6,865 crore.**
- **The Ministry in a statement said that FPOs are to be developed to produce clusters, wherein agricultural and horticultural products are grown for leveraging economies of scale and improving market access for members. It said, under this Central Sector Scheme with funding from Government of India, formation and Promotion of FPOs are to be done through implementing agencies and at present, nine such agencies have been finalized.**
- **It said, implementing agencies will engage Cluster- Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) to aggregate, register and provide professional handholding support to each FPO for a period of five years. CBBOs will be the platform for an end to end knowledge for all issues related to FPO promotion. The Ministry said, FPOs will be provided financial assistance upto Rs 18 lakh per FPO for a period of three years.**
- **In addition to this, provision has been made for matching equity grant up to two thousand rupees per farmer member of FPO with a limit of 15 lakh rupees per FPO and a credit guarantee facility upto Rs two crore of project loan per FPO from eligible lending institutions to ensure institutional credit accessibility to FPOs.**
- **The Ministry said, formation and promotion of FPOs is the first step for converting Krishi into Atma Nirbhar Krishi. This will enhance cost-effective production and productivity and higher net incomes to the members of the FPO. It will also improve rural economy and create job opportunities for rural youths in villages itself and this was the major step towards improving farmers' income substantially.**

**FPO stands for Farmers Producers Organisation. It is an organisation of farmer-producers that provide support to small farmers with end-to-end services covering almost all aspects of cultivation from inputs, technical services to processing and marketing. FPO is one type of Producers Organisation where the members of the organisation are the farmers. These are also known as farmers' producer companies (FPC).**

### **National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws Bill passed in the Rajya Sabha**

- **Rajya Sabha passed the National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The bill seeks to replace the ordinance brought to the same effect by the President.**
- **The legislation aims to amend the National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second Act, 2011. Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri said that ordinance in this regard was necessary since the Winter Session of the Parliament was suspended in view of the Corona pandemic and the 2011 Act was valid till 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2020. Mr. Puri said that if the ordinance was not brought into effect, the state agencies in Delhi could have started sealing operations against the set-ups in the unauthorised colonies.**
- **He said, the NDA Government is committed to provide a house for everyone till 2022. Mr. Puri added that out of the total target of building one crore 12 lakh houses under the PM AWAS Yojana in the country, construction of nearly one crore 11 lakh houses have already been sanctioned. He said the legislation will benefit over one crore 35 lakh people living in the unauthorised colonies in the city of Delhi.**

**Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai. Anil Baijal is the current & 21<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7<sup>th</sup> Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi.**

## Karnataka digital economy mission office inaugurated

- The office of the **Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM)** which has the **objective of increasing digital economy contribution to Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) to 30 per cent** was **inaugurated** and the **“Beyond Bengaluru” report** which facilitates to achieve this target was launched.
- Deputy Chief Minister Dr CN Ashwatha Narayana said, “The government wanted KDEM to be more industry-friendly and keeping this in mind it has **allowed for 51 per cent stakes to industry associations while retaining a minority holding of 49 per cent for itself**. The government wants to act rather as a facilitator than an authority”.

**Karnataka** is a state in the south western region of India. It was **formed on 1 November 1956**, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. **Originally known as the State of Mysore**, it was **renamed Karnataka in 1973**. The capital and largest city is **Bengaluru**. **Bookanakere Siddalingappa Yediyurappa** is serving as the 19<sup>th</sup> and current Chief Minister of Karnataka. **Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala** is currently serving as the Governor of Karnataka.

## By 2023, Noida likely to get north India’s first medical device park

- **By 2023, Noida likely to get north India’s first medical device park.** Noida: In two years, **Gautam Budh Nagar** will get northern India’s first medical equipment and device **Manufacturing Park**.
- **Other four parks are in the southern states of AP, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.** For the first Medical Device Park of the UP, about 250 acres of land has been identified in Sector 28 near Yamuna Expressway in Noida.
- **Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority** has been named the **State Implementing Agency for the Medical Device Park**. The Medical Device Parks are **aimed to support the Make in India initiative** and provide world-class products at an affordable price for treatment in the country.

## Indian Railways rolls out its first AC 3-tier economy class coach

- **Railways rolled out its first air conditioned three-tier economy class coach** which is being touted by the ministry to be “synonymous with the **cheapest and best AC travel in the world**”.
- These coaches, officials said, will be “economical” and in between the current AC three-tier and non-AC sleeper class. **This LHB coach was rolled out from Rail Coach Factory (RCF) Kapurthala to Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) Lucknow** for the upcoming trial.
- It was conceived by RCF and work on its design started on war footing in October 2020. The new coach can carry more passengers as the berths have been increased from 72 to 83. **“Innovative AC 3 tier economy class coach manufactured in Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala in Punjab,”** Piyush Goyal said.

**Indian Railways (IR)** is the **fourth-largest railway network in the world by size**. There are a total of **18 Railway zones**. **South Coast Railway Zone** is the newest and 18<sup>th</sup> railway zone, headquartered at **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**. **Piyush Vedprakash Goyal** is currently serving as the **Minister of Railways and Commerce** in the Government of India. He was elected as the **BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016**. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member **Acworth Committee** headed by British economist **William Mitchell Acworth** in 1920-21. On **21 September 2016**, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of **India**, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

## Odisha launches citizen-centric on-line services of State Transport department

- **Odisha launched various citizen-centric on-line services of the State Transport department.** Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** said that the digital initiative will **allow freedom to the vehicle owners to choose any transport office of the state for vehicle related services**.
- **Odisha is the first state in the country to introduce document upload through digital signature**, using the NIC platform. The state rolled out as many as **nine on line services** that include vehicle registration and ownership transfer.

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 13<sup>th</sup>-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.

### PM Modi to inaugurate Maritime India Summit-2021 on 2<sup>nd</sup> March

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Maritime India Summit-2021 on 2<sup>nd</sup> March. Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Mansukh Mandaviya said, around 20 thousand delegates will participate, 24 partner countries will join and more than 400 Projects are set to be showcased in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Maritime India Summit 2021 to be held virtually from 2<sup>nd</sup> March to 4<sup>th</sup> March.
- Maritime India Summit is going to provide a powerful platform for international collaboration and bring in partner countries for mutual exchange of knowledge and opportunities. The event is being organised by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways jointly with FICCI as Industrial Partner and EY as Knowledge Partner. Maritime States of India will participate in the Summit through dedicated sessions.

### India's first Museum of Illusions comes up in Delhi

- Museum of Illusions is a mind-bending "edutainment" experience where guests enter the fascinating world of mental deception, has opened to the public on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Situated on Connaught Place, New Delhi, this is the first India outpost and 30<sup>th</sup> location for the rapidly expanding Museum of Illusions brand that started in Zagreb, Croatia in 2015.
- With over 50 intriguing exhibits, Museum of Illusions, offers more eye-fooling fun than any other destination in New Delhi. The museum's collection of interactive, immersive, and distinctly incomprehensible exhibits is based on math, science, and psychology. Visitors are prompted to learn about the tricks of perception and how the human brain works as they move through each exhibit.
- Imaginations can run free in the vast expanse of the Infinity Room, defy the laws of gravity in the Reverse Room, and shrink to miniature size in the Ames Room - all while capturing a coveted, baffling photo. With uniquely mind-boggling backdrops - including several designed just for the New Delhi location - the museum offers photo opportunities that visitors will not find anywhere else in the area.

### Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates 'Jalabhishekam' campaign in Madhya Pradesh

- Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated more than 57,000 water structures constructed in Madhya Pradesh under 'Jalabhishekam' campaign with public participation will be helpful in achieving the goal of water conservation and building self-reliant Madhya Pradesh.
- Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar also attended the program virtually organised in the presence of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan at Bhopal. These water structures were created during COVID era by linking the work with the MNRGA scheme. Union Minister Mr Rajnath Singh said that the 'Jalabhishekam' Campaign is fulfilling the intention of 'water for every farm and work for every hand'. This will prove to be helpful in the betterment of the villages.
- Under the campaign, 57,000 water structures costing over Rs. 2,000 crores have been inaugurated under the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA and Pradhan Mantri Krishi Irrigation Scheme. The structures were created in the COVID-19 era.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The President of India is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The Indian Armed Forces (including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard under the Ministry of Defences are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. A military department was created by the supreme government of the British East India Company at Kolkata in the year 1776. Rajnath Singh is currently serving as the Defence Minister of India. He has been representing the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha from Lucknow constituency. He also served as Union Home Minister of India from 2014 to 2019.



## PM hands over indigenously designed and manufactured Arjun Main Battle Tank to the Army

- The Prime Minister said India has undertaken massive effort to become self-reliant in the defence sector. The **Prime Minister also handed over the indigenously designed and manufactured Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A) to the Army.**
- It has been **indigenously designed and manufactured by the Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment of Defence Research and Development Organisation.** Prime Minister said, a tank made in Tamil Nadu will be used in our northern borders to keep the nation safe. This showcases India's unity- Bharat's Ekta Darshan". The Prime Minister said that the **focus on making India Aatmanirbhar in the defence sector** will keep moving at full speed.
- **The Arjun features a 120 mm main rifled gun with indigenously developed armour-piercing fin-stabilized discarding-sabot ammunition,** one PKT 7.62 mm coaxial machine gun, and a NSVT 12.7 mm machine gun.
- Among the projects, **Prime Minister inaugurated the Chennai Metro Rail Phase-I extension,** completed at a cost of 3770 crore rupees, and flagged off the passenger services from Washermenpet to Wimco Nagar.

Arjun is a third generation main battle tank developed by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), for the Indian Army. The tank is named after Arjun, the archer prince who is the main protagonist of the Indian epic Mahabharata.

## PM Narendra Modi unveils several development projects worth Rs 6100 cr in Kerala

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled several key development projects worth 6,100 crore rupees at INS Garuda Naval Air Station at Kochi.** Prime Minister said, the projects inaugurated will energize the growth trajectory of India.
- The Prime Minister Indians can do wonders in achieving the target of Atmanirbhar Bharat. The Prime Minister said, India has the ability to rise to the occasion and contribute to the global good **The Prime Minister also inaugurated country's first full-fledged international cruise terminal, Sagarika at Cochin Port and Marine Engineering Training Institute of Cochin Shipyard Ltd.**
- Among the projects unveiled by the Prime Minister include the **Propylene Derivative Petrochemical Project of Bharat Petroleum Corporation.** Mr Modi said, Propylene Derivatives Petrochemical complex of Kochi Refinery, will help strengthen the country's journey towards being Atmanirbhar.
- Prime Minister also **dedicated to the nation the Ro-Ro Vessels at Willingdon Islands in Kochi.** Ro-Ro service will benefit trade as a result of reduced transportation cost and transit time, and will also lead to reduced congestion on the roads of Kochi. Apart from this, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the reconstruction of South Coal Berth at Cochin Port.
- Mr Modi said, **through the national infrastructure pipeline, 110 lakh crore rupees being invested.** In this, special attention is being given to coastal parts, the North east and mountain areas. The Prime Minister said, India is embarking on an ambitious program of broadband connectivity to every village.

## Vigyan Jyoti programme spreads to 100 districts in 2<sup>nd</sup> phase initiated on International Day of Women & Girls in Science

- **The second phase of Vigyan Jyoti programme was commenced on the occasion of International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11, 2021,** which will spread the programme for encouraging girls to take interest in science and build a career in STEM to 50 more districts adding to the existing 50 districts across the country.
- **Vigyan Jyoti programme, a new initiative to encourage girls to take interest in science and build career,** was launched by the Department of Science & Technology (DST) to create a level-playing field for the meritorious girls to pursue STEM. It had been running successfully in 50 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNV) since December 2019 and has now been expanded to 50 more JNVs for the year 2021-22.
- **The programme addresses the underrepresentation of women in certain areas of STEM.** As a first step, the programme has been started at school level for meritorious girls of Class IX to Class XII to encourage and empower them to pursue STEM courses in reputed institutions of the country.

## NAFED to develop Integrated Solid Waste Management Project at Kot Bhalwal in 2 years

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir the Administrative Council (AC) has approved the establishment of an Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) project by the National Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED).
- To implement the project, the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) will sign an agreement with NAFED to set up a 350 MT capacity ISWM plant along with an ancillary bio-CNG generating plant and bio-landfill at Kot Bhalwal, Jammu. At the estimated project cost of Rs. 74.41 crore and project timeline of 2 years, NAFED will establish a scientific system for waste management.

**Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019** re-constituted the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, with effect from 31 October 2019. Girish Chandra Murmu is the first lieutenant governor of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the second and current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Ladakh is a region administered by India as a union territory; Radha Krishna Mathur is the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh. Article 370 of the Indian constitution gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, a region located in the northern part of Indian subcontinent which was administered by India as a state from 1954 to 31 October 2019, conferring it with the power to have a separate constitution, a state flag and autonomy over the internal administration of the state.

## Minority Affairs Ministry organising 26<sup>th</sup> Hunar Haat in New Delhi

- **Minority Affairs Ministry is organised 26<sup>th</sup> Hunar Haat of indigenous artisans and craftsmen** from across the country at **Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi**. More than 600 artisans and craftsmen, including a large number of women artisans, from more than 31 States and Union Territories were participated in the event.
- The Hunar Haat was **organised with the theme of Vocal for Local** from 20<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> March this year. Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has said that the Hunar Haat is a perfect platform to promote indigenous products of artisans and craftsmen from across the country. It has provided employment and employment opportunities to more than five lakh artisans, craftsmen and artists yet.
- **Hunar Haat is an exhibition of handicrafts and traditional products made by artisans from the minority communities.** These are **organised by the Ministry of Minority Affairs** under USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development) scheme.

## Mallikarjun Kharge replaced Azad as Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha

- The Congress nominated veteran leader **Mallikarjun Kharge as the new Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha to succeed Ghulam Nabi Azad**, who is retired on February 15. Seventy-eight year old Kharge had led the Congress in Lok Sabha between 2014 and 2019.
- **Kharge, a two time Lok Sabha MP and nine-time MLA had led the Congress in Lok Sabha** in an aggressive fashion and had earned the respect of the leadership. A hard-boiled Congressman considered loyal to the Gandhi family, Kharge is one of the party's prominent Dalit faces.
- He was also the **Leader of the Opposition in Karnataka. In UPA's second tenure, he held the portfolios of Labour and Railways.** His elevation was on the cards when he was brought to Rajya Sabha last year after he suffered the first electoral setback in his political career in the Lok Sabha elections in 2019.

**Rajya Sabha or Council of States** is the upper house of the bicameral Parliament of India. It currently has a maximum membership of 245, of which 233 are elected by the legislatures of the states and union territories using single transferable votes through Open Ballot while the President can appoint 12 members for their contributions to art, literature, science, and social services. The potential seating capacity of the Rajya Sabha is 250 (238 elected, 12 appointed), according to article 80 of the Indian Constitution. Members sit for staggered terms lasting six years, with elections every year but almost a third of the 233 designates up for election every two years, specifically in even-numbered years. The Vice President of India (currently, Venkaiah Naidu) is the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Thaawar Chand Gehlot is currently the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha.



### Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, a businessman has chosen as Libya's new interim Prime Minister

- **Abdul Hamid Dbeibah**, a businessman-turned-politician, has been **chosen as Libya's new interim Prime Minister** following lengthy United Nations-sponsored talks aimed at **ending a decade of conflict in the North African country**.
- **Dbeibah**, along with a **three-member Presidential Council**, will have the **crucial and difficult task of preparing the ground for fair and transparent national elections** in December, as well as ensuring the safe participation of Libyans in the electoral process.
- The choice of **Dbeibah** came as a surprise to many, given the **construction mogul's close association with Libya's former longtime ruler, Muammar Gaddafi**. **Gaddafi's rule ended in 2011**, when he was overthrown in a NATO-backed uprising and later killed.

**Libya is a country in the Maghreb region in North Africa**. The largest city and **capital is Tripoli**. On 5 February 2021, **Mohamed Yunus al-Menfi** was chosen as the **president of the Libyan Presidential Council** at the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum. **The dinar is the currency of Libya**.

### Mario Draghi secures support from key parties to form new Italian government

- **Mario Draghi** secured preliminary support from two key parties for forming a new government that will decide how to **spend more than 200 bn euros (£175 bn)** in European Union funds to help relaunch Italy's pandemic-ravaged economy.
- The populist **5-Star Movement** and the rightwing **League** both signalled support for a **Draghi-led government**. **Draghi**, the former president of the **European Central Bank**, completed a first round of talks with political parties. **Italy's president asked Draghi to form a government after the resignation of ex-premier Giuseppe Conte**, who lost support of a small but key coalition party.

**Italy is located in Southern Europe** and is also considered part of Western Europe. A **unitary parliamentary republic with Rome as its capital**. **Sergio Mattarella** is serving as the **current President** of the Italian Republic, since February 2015. **Euro is the official currency of it**.

### U.S. moves to rejoin UN rights council, reversing Trump anew

- The **Biden administration** is set to announce that it will **reengage with the much-maligned U.N. Human Rights Council** that **former President Donald Trump withdrew from almost three years ago**. The decision reverses another Trump-era move away from multilateral organizations and agreements.
- **Trump pulled out of the world body's main human rights agency in 2018 due to its disproportionate focus on Israel**, which has received by far the largest number of critical council resolutions against any country, as well as the number of authoritarian countries among its members and because it failed to meet an extensive list of reforms demanded by then-US Ambassador to the United Nations **Nikki Haley**.

The **United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)** is a **United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world**. The **UNHRC has 47 members** elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis. **The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva, Switzerland**.



## India, Afghanistan sign MoU to build Shahtoot Dam in Kabul

- **India and Afghanistan signed an agreement to build the Shahtoot Dam in Kabul to provide drinking water facility in the Afghan capital.**
- **In a virtual summit, external affairs minister S Jaishankar and his Afghan counterpart Mohammed Haneef Atmar signed the MoU in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani.**

**Afghanistan is a landlocked country located within south-central Asia. Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan and its largest city. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai is the current President of Afghanistan. The afghani is the currency of Afghanistan, issued by the central bank Da Afghanistan Bank. Abdullah Abdullah leads the High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR), which is expected to lead the intra-Afghan peace talks with the Taliban. He served as Chief Executive Officer of the Unity Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan from September 2014 until March 2020. India shares its international boundary with 7 countries including Afghanistan.**

## Mario Draghi sworn in as Italy Prime Minister

- **The ex-head of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, was sworn in as Italian Prime Minister. He has secured the support of almost all the main political parties, following the collapse of the previous administration last month.**
- **Italy is still grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic and is also facing its worst economic crisis in decades. In this regard, Draghi, an economist with experience at the highest levels of the European Union and as governor of the Bank of Italy is being seen as a safe pair of hands.**

## US Prez Joe Biden announces launch of China task force to counter challenges posed by Beijing

- **US President Joe Biden has announced the launch of a new China task force that will provide recommendations on military strategy to the Department of Defense (DoD) to counter growing challenges posed by Beijing.**
- **President Biden said, the task force will work quickly, drawing on civilian and military experts across the department. The task force will provide recommendations to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on key priorities and decision points to facilitate a strong path forward on China-related matters.**

**Joe Biden is the current and the 46<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. At 78, Biden is the oldest president in US history and only the second Roman Catholic President. A member of the Democratic Party, he served as the 47<sup>th</sup> Vice President from 2009 to 2017 under Barack Obama and represented Delaware in the United States Senate from 1973 to 2009. In January 2017, Barack Obama awarded Biden the Presidential Medal of Freedom with distinction.**

## China celebrates Lunar New Year

- **China is celebrating Lunar New Year as it ushered into the Year of the Ox. It is one of the most important Chinese festivals, also known as the Chinese New Year or Spring Festival.**
- **In China, the festival lasts 15 days, starting with a feast the night of New Year's Eve and ending this year with the Spring Lantern Festival. People wear special clothes, write Spring Festival couplets, make dumplings, hang up lanterns and the characters for luck. Festivities started in the last lunar month on Laba Festival.**

**China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies. The nine-dash line area claimed by the Republic of China, later the People's Republic of China (PRC), which covers most of the South China Sea and overlaps with the exclusive economic zone claims of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.**



## India to overtake EU as world's third largest energy consumer by 2030: IEA

- India will overtake the European Union as the world's third-largest energy consumer by 2030, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said as it forecast India accounting for the biggest share of energy demand growth over the next two decades.
- In its India Energy Outlook 2021, IEA saw primary energy consumption almost doubling to 1,123 million tonnes of oil equivalent as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) expands to USD 8.6 trillion by 2040. India at present is the fourth -largest global energy consumer behind China, the United States and the European Union.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) is a Paris-based autonomous intergovernmental organisation established in the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1974 in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis. Fatih Birol is a Turkish economist and energy expert, who has been the Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA) since 1 September 2015.

## IAE says India's solar energy output to match coal-fired power by 2040

- The share of solar energy in India's power generation could equal coal-fired output by 2040, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said driven by falling renewable tariffs and a government push to increase green energy use.
- Coal currently dominates India's electricity sector, accounting for over 70% of overall generation with only about 4% produced through solar. India was on track to exceed its commitments as a part of the 2015 Paris agreement, the IEA said.
- "This dramatic turnaround is driven by India's policy ambitions, notably the target to reach 450 GW of renewable capacity by 2030, and the extraordinary cost-competitiveness of solar," the agency said. India has the potential to become a world leader in battery storage, the IEA said, adding the country could add 140-200 GW capacity of battery by 2040. India is the world's second-largest coal market and holds the world's fifth-largest coal reserves. The nation's coal demand is estimated to rise by over nearly a third by 2040, with share of imports shrinking to below 30%.

## Biden administration appoints 2 Indian-origin experts to key positions

- Two Indian-origin experts in public service have been appointed by the Biden administration to key positions at AmeriCorps, the federal agency for volunteering and service.
- Sonali Nijhawan has been named Director of AmeriCorps State and National, and Sri Preston Kulkarni, 42, was appointed the new Chief of External Affairs. Though having run for Congress twice unsuccessfully in Texas, Kulkarni was certainly noticed by the leadership in Washington.

## In a first, Indian and Saudi Arabia armies to undertake joint bilateral exercises

- In a significant development, Indian and Saudi armies will undertake joint bilateral exercises. This will be the first such exercises of both the armies together. The Indian forces contingent will be travelling to Saudi Arabia for the exercises which will be taking place in the next financial year.
- In December 2020, in another significant development, Indian Army Chief General MM Naravane had visited Saudi Arabia. It was the first time any Indian Army chief had visited the West Asian country in what is a clear sign of growing ties between New Delhi and Riyadh.
- Saudi Arabia identifies India as one of the Kingdom's Strategic Partner Countries under its 'Vision 2030'.

Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab state in Western Asia. Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East. Riyadh is the capital and most populous city of Saudi Arabia. Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has been King of Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, and Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques since 23 January 2015. Mohammad bin Salman is the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, also serving as First Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs and Minister of Defense—the world's youngest office holder at the time. Saudi riyal is the currency of Saudi Arabia.



## One nation one ombudsman: RBI to integrate consumer grievance redressal scheme

- The RBI is targeting to roll out the e-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme in June 2021. The Reserve Bank announced it will be integrating consumer grievances redressal under a single ombudsman as against three schemes working at present.
- There are dedicated ombudsman schemes devoted to consumer grievance redressal in banking, non-bank finance companies and digital transactions, respectively, at present. The RBI had operationalised complaint management system (CMS) portal as one stop solution for alternate dispute resolution of customer complaints not resolved satisfactorily by the regulated entities.

Banking Ombudsman Scheme is an expeditious and inexpensive forum for bank customers for resolution of complaints relating to certain services rendered by banks, which was introduced under the Banking Regulation Act of 1949 by RBI with effect from 1995. Presently the Banking Ombudsman Scheme 2006 (As amended upto July 1, 2017) is in operation. The Banking Ombudsman is a senior official appointed by the Reserve Bank of India to redress customer complaints against deficiency in certain banking services. One can file a complaint before the Banking Ombudsman if the reply is not received from the bank within a period of one month after the bank concerned has received one's complaint, or the bank rejects the complaint, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the reply given by the bank. The RBI introduced an NBFC Ombudsman scheme to redress complaints with regard to NBFCs in 2018.

## National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture aims rapid agri development through ICT

- A Centrally sponsored scheme namely National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGPA) was initially launched in 2010-11 in 7 pilot states, which aims to achieve rapid development in India through use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for timely access to agriculture related information to the farmers.
- In 2014-15, the scheme was further extended for all the remaining states and two union territories. The scheme has been extended up to March 31, 2021. Under Phase-II of the scheme, funds were released to states for carrying out the activities such as site preparation of offices for installation of hardware and establishment of computer training labs, procurement, installation and accounting of hardware and system software.
- The back-up power arrangements, wherever required, setting-up of State Project Management Unit (SPMUs) and hiring of manpower on contract basis, connectivity for the locations for installation of hardware and data digitisation customisation of applications as per state's and UT's specific requirements.

The agriculture contribution in India's GDP in 2019 is 15.96 percent. According to latest report, agriculture is primary source of livelihood for 58% population in India. The Primary sector of the economy includes any industry involved in the extraction and production of raw materials, such as farming, logging, hunting, fishing, and mining. India is a global agricultural powerhouse. It is the world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices, and has the world's largest cattle herd (buffaloes), as well as the largest area under wheat, rice and cotton. It is the second largest producer of rice, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, farmed fish, sheep & goat meat, fruit, vegetables and tea.

## Wipro named in Human Rights Campaign Foundation's CEI

- Wipro has been named to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2021 Corporate Equality Index (CEI). The company scored 95 out of 100 marks in multiple categories, including workplace protections and inclusive benefits.
- The CEI is a premier benchmarking survey and report on U.S. corporate policies and practices relating to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) workplace equality, administered by the Human Rights Campaign. This is the third time that Wipro has been included in the CEI.

Azim Hashim Premji is an Indian business tycoon, investor, engineer, and philanthropist, who was the **chairman of Wipro Limited**. Premji remains a **non-executive member of the board and founder chairman**. He is informally known as the **Czar of the Indian IT Industry**. Wipro Limited is an Indian multinational corporation that **provides information technology, consulting and business process services**. It is **headquartered in Bangalore, Karnataka**.

## India's stock market now 7<sup>th</sup> biggest in the world as BSE m-cap surges to \$2.7 trillion

- India's stock market is now bigger than Canada, Germany and Saudi Arabia. Worth mentioning here is that India's stock market is the second-best performer among the top 15 countries in 2021 and soon it may overtake France to become the sixth biggest in the world. Total market capitalisation of France now stands at \$2.86 trillion.

BSE Limited, formerly known as the Bombay Stock Exchange Ltd., is an Indian stock exchange located at Dalal Street, Mumbai. Established in 1875, the BSE Ltd., the oldest stock exchange in Asia. It is the world's 10<sup>th</sup> largest stock exchange. Ashishkumar Chauhan (Ashish Chauhan) is the current managing director and chief executive officer of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).

## RBI releases Annual Report of Ombudsman Schemes for 2019-20

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the Annual Report of the Ombudsman Schemes for the year 2019-20. There was an increase of around 65 per cent in the receipt of complaints out of which almost 92 per cent have been disposed of.
- RBI has three Ombudsmen- Banking, Non-Banking Finance Company (i.e. NBFC) and digital transactions. A common man can approach these Ombudsmen for their grievances.
- Banking Ombudsman received major complaints regarding ATM & Debit Cards, Mobile & Electronic Banking while NBFC's Ombudsmen received most complaints about non-observance of regulatory guidelines, lack of transparency in contract/ loan agreement and levy of charges without notice.
- Digital Transactions Ombudsmen received most complaints about fund transfer. RBI has taken various measures for creating awareness among various stakeholders to minimise the grievances.

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1 April 1935 to respond to economic troubles after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his book titled "The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution" and presented to the Hilton Young Commission. The bank was set up based on the recommendations of the 1926 Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, also known as the Hilton-Young Commission. In 1969, the Indira Gandhi-headed government nationalised 14 major commercial banks. Upon Indira Gandhi's return to power in 1980, a further six banks were nationalised. The first Governor of the RBI was British banker Osborn Smith and C.D. Deshmukh was the first Indian Governor of RBI. Shashikant Das is the current Governor of RBI.

## Bank of Maharashtra ties up with LoanTap Credit for co-lending to MSMEs

- Bank of Maharashtra has entered into a co-lending agreement with Pune-based non-banking financial company LoanTap Credit Products for MSME loans.
- LoanTap offers a range of business, vehicle and personal loans to the underserved segment. BoM has a tie-up with fintech company Atyati Technologies, but it was limited to sourcing proposals. With LoanTap, the bank would be getting into faceless sanction and disbursements using mobile app.



**Bank of Maharashtra is a major public sector bank in India. The Government of India holds 92.49% of the shares. It has the largest network of branches of any public sector bank in the state of Maharashtra. The bank was founded by V. G. Kale and D. K. Sathe in Pune, India.**

### Financial Literacy Week Begins; RBI Sets Responsible Borrowing As Theme

- **The Reserve Bank of India has launched the Financial Literacy Week on the theme of ‘Credit Discipline and Credit from Formal Institutions’.**
- As a part of nationwide campaign, Reserve Bank of India, Delhi is **observed Financial Literacy Week from February 8-12, 2021**, to propagate financial education, an official statement said.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been **conducting Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every year since 2016 to propagate financial education** messages on a particular theme across the country. **The theme selected for current year FLW is ‘Credit Discipline and Credit from Formal Institutions’** which will be observed from February 8-12, 2021.
- This theme is one of the strategic **objectives of the National Strategy for Financial Education 2020-2025**. Focus will be on responsible borrowing; borrowing from formal institutions and timely repayments.

### Etihad Airways becomes world’s first airline to vaccinate all crew members

- **Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, became the first airline in the world to vaccinate 100% of its onboard crewmembers.**
- The airline has vaccinated all of its onboard crew members through the **airline’s “Protected Together” initiative, which began January 2021**. Seventy-five percent of all of its employees have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

### National Coal Index

- **Ministry of Coal has started Commercial Auction of coal mines on revenue share basis.** In order to arrive at the revenue share based on market prices of coal, **one National Coal Index (NCI) was conceptualized. The NCI is a price index** which reflects the change of price level of coal on a particular month relative to the fixed base year.
- **The base year for the NCI is FY 2017-18. Prices of coal from all the sales channels of coal, including import, as existing are taken into account for compiling the NCI. The amount of revenue share per tonne of coal produced from auctioned blocks would be arrived at using the NCI by means of defined formula.** NCI has already been rolled out on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and the same is placed on the website of the Ministry of Coal.
- **NCI is composed of a set of five sub-indices: three for Non Coking Coal and two for Coking Coal.** The three sub-indices for Non Coking Coal are combined to arrive at the Index for Non Coking Coal and the two sub-indices for Coking Coal are combined to arrive at the Index for Coking Coal. Thus, indices are separate for Non-coking and Coking Coal. **As per the grade of coal pertaining to a mine, the appropriate sub-index is used to arrive at the revenue share.**

**Coal is a combustible black or brownish-black sedimentary rock, formed as rock strata called coal seams. Coal is mostly carbon with variable amounts of other elements; chiefly hydrogen, sulfur, oxygen, and nitrogen. The largest consumer and importer of coal is China. China mines almost half the world’s coal, followed by India with about a tenth.**

### India’s first ever CNG Tractor launched

- In an initiative that could help farmers save over Rs 1 Lakh per annum towards fuel costs, **Union Road Minister Nitin Gadkari launched India’s first-ever Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) tractor.**
- **This will help farmers increase their income, by lowering costs and help to create job opportunities in rural India.** The most important benefit for the farmer will be to **save more than one lakh rupees annually on fuel costs**, which will help them to improve their livelihood. It will also help farmers to **save up to 50 per cent on the fuel cost** as the current Diesel prices are around 77 rupees per litre whereas CNG is only 42 rupees per kilogram.



Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the BJP from 2010-2013. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India and Shipping Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Government of India. Gadkari represents Lok Sabha from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra.

### ‘Government of India to work with RBI on bank privatisation’

- Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the government will work with the Reserve Bank of India for execution of the bank privatisation plan announced in the Union Budget 2021. The FM, however, did not reveal the name of banks chosen for privatisation.
- In the budget, Sitharaman did not announce any change in income tax slabs for individuals taxpayers, but made some changes in the rules for income tax ease compliance. “The honest taxpayer need not worry at all. Sitharaman, in her Union Budget speech on February 1, had proposed privatisation of two banks as part of its disinvestment plan. Bank unions have opposed the move.

Privatisation means transfer of ownership, management and control of public sector enterprises to the private sector. Privatisation of the public sector undertakings by selling off part of the equity of PSUs to the private sector is known as disinvestment. Then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who was also Finance Minister nationalised the 14 largest private banks on July 19, 1969. The idea was to align the banking sector with the socialistic approach of the then government. State Bank of India had been nationalised in 1955 itself, and the insurance sector in 1956. A second round of nationalizations of six more commercial banks followed in 1980. Many committees had proposed bringing down the government stake in public banks below 51%: The Narasimham Committee proposed 33%. The P J Nayak Committee suggested below 50%. An RBI Working Group recently suggested the entry of business houses into the banking sector. Presently, India has 22 private banks and 10 small finance banks.

### CDSL becomes India’s first depository to open 3-crore active demat accounts

- Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL) has become India’s first and only listed depository to open three crore plus (30 million) active demat accounts. CDSL is currently the largest depository in the country in terms of active demat accounts. The depository facilitates holding and transacting in securities electronically and facilitates settlement of trades on stock exchanges.

Demat Account is an account that is used to hold shares and securities in electronic format. The full form of Demat account is a dematerialised account. In India, depositories such as NSDL and CDSL provide Free Demat account services.

### World Bank signs up for US\$56m slice of renewables developer’s first green bond

- Morgan Stanley-owned Indian commercial and industrial renewables developer Continuum Green Energy Ltd had a helping hand from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) as it launched its first green bond. The IFC private-sector arm of multilateral development lender the World Bank invested in 10% of the over-subscribed financial instrument as Continuum raised \$561 million (INR4,080 crore) to refinance its debts.
- The developer, which provides solar and wind projects for commercial customers in India, and has been controlled by U.S. finance giant Morgan Stanley since 2012, claims to have developed 2 GW of clean power generation capacity across India to date.

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world’s poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries.



## Inventions/Discoveries

### In Arab world's first interplanetary mission, spacecraft 'Amal' enters orbit around Mars

- A spacecraft from the United Arab Emirates swung into orbit around Mars in a triumph for the Arab world's first interplanetary mission.
- Mission controllers at the UAE's space center in Dubai announced that the **unmanned craft, called Amal, Arabic for Hope, reached the end of its nearly seven-month, 300-million-mile journey and began circling the red planet**, where it will gather detailed data on Mars' atmosphere.
- The orbiter fired its main engines for 27 minutes in an intricate, high-stakes maneuver that slowed the craft enough for it to be captured by Mars' gravity. **Amal's arrival puts the UAE in a league of just five space agencies in history** that have pulled off a functioning Mars mission. **As the country's first venture beyond Earth's orbit**, the flight is a point of intense pride for the oil-rich nation as it seeks a future in space.
- **Two more unmanned spacecraft from the U.S. and China are following close behind**, set to arrive at Mars over the next several days. **All three missions were launched in July to take advantage of the close alignment of Earth and Mars. A combination orbiter and lander from China is scheduled to reach the planet soon. It will circle Mars until the rover separates and attempts to land in May to look for signs of ancient life.**
- A rover from the U.S. named Perseverance is set to join the crowd next week, aiming for a landing Feb. 18. It will be the **first leg in a decade-long U.S.-European project to bring Mars rocks back to Earth to be examined for evidence the planet once harbored microscopic life.**
- **About 60% of all Mars missions have ended in failure**, crashing, burning up or otherwise falling short in a testament to the complexity of interplanetary travel and the difficulty of making a descent through Mars' thin atmosphere.

The Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), also called Mangalyaan is a space probe orbiting Mars since 24 September 2014. It was launched on 5 November 2013 by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It is India's first interplanetary mission and it made it the fourth space agency to reach Mars, after Roscosmos, NASA, and the European Space Agency. It made India the first Asian nation to reach Martian orbit and the first nation in the world to do so on its maiden attempt. On 1 July 2020, ISRO's space probe Mangalyaan was able to capture a photo of the Mars satellite Phobos from 4200 kms away. The Mars Colour Camera (MCC) onboard ISRO's Mars Orbiter Mission has captured the image of Phobos, the closest and biggest moon of Mars.

### China to set up public platform to track, crack down on polluters

- China will set up a new information platform to allow the public to track the emissions of polluting enterprises and help authorities prosecute those that break the rules or try to "evade supervision".
- A total of 2.36 million companies, industrial facilities and institutions in China are **legally obliged to obtain permits to emit pollutants like sulphur dioxide or wastewater**. But China has struggled to collect the information required to make the system work, and has also faced obstruction and data fraud from some polluting firms. It is set to come into effect on March 1, 2021.

## Srivilliputhur–Megamalai Tiger Reserve in TN approved

- The Central government has given its approval for the creation of a fifth tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu that will encompass the Meghamalai and Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- For nearly a decade now, environmental activists have been seeking a tiger reserve linking these two sanctuaries, adjoining the Periyar Tiger Reserve in Kerala, and then to connect it with the Tirunelveli Wildlife Sanctuary, and then to Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve to make it a contiguous corridor where the big cats can thrive.
- The Forest Department's proposal was to declare 1.48 lakh hectares of land encompassing Meghamalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary and Tirunelveli Wildlife Sanctuary as Tamil Nadu's fifth tiger reserve.

Project Tiger is a tiger conservation programme launched in April 1973 by the Government of India during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's tenure. Kailash Sankhala was the first director of Project Tiger. As the Bengal Tiger is the national animal of India, this project aims to stem the dwindling population of the big cats and work to increase their numbers.

## Agnikul first to fire a fully 3D printed rocket engine

- Chennai-based space tech startup Agnikul Cosmos has announced that it has successfully test fired the world's first 3D-printed rocket engine or higher stage semi-cryogenic rocket engine called Agnilet.
- Cofounder Srinath Ravichandran said that Agnilet is expected to be used in the second stage of Agnikul's launch vehicle Agniban. The vehicle has been designed to carry payloads up to 100 kg to low Earth orbits (up to 700 km) with a plug-and-play engine configuration. The company is planning to launch this by the end of 2022.
- Agnilet, which will power Agnikul's orbital class vehicle Agnibaan, was made in India at roughly one-tenth of the cost of conventionally assembling a rocket engine and was could be made in less than four days. Started by Ravichandran and Moin SPM in 2017, Agnikul operates out of the National Centre for Combustion Research at IIT Chennai. Since 2018, the company has claimed to be testing its 3D engines on a smaller scale.

## IIT Kharagpur develops solar-powered pest control system for smaller farm fields

- Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur have developed energy-efficient pest controlling devices for smaller agricultural tracts owned by marginal farmers. The research team has developed a self-propelled boom-type sprayer that can be operated using solar energy while safely guided through the crops in smaller tracts of land.
- The device is aimed to increase field capacity and uniformity in liquid spraying and also to reduce drudgery to the operator and dependency on fossil fuel for carrying out spraying in cropped areas. The semi-automated device, developed by Prof. Hifjur Raheman, Anup Behera Rahul K, and Prof. P.B.S. Bhadoria from the Dept. of Agricultural and Food Engineering at IIT Kharagpur, will address several challenges of the mechanized pest control system in the small farm sector.

## Millions of lives saved annually by 2040 if countries raise climate ambitions to meet Paris Agreement targets: modelling study

- Adopting policies that are consistent with achieving the Paris Agreement and prioritising health could save 6.4 million lives due to better diet, 1.6 million lives due to cleaner air, and 2.1 million lives due to increased exercise per year across nine countries.
- New research from The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change, published in a special issue of The Lancet Planetary Health Journal, highlights the benefits to health if countries adopt climate plans – Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – that are consistent with the Paris Agreement aim of limiting warming to “well below 2°C”.
- The countries considered in the study represent 50 per cent of the world's population and 70 per cent of the world's emissions – Brazil, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, South Africa, the UK and the US.



In 2015, ahead of the UN significant climate conference in Paris, India announced three major voluntary commitments called the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC): 1. Improving the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33–35% by 2030 over 2005 levels. 2. Increasing the share of non-fossil fuels-based electricity to 40% by 2030. 3. Enhancing its forest cover, thereby absorbing 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide. The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance, was adopted by 196 parties at the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties in Paris, on December 12, 2015, and was enforced on November 4, 2016. On June 1, 2017, United States President Donald Trump announced that the U.S. would cease all participation in the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation and withdrawal took effect on November 4, 2020, one day after the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

### Indian astronomers detect huge optical flare in one of the oldest astronomical objects

- Indian astronomers have reported one of the strongest flares from a feeding super massive black hole or blazar called BL Lacertae, analysis of which can help trace the mass of the black hole and the source of this emission, the Department of Science and Technology.
- Blazars or feeding super massive black holes in the heart of distant galaxies receive a lot of attention from the astronomical community because of their complicated emission mechanism. They emit jets of charged particles travelling nearly at the speed of light and are one of the most luminous and energetic objects in the Universe.

### Work on India's first dolphin research centre to start soon in Patna

- As Bihar accounts for 50% of the world's river dolphin population, a highly endangered species under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and declared the National Aquatic Animal in 2009.
- In 2018-19, around 1500 dolphins were sighted in the Ganga during a survey by teams of experts. This also prompted the government to build India's first observatory, Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, for the mammals in Bhagalpur. Once it is completed, it is expected to boost eco-tourism. Another observatory is also in the pipeline at Patna.

### TIFAC unveils two new initiatives of Technology 'SAKSHAM' and a Seaweed Mission for commercial farming of seaweeds and its processing for value addition

- Two new initiatives of Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) — SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch)- a dynamic job portal for mapping the skills of Shramiks vis-à-vis requirements of MSMEs to directly connect Shramiks with MSMEs and facilitate placement of 10 lakh blue-collar jobs and a Seaweed Mission for commercial farming of seaweeds and its processing for value addition towards boosting national economy were launched on the occasion of the 34<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day celebrations.
- Dr V.K. Saraswat, Member Science, Niti Ayog and Chairman-TIFAC, while underscoring the increasing nonlinearity of science in the new era, identified the technological priorities of the future like cyber-physical systems, quantum computing, green chemistry and water. He stressed that it is imperative to focus on technologies that can make India self-reliant or Atmanirbhar and are futuristic as well.
- SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch), a dynamic portal for jobs/ mapping the skills of Shramiks vis-à-vis requirements of MSMEs and other industries all across the country. The portal with the demand and supply data uses algorithm and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, for geo spatial information on demand and availability of Shramiks, and also provide analysis on skill training programmes of Shramiks. The pilot portal originally initiated with two districts is now being launched as an all India portal.
- Out of the global seaweed production of 32 million tons fresh weight valued around 12 billion US dollars. China produces 57 %, Indonesia 28% followed by South Korea, whereas India is having a mere share of 0.01-0.02%. Despite several advantages, commercial seaweeds cultivation has not been taken place in the country at an appropriate scale, as being practiced in South-East Asian countries.

-----



# SPORTS



## Sports Personalities in News

### Ankita Raina becomes fifth Indian woman to feature in Grand Slam main draw

- Ankita Raina became only the fifth Indian woman tennis player in Open era to secure a place in the main draw of a Grand Slam as she made the cut for the women's doubles event of the Australian Open. The year's first Grand Slam starts on February 8.

### Rishabh Pant voted inaugural ICC Player of the Month

- India's flamboyant wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant won the ICC's inaugural Player of the Month award for his superlative performances in the two Tests against Australia in January 2021.
- Pant scored a 97 at Sydney and an unbeaten 89 at Brisbane that powered India to an incredible series win against arch-rivals Australia Down Under.
- South Africa's Shabnim Ismail was named the ICC Women's Player of the Month for January 2021 for her performances across three ODIs and two T20Is during the month. Ismail took seven wickets in the victorious ODI series against Pakistan, before taking five wickets in the second T20I against the same opposition.

### ICC signs Byju's as global partner for 3 years

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has signed Indian edtech start-up Byju's as global partner for three years, from 2021 to 2023.
- The agreement will see team India's jersey sponsor Byju's partner all ICC events over the period, including the forthcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup in India, and the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in New Zealand. As a global partner, BYJU'S will have extensive in-venue, broadcast, and digital rights across all ICC events.

### Assam government appoints Hima Das as DSP

- Star sprinter Hima Das, who is currently looking to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics, has been appointed as a Deputy Superintendent of Police by the Assam government. Hima thanked Assam Chief Minister and former Union Sports Minister Sarbananda Sonowal for the job, saying it will motivate her.

### Ravichandran Ashwin becomes first bowler to dismiss left-handers 200 times in Tests

- Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin became the first player in the 143-year history of Test cricket to take 200 wickets against left-handed batsmen. Ashwin also surpassed Harbhajan Singh as the second-highest wicket taker in home Tests for India. Harbhajan had taken 265 wickets while Ashwin's five-wicket haul on the second day of the Test took his tally to 268.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### ISB ranked 1 in India and 23 globally in The Financial Times Global MBA Rankings 2021

- **The Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) of the Indian School of Business (ISB)** has been ranked **1 in India and 23 worldwide** in the Financial Times Global MBA Rankings 2021.
- **Amongst Asian business schools, it ranks 5.** It is the **only B-School from India to figure in the top 25 globally**. Alumni from PGP Class of 2017 were surveyed for this ranking. The school has done exceedingly well in many areas which were considered by The Financial Times for the rankings.
- **ISB is ranked 1 in India and 3 in Asia** as well as globally for the salary percentage increase for alumni. **The school's career progress rank (21 globally)** has improved indicating a better employment opportunity for the alumni.
- **ISB continued to progress in the weighted salary and career service rank (39 globally) year on year.** ISB was also acknowledged for being the **top business school from India to be featured in the research rankings (77 globally)**. The school has always focused on research and this ranking bears testimony to this fact.

### IIM Indore in Top 100 of Financial Times' Global MBA Rankings

- **Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Indore** has featured on the **Financial Times (FT) Global MBA ranking 2021 at 94<sup>th</sup> spot**. The MBA Institute has made its debut on the prestigious global list for its flagship one-year Full Time Residential Post Graduate Programme for Executives (EPGP). It has **become the fourth IIM and fifth Indian business school to be included in the top 100 list**.

### Robotic Spa' facility inaugurated at Visakhapatnam railway station

- **Waltair Division**, in its efforts to enhance the passenger amenities at Railway stations, has **commissioned another innovative facility called Robotic Spa under Non-fare revenue at Visakhapatnam railway station**.
- **The first of its kind facility at Railway station in East Coast Railway.** The Robotic Spa comprising of Relaxing Chair, Foot massager and Fish pedicure spa gives a pleasant experience to the Rail Customers waiting at Visakhapatnam railway station. The motto behind such innovative model is to facilitate the esteemed rail customers to spend quality time while waiting for trains.

### Government launched website of India Toy Fair- 2021

- **The government of India launched the website of the India Toy Fair- 2021.** The website was **launched jointly by Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank** in New Delhi.

### Indian Railways to introduce modern Tejas AC sleeper coaches

- **The Ministry of Railways has decided to replace the rake of Agartala - Anand Vihar Terminal Special Rajdhani Express with Tejas Sleeper coaches with upgraded facilities.**
- **The Ministry said, it will offer better connectivity with the National Capital.** Provided with smart features, the coaches of this New Sleeper Type Tejas Train will offer best in class travel experience. The Ministry said, **Agartala Rajdhani Special train will run with special Tejas type Sleeper coaches.**
- **With the introduction of this modern Tejas Sleeper type train for long distance journey,** Indian Railway is making a paradigm shift in the travel experience for the passengers. A new era of train travel experience with enhanced comfort is being rolled out with the introduction of Sleeper Type Tejas Trains.
- **The Ministry has planned that 500 such Tejas type Sleeper coaches** are manufactured at Integral Coach Factory and Modern Coach Factory, production units of Indian Railways in the Financial Year 2021-2022 which will gradually replace the premium long distance trains over Indian Railways network.

### IIHR organised National Horticulture Fair in Bengaluru

- **Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR)** is organised **five days National Horticulture Fair (NHF) 2021** from February 8 to February 12 **at the IIHR campus situated in Hesaraghatta, Bengaluru.**

## Prime Minister dedicated Oil, Gas and Road infrastructure projects at Haldia in West Bengal

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation projects worth four thousand and seven hundred crore rupees at Haldia, West Bengal. He lays the foundation stone of the Second Catalytic Dewaxing Unit at the Haldia Refinery of Indian Oil Corporation Limited. He also inaugurated three more projects, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, BPCL's LPG Import Terminal at Haldia, GAIL's Dobhi-Durgapur Natural Gas Pipeline and NHAI's four-lane ROB cum flyover at Ranichak.
- On the other hand, Mr Modi dedicated a 347-kilometre long Dobhi - Durgapur Natural Gas Pipeline built with an investment of 2,400 crore rupees as a part of the Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga project towards achieving 'one Nation, One Gas Grid'.
- The LPG import terminal of BPCL, built with an investment of around 1,100 crore rupees, has a capacity of one Million Metric Tonne Per Annum which will cater to the growing requirement of LPG in the eastern and north-eastern states of India.

## Mahesh Sharma is first Indian MP to get COVID-19 vaccine

- In a first, Member of Parliament from Gautam Buddha Nagar, Dr Mahesh Sharma was administered the COVID-19 vaccine.

## Karnataka gets 31<sup>st</sup> district; issues notification carving Vijayanagara out of Ballari

- Karnataka got its 31<sup>st</sup> district with the state government issuing an official gazette notification carving out a new Vijayanagara district from the mine-rich Ballari. The new district will have six taluks and Hosapete will be its headquarters.

## NCAP to be implemented in 122 cities across country

- Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has informed that the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) will be implemented in 122 cities across the country.

## IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Delhi, TERI to combat pollution in Delhi

- The Delhi government will now work with IIT-Delhi, IIT-Kanpur and TERI to identify the sources of pollution in Delhi in real-time. The three leading institutions made a presentation to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal about the technology that has been developed in this regard. IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Delhi and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) have developed this technology after conducting research to ascertain the sources of pollution in real time.

## Tripura wants new land custom station with Bangladesh to make Dumboor Mela accessible to Bangladeshi visitors

- Dumboor Mela is a traditional fair organized with support from the state government on Tirthamukh, confluence of River Raima and Saima and the Dumbur Lake, where thousands of devotees and mystics gather to take holy dip in the waters of Lake Dumboor.
- The lake is actually an artificial reservoir created to hold water from both hilly streams for Gumti hydro-electric power project in the area. Though the project had 15 MW installed capacity, it doesn't generate over 6-8 MW for most of the year now. Dumboor Lake is also one of the most popular picnic spots in Tripura, known for its astounding boating arena near 'Narikelkunj' amidst numerous 'char lands, various species of migratory birds visiting Tripura in the winters.

## Government to launch portal to collect information on building & construction workers

- The government has proposed in the Union Budget to launch a portal which will collect information on building and construction workers among others and the work is on setting up of the portal by Directorate General of Labour Welfare. It will help formulate health, housing, skill, insurance, credit and food scheme for migrant workers.

## AWARDS

### Tamil film 'Pebbles' wins Tiger Award at International Film Festival Rotterdam

- Indian drama “Pebbles”, directed by filmmaker Vinodraj PS, has won the top honour, the Tiger Award for best film, at the 50<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR).
- The Tamil language film follows an alcoholic abusive husband who, after his long-suffering wife runs off, sets out with his young son to find her and bring her back.
- Titled “Koozhangal” in Tamil, “Pebbles” stars a host of new comers and is produced by Vignesh Shivan and Nayantara.
- The Tiger Award is accompanied by a Euro 40,000 cash prize, to be shared between the director and producer of the winning film.

### Steven Spielberg wins Israel's prestigious 2021 Genesis Prize for films, philanthropy

- Steven Spielberg has been awarded Israel's prestigious 2021 Genesis Prize in recognition of his contribution to cinema, his philanthropic works and his efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust.
- The \$1 million award is granted each year to a person for their professional achievements, contributions to humanity and commitment to Jewish values.
- The prize was founded in 2012 with a \$100 million endowment from five Russian philanthropists Mikhail Fridman, Pyotr Aven, German Khan, Stan Polovets, and Alexander Knaster. The prize is under the administration of the Genesis Prize Foundation, in partnership with the Jewish Agency for Israel. It has been referred to as the “Jewish Nobel Prize”, causing some commentators to question the need for a “Jewish” Nobel Prize.



# IMPORTANT DAYS

## World Pulses Day- 10 February

- On 20 December 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2016 as the **International Year of Pulses (IYP)**. The celebration of the year, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), increased the public awareness of the nutritional and environmental benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production.
- **World Pulses Day 2021 is under theme LovePulses.**
- Building on the success of the International Year of Pulses and recognizing their potential to further achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with **particular relevance to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 12, 13 and 15**, Burkina Faso proposed the observance of World Pulses Day. In 2019, the General Assembly proclaimed 10 February as the World Pulses Day.

## National De-worming Day

- The **National Deworming Day** is conducted in all states/UTs on **February 10 every year**, with a mop-up day on February 15. Some states/UTs also conduct a bi-annual round on 10 August, depending on worm prevalence in their state/UT.

## International Day of Women and Girls in Science, 11 February

- On 11 February 2021, the 6<sup>th</sup> International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly was held at the United Nations Headquarters virtually.
- With great momentum and interest to accelerate progress in achieving the 2030 Development Agenda and its 17 Global Goals, the 6<sup>th</sup> International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly **theme was 'Beyond the Borders: Equality in Science for Society'**, with a special focus on the value of the social aspects and cultural dimensions in Science, Technology and Innovation to enhance sustainable development programmes.

## World Day of Social Justice 20 February

- On 26 November 2007, the General Assembly declared that, starting from the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, **20 February is celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice.**
- The Permanent Mission of the Kyrgyz Republic to the UN and the International Labour Organization (ILO) will organize a virtual event to **commemorate the 2021 World Day of Social Justice on the theme, "A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy."**

## World Radio Day

- Proclaimed in 2011 by the Member States of UNESCO, and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012 as an International Day, February 13 became World Radio Day (WRD).
- This year, the theme for World Radio Day is 'New World, New Radio.'

## References:

The Hindu  
The Economics Times  
Indian Express  
Press Information Bureau of India  
The Times of India  
Business Standard  
News on AIR  
Hindustan Times

# QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following state governments recently announced 16-digit Unicode to identify landholdings?  
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Rajasthan (d) Haryana
2. Which of the following places will get India's first thunderstorm research testbed?  
(a) Rajasthan's Udaipur (b) West Bengal's Darjeeling  
(c) Odisha's Balasore (d) Jharkhand's Ranchi
3. Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR) is organised five days National Horticulture Fair (NHF) 2021 at the IIHR campus situated in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Bengaluru (b) Mysuru (c) Hyderabad (d) Bhopal
4. Recently, Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, a businessman-turned-politician, has been chosen as new interim Prime Minister of:  
(a) Libya (b) Morocco (c) Turkey (d) Egypt
5. Name the first Member of Parliament who was administered the COVID-19 vaccine.  
(a) Anurag Thakur (b) Dr Mahesh Sharma (c) Manoj Tiwari (d) Dr Harshvardhan
6. Government of India has allocated 16 thousand crore rupees for Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana for 2021-22 to boost the safety of farmers' crops. Government had approved this flagship crop insurance scheme in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 2014 (b) 2016 (c) 2017 (d) 2018
7. The RBI is targeting to roll out the e-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) June 2021 (b) December 2021 (c) March 2022 (d) September 2022
8. Recently, Mario Draghi was appointed as the new Prime Minister of:  
(a) France (b) Italy (c) Greece (d) Panama
9. Recently, Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve was approved in which of the following Indian states?  
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Maharashtra
10. In 2019, the General Assembly proclaimed \_\_\_\_\_ as the World Pulses Day.  
(a) 5 February (b) 8 February (c) 10 February (d) 13 February
11. Recently, Karnataka got its 31<sup>st</sup> district with the state government issuing an official gazette notification carving out a new \_\_\_\_\_ district from the mine-rich Ballari.  
(a) Chitradurga (b) Kodagu (c) Vijayanagara (d) Yadagiri
12. The government has proposed in the Union Budget to launch a portal which will collect information on \_\_\_\_\_ among others and the work is on setting up of the portal by Directorate General of Labour Welfare.  
(a) Building and construction workers (b) Street Vendors  
(c) Small & Marginal Farmers (d) Beggars
13. Recently, The Biden administration is set to announce that it will reengage with the much-maligned \_\_\_\_\_ that former President Donald Trump withdrew from almost three years ago.  
(a) U.N. Human Rights Council (b) WHO  
(c) WMO (d) International Monetary Fund
14. The India-US Joint Military Exercise \_\_\_\_\_ commenced at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan with unfurling of the National Flags of both the countries.  
(a) AJEYA WARRIOR (b) YUDH ABHYAS  
(c) NOMADIC ELEPHANT (d) FRIENDS EXERCISE

15. Who among the following inaugurated the World Sustainable Development Summit 2021 on 10<sup>th</sup> of February via video conferencing?  
 (a) President Ramnath Kovind (b) Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
 (c) Home Minister Amit Shah (d) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
16. Which of the following companies has been named to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2021 Corporate Equality Index (CEI)?  
 (a) Wipro (b) Infosys (c) Indian Oil (d) Reliance
17. Recently, India's stock market is the \_\_\_\_\_ best performer among the top 15 countries in 2021 and soon it may overtake France to become the sixth biggest in the world.  
 (a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Fifth
18. Which of the following has released the Annual Report of the Ombudsman Schemes for the year 2019-20?  
 (a) Reserve Bank of India (b) Ministry of Finance  
 (c) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (d) NABARD
19. Recently, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has informed that the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) will be implemented in \_\_\_\_\_ cities across the country.  
 (a) 74 (b) 85 (c) 94 (d) 122
20. Recently, Indian drama \_\_\_\_\_ directed by filmmaker Vinodhraj PS, has won the top honour, the Tiger Award for best film, at the 50<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR).  
 (a) "Pebbles" (b) "Stones" (c) "Miracles" (d) "Amazing"
21. Recently, In Arab world's first interplanetary mission, spacecraft \_\_\_\_\_ enters orbit around Mars.  
 (a) 'Nargis' (b) 'Amal' (c) 'Sulaiman' (d) 'Jamal'
22. Recently, the government of India has launched a new Central Sector Scheme titled 'Formation and Promotion of \_\_\_\_\_ Farmer Produce Organizations (FPOs)'.  
 (a) 4,600 (b) 5,900 (c) 7,400 (d) 10,000
23. The National Deworming Day is conducted in all states/UTs on \_\_\_\_\_ every year.  
 (a) 5<sup>th</sup> February (b) 7<sup>th</sup> February (c) 10<sup>th</sup> February (d) 13<sup>th</sup> February
24. The International Cricket Council (ICC) has signed \_\_\_\_\_ as global partner for three years, from 2021 to 2023.  
 (a) Amul (b) Byju's (c) Dabur (d) Patanjali
25. Which of the following banks has entered into a co-lending agreement with Pune-based non-banking financial company LoanTap Credit Products for MSME loans?  
 (a) Bank of India (b) Bank of Maharashtra (c) Union Bank of India (d) Punjab National Bank
26. Recently, IIT-Madras incubated space startup Agnikul Cosmos has successfully test fired its semi-cryogenic rocket engine \_\_\_\_\_ which is completely 3D printed as a single component in a single run of a 3D printer.  
 (a) Agniload (b) Agnighera (c) Agnilet (d) Agniflet
27. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), India will overtake the European Union as the world's \_\_\_\_\_ largest energy consumer by 2030.  
 (a) Second (b) Third (c) Fifth (d) Seventh
28. The Delhi government will now work with \_\_\_\_\_ IIT's and TERI to identify the sources of pollution in Delhi in real-time.  
 (a) IIT-Bombay & IIT-Madras (b) IIT-Delhi & IIT-Kharagpur  
 (c) IIT-Delhi & IIT-Kanpur (d) IIT- Hyderabad & IIT Mandi

29. Recently, Researchers from which of the following IIT's have developed energy-efficient pest controlling devices for smaller agricultural tracts owned by marginal farmers?  
 (a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur  
 (b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras  
 (c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur  
 (d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
30. Recently, who won the ICC's inaugural Player of the Month award?  
 (a) Josh Hazlewood (b) Joe Root (c) Rishabh Pant (d) Mohammad Siraj
31. Which of the following became the first airline in the world to vaccinate 100% of its onboard crewmembers?  
 (a) Air India (b) Australian Airlines (c) Etihad Airways (d) Singapore Airlines
32. The government of India launched the website of the India Toy Fair- 2021. The website was launched jointly by Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank in \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) New Delhi (b) Bengaluru (c) Chennai (d) Hyderabad
33. Recently, US President Joe Biden has announced the launch of a new \_\_\_\_\_ task force that will provide recommendations on military strategy to the Department of Defense, DoD to counter growing challenges posed by \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) Japan, Tokyo (b) China, Beijing (c) India, New Delhi (d) Russia, Moscow
34. Recently, India and Afghanistan signed an agreement to build the \_\_\_\_\_ Dam in Kabul to provide drinking water facility in the Afghan capital.  
 (a) Shahtoot (b) Mango (c) Kabul (d) Rangjah
35. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), the share of solar energy in India's power generation could equal coal-fired output by year \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) 2025 (b) 2030 (c) 2035 (d) 2040
36. By 2023, \_\_\_\_\_ likely to get north India's first medical device park.  
 (a) Lucknow (b) Noida (c) Meerut (d) Shimla
37. Indian Railways rolled out its first air conditioned three-tier economy class coach which is being touted the cheapest and best AC travel in the world". The new coach berths have been increased from 72 to \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) 75 (b) 83 (c) 86 (d) 90
38. Recently, which of the following launched the 'Financial Literacy Week' on the theme of 'Credit Discipline and Credit from Formal Institutions'?  
 (a) Reserve Bank of India (b) State Bank of India  
 (c) NABARD (d) SIDBI
39. Recently, The office of the Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM) which has the objective of increasing digital economy contribution to Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) to \_\_\_\_\_ per cent was inaugurated.  
 (a) 20 (b) 30 (c) 40 (d) 50
40. Recently, Major Port Authorities Bill 2020 passed by Rajya Sabha. How many major ports are there in India?  
 (a) 8 (b) 10 (c) 13 (d) 16
41. Which is the first state in the country to introduce document upload through digital signature, using the NIC platform?  
 (a) Jharkhand (b) Odisha (c) West Bengal (d) Bihar



42. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated more than 57,000 water structures constructed in Madhya Pradesh under \_\_\_\_\_ campaign from New Delhi.  
(a) 'Jalabhishekam' (b) 'Farmahishekam' (c) 'Daksheshkam' (d) 'Raghumanishekam'
43. The base year for the National Coal Index (NCI) is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) FY 2015-16 (b) FY 2016-17 (c) FY 2017-18 (d) FY 2019-20
44. India's first ever CNG \_\_\_\_\_ will be launched in February 2021.  
(a) Bus (b) Auto (c) Motorbike (d) Tractor
45. Which of the following countries is celebrated Lunar New Year as it ushered into the Year of the Ox?  
(a) Finland (b) China (c) Japan (d) Australia
46. Recently, India's First Museum of Illusions comes up in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Mumbai (b) Bengaluru (c) New Delhi (d) Hyderabad
47. Who among the following will inaugurate the Maritime India Summit-2021 on 2<sup>nd</sup> March?  
(a) Ramnath Kovind (b) Narendra Modi  
(c) Mansukhlal Mandaviya (d) Rajnath Singh
48. Who has been awarded Israel's prestigious 2021 Genesis Prize in recognition of his contribution to cinema, his philanthropic works and his efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust?  
(a) Brad Pitt (b) Johny Depp (c) Steven Spielberg (d) Tom Cruise
49. Recently, Star sprinter Hima Das has been appointed as a Deputy Superintendent of Police by the \_\_\_\_\_ government.  
(a) Assam (b) West Bengal (c) Manipur (d) Mizoram
50. The 6<sup>th</sup> International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly was held at the United Nations Headquarters virtually on:  
(a) 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (b) 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (c) 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (d) 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021
51. Recently, Prime Minister inaugurated India's first full-fledged international cruise terminal in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Maharashtra (b) Kerala (c) Gujarat (d) Karnataka
52. Recently, The Prime Minister handed over the indigenously designed and manufactured \_\_\_\_\_ Main Battle Tank (MK-1A) to the Army.  
(a) Bhim (b) Arjun (c) Karna (d) Nakul
53. Which of the following Indian union territories has approved the establishment of an Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) project by the National Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)?  
(a) Lakshadweep (b) Andaman & Nicobar Islands  
(c) Ladakh (d) Jammu and Kashmir
54. Name the new initiative to encourage girls to take interest in science and build career, which was launched by the Department of Science & Technology (DST) to create a level-playing field for the meritorious girls to pursue STEM.  
(a) Vigyan Jyoti Programme (b) Vigyan Darshika Programme  
(c) National Science Programme (d) Vigyan Digidarshika Karyakram
55. Minority Affairs Ministry is organised 26<sup>th</sup> Hunar Haat of indigenous artisans and craftsmen from across the country in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) New Delhi (b) Kolkata (c) Mumbai (d) Kanpur

56. Recently, Robotic Spa the first of its kind facility has been inaugurated at \_\_\_\_\_ in East Coast Railway.  
 (a) Cuttack railway station (b) Paradip railway station  
 (c) Visakhapatnam railway station (d) Guntur railway station
57. Who has been recently named as Director of AmeriCorps State?  
 (a) Sonali Nijhawan (b) Atul Mahajan (c) Preston Kulkarni (d) Aniket Bhaskar
58. Indian astronomers have reported one of the strongest flares from a feeding super massive black hole or blazar called \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) BL Lacertae (b) BL Laceru (c) GL Lustrine (d) MK Linel
59. Recently, The Ministry of Railways has decided to replace the rake of \_\_\_\_\_ Special Rajdhani Express with Tejas Sleeper coaches with upgraded facilities.  
 (a) Agartala - Anand Vihar Terminal (b) Tezpur- Anand Vihar Terminal  
 (c) Guwahati- New Delhi (d) Dispur-New Delhi
60. Dumboor Mela is a traditional fair organized with support from the \_\_\_\_\_ state government on Tirthamukh, confluence of River Raima and Saima and the Dumbur Lake.  
 (a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Tripura (d) Assam
61. Who has been recently appointed as the new Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha by Congress?  
 (a) Ghulam Nabi Azad (b) Mallikarjun Kharge (c) Kapil Sibal (d) Digvijay Singh
62. A Centrally sponsored scheme namely National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGPA) was initially launched in 2010-11 in \_\_\_\_\_ pilot states.  
 (a) 3 (b) 5 (c) 7 (d) 9
63. In a significant development, Indian and \_\_\_\_\_ armies will undertake joint bilateral exercises. This will be the first such exercises of both the armies together.  
 (a) Saudi Arabia (b) Oman (c) Jordan (d) Egypt
64. The ex-head of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, was sworn in as Prime Minister of:  
 (a) Spain (b) Greece (c) Portugal (d) Italy
65. Which of the following IIM's has been featured on the Financial Times (FT) Global MBA ranking 2021 at 94<sup>th</sup> spot?  
 (a) Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmadabad  
 (b) Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore  
 (c) Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Indore  
 (d) Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Kolkata
66. Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL) has become India's first and only listed depository to open \_\_\_\_\_ active demat accounts.  
 (a) One crore plus (10 million) (b) Two crore plus (20 million)  
 (c) Three crore plus (30 million) (d) Five crore plus (50 million)
67. Which of the following Indian states accounts for 50% of the world's river dolphin population, a highly endangered species under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and declared the National Aquatic Animal in 2009?  
 (a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Bihar (c) Uttarakhand (d) Assam
68. Recently, \_\_\_\_\_ owned Indian commercial and industrial renewables developer Continuum Green Energy Ltd had a helping hand from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) as it launched its first green bond.  
 (a) Morgan Stanley (b) Ernst & Young  
 (c) Reliance Energy Limited (d) Amazon Inc

69. Who has become the first player in the 143-year history of Test cricket to take 200 wickets against left-handed batsmen?  
(a) Shakib Al Hasan (b) Stuart Broad  
(c) Ravichandran Ashwin (d) Nathan Lyon
70. Which of the following is celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice?  
(a) 11<sup>th</sup> February (b) 14<sup>th</sup> February (c) 17<sup>th</sup> February (d) 20<sup>th</sup> February



Career  
Launcher

## ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. b UP govt announces 16-digit Unicode to identify landholdings.
2. c Odisha's Balasore will get the country's first thunderstorm research testbed, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said.
3. a Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR) is organised five days National Horticulture Fair (NHF) 2021 from February 8 to February 12 at the IIHR campus situated in Hesaraghatta, Bengaluru.
4. a Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, a businessman-turned-politician, has been chosen as Libya's new interim prime minister following lengthy United Nations-sponsored talks aimed at ending a decade of conflict in the North African country.
5. b In a first, Member of Parliament from Gautam Buddha Nagar, Dr Mahesh Sharma was administered the COVID-19 vaccine.
6. b Government had approved this flagship crop insurance scheme, five years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
7. a The RBI is targeting to roll out the e-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme in June 2021
8. b Mario Draghi secured preliminary support from two key parties for forming a new government that will decide how to spend more than 200 bn euros (£175 bn) in European Union funds to help relaunch Italy's pandemic-ravaged economy.
9. b The Central government has given its approval for the creation of a fifth tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu that will encompass the Meghamalai and Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuaries.
10. c In 2019, the General Assembly proclaimed 10 February as the World Pulses Day.
11. c Karnataka got its 31<sup>st</sup> district with the state government issuing an official gazette notification carving out a new Vijayanagara district from the mine-rich Ballari. The new district will have six taluks and Hosapete will be its headquarters.
12. a The government has proposed in the Union Budget to launch a portal which will collect information on building and construction workers among others and the work is on setting up of the portal by Directorate General of Labour Welfare.
13. a The Biden administration is set to announce that it will reengage with the much-maligned U.N. Human Rights Council that former President Donald Trump withdrew from almost three years ago.
14. b The India-US Joint Military Exercise 'YUDH ABHYAS' commenced at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan with unfurling of the National Flags of both the countries.
15. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the World Sustainable Development Summit 2021 on 10<sup>th</sup> of February via video conferencing. The theme of the summit is 'Redefining Our Common Future: Safe and Secure Environment for All'.
16. a Wipro has been named to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2021 Corporate Equality Index (CEI).
17. b India's stock market is the second-best performer among the top 15 countries in 2021 and soon it may overtake France to become the sixth biggest in the world.



- 18. a** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the Annual Report of the Ombudsman Schemes for the year 2019-20.
- 19. d** Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has informed that the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) will be implemented in 122 cities across the country.
- 20. a** Indian drama “Pebbles”, directed by filmmaker Vinod Chaudhary, has won the top honour, the Tiger Award for best film, at the 50<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR).
- 21. b** In Arab world’s first interplanetary mission, spacecraft ‘Amal’ enters orbit around Mars
- 22. d** The government has launched a new Central Sector Scheme titled ‘Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Produce Organizations (FPOs)’ and it has committed resources in this regard with a budgetary provision of Rs 6,865 crore.
- 23. c** The National Deworming Day is conducted in all states/UTs on February 10 every year, with a mop-up day on February 15.
- 24. b** The International Cricket Council (ICC) has signed Indian edtech start-up Byju’s as global partner for three years, from 2021 to 2023.
- 25. b** Bank of Maharashtra has entered into a co-lending agreement with Pune-based non-banking financial company LoanTap Credit Products for MSME loans.
- 26. c** IIT-Madras incubated space startup Agnikul Cosmos said it has successfully test fired its semi-cryogenic rocket engine Agnilet, which is completely 3D printed as a single component in a single run of a 3D printer.
- 27. b** India will overtake the European Union as the world’s third-largest energy consumer by 2030, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said as it forecast India accounting for the biggest share of energy demand growth over the next two decades.
- 28. c** The Delhi government will now work with IIT-Delhi, IIT-Kanpur and TERI to identify the sources of pollution in Delhi in real-time.
- 29. a** Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur have developed energy-efficient pest controlling devices for smaller agricultural tracts owned by marginal farmers.
- 30. c** India’s flamboyant wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant won the ICC’s inaugural Player of the Month award for his superlative performances in the two Tests against Australia in January.
- 31. c** Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, became the first airline in the world to vaccinate 100% of its onboard crewmembers.
- 32. a** The website was launched jointly by Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank in New Delhi.
- 33. b** US President Joe Biden has announced the launch of a new China task force that will provide recommendations on military strategy to the Department of Defense, DoD to counter growing challenges posed by Beijing.
- 34. a** India and Afghanistan signed an agreement to build the Shahtoot Dam in Kabul to provide drinking water facility in the Afghan capital.
- 35. d** The share of solar energy in India’s power generation could equal coal-fired output by 2040, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said driven by falling renewable tariffs and a government push to increase green energy use.

- 36. b** By 2023, Noida likely to get north India's first medical device park.
- 37. b** The new coach can carry more passengers as the berths have been increased from 72 to 83.
- 38. a** The Reserve Bank of India has launched the Financial Literacy Week on the theme of 'Credit Discipline and Credit from Formal Institutions'.
- 39. b** The office of the Karnataka Digital Economy Mission (KDEM) which has the objective of increasing digital economy contribution to Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) to 30 per cent was inaugurated and the "Beyond Bengaluru" report which facilitates to achieve this target was launched.
- 40. c** Thirteen major ports in the country handle a lot of volume of container and cargo traffic.
- 41. b** Odisha is the first state in the country to introduce document upload through digital signature, using the NIC platform.
- 42. a** Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated more than 57,000 water structures constructed in Madhya Pradesh under 'Jalabhishekam' campaign from New Delhi.
- 43. c** In order to arrive at the revenue share based on market prices of coal, one National Coal Index (NCI) was conceptualized. The NCI is a price index which reflects the change of price level of coal on a particular month relative to the fixed base year. The base year for the NCI is FY 2017-18. Prices of coal from all the sales channels of coal, including import, as existing are taken into account for compiling the NCI.
- 44. d** India's first ever CNG Tractor will be launched. This will help farmers increase their income, by lowering costs and help to create job opportunities in rural India.
- 45. b** China is celebrating Lunar New Year as it ushered into the Year of the Ox. It is one of the most important Chinese festivals, also known as the Chinese New Year or Spring Festival.
- 46. c** India's First Museum of Illusions Comes up in Delhi.
- 47. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Maritime India Summit-2021 on 2<sup>nd</sup> March.
- 48. c** Steven Spielberg has been awarded Israel's prestigious 2021 Genesis Prize in recognition of his contribution to cinema, his philanthropic works and his efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust.
- 49. a** Star sprinter Hima Das, who is currently looking to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics, has been appointed as a Deputy Superintendent of Police by the Assam government.
- 50. d** On 11 February 2021, the 6<sup>th</sup> International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly will be held at the United Nations Headquarters virtually.
- 51. b** Prime Minister also inaugurated country's first full-fledged international cruise terminal, Sagarika at Cochin Port and Marine Engineering Training Institute of Cochin Shipyard Ltd.
- 52. b** The Prime Minister also handed over the indigenously designed and manufactured Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A) to the Army.
- 53. d** In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir the Administrative Council (AC) has approved the establishment of an Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) project by the National Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED).

- 54. a** Vigyan Jyoti programme, a new initiative to encourage girls to take interest in science and build career, was launched by the Department of Science & Technology (DST) to create a level-playing field for the meritorious girls to pursue STEM.
- 55. a** Minority Affairs Ministry is organised 26<sup>th</sup> Hunar Haat of indigenous artisans and craftsmen from across the country at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi.
- 56. c** Waltair Division, in its efforts to enhance the passenger amenities at Railway stations, has commissioned another innovative facility called Robotic Spa under Non-fare revenue at Visakhapatnam railway station.
- 57. a** Sonali Nijhawan has been named Director of AmeriCorps State and National, and Sri Preston Kulkarni, 42, was appointed the new Chief of External Affairs.
- 58. a** Indian astronomers have reported one of the strongest flares from a feeding super massive black hole or blazar called BL Lacertae, analysis of which can help trace the mass of the black hole and the source of this emission, the Department of Science and Technology.
- 59. a** The Ministry of Railways has decided to replace the rake of Agartala - Anand Vihar Terminal Special Rajdhani Express with Tejas Sleeper coaches with upgraded facilities.
- 60. c** Dumboor Mela is a traditional fair organized with support from the Tripura state government on Tirthamukh, confluence of River Raima and Saima and the Dumbur Lake, where thousands of devotees and mystics gather to take holy dip in the waters of Lake Dumboor.
- 61. b** The Congress nominated veteran leader Mallikarjun Kharge as the new Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha to succeed Ghulam Nabi Azad, who is retiring on February 15.
- 62. c** A Centrally sponsored scheme namely National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGPA) was initially launched in 2010-11 in 7 pilot states.
- 63. a** In a significant development, Indian and Saudi armies will undertake joint bilateral exercises. This will be the first such exercises of both the armies together.
- 64. d** The ex-head of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, was sworn in as Italian Prime Minister.
- 65. c** Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Indore has featured on the Financial Times (FT) Global MBA ranking 2021 at 94<sup>th</sup> spot.
- 66. c** Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL) has become India's first and only listed depository to open three crore plus (30 million) active demat accounts.
- 67. b** Bihar accounts for 50% of the world's river dolphin population, a highly endangered species under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and declared the National Aquatic Animal in 2009.
- 68. a** Morgan Stanley-owned Indian commercial and industrial renewables developer Continuum Green Energy Ltd had a helping hand from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) as it launched its first green bond.
- 69. c** Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin became the first player in the 143-year history of Test cricket to take 200 wickets against left-handed batsmen.
- 70. d** On 26 November 2007, the General Assembly declared that, starting from the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, 20 February will be celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice.