
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

15th February to 21st 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



SAARC virtual meet: India invites Pakistan to COVID-19 workshop

- India hosted a health secretary-level meet virtually with other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation countries to discuss the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Pakistan has also been invited to attend the workshop.
- It is a virtual workshop on management of Covid-19, response to the pandemic and exchange of best practices amid the pandemic. On March 15, 2020, during a video conference of the SAARC Heads of State, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had proposed a Coronavirus Emergency Fund for the region.
- This emergency fund was set up in response to the global coronavirus pandemic. The initiative seeks to mitigate the risks associated with the coronavirus pandemic in the South Asian region with India contributing USD10 million to it. Other members of the SAARC expressed their support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his proposal for the coronavirus emergency fund.
- India is also running an initiative called 'Vaccine Maitri,' (Vaccine Friendship), which was launched on 20 January 2021, wherein India is extending support to neighboring countries like Nepal, The Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Brazil, and even Seychelles. India has already donated 5 million vaccines to its neighbours including 1.5 lakh doses to Bhutan, 20 lakh doses to Bangladesh, and 10 lakh doses to Nepal.
- SAARC groups together Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. November 2014, when Nepal hosted a SAARC leaders' summit, was the last time that leaders of these nations had shared a platform. Since then, India has refused to participate in the summit as it is due to be hosted in Pakistan.

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of states in South Asia. Its member states are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The SAARC was founded in Dhaka on 8 December 1985. Afghanistan joined the SAARC as its eighth member state in April 2007. Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal. The first SAARC summit was held in Dhaka on 7–8 December 1985.

Shabnam is the first woman to be hanged in independent India

- For the first time in the history of India's Independence, a woman on death row will be executed at the country's lone female execution room in Mathura.
- According to multiple media reports, Shabnam, one of the two convicts in the sensational Amroha murder case, will be executed. This case is of the Amroha district of Uttar Pradesh, where a girl named Shabnam murdered all the 7 people in her family because she wanted to marry her lover and the family was against their marriage. Shabnam felt that if she removes her family members from the way, then she will get married and will also get possession of the house property. But Shabnam was arrested along with her lover after the crime and both of them were sentenced to death by the court of Amroha in 2010. She is the first woman in the country who is set for gallows after in independent India. But the execution date is not finalised yet.

Government announces Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban) in Union Budget 2021-22

- Government of India has announced the **Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban) in the Union Budget 2021-22 on the lines of Jal Jeevan Mission (Rural)**. In her budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, it will be **implemented over five years, with an outlay of two lakh 87 thousand crore rupees**.
- Government has set aside **50 thousand crore rupees for drinking water and ten thousand crore rupees for sanitation**. The budget has been increased to provide tap water connection to the houses of the villages, the poor and the farmer. The government has taken this important step to **provide pure drinking water in villages as well as cities**.
- The work to provide tap water connections to over 19 crore rural households under the Jal Jeevan Mission (Rural) by 2024 was going on at a rapid pace. **Goa and Telangana have now access to 100 per cent potable tap water in the rural households**.
- **Goa has earned itself the unique distinction of becoming first 'Har Ghar Jal' State in the country as it successfully provides 100% Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) in the rural areas covering 2.30 lakh rural households**.

Jal Jeevan Mission, a central government initiative under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, aims to ensure access of piped water for every household in India. The mission's goal is to provide to all households in rural India safe and adequate water through individual household tap connections by 2024. The Har Ghar Nal Se Jal programme was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget 2019-20 speech. This programme forms a crucial part of the Jal Jeevan Mission. The programme aims to implement source sustainability measures as mandatory elements, such as recharge and reuse through grey water management, water conservation, and rain water harvesting.

PM Modi inaugurates first full-fledged international cruise terminal at Cochin Port in Kerala

- **Prime Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of several developmental projects worth over 8000 crore rupees at Chennai in Tamil Nadu**.
- The Prime Minister also **inaugurated India's first full-fledged international cruise terminal, Sagarika at Cochin Port and Marine Engineering Training Institute of Cochin Shipyard Ltd**.
- Prime Minister said, **Thanjavur and Pudukkottai will be specially benefited after the foundation for the extension, renovation and modernization of six hundred and thirty six kilometre long Grand Anicut Canal System was laid**. It will improve irrigation facilities for 2.27 lakh acres of land in the delta districts. **The Prime Minister lauded the farmers of Tamil Nadu for record food grain production and good use of water resources**. He emphasized the need to remember the mantra of Per Drop More Crop.

Bihar in pact with UNEP to chalk out a climate-resilient development pathway

- **In a first for an Indian State, Bihar signed a memorandum of understanding with the UN Environment Programme to achieve climate resilience and low carbon development by 2040**.
- Over the next two years, **UNEP would lead a multi-stakeholder team to assess the carbon footprint of various sectors in the State before chalking out a plan to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and increasing carbon sinks**. UNEP will **provide technological assistance to put together the State's greenhouse fuel stock and have out local weather effects state of affairs and vulnerability evaluation**.
- **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is responsible for coordinating responses to environmental issues within the United Nations system**. It was established by Maurice Strong, its first director, after the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in June 1972. **It is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya**.

Bihar is the third-largest state of India by population, according to the census 2011. It is a land-locked state, although the outlet to the sea through the port of Kolkata is not far away. Nalanda University is located in the town of Rajgir, in the northern Indian state of Bihar. It was a Buddhist center of learning from 427 to 1197 CE. It has been called "one of the first great universities in recorded history. Phagu Chauhan is the current Governor of Bihar. Nitish Kumar is the current Chief Minister of Bihar.

PM Narendra Modi addressed NASSCOM Technology and Leadership Forum

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the NASSCOM Technology and Leadership Forum (NTLF) via video conferencing.
- The three-day 29th edition of NTLF is organised till 19th of February. It is a **flagship event of the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM)**.
- The theme of this year's event is 'Shaping the future towards a better normal'. The event hosted 1,600 participants from more than 30 countries. Over 30 products will be showcased during the talks.

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

'Schools under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan to be renamed after Subhas Chandra Bose'

- Schools and hostels under the Ministry of Education's Samagra Shiksha scheme will now be renamed after Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. The Ministry of Education said the association of these schools with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose will "act as an inspiration" to children and also motivate teachers, staff and administration to enable them to achieve high standards of excellence.
- "The Ministry of Education has decided to name residential schools and hostels funded under Samagra Shiksha of MoE as 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose residential schools and hostels'". "This will also help create awareness about the facility of these residential schools and hostels in difficult areas and inspire these schools to achieve high standards of quality education."
- The Ministry of Education under Samagra Shiksha provides financial assistance to states and union territories for opening and running of residential schools and hostels in hilly terrain, small and sparsely populated areas for children who are in need of shelter and care, in addition to the provision of regular schools.
- "The objective is to ensure universal enrolment and provide schooling facilities in areas, which are sparsely populated (mostly tribal areas) where opening of schools may not be viable, and for children in urban areas who are in need of care and protection. "The residential facilities are also provided to child labour rescued, migrant children who belong to poor landless families, children without adult protection, separated from their families, internally displaced persons, and children from the areas of social and armed conflict and natural calamities, the statement said.

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

The legend of Suheldev

- The legend goes that over a millennia back when invaders were conquering one region after another in India, it was Raja Suheldev of Shravasti who gathered heads of different communities likes Tharu and Banjara as well as small kings to block the invasion.
- It is said that it was his army which defeated and killed Ghazi Salar Masud, the nephew of Mahmud of Gazni at Bahraich. In local folklore, Suheldev is said to be a Rajbhar. Legend of Suheldev: King Who Saved India is the eighth book by Amish Tripathi, and the first book from The Immortal Writers' Centre. It was released on 20 June 2020 and is published by Westland Publications. It is based on the legendary Indian king Suheldev who defeated the army of Salar Maqsum in the Battle of Bahraich in 1034 CE.

Tribes India 'Aadi Mahotsav' ends successfully

- The Tribes India 'Aadi Mahotsav' held from 1-15 February, 2021 at Dilli Haat, INA, New Delhi. The closing ceremony was presided by Ramesh Chand Meena, Chairman, TRIFED in the presence of Krishnadhan Das, Chairman, Tripura MARKFED and Pravir Krishna, Managing Director, TRIFED.
- The fortnight-long National Tribal Festival held at New Delhi saw the participation of thousands of tribal artisans, chefs, artists and cultural troupes from 25 states across the country. The Aadi Mahotsav witnessed a heavy footfall.

Aadi Mahotsav is a national tribal festival and a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED). It commenced in 2017 and is held annually. It is an attempt to familiarise the people with the rich and diverse craft, culture of the tribal communities across the country, in one place.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launches Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched a Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan under Jal Jeevan Mission-Urban, JJM-U. It will be conducted in cities to ascertain equitable distribution of water, reuse of wastewater and mapping of water bodies with respect to quantity and quality of water through a challenge process.
- As part of the survey, 'Pey Jal Survekshan', data will also be collected on wastewater management and condition of water bodies in the cities. As a first step, the Ministry has decided to launch the Survekshan in 10 cities- Agra, Badlapur, Bhubaneswar, Churu, Kochi, Madurai, Patiala, Rohtak, Surat and Tumkur.
- Jal Jeevan Mission Urban is designed to provide universal coverage of water supply to all households through functional taps in all 4,378 statutory towns in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal - 6. The total outlay proposed for JJM (U) is 2 lakh 87 thousand crore rupees which includes 10 thousand crore rupees for continuing financial support to AMRUT Mission.

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

Kiran Bedi removed as Puducherry Lieutenant-Governor

- President Ram Nath Kovind has removed Dr. Kiran Bedi as Lieutenant-Governor of Puducherry and appointed Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan, Governor of Telangana, to discharge the functions of the Lieutenant-Governor of Puducherry. This is in addition to her own duties.
- Puducherry is a union territory which is governed by Article 239A of the Constitution. The Government of Union Territories Act, 1963 provides for a Legislative Assembly of Puducherry, with a Council of Ministers to govern the UT. The same Act says that the UT will be administered by the President of India through a Lieutenant Governor. The Lt. Governor is appointed by the President for a term of five years.

Puducherry also known as Pondicherry is a union territory of India. It was formed out of four territories of former French India, namely Pondichéry (now Puducherry), Karikal (Karaikal), Mahé and Yanaon (Yanam), excluding Chandannagar. It is named after the largest district, Puducherry. Historically known as Pondicherry, the territory changed its official name to Puducherry on 20 September 2006. Puducherry, the capital of the territory was once the original headquarters of the French in India. It was under the French rule for 138 years and merged with the Indian Union on 1st November 1954.

2 Gujarat villages first in India to get LiFi

- In the first step towards creating smart villages in Gujarat, an Ahmedabad startup has powered up two villages with high-speed internet using LiFi-based technology. Akhund and Navanagar villages in Aravalli district of Gujarat have become India's first smart villages with LiFi-based internet connectivity.

- With this facility from the startup, **Nav Wireless Technology**, schools, hospitals, post offices, and government offices in these two villages will get faster and safer internet connection through existing electricity lines. Till now, only large, well-funded organizations have been able to develop LiFi – Wireless Optical Communication technology such as Nav Wireless Technologies Pvt Ltd in India.

Li-Fi (LiFi) is a wireless communication technology which utilizes light to transmit data and position between devices. The term was first introduced by **Harald Haas** during a 2011 TEDGlobal talk in Edinburgh. In technical terms, **Li-Fi is a light communication system that is capable of transmitting data at high speeds over the visible light, ultraviolet, and infrared spectrums.** In its present state, only LED lamps can be used for the transmission of visible light. In terms of its end use, the technology is similar to **Wi-Fi** — the key technical difference being that **Wi-Fi uses radio frequency to induce a voltage in an antenna to transmit data, whereas Li-Fi uses the modulation of light intensity to transmit data.** Li-Fi can theoretically transmit at speeds of up to **100 Gbit/s.** Li-Fi's ability to safely function in areas otherwise susceptible to electromagnetic interference (e.g. aircraft cabins, hospitals, military) is an advantage.

What is Sandes, the government's new Instant Messaging platform like WhatsApp

- The **National Informatics Centre** has launched an instant messaging platform called **Sandes** on the lines of WhatsApp. Like WhatsApp, the new NIC platform can be used for all kinds of communications by anyone with a mobile number or email id.
- After security scares, the Ministry of Home Affairs had in April last year issued an advisory to all government employees to avoid using platforms like **Zoom** for official communication. This was after the **Computer Emergency Response Team (Cert-In)** had also posted an advisory against Zoom over safety and privacy concerns.
- The idea for a secure communication network dedicated exclusively to government employees has been in the works for the past four years. The execution of the idea was accelerated during the last year.
- In **August 2020**, the NIC released the first version of the app, which said that the app could be used by both central and state government officials “for intra and inter-organisation communication.” The app was initially launched for **Android** users and then the service was extended to **iOS** users.

National Informatics Centre (NIC) is an attached office under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** in the Indian government. The NIC provides infrastructure to help support the delivery of government IT services and the delivery of some of the initiatives of **Digital India**. The NIC was established in 1976 and based in **Delhi**.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid foundation stone of key projects of power and urban sector in Kerala virtually

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of key projects of power and urban sector in **Kerala** through video conferencing.
- He inaugurated the **320 KV Pugalur - Thrissur Power Transmission Project**. It is a Voltage Source Converter based High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Project and has **India's first HVDC link featuring state-of-the-art VSC technology.** Built at a cost of **Rs 5070 crore**, it will facilitate transfer of 2000 MW power from the western region and help meet the growth in load for the people of Kerala.
- PM Modi laid the foundation set for the **Rs 94-crore Integrated Command and Control Centre project at Thiruvananthapuram.** It is being set up to host Smart Solutions for Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Corporation, and will act as a common point of action during emergency situations.

Kerala is a state on the southwestern, **Malabar Coast** of India. It was formed on **1 November 1956** following the **States Reorganisation Act** by combining Malayalam-speaking regions. Kerala has the highest literacy rate **93.91%** in the 2011 census; the highest life expectancy, **77 years**; and the highest sex ratio, **1,084 women per 1,000 men.** **Arif Mohammad Khan** is the current Governor of Kerala. Kerala is known as “**God's own country**” and is one of the popular tourist destinations in India. **Pinarayi Vijayan** is the current Chief Minister of Kerala, in office since **25 May 2016.** As per the census 2011, **Haryana** has the lowest child sex ratio i.e. **834 per thousand males.**

India's first centralised AC railway terminal to come up at Bengaluru

- India's first centrally air-conditioned Sir M Visvesvaraya Railway Terminal at Baiyappanahalli in Bengaluru will soon be inaugurated at Bengaluru and will have state-of-art facilities.
- The railway terminal situated in Bengaluru's Byappanahalli area is fully covered and is expected to be operational by February-end, as per reports. It is named after Bharat Ratna Sir M. Visvesvaraya. The terminal will handle more trains connecting the city with other railway stations within Karnataka and outside.

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 18th 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.

25 cities selected for Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge

- The Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, announced twenty-five(25) shortlisted cities for the 'Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge' cohort, in collaboration with the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) and technical partner WRI India. The Challenge is a 3-year initiative aimed at supporting early childhood-friendly neighbourhoods under the government's Smart Cities Mission.
- The selected cities were Agartala, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Dharamshala, Erode, Hubballi-Dharwad, Hyderabad, Indore, Jabalpur, Kakinada, Kochi, Kohima, Kota, Nagpur, Rajkot, Ranchi, Rohtak, Rourkela, Salem, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruppur, Ujjain, Vadodara, and Warangal.
- Under its prime objective of inclusive development, the Government of India is committed to enhancing opportunities in urban areas for all vulnerable citizens, especially young children. The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge, launched on November 4th, 2020, invited participation from all Smart Cities, capitals of States and UTs, and other cities with population above 5 lakhs were eligible to participate.

Smart Cities Mission is an innovative initiative under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people by enabling local development and harnessing technology as a means to create smart outcomes for citizens. "100 Smart Cities Mission" was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 June 2015. The Mission covers 100 cities for the duration of five years starting from the financial year (FY) 2015-16 to 2019-20.

'Free Gift Milk to Girl Students of Sikkim' initiative to benefit around 1,500 students

- Sikkim Chief Minister P. S. Tamang launched the 'Free Gift Milk to Girl Students of Sikkim' initiative at Gangtok. The initiative will benefit around 1,500 students who would be provided 200 mls of milk every day.
- Government initiatives to achieve the vision such as an incentive of Rupees eight per litre of milk produced by dairy farmers in addition to the standard price as well as other benefits for agricultural practices in Sikkim.

Sikkim is a state in northeastern India. Sikkim's capital and largest city is Gangtok. In 1975, after the Indian Army took over the city of Gangtok, a referendum was held that led to the deposition of the monarchy and On 16 May 1975, Sikkim became the 22nd state of the Indian Union. To enable the incorporation of the new state, the Indian Parliament amended the Indian Constitution. First, the 35th Amendment laid down a set of conditions that made Sikkim an "Associate State", a special designation not used by any other state. A month later, the 36th Amendment repealed the 35th Amendment, and made Sikkim a full state, adding its name to the First Schedule of the Constitution.

Indian and Indonesian Navies Conduct Exercise in Arabian Sea

- The Indian and Indonesian navies carried out a military exercise in the Arabian Sea to enhance operational interoperability and overall cooperation.

- **“Enhancing Interoperability & strengthening Bilateral Maritime Cooperation Indian Navy Ship INS Talwar and Indonesian Navy’s multirole Corvette KRI Bung Tomo, conducted Passage Exercise (PASSEX) in the Arabian Sea”.** India’s maritime cooperation with Indonesia witnessed a renewed momentum in the last few years.
- In November 2020, **India hosted the Malabar exercise**, in which the **navies of the US, Japan and Australia participated**. India invited Australia for the exercise, effectively making it a drill by all the Quad member nations.

Indonesia is a sovereign state in Southeast Asia, between the Indian and Pacific oceans. It is the world’s largest island country, with more than thirteen thousand islands. With over 261 million people, it is the world’s 4th most populous country as well as the most populous Muslim-majority country. Java is the world’s most populous island. Jakarta is the country’s capital. The rupiah (Rp) is the official currency of Indonesia. Joko Widodo also known as Jokowi is the seventh and current President of Indonesia.

First joint commands to be launched

- **India is set to begin a formal roll-out of its long-awaited theaterisation plan to best utilise its military’s resources amid growing security threats, with the Air Defence Command and the Maritime Theatre Command set to be launched by May.**
- **The commands are being set up in the backdrop of border tensions with China on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh and Pakistani hostility along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir, with a joint threat from the two nuclear-armed neighbours being acknowledged as a reality by the country’s military leadership, and at a time when India is demonstrating a muscular stance in the Indo-Pacific region.**
- **The Air Defence Command, which can come up in Prayagraj (Allahabad), would be the first to be arranged in April. It is going to manage the air defence assets of all of the three providers, and might be tasked with defending navy belongings from airborne enemies. The Maritime Theatre Command, to be headquartered in Karwar on the west coast, will come up the next month and be chargeable for securing India from seaborne threats and can have military and air power parts underneath it.**

Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces (CDS) is the head of the military staff of the Indian Armed Forces and the chief executive of the Department of Military Affairs. As the highest ranking officer of the armed forces, the CDS is the commanding officer and chairperson of the Joint Commanders and Staff Committee and here the CDS has an operational role where he is responsible as the chief military adviser to the government of India and the Ministry of Defence. As the head of the armed forces, the Chief of Defence Staff is also aided by the newly formed office of Vice Chief of Defence Staff, the nation’s second highest ranking military officer, and the three chiefs of staff of the army, navy and air force, who are the leaders of each respective branch. The first and current CDS is General Bipin Rawat, who took office on 1 January 2020. The position was first officially suggested in 1999 following the Kargil War through the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee.

Assam CM lays foundation of first Skill University of Eastern India

- **Assam’s Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal laid the foundations for the first East India Skills University in Darrang district, which aims to educate more than 10,000 students in 12 disciplines. The university is also being built at a cost of Rs. 1000 crore. The Skill University is reportedly expected to be completed and have an agreement with countries such as Germany, Taiwan, South Korea, Israel, Japan and England by 2026. The chief minister also said that he decided to create prestigious institutions in different districts of the state**

Jagdish Mukhi is the current Governor of Assam and Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk. Dispur is the capital of the state of Assam. Guwahati is the largest city of Assam and Northeastern India. Sarbananda Sonowal is current the Chief Minister of Assam. In 1874, on the formation of Assam as the Chief Commissioner’s Province, it was chosen as the headquarters of the new administration because of its convenient location between the Brahmaputra and Surma valleys and more so because the climate of Shillong was much cooler than tropical India. Shillong remained the capital of undivided Assam until the creation of the new state of Meghalaya on 21 January 1972, when Shillong became the capital of Meghalaya, and Assam moved its capital to Dispur in Guwahati.

Go Electric campaign launched to ensure energy security in the country

- The Union Minister of Road, Transport, and Highways Nitin Gadkari on February 19, 2021, launched the 'Go Electric Campaign' in order to spread awareness regarding the benefits of EV Charging Infrastructure and e-mobility as well as electric cooking in India.
- The Central Government launched the Go Electric campaign to boost the adoption of electric mobility vehicles and electric cooking appliances to ensure energy security in the country. Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadakari said, **Go Electric is a future of India** which will promote cost effective, environment friendly and indigenous electric products.
- Expressing concern over the huge imported cost of fossil fuel, he said, **carbon emission from transport vehicles is a major challenge and the country needs to promote use of such kinds of vehicles which operate on alternative mode of fuels like electric batteries, CNG and Bio-fuel.** He said, India would become the number one manufacturer of electric vehicles in the next five years. **India is the fourth largest auto market in the world** and some estimates suggest there are close to 170 active investors in EV startup ecosystem in the country.

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.**

India's first Digital Varsity comes up in Kerala

- **Digital University is set up by upgrading two-decade-old Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Kerala (IIITM-K).** The university is starting with five schools of knowledge. Each school will be offering master level programmes in computer science, informatics, applied electronics and humanities with various specialization of the industry 4.0 world.
- **The university is starting with five schools of knowledge**—School of Computer Science and Engineering; School of Digital Sciences; School of Electronic Systems and Automation; School of Informatics; and School of Digital Humanities and Liberal Arts, covering science, technology and humanities aspects of the Digital world.

EAM S Jaishankar launches BRICS-2021 website

- **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar launched the BRICS-2021 website.** The website will provide a comprehensive snapshot of the strong BRICS engagement and the exhaustive calendar of events during BRICS under the Chair ship of India. He also soft launched the upgraded facilities at Sushma Swaraj Bhavan that will serve as the Secretariat for BRICS Summit.

BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (China, Brazil, Russia and India), before the induction of South Africa in 2010. In 2009, the first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

ISA to launch World Solar Bank at global climate meet in Nov

- **The International Solar Alliance (ISA) plans to launch the World Solar Bank (WSB) at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November** a development that will support **India's attempt to secure leadership in the climate arena.**
- The development assumes significance, given that green finance will be among priority **themes at the climate meet called COP-26, which comes in the backdrop of US re-joining the Paris climate accord.**

The **International Solar Alliance** is a common platform for cooperation among sun-rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The initiative was launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015 by the then, President of France and the Prime Minister of India. In January 2016, Narendra Modi, and the then, French President François Hollande jointly laid the foundation stone of the **International Solar Alliance headquarters** and inaugurated the interim Secretariat at the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurugram, India.



Canada's Securities Regulator clears launch of world's first Bitcoin Exchange Traded Fund

- **Canada's main securities regulator has cleared the launch of the world's first bitcoin exchange-traded fund, an investment manager providing investors greater access to the cryptocurrency that has sparked an explosion in trading interest. The Ontario Securities Commission has approved the launch of Purpose Bitcoin ETF, Toronto-based asset Management Company Purpose Investments Inc. said in a statement.**
- **The OSC confirmed the approval in a separate statement to Reuters. "The ETF will be the first in the world to invest directly in physically settled Bitcoin, not derivatives, allowing investors easy and efficient access to the emerging asset class of cryptocurrency," Purpose Investments said.**
- **Investors have been able to trade bitcoin using futures contracts on the CME derivatives exchange. They can also buy closed-end investment funds, such as the Bitcoin Fund on the Toronto Stock Exchange.**
- **Elon Musk's Tesla revealed it had bought \$1.5 billion worth of the cryptocurrency and would soon accept it as a form of payment for its cars, while the cryptocurrency has been gaining acceptance among mainstream financial firms.**

Canada is a country located in the northern part of North America. Canada is the world's second-largest country by total area. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. Its capital is Ottawa, and its three largest metropolitan areas are Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Canadian dollar is the currency of Canada. Justin Pierre James Trudeau is serving as the 23rd and current Prime Minister of Canada since 2015.

A blockchain originally block chain, is a growing list of records, called blocks that are linked using cryptography. Each block contains a cryptographic hash of the previous block, a timestamp, and transaction data (generally represented as a Merkle tree). The blockchain was invented by a person (or group of people) using the name Satoshi Nakamoto in 2008 to serve as the public transaction ledger of the cryptocurrency bitcoin.

Italy gets Inexperienced Super-ministry as Draghi Eyes EU Funds

- **Prime Minister Mario Draghi has put climate change at the heart of his plans to run Italy by creating a super ministry to ensure a transition to green energy drives recovery and makes full use of European Union funds. Draghi's first job will be to redraft Italy's Recovery Plan, which must be handed to the European Commission by April to tap more than USD 240 billion of funds needed to revive the recession-hit economy.**
- **The creation of the new ministry helped to win over Italy's 5-Star Movement, which prides itself on its green credentials but had faced internal strife over the prospect of joining a cabinet containing its political foes. Under a European Union agreement, 37 percent of this money must be dedicated to the transition to a low carbon economy.**

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.

Nigeria's Okonjo-Iweala named first female, African WTO boss

- Nigeria's Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed as the first female and first African head of the beleaguered World Trade Organization (WTO), saying a stronger WTO would be vital for the global coronavirus recovery.
- The WTO called a virtual special general council meeting at which member states officially selected the former Nigerian finance minister and World Bank veteran as the global trade body's new director-general. She will take up her post on March 1 and her term, which is renewable, will run until August 31, 2025.

World Trade Organization (WTO) is an intergovernmental organization that regulates and facilitates international trade between nations. It officially commenced operations on 1 January 1995, pursuant to the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was established in 1948. The WTO is the world's largest international economic organization, with 164 member states representing over 96% of global trade and global GDP. The WTO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed as Director-General of the World Trade Organization. Her term will begin on 1 March 2021, when she will become the first woman and the first African to hold the office. Roberto Azevedo is a Brazilian career diplomat who served as Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) from 2013 until 2020.

Nigeria is a country in West Africa. Abuja is the capital city of Nigeria. Muhammadu Buhari has been President of Nigeria since 2015. The Naira is the currency of Nigeria.

'Pahela Phagun' spring festival celebrated in Bangladesh

- The first day of the spring called 'Pahela Phagun' was celebrated in Dhaka despite the continued shadow of Corona pandemic in the country.
- Cultural organisations held programmes at different venues in the city to herald the beginning of the spring. Programmes were held at the Suhrawardy Udyan, Nandan Manch of Shilpakala Academy and several other locations

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

India joins Iran-Russia's two-day navy exercise

- India has joined Iran and Russia in a two-day navy exercise dubbed "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021" in the northern part of the Indian Ocean.
- The drill will cover an area of 17,000 square kilometres (6,500 square miles). It will include shooting at sea and air targets and liberating hijacked ships, as well as search and rescue and anti-piracy operations.

Indian Ocean is the third-largest of the world's oceanic divisions, covering 70,560,000 km² (27,240,000 sq mi) or 19.8% of the water on Earth's surface. It is bounded by Asia to the north, Africa to the west and Australia to the east. Atlantic Ocean is the second-largest of the world's oceans. Pacific Ocean is the largest and deepest of Earth's oceanic divisions. Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench, located in the western north Pacific, is the deepest point in the world, reaching a depth of 10,928 meters (35,853 feet).

Britain's Karim Khan elected International Criminal Court prosecutor

- Parties to the International Criminal Court elected Britain's Karim Khan as the new prosecutor for a nine-year term starting on June 16. Mr. Khan won a secret ballot against three other candidates to replace lead prosecutor Fatou Bensouda. The 123-member Hague-based court, which began work nearly 20 years ago, handles war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and crimes of aggression.

- **British barrister Karim** is best known for heading the United Nations' special investigative team looking into Islamic State crimes in Iraq.
- In his 27-year law career Mr. Khan, who is also **Queens Counsel**, has **worked for almost every international criminal tribunal in roles in prosecution, defence and as counsel for victims**. At the ICC Khan is best known for being a lead defence counsel who has worked on cases from Kenya, Sudan and Libya.

International Criminal Court (ICC or ICtT) is an intergovernmental organization and international tribunal that sits in The Hague, Netherlands. The ICC is the first and only permanent international court with jurisdiction to prosecute individuals for the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression. **The ICC began operations on 1 July 2002, upon the entry into force of the Rome Statute**, a multilateral treaty that serves as the court's foundational and governing document. States which become party to the Rome Statute become members of the ICC, serving on the Assembly of States Parties, which administers the court. **As of December 2020, there are 123 ICC member states; 42 states have neither signed nor become parties to the Rome Statute.**

DR Congo President appoints Sama Lukonde as new Prime Minister

- **Congo President Felix Tshisekedi** appointed **Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde Kyenge**, director-general of Gécamines (General Quarries and Mines) as the **new DRC Prime Minister**.
- The 43-year-old, who was **appointed to Gécamines by Tshisekedi**, is a former sports minister and an ex-party member of the **former governor of Katanga Moïse Katumbi**, who recently postured his political lean in support of the President.

Democratic Republic of the Congo or simply either **Congo** or the **Congo**, and historically **Zaire**, is a country in **Central Africa**. **Kinshasa** is the capital and the largest city of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. **The Congolese franc** is the currency of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Bangladesh Supreme Court launches AI based translation software 'Amar Vasha'

- The Bangladesh Supreme Court launched the Artificial Intelligence (AI) based translation software '**Amar Vasha**' through a virtual event. The software will translate orders and judgements of the Supreme Court from English to Bangla.
- Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, Law Minister Anisul Haq, Law Secretary Md. Golam Sarwar and High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Vikram Doraiswami spoke during the virtual function.
- The Software has been developed with '**EkStep**' foundation of India. It is based on their '**Anuvaad**' translation software used in India to translate from English to Indian languages including Bangla. **Anuvaad** was deployed by the Supreme Court of India as **SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software)** from November 2019.

Georgia's PM resigns over move to arrest opposition leader

- **Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia** announced his resignation, following a court ruling that ordered the arrest of a man who leads the ex-Soviet nation's top opposition party.
- **Mr. Gakharia** said he was **stepping down because of disagreements** within his own team over the decision to arrest **Nika Melia**, chairman of the United National Movement opposition party.

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

India-Myanmar Kaladan project in final stages

- **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar** said the **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project** was in the final stages despite delays due to various challenges. **The visit to Guwahati follows a virtual meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum** which reviewed **hydropower** and connectivity projects in the northeast.

- The \$484 million Kaladan project, originally scheduled to be completed by 2014, will connect the Kolkata seaport with Sittwe in Rakhine State of Myanmar by sea. In Myanmar, it will link the Sittwe seaport with Paletwa in the Chin State via the Kaladan river boat route, and then from Paletwa by road to Mizoram.

Aung San Suu Kyi is a Myanmar politician, diplomat, author, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1991). She is the leader of the National League for Democracy and the first woman to serve as State Counsellor of Myanmar (equivalent to a prime minister) and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2016 to 2021. She is also the first woman to serve as Minister for Foreign Affairs. Myanmar's capital city is Naypyidaw and kyat is the currency of Myanmar. Sittwe Port is a deep-water port constructed by India in 2016 at Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State in Myanmar, on the Bay of Bengal. Situated at the mouth of the Kaladan River, the USD 120 Million port is being financed by India as a part of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, collaboration between India and Myanmar. Min Aung Hlaing is a Burmese army general who has been serving as Chairman of the State Administration Council of Myanmar since February 2021, a position which makes him the country's de facto leader.

UK is building the world's first airport for flying cars

- The Air-One facility will be open for just one month, and is collaboration between government agencies, private-sector businesses and the aviation industry.
- It has been developed by Urban Air Port, with the involvement of the Urban Air Mobility Division of Hyundai Motor Group and Coventry City Council.
- The pop-up airport is being built as a proof of concept of a zero-emissions hub for future modes of travel. Electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) vehicles are being suggested as a low-carbon way to ease congestion as people travel between urban centres.
- "Cars need roads. Trains need rails. Planes need airports. eVTOLs will need Urban Air Ports," said Ricky Sandhu, founder and executive chairman of Urban Air Port. "Flying cars used to be a futuristic flight of fancy. Air-One will bring clean urban air transport to the masses and unleash a new airborne world of zero emission mobility."

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commonly known as the United Kingdom (UK or U.K.), or Britain, is a sovereign country in north-western Europe, off the north-western coast of the European mainland. The United Kingdom includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland, and many smaller islands within the British Isles. The United Kingdom's capital is London. Boris Johnson has been Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Leader of the Conservative Party since July 2019. Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary) is Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other Commonwealth realms. Pound sterling is the official currency of the United Kingdom.



Reserve Bank to conduct purchase of government securities under Open Market Operations (OMO) for an aggregate amount of Rs.20, 000 crore

- The Reserve Bank of India has decided to conduct purchase of government securities under Open Market Operations (OMO) for an aggregate amount of Rs.20, 000 crore on February 25. This announcement comes in the wake of sharp jump in yields of government bonds over the past two weeks. After the announcement, India 10-year bond yield eased to 6.034% as compared to previous close of 6.071%.
- Holding policy interest rates unchanged at record lows, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das assured investors that its stance on liquidity remained accommodative and that the government's Rs.12.06 trillion borrowing programme for the fiscal year starting April would be managed in a smooth and orderly manner.
- Eligible participants should submit their bids in electronic format on the Reserve Bank of India Core Banking Solution E-Kuber system between 10:00 am and 11:00 am on February 25, 2021. Only in the event of system failure, physical bids would be accepted.

Open market operations is the sale and purchase of government securities and treasury bills by RBI or the central bank of the country. The objective of OMO is to regulate the money supply in the economy. When the RBI wants to increase the money supply in the economy, it purchases the government securities from the market and it sells government securities to suck out liquidity from the system. RBI carries out the OMO through commercial banks and does not directly deal with the public. OMO is one of the tools that RBI uses to smoothen the liquidity conditions through the year and minimise its impact on the interest rate and inflation rate levels.

Union Cabinet approves production-linked incentive scheme for telecom sector

- The Union Cabinet approved a production-linked incentive scheme for the telecom sector. Electronic and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said, the production-linked incentive worth Rs 12,195 Crore has been cleared for the telecom sector.
- Production Linked Incentive Scheme intends to promote manufacture of Telecom and Networking Products in India and proposes a financial incentive to boost domestic manufacturing and attract investments in the target segments of telecom and networking products in order to encourage Make in India.
- The scheme will also encourage exports of telecom and networking products 'Made in India'. Support under the Scheme will be provided to companies and entities engaged in manufacturing of specified telecom and networking products in India.
- Cabinet has also approved amendments in the Juvenile Justice Care and Protection of Children Act, 2015. Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani said, the amendments allow District Magistrates along with Assistant District Magistrates to monitor the functions of the agencies implementing JJ Act in every district.

India's telecommunication network is the second largest in the world by number of telephone users (both fixed and mobile phone) with 1171.80 million subscribers as on 31 Oct 2020. It has one of the lowest call tariffs in the world enabled by mega telecom operators and hyper-competition among them.

Tesla to Set up India's First Manufacturing Unit in Karnataka

- U.S.-based electric car giant Tesla would set up its manufacturing unit in Karnataka. Tesla founder and CEO Elon Musk had confirmed the electric car company's debut in India.

Tesla, Inc. (formerly Tesla Motors, Inc.) is an American electric vehicle and clean energy company based in Palo Alto, California. Tesla's current products include electric cars, battery energy storage from home to grid scale, solar panels and solar roof tiles, as well as other related products and services. Founded in July 2003 as Tesla Motors, the company's name is a tribute to inventor and electrical engineer Nikola Tesla. Elon Musk, who contributed most of the funding in the early days, has served as CEO since 2008.

Kotak Mahindra Bank launches Kotak Remit on mobile to send money abroad directly from phone

- Kotak Mahindra Bank launched its outward forex remittance service, Kotak Remit, hence allowing its users to directly send money abroad from their phones. The feature is already live on the Kotak Mobile Banking App.
- For the first time, Kotak customers can conveniently transfer money internationally to their beneficiaries straight from their mobile. The private sector lender said that it is an industry-first move, and customers will not have to furnish any physical documents for transactions up to \$25,000 or equivalent seamlessly to permissible geographies across the world.

Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. In 1985, Uday Kotak founded what later became an Indian financial services conglomerate. In February 2003, Kotak Mahindra Finance Ltd. (KMFL) became the first non-banking finance company in India to be converted into a bank. As of April 2020, it is the second largest Indian private sector bank by market capitalization.

Reserve Bank of India forms expert panel for urban co-operative banks

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted an expert committee under the chairmanship of its former Deputy Governor N.S. Vishwanathan on Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks.
- The eight-member panel will take stock of the regulatory measures taken by the Reserve Bank and other authorities in respect of urban co-operative banks (UCB) and assess their impact over the last five years to identify key constraints and enablers, if any, in fulfilment of their socio-economic objective.
- The other members of the committee include former NABARD Chairman Harsh Kumar Bhanwala, Mukund M. Chitale, who is a Chartered Accountant, M.S. Sriram, of IIM Bangalore among others. The panel will also draw up a vision document for a vibrant and resilient urban co-operative banking sector having regards to the principles of cooperation as well as depositors' interest and systemic issues.

Reserve Bank issues rules for HFCs

- The RBI issued directives to housing finance companies (HFCs) on maintenance of liquidity coverage ratio, risk management, asset classification and loan-to-value ratio. It said the directions, took immediate effect and were aimed at protecting the interests of investors and depositors. "All non-deposit taking HFCs with asset size of Rs. 100 crore and above and all deposit taking HFCs shall pursue liquidity risk management, to gap limits, making use of liquidity risk monitoring tools and adoption of stock approach to liquidity risk."

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.

Government will work with the Reserve Bank for execution of the bank privatisation plan announced in the Union Budget 2021-22

- To facilitate privatisation of public sector banks, the government is likely to bring amendments to two legislations later this year. Amendments would be required in the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970 and the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980 for privatisation, sources said. These Acts led to nationalisation of banks in two phases and provisions of these laws have to be changed for privatisation of banks, they said.
- As the government has already announced the list of legislative business for the Budget session, it is expected that these amendments may be introduced in the Monsoon session or later during the year, sources added. The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting Budget 2021-22 had announced privatisation of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) as part of disinvestment drive to garner Rs 1.75 lakh crore.
- 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%.
- “Other than IDBI Bank, we propose to take up the privatization of two Public Sector Banks and one General Insurance company in the year 2021-22,” she had said. The government last year consolidated 10 public sector banks into four and as a result the total number of PSBs came down to 12 from 27 in March 2017.
- In a first three-way merger, Bank of Baroda merged Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with itself in 2019. SBI had merged five of its associate banks - State Bank of Patiala, State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Travancore and State Bank of Hyderabad- and also Bharatiya Mahila Bank effective April 2017.

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. 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.

Government at centre has finalized the privatisation of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL)

- In a significant move that is likely to trigger public outcry in Andhra Pradesh, the Narendra Modi government at the Centre has finalized the privatisation of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL), the public sector corporate entity of Vizag Steel Plant (VSP).
- Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL) was wholly owned by the Government of India. In November 2010, the company was granted the Navratna status by the Government of India.
- According to the report submitted by the Union Ministry of Steel, Vizag Steel Plant is the only steel-manufacturing PSE in the country that has no captive iron ore mine. The losses were majorly due to the lack of captive mines due to which the RINL is procuring the iron ore supplies at market price, resulting in a loss of at least Rs.5,000 on every ton produced.

The current Hon'ble Minister of Steel is Shri Dharmendra Pradhan. According to the data provided by the World Steel Association, the biggest steel producing country is currently China, which accounted for 53.3% of world steel production in 2019. Asia produced 1,374.9 Mt of crude steel in 2020, an increase of 1.5% compared to 2019. China's crude steel production in 2020 reached 1,053.0 Mt, up by 5.2% on 2019. China's share of global crude steel production increased from 53.3% in 2019 to 56.5% in 2020. India's crude steel production for 2020 was 99.6 Mt, down by 10.6% on 2019. Japan produced 83.2 Mt in 2020, down 16.2% on 2019. South Korea produced 67.1 Mt, down 6.0% on 2019.



Inventions/Discoveries

Russia detects first case bird flu in humans, alerts WHO

- Russia said its scientists had detected the first case of transmission of the H5N8 strain of avian flu to humans and had alerted the World Health Organization.
- “Information about the world’s first case of transmission of the avian flu (H5N8) to humans has already been sent to the World Health Organization.”. “The discovery of these mutations when the virus has not still acquired an ability to transmit from human to human gives us all, the entire world, time to prepare for possible mutations and react in an adequate and timely fashion.”.

H5N8 is a subtype of the Influenza A virus (sometimes called bird flu) and is highly lethal to wild birds and poultry. H5N8 is typically not associated with humans; however, seven people in Russia were found to be infected in 2021. The H5N8 virus manifests itself in various ways, from asymptomatic and sub-clinical to highly lethal in some populations. Many of the findings in wild birds are based on the discovery of dead animals. H5N8 has previously been used in place of the highly pathogenic H1N1 in studies.

Fossils of ‘Dickinsonia’ found at Bhimbetka

- Researchers have discovered three fossils of the earliest known living animal — the 550-million-year-old ‘Dickinsonia’ — on the roof of the Bhimbetka Rock Shelters, about 40 km from Bhopal.
- One can identify the fossils from the white leaf-like patches with a central vertebra (central midrib) and connecting veins. While one fossil is 17 inches long, the other two are much smaller. The new discoveries, published in a journal, Gondwana Research, can be seen right at the beginning of the ‘Auditorium Cave’, the first of such caves at Bhimbetka, a UNESCO heritage site, located about 3.5 metres above the ground.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0 launched to expand immunization coverage across country

- Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0, (IMI 3.0) to expand immunization coverage across the country.
- It will have two rounds starting from the 22nd of this month and the 22nd of March this year and will be conducted in pre-identified 250 districts and urban areas across 29 States and UTs in the country.
- IMI 3.0 is aimed at reaching the unreached population with all the available vaccines under Universal Immunisation Programme and thereby accelerates the full immunization and complete immunization coverage of children and pregnant women.
- The focus of the Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0 will be the children and pregnant women who have missed their vaccine doses during the COVID-19 pandemic. They will be identified and vaccinated during the two rounds. Beneficiaries from migration areas and hard to reach areas will be targeted as they may have missed their vaccine doses during COVID19. The present campaign will target achieving 90 percent Full Immunization Coverage in all districts of the country and sustain the coverage through immunization system strengthening and foster India’s march towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** is an Indian government ministry charged with **health policy in India**. It is also responsible for all government programs relating to family planning in India. The Minister of Health and Family Welfare holds cabinet rank as a member of the Council of Ministers. **The current minister is Harsh Vardhan.** **Rajkumari Bibiji Amrit Kaur** was the **first Health Minister of India in 1947** and remained in office until 1957.

Rare Mandarin Duck Spotted in Wetland in Assam after 100 years

- A mandarin duck was spotted in Assam earlier this week for the first time in 118 years by a team of the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI). The rare colourful duck was spotted in the wetland Maguri Motapung Beel, near Baghjan in Tinsukia.
- Maguri Beel had suffered damage last year following a blowout in one of the oil wells belonging to the Oil India limited in Baghjan. The oil well caught fire on 9 June 2020 and burned for 170 days, before the blowout was doused in November. The mandarin duck has a distinctive, elaborate plumage and it nests in trees. The bird is native to East Asia, but has established feral populations throughout Western Europe. The duck has primary habitat is in eastern China and southern Japan.

HCL Tech signs MoU with IIT-K for cybersecurity

- HCL Technologies (HCL) said it has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) to collaborate in the area of cybersecurity.
- As part of the MoU, HCL will work with C3iHub, a specialised cybersecurity research centre at IITK. HCL and IITK will bring in real-world industry exposure to carry out joint initiatives and research.

HCL Technologies is an Indian multinational technology company that specializes in information technology (IT) services and consulting, headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India. It is a subsidiary of HCL Enterprise. Originally a research and development division of HCL, it emerged as an independent company in 1991 when HCL entered into the software services business. **Shiv Nadar is the founder and chairman of HCL Technologies Limited and the Shiv Nadar Foundation.**

IIT Madras' home-grown e-bike

- An IIT Madras-Incubated start-up has recently launched PiMo, a sustainable utility e-bike. Pi Beam's new Electric Two-Wheeler can charge faster than a smartphone.
- Riding PiMo does not require a license or registration. Priced at Rs. 30,000 it is economical and eliminates fuel costs. It offers 'Battery Swapping' and a drained battery can be exchanged for a fully charged one at designated locations.
- PiMo is one of the few EVs in the local market that is almost completely made in India. 90% of its components, including the batteries and controllers, are manufactured in India.

Teeth from Siberian mammoths yield oldest DNA ever recovered

- Scientists have recovered the oldest DNA on record, extracting it from the molars of mammoths that roamed northeastern Siberia up to 1.2 million years ago in research that broadens the horizons for understanding extinct species.
- The researchers had recovered and sequenced DNA from the remains of three individual mammoths — elephant cousins that were among the large mammals that dominated Ice Age landscapes — entombed in permafrost conditions conducive to preservation of ancient genetic material.
- While the remains were discovered starting in the 1970s, new scientific methods were needed to extract the DNA. The oldest of the three, discovered near the Krestovka River, was approximately 1.2 million years old. Another, from near the Adycha river, was approximately 1 to 1.2 million years old. The third, from near the Chukochya river, was roughly 700,000 years old.
- Until now, the oldest DNA came from a horse that lived in Canada's Yukon Territory about 700,000 years ago. By way of comparison, our species, Homo sapiens, first appeared roughly 300,000 years ago. DNA is the self-replicating material that carries genetic information in living organisms - sort of a blueprint of life.

Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) is a molecule composed of two polynucleotide chains that coil around each other to form a double helix carrying genetic instructions for the development, functioning, growth and reproduction of all known organisms and many viruses. **DNA and ribonucleic acid (RNA)** are nucleic acids. Alongside proteins, lipids and complex carbohydrates (polysaccharides), nucleic acids are one of the four major types of macromolecules that are essential for all known forms of life. The two DNA strands are known as polynucleotides as they are composed of simpler monomeric units called nucleotides. Each nucleotide is composed of one of four nitrogen-containing nucleobases (cytosine [C], guanine [G], adenine [A] or thymine [T]), a sugar called deoxyribose, and a phosphate group. “Molecular Structure of Nucleic Acids: A Structure for Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid” was the first article published to describe the discovery of the double helix structure of DNA, using X-ray diffraction and the mathematics of a helix transform. It was published by Francis Crick and James D. Watson in the scientific journal Nature on pages 737–738 of its 171st volume (dated 25 April 1953).

IIT Bombay team led Airth launches the world’s first antimicrobial air purifier

- **Airth is ready to launch the first of its kind antimicrobial air purifier.** It is developed by the visionary team from IIT Bombay and uses patent filed & tested technology for protection against airborne diseases such as COVID-19.
- **The device goes a step ahead of surface sanitisers and protects people within a closed space,** such as an office. Airth antimicrobial air purifiers stand by their words to help organisations provide clean and pathogen-free air to their customers and employees. “These meticulously designed air purifiers use proprietary SAVE (Sanitizer for Airborne Virus Elimination) technology developed by IIT Bombay researchers.

India successfully conducts joint user trials of indigenously developed Helina, Dhruvastra Anti-Tank Guided Missiles

- **India successfully test-fired indigenously-developed anti-tank guided missile systems ‘Helina’ and ‘Dhruvastra’.** This paved way for their induction into the Army and the Indian Air Force respectively.
- **Joint User Trials for Helina (Army Version) and Dhruvastra (Air Force Version) Missile Systems designed and developed by DRDO were carried out from Advanced Light Helicopter platform in desert ranges.**
- **Five missions were carried out for evaluating the missile capabilities in minimum and maximum range.** The missiles were fired in hover and max forward flight against realistic static and moving targets. Some missions were carried out with warheads against derelict tanks. A mission was carried out against a moving target from a forward flying helicopter.
- **The ‘Helina’ and ‘Dhruvastra’ are third-generation anti-tank guided missiles that can engage targets both in direct hit mode as well as top attack mode**
- **The system has all weather day and night capability and can defeat battle tanks with conventional armour as well as with explosive reactive armour.**
- **Indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation, it is one of the most-advanced anti-tank weapons in the world.** Now the missile systems are ready for induction. Defence minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO, Indian Army and Indian Air Force for this achievement.

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

Dharmendra Pradhan urges Centre to set up Centre of Excellence on Maritime Biotechnology in Odisha

- **Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has urged the Centre to set up a Centre of Excellence on Maritime Biotechnology in Bhubaneswar in Odisha.**

- In order to strike a balance between Odisha's delicate maritime ecosystems and the growth of its blue economy, there is a need for enhanced focus on scientific research, which can be ensured by the setting up of the Centre of Excellence on Maritime Biotechnology at the Institute of Life Sciences in Bhubaneswar.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan addresses 'Population versus Planet' Conference

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare participated and expressed his views in WION and Zee Media's 'Population versus Planet' Conference which is a part of its year-long campaign called 'Mission Sustainability: Population vs Planet'.
- This e-conclave marking the campaign's launch will host deliberations between numerous policy experts, demographic researchers & academicians on socially important themes like population stabilisation, empowering women & youth through education among various others as the world population witnesses an increase from 1 billion in the year 1800 to 7.8 billion.

Indian-American scientist Swati Mohan leads NASA's Mars 2020 mission

- As the world witnessed the historic landing of NASA's Perseverance rover on the Martian surface, it was Indian-American scientist, Swati Mohan, who led the guidance, navigation, and control operations of the Mars 2020 mission.
- Ms. Mohan also confirmed that the rover had survived a particularly tricky plunge through the Martian atmosphere.
- Raised in Northern Virginia and Washington DC metro area, she completed her bachelor's degree from Cornell University in Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, and her M.S. and Ph.D from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Aeronautics/Astronautics.
- The Perseverance Rover was launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida on July 30, 2020 – made its landing on an ancient river delta in a lake that once filled Jezero Crater.
- The Perseverance rover carried seven instruments to conduct an “unprecedented science and test new technology on the Red Planet,” according to NASA. As it spends one Mars year which is equal to two years on Earth, the rover will search for signs of ancient microbial life, which will advance NASA's mission to explore the history of habitability in Mars. The rover has a drill that it will use to collect core samples of Martian rock and soil, then store them in sealed tubes for pickup by a future mission that would take them back to Earth for detailed analysis.
- First, Perseverance carried a unique instrument, MOXIE or Mars Oxygen ISRU Experiment: which for the first time will manufacture molecular oxygen on Mars using carbon dioxide from the carbon-dioxide-rich atmosphere. There is the new push for ISRU at NASA: in NASA jargon, ISRU means In Situ Resource Utilization: or the use of local resources to meet human needs or requirements of the spacecraft. Without ISRU, exploration of Mars in the future decades will be incredibly expensive and thereby impossible.

Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun and the second-smallest planet in the Solar System, being larger than only Mercury. In English, Mars carries the name of the Roman god of war and is often referred to as the “Red Planet”. The latter refers to the effect of the iron oxide prevalent on Mars's surface, which gives it a reddish appearance distinctive among the astronomical bodies visible to the naked eye. 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.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Australian Open 2021: Hsieh Su-Wei becomes oldest first-time quarterfinalist in Grand Slam

- In Australian Open Tennis Hsieh Su-Wei has become the oldest first-time quarterfinalist in a Grand Slam. Taiwanese Hsieh Su-wei stunned 19th seed Czech Marketa Vondrousova in straight sets.

Australian Open is a tennis tournament held annually over the last fortnight of January at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Australia. It was first played at the Warehouseman's Cricket Ground in Melbourne in November 1905. The tournament is the first of the four Grand Slam tennis events held each year, preceding the French Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open.

Star's Sanjog Gupta reappointed to chair FICCI's sports committee

- The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (Ficci) announced the re-appointment of Sanjog Gupta, head-sports, Star India, as the chairperson to its sports committee for 2021.
- Ficci is the first national chamber of commerce to establish a dedicated sports vertical under the aegis of the sports committee.

Odisha CM lays foundation stone of country's largest hockey stadium in Rourkela

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation stone of the country's largest hockey stadium in the steel city Rourkela during his one-day visit to Sundargarh district.
- The stadium will be named after noted freedom fighter Birsa Munda and will jointly host the men's Hockey World Cup- 2023 along with the Kalinga Hockey Stadium in Bhubaneswar.
- With a seating capacity of 20,000, the new stadium will be located on the Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) campus.

Seiko Hashimoto takes over as Tokyo Olympic president

- Seiko Hashimoto appeared in seven Olympics - four Winter Olympics and three Summer Olympics. According to historian Dr. Bill Mallon, her seven appearances is the most by any "multi-season" athlete in the games.
- Hashimoto made even more history in Japan, where women are still rare in the boardrooms and positions of political power. Hashimoto was named as president of the Tokyo Olympic organising committee after a meeting of its male-dominated executive board. She replaces 83-year-old Yoshiro Mori, a former Japanese prime minister who was forced to resign after making sexist comments about women. Hashimoto had been serving as the Olympic minister in the cabinet of Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga.

Elise Mertens, Aryna Sabalenka win women's doubles title of Australian Open

- In Tennis, the Belgian and Belarus pair of Elise Mertens and Aryna Sabalenka has won the WOMEN'S doubles final of the Australian Open 2021. They defeated Barbora Krejčíková and Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic.

- Earlier, **Defending champions Rajeiv Ram and Joe Salisbury** won the **Australian Open Semi-finals of the Men's doubles** against **Australia born Jamie Murray and Brazilain Bruno Soares**. In the finals they will face the Croatian-Slovakian duo **Ivan Dodig and Filip Polasek**.

Chris Morris becomes costliest ever player at IPL auction for Rajasthan Royal

- **Chris Morris** became the **costliest ever player** at an **IPL auction** for **Rajastyhan Royal** while **Krishnappa Gowtham** became the **costliest Indian uncapped player** for **Chennai Super Kings** at the **IPL 2021 auction**. The **IPL 2021 auction** was held in **Chennai** and all the **8 teams** are looking to make some additions to their squad.
- The **Indian Premier League (IPL)** is a **professional Twenty20 cricket league in India** usually contested between **March and May** of every year by **eight teams representing eight different cities or states in India**. The league was **founded by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** in **2007**. The **IPL** has an **exclusive window in ICC Future Tours Programme**

Australian Open: Naomi Osaka lifts Women's title defeating Jennifer Brady

- **Japan's Naomi Osaka** cemented her place as the **outstanding star of the women's singles game** by beating **American Jennifer Brady** in the **Australian Open final** to win her **fourth Grand Slam title**.
- **Osaka** has remained unbeaten in **major finals win in Melbourne**. **Osaka** has now won **two Australian Open titles** after also triumphing at **Melbourne Park** in **2019**, with her other **Grand Slam successes** coming at the **US Open in 2018 and 2020**. She has not suffered a defeat since **February 2020** after winning her past **20 matches**.

Indian tennis: Ankita Raina lifts first WTA title in doubles at Phillip Island Trophy

- **India No 1 Ankita Raina** added another **memorable first** to her **Australia trip** by claiming her **first WTA title** with a **doubles win** at the **Phillip Island Trophy**. **Raina** and her partner **Russian Kamilla Rakhimova** beat **Anna Blinkova and Anastasia Potapova** in the **final**.

MISCELLANEOUS

1st 'India Toy Fair-2021' organized from 27th February to 2nd March

- With a view to boost toy manufacturing in the country and improve its global market shares in line with the theme of “Atmanirbhar Bharat, the 1st “India Toy Fair-2021” is being organized on a virtual platform from 27th February to 2nd March 2021.
- It is a first-of-its-kind initiative that aims to bring together all stakeholders of the Indian toy industry to create sustainable linkages. It will promote dialogue for the holistic development of the industry and present to the globe the richness and vastness of India's toy manufacturing capabilities. The website of India Toy Fair-2021 www.theindiatoyfair.in.
- The website for the 'India Toy Fair 2021' will enable children, parents, teachers, exhibitors, etc. to register themselves to participate in the virtual fair and showcase various facets of the Indian Toy ecosystem.
- It is the first ever digitally accessible exhibition and platform which will provide an opportunity to not only explore and buy a variety of toys from over 1000 exhibitors across States and UTs of India, but also to participate in insightful webinars, panel discussions and activities and network with various stakeholders of the toy industry.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launches e-Chhawani portal

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched e-Chhawani portal. Launching the portal, Mr Singh said, residents of Cantonment areas can register their complaints regarding civic issues and resolve them while sitting at home.
- The minister said, government is committed to refine the system and improve the Ease of Living for people. Mr Singh said, e-Chhawani project aims to provide online municipal services to more than 20 lakh citizens across 62 Cantonment Boards through a multi-tenancy central platform. Through this portal, online application for renewal of leases, online registration of births and deaths and online application for water and sewerage connection will be very simpler.

Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani rolls out commercial Jute seed distribution scheme

- Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani rolled out the commercial Jute seed distribution scheme. Jute Corporation of India had last year, signed an MoU with National Seeds Corporation for commercial distribution of 1 thousand Metric Tonne certified jute seeds for the year 2021-22.
- Ms. Irani said both the Agriculture Ministry and the Textile Ministry is working with enhanced synergy to extend support to the Jute growing farmers. She informed that centre's decision regarding mandatory packaging in jute materials will benefit over 4 lakh farmers directly including nearly 40 lakh agri-based households.

PM Narendra Modi launched 'Mahabahu-Brahmaputra' initiative and several development projects in Assam

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Mahabahu-Brahmaputra, laid the foundation stone of Dhubri-Phulbari Bridge and performs Bhoomi Poojan for construction of Majuli Bridge Assam through video conferencing.
- The launch of Mahabahu-Brahmaputra, which aims to improve connectivity in the eastern states, was marked by the inauguration of the Ro-Pax vessel operations between Neamati-Majuli Island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati and Dhubri-Hatsingimari.
- The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the longest river bridge of the country over the Brahmaputra between Dhubri in Assam and Phulbari in Meghalaya. The 19 kilometer long 4 lane bridge will reduce the distance of 205 kilometer to be travelled by road to 19 kilometer only.

Mamata Banerjee launches 'Maa' scheme to provide meals at RS. 5 to poor people

- Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee launched “Maa” canteens for providing subsidised cooked meals for the poor and the destitute at a nominal cost of Rs. 5. People will get a platter of rice, dal, a vegetable and egg curry.

Centre for Land Warfare Studies organises Seminar-cum-Webinar, named Divya-Drishti 202

- **Indian Army National Seminar-cum-Webinar, named as Divya-Drishti 202 on Multi-Domain Operations: Future of Conflicts** was organised by Centre for Land Warfare Studies, CLAWS.
- **Divya-Drishti 2021**, meaning divine or cognitive perception required for an informed vision, aimed to bring together national and international experts and practitioners to deliberate on the complex and emerging subject on multi-domain operations.

Women & Child Development Ministry in association with MyGov launches online campaign to celebrate Women in science

- **On the International Day of Women & Young Girls in Science**, Ministry of Women & Child Development in association with Ministry of Education and MyGov, Ministry of Electronics and Information technology launched an online campaign to celebrate women who have carved a niche for themselves in the field of STEM and also encourage young girls who aspire to excel in STEM and contribute towards nation building.
- **The campaign honours our young girls from across the country** who have performed well in the subjects of Maths and Science & encourage these STEM STARS to make us proud in days to come. This initiative is as per the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of “Seeding the powers of idea and innovation in schoolchildren will broaden the base of our innovation pyramid.”
- **The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is the 11th day of February**, by resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on 22 December 2015. The day recognises the critical role women and girls play in science and technology. **The day’s purpose is to promote full and equal access to participation in science for women and girls.**

Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the statue of Raja Suheldev in Uttar Pradesh

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the statue of Raja Suheldev in Bahraich district of Eastern Uttar Pradesh**, maintaining that history of India, written by those who enslaved us, has not been just to martyrs like him. He also laid the foundation stone for tourism-oriented development works at Chitaura Jheel.

Filmmaker Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari turns author with ‘Mapping Love’

- **Filmmaker Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari has turned author with her debut fiction novel, titled Mapping Love.** The director’s book will be published by Rupa Publications in May this year. Iyer Tiwari, known for acclaimed films like Nil Battey Sannata, Bareilly Ki Barfi and Panga, said it took her three years to bring the book to life.

World famous Khajuraho Dance Festival begins in Madhya Pradesh

- **In Madhya Pradesh, the seven-day 47th Khajuraho Dance Festival is organized** from the 20th to the 26th of February, 2021 **at the world-famous tourist destination Khajuraho.**
- **The Minister of Culture and Tourism of Madhya Pradesh Ms Usha Thakur inaugurated the globally acclaimed ‘Khajuraho Dance Festival.** Significantly, this ceremony was held once again in the temple complex after a gap of 44 years. This gives the audience a chance to watch the performance amid the aura of the temple.

Dharmendra Pradhan addresses Joint Conference of 11th World PetroCoal Congress

- **Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan** said that the country is creating a global model of energy justice by balancing its accessibility and affordability. Mr. Pradhan said that India will chart its own strategy and pathway for green energy transition. He said this **at the Joint Conference of the 11th World PetroCoal Congress and World Future Fuel Summit in New Delhi.**
- **The Minister highlighted the increase in LPG coverage from 56 per cent to nearly 99.5 per cent in less than seven years.** He also mentioned that to reduce vehicular pollution, the country leapfrogged from BS-4 to BS-6 emission standards from April last year. On the gas-based economy, Mr. Pradhan said that investment of 60 billion US dollars is underway for developing gas infrastructure which includes pipelines, city gas distribution and LNG regasification terminals. He said that One Nation, One-Gas Grid will connect all corners of the country.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Twitter's top lawyer, UK's FM and 3 other Indian-origin people feature in TIME's 100 emerging leaders list

- Five Indian-origin personalities, including Twitter's top lawyer Vijaya Gadde and UK's finance minister Rishi Sunak, and an Indian activist feature in TIME magazine's annual list of 100 "emerging leaders who are shaping the future".
- The 2021 TIME100 Next, is an expansion of TIME's flagship TIME100 franchise of the most influential people in the world and highlights 100 emerging leaders who are shaping the future.
- Other Indian-origin personalities on the list are Instacart founder and CEO Apoorva Mehta, doctor and Executive Director of nonprofit Get Us PPE Shikha Gupta and founder of nonprofit Upsolve Rohan Pavuluri. Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad is also on the list.

US military's first India-born female Muslim chaplain graduates from Chaplin College

- Saleha Jabeen, US military's first India-born female Muslim chaplain has graduated from Air Force Basic Chaplain Course, vowing to take her duty as a spiritual mentor very seriously.
- Jabeen was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, becoming the first female Muslim chaplain in the Department of the Defense. She came to the United States 14 years ago as an international student.

Rashmi Samant First Indian Woman to Head Oxford Students' Union

- Rashmi Samant has made history by becoming the first Indian woman to head the Oxford Students' Union. An alumna of Karnataka's Manipal Institute of Technology, Ms Samant in her LinkedIn profile says she is "a sustainable energy enthusiast who believes in effective policymaking and energy equality for healing the deteriorating climate of the world".
- Ms Samant won the students' union election with 1,996 votes, more than all her opponents put together, the university said in a post on its website.

ISA announces Dr Ajay Mathur as its new Director-General

- International Solar Alliance (ISA) has announced Dr. Ajay Mathur as its new Director General following his election at the first special assembly of ISA members. Dr Mathur replaces Mr Upendra Tripathy, who has served as Director General since the inception of the ISA.
- A coalition of 73 member countries, ISA was established in 2015 to accelerate the demand for and use of safe, sustainable, and affordable solar energy for all.
- It aims to mobilize over one trillion dollars of investment into solar projects by 2030 through focused advocacy, policy and regulatory support, capacity building, and by overcoming perceived investment barriers.

Indian-origin Preeti Sinha to lead UN Capital Development Fund

- The UN Capital Development Fund has appointed Indian-origin investment and development banker Preeti Sinha as its Executive Secretary, whose focus will be on providing micro-finance assistance to women, youth, small and medium-sized enterprises in under-served communities. Sinha commenced her tenure as UNCDF Executive Secretary, the highest leadership rank in the institution.

AWARDS

Manipur doctor gets Japan's highest honour for promoting ties between 2 nations

- Japan has conferred the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays decoration on Manipur physician and former president of state tourism forum, Dr Thangjam Dhabali Singh, to honour his contribution to strengthening ties between Japan and India, and Japan and Manipur.
- Dr Dhabali was involved in organising the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Imphal in 2014, an event attended by dignitaries from Japan, Britain and Australia. The decoration was constituted by Japanese Emperor Meiji in 1875.
- It is the highest order conferred by the government of Japan, in the name of his majesty the emperor, upon those who have made distinguished achievements in international relations, promotion of Japanese culture, achievements in their respective field, development in welfare or preservation of the environment.

Andhra Pradesh CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy conferred Skoch Chief Minister of the Year Award

- The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has been conferred the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year Award. He has been selected the "SKOCH CM of the Year" on the basis of study of project level outcomes across various states of India. Quite a few of them from Andhra Pradesh stand out to be nationally significant.
- The Award has been presented to the CM by Chairman, Skoch group, Sameer Kochhar personally at Tadepalli in Andhra Pradesh. SKOCH Award, independently instituted in 2003, is India's honest civilian honour conferred by an independent organisation as a third party assessment. It is the only award in the country that is based on felt-needs assessment and outcome evaluation based on evidence.

Anthony Fauci wins \$1 million Israeli prize for 'defending science'

- Dr. Anthony Fauci has won the \$1 million Dan David Prize for "defending science" and advocating for vaccines now being administered worldwide to fight the coronavirus pandemic.
- The Israel-based Dan David Foundation named President Joe Biden's chief medical adviser as the winner of one of three prizes. It said he had earned the recognition over a lifetime of leadership on HIV research and AIDS relief, as well as his advocacy for the vaccines against COVID-19.

Theodore Baskaran wins Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020

- Sanctuary Nature Foundation honours conservation hero S Theodore Baskaran with Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020 for his role in wildlife conservation and his continuing legacy of writings in Tamil and English to the conservation discourse
- Writer, historian, naturalist, and activist, S Theodore Baskaran sounds hopeful as he gets talking about conservation. "There is more awareness among people, which is a good thing. Tigers and leopards have been protected, peacocks have multiplied and we have hundreds of sanctuaries providing a safe haven for wildlife."
- Theodore is the winner of this year's Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award, instituted by the Sanctuary Nature Foundation's Sanctuary Wildlife Service Awards, for his dedication to wildlife conservation and his writing prowess in English and Tamil that contribute to the conservation discourse. And, for inspiring young naturalists along the way.

WCCB receives Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020

- The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020 awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said that WCCB getting the award twice in three years is a testimony of India's commitment towards ending wildlife crime. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been awarded this year under the Innovation category. Earlier, the Bureau had received the award in 2018 under the same category.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Radio Day being celebrated across globe

- **World Radio Day (WRD)** is being **celebrated across the Globe**. The day was proclaimed by the member states of UNESCO in 2011 and subsequently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly as an International Day.
- According to UNESCO, **radio is a powerful medium for celebrating humanity and constitutes a platform for democratic discourse**. Radio has the ability to reach out to the widest audience, in the process having the ability to shape a society's experience of diversity and providing a platform for everyone to be represented and heard.
- **The theme of World Radio Day 2021, "New World, New Radio"**, will highlight the services rendered by the radio medium throughout the crisis.

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 was celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice**.
- **This year's World Social Justice day theme constituted as "A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy"** which thereby focusing on the necessities of the people who have no access to the resources amid rapid increase in the technology that has been resulted in "digital divide".

International Mother Language Day 21 February

- **International Mother Language Day is observed on February 21, every year to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. International Mother Language Day recognizes that languages and multilingualism can advance inclusion and the Sustainable Development Goals'** focus on leaving no one behind. UNESCO believes education, based on the first language or mother tongue, must begin from the early years as early childhood care and education is the foundation of learning.
- **The theme of the 2021 International Mother Language Day is "Fostering multilingualism for inclusion in education and society"**.

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. In a first for an Indian State, which of the following states signed a memorandum of understanding with the UN Environment Programme to achieve climate resilience and low carbon development by 2040?
(a) West Bengal (b) Bihar (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Madhya Pradesh
2. The Government is working to provide tap water connections to over 19 crore rural households under the Jal Jeevan Mission (Rural) by year _____.
(a) 2022 (b) 2024 (c) 2026 (d) 2030
3. According to Union Budget 2021, FDI in insurance to be hiked to _____ from 49% now.
(a) 51% (b) 60% (c) 74% (d) 100%
4. Who is the first Indian woman to head the Oxford Students' Union?
(a) Anandita Nadar (b) Rashmi Samant (c) Yogita Kulshrestha (d) Anita Bhatia
5. Recently, Indian Army National Seminar-cum-Webinar, named as _____ on Multi-Domain Operations: Future of Conflicts was organised by Centre for Land Warfare Studies, CLAWS.
(a) Divya-Drishti 202 (b) Divya-Vision 2045
(c) Divya-Drishti Vision 2021 (d) Divya-Nain 2026
6. Which of the following countries securities regulator clears launch of World's first Bitcoin Exchange Traded Fund?
(a) Canada (b) New Zealand (c) Australia (d) Mexico
7. Which of the following is building the world's first airport for flying cars?
(a) United Kingdom (b) United States of America
(c) France (d) Germany
8. The U.S.-based electric car giant Tesla would set up its manufacturing unit in _____.
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Kerala
9. Who has recently become the oldest first-time quarterfinalist in a Grand Slam?
(a) Marketa Vondrousova (b) Hsieh Su-Wei
(c) Serena Williams (d) Martina Navarotilova
10. World Radio Day is an international day celebrated on _____ each year.
(a) 4th February (b) 7th February (c) 13th February (d) 16th February
11. Name the Filmmaker who has turned author with her debut fiction novel, titled Mapping Love.
(a) Meghana Gulzar (b) Farah Khan (c) Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari (d) Divya Khosla Kumar
12. Recently, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted an expert committee under the chairmanship of its former Deputy Governor _____ on Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks.
(a) H. R. Khan (b) Usha Thorat (c) N.S. Vishwanathan (d) Viral V Acharya
13. Which of the following European countries has got a super ministry recently to ensure a transition to green energy drives recovery and makes full use of European Union funds?
(a) Portugal (b) Ireland (c) Italy (d) Finland
14. Recently, Nigeria's Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed as the first female and first African head of the beleaguered _____.
(a) World Trade Organization (b) World Bank
(c) African Development Bank (d) International Monetary Fund

15. Recently, The first day of the spring called 'Pahela Phagun' was celebrated in which of the following Asian countries?
(a) Bhutan (b) Nepal (c) Bangladesh (d) Myanmar
16. Recently, Kotak Mahindra Bank launched its outward forex remittance service, Kotak Remit, hence allowing its users to directly send money abroad from their phones. Who is the current vice chairman and managing director of Kotak Mahindra Bank?
(a) Uday Kotak (b) Rajnish Kumar (c) Sandeep Bakshi (d) Anand Mahindra
17. Recently, Researchers have discovered three fossils of the earliest known living animal the 550-million-year-old 'Dickinsonia' on the roof of the _____.
(a) Bagh Caves (b) Bhimbetka Rock Shelters
(c) Ellora Caves (d) Borra Cave
18. Who among the following won the \$1 million Dan David Prize for "defending science" and advocating for vaccines now being administered worldwide to fight the coronavirus pandemic?
(a) Dr Mark Albert (b) Dr Atbert Matthes (c) Dr. Anthony Fauci (d) Dr Alex Fret
19. Recently, The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) announced the re-appointment of _____ as the chairperson to its sports committee for 2021.
(a) Sanjog Gupta (b) Rajat Sharma (c) Deepa Chaurasiya (d) Sandeep Patil
20. In a recent development, Schools and hostels under the Ministry of Education's Samagra Shiksha scheme will now be renamed after _____.
(a) Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (b) Deen Dayal Upadhyay
(c) Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose (d) Atal Bihari Vajpayee
21. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the statue of Raja Suheldev in _____ district of Eastern Uttar Pradesh.
(a) Gorakhpur (b) Kushinagar (c) Gonda (d) Bahraich
22. Which of the following ministries has launched a Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan under Jal Jeevan Mission- Urban, JJM-U recently?
(a) Ministry of Rural Development (b) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
(c) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (d) Ministry of Jal Shakti
23. Recently, the Joint Conference of the 11th World PetroCoal Congress and World Future Fuel Summit was organized in _____.
(a) Mumbai (b) New Delhi (c) Jaipur (d) Bhubaneswar
24. Which of the following countries has joined Iran and Russia in a two-day navy exercise dubbed "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021" in the northern part of the Indian Ocean?
(a) India (b) Pakistan (c) Bangladesh (d) Mauritius
25. Recently, Japan has conferred the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays decoration on Manipur physician _____ to honour his contribution to strengthening ties between Japan and India, and Japan and Manipur.
(a) Dr Thangjam Dhabali Singh (b) Dr Bikram Ismail Singh
(c) Dr Makram Ibobi Singh (d) Dr Sandeep Kulshreshtha
26. Recently, Sanctuary Nature Foundation honours _____ with Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020 for his role in wildlife conservation and his continuing legacy of writings in Tamil and English to the conservation discourse.
(a) D Bhaskar Rao (b) S Theodore Baskaran
(c) Amit S Prajapati (d) M Ashwin Sundaram

27. Name the Indian-origin investment and development banker who has been appointed as Executive Secretary by UN Capital Development Fund?
 (a) Preeti Sinha (b) Anita Advani (c) Gunjan Kaushik (d) Aparajita Saxena
28. Recently, Parties to the International Criminal Court elected Britain's _____ as the new prosecutor for a nine-year term.
 (a) Alfred Matthews (b) Johnson Kirchoff (c) Karim Khan (d) Mohammad Nabi Ismail
29. Recently, the foundation stone of the India's largest hockey stadium was laid down in _____.
 (a) Guwahati (b) New Delhi (c) Jodhpur (d) Rourkela
30. Who is the new Director General of International Solar Alliance (ISA)?
 (a) Dr. Abhishek Mahajan (b) Dr. Ajay Mathur
 (c) Dr. Deepak Rathi (d) Dr Subhendu Sarkar
31. Recently, Akrund and Navanagar villages in Aravalli district of _____ have become India's first smart villages with LiFi-based internet connectivity.
 (a) Rajasthan (b) Gujarat (c) Haryana (d) Punjab
32. Recently, The National Informatics Centre has launched an instant messaging platform called _____ on the lines of WhatsApp.
 (a) Sandes (b) Chitthi (c) Aamantran (d) HumsApp
33. Recently, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has urged the Centre to set up a Centre of Excellence on Maritime Biotechnology in _____.
 (a) Bhubaneswar in Odisha (b) Balasore in Odisha
 (c) Cuttack in Odisha (d) Puri in Odisha
34. Name the Chief Minister who has been conferred the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year Award recently?
 (a) K. Chandrashekar Rao (b) Edappadi K. Palaniswami
 (c) Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy (d) Yogi Adityanath
35. Recently, An IIT Madras-Incubated start-up has recently launched _____ a sustainable utility e-bike.
 (a) PiMo (b) BiNo (c) TiLo (d) EiHo
36. Which of the following companies has recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) to collaborate in the area of cybersecurity?
 (a) TCS (b) HCL (c) Microsoft (d) Alphabet
37. Recently, President Ram Nath Kovind has removed Dr. Kiran Bedi as Lieutenant-Governor of _____.
 (a) Puducherry (b) Lakshadweep (c) Jammu & Kashmir (d) Ladakh
38. Recently, Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde Kyenge has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of:
 (a) Angola (b) The Gambia
 (c) Sierra Leone (d) Democratic Republic of the Congo
39. In February 2021, The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the longest river bridge of the country over the _____.
 (a) Chenab (b) Brahmaputra (c) Ganga (d) Sutluj
40. In February 2021, which of the following Indian states launched "Maa" canteens for providing subsidised cooked meals for the poor and the destitute at a nominal cost of Rs. 5?
 (a) Haryana (b) West Bengal (c) Gujarat (d) Tamil Nadu

41. The centrally air-conditioned Sir M Visvesvaraya Railway Terminal will soon be inaugurated at:
(a) Mysuru (b) Bengaluru (c) Gulbarga (d) Shivmogaa
42. Recently, Assam's Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal laid the foundations for the first East India Skills University in _____.
(a) Bongaigaon district (b) Barpeta district (c) Majuli district (d) Darrang district
43. Recently, The Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry announced the names of the _____ cities selected for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge under the Smart Cities Mission.
(a) 8 (b) 12 (c) 20 (d) 25
44. Recently, The Bangladesh Supreme Court launched the Artificial Intelligence (AI) based translation software _____ through a virtual event.
(a) 'Amar Bhasha' (b) 'Hamar Bhasho' (c) 'Amar Vasha' (d) 'Bhalo Bhashi'
45. Recently, Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia of _____ announced his resignation, following a court ruling that ordered the arrest of a man who leads the ex-Soviet nation's top opposition party.
(a) Columbia (b) Georgia (c) Finland (d) Netherland
46. Which of the following issues directives to housing finance companies (HFCs) on maintenance of liquidity coverage ratio, risk management, asset classification and loan-to-value ratio?
(a) Finance Ministry (b) Reserve Bank of India
(c) NABARD (d) SIDBI
47. Which of the following Indian states recently launched the 'Free Gift Milk to Girl Students of State' initiative?
(a) West Bengal (b) Nagaland (c) Sikkim (d) Meghalaya
48. Recently, Scientists have recovered the oldest DNA on record, extracting it from the molars of mammoths that roamed northeastern _____ up to 1.2 million years ago in research that broadens the horizons for understanding extinct species.
(a) Siberia (b) Serbia (c) Finland (d) Sweden
49. Airth is ready to launch the first of its kind antimicrobial air purifier on (date). It is developed by the visionary team from _____ and uses patent filed & tested technology for protection against airborne diseases such as COVID-19.
(a) IIT Bombay (b) IIT Madras (c) IIT Kanpur (d) IIT Delhi
50. Recently, Five Indian-origin personalities feature in TIME magazine's annual list of 100 "emerging leaders who are shaping the future". Who is not among the five?
(a) Rishi Sunak (b) Roshni Nadar
(c) Apoorva Mehta (d) Vijaya Gadde
51. The Central Government launched the _____ campaign to boost the adoption of electric mobility vehicles and electric cooking appliances to ensure energy security in the country.
(a) Go Electric (b) Come on Electronic
(c) Come Electric (d) Go Electronic
52. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) plans to launch the World Solar Bank (WSB) at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in _____ in November.
(a) Glasgow (b) Paris (c) Dublin (d) Tokyo
53. The Union Cabinet approved a production-linked incentive scheme for the _____ sector.
(a) Coal (b) Telecom (c) Power (d) Environment

54. Recently, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project was in the final stages despite delays due to various challenges. Kaladan project is in:
 (a) Nepal (b) Myanmar (c) Bangladesh (d) Sri Lanka
55. Who is US military's first India-born female Muslim chaplain?
 (a) Saleha Jabeen (b) Rashida Biwi (c) Mumtaz Khan (d) Aliya Hasan
56. Recently, Joint User Trials for Helina (Army Version) and _____ (Air Force Version) Missile Systems designed and developed by DRDO were carried out from Advanced Light Helicopter platform in desert ranges.
 (a) Brahmastra (b) Shivastra (c) Dhruvastra (d) Chandrastra
57. Who became the costliest ever player at an IPL auction 2021 for Rajasthan Royals?
 (a) Chris Morris (b) Ish Sodhi (c) Steven Smith (d) Krishnappa Gowtham
58. Recently, In Tennis, the Belgian and Belarus pair of Elise Mertens and Aryna Sabalenka has won the WOMEN'S doubles final of the _____ 2021.
 (a) French Open (b) Australian Open (c) US Open (d) Wimbledon
59. Which of the following countries hosted a health secretary-level meet virtually with other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation countries to discuss the ongoing COVID-19 crisis?
 (a) Sri Lanka (b) India (c) Bangladesh (d) Bhutan
60. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020 awarded by the _____.
 (a) United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)
 (b) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 (c) World Bank
 (d) Amnesty International
61. Which of the following countries is set to host 13th BRICS Summit 2021?
 (a) Russia (b) Brazil (c) South Africa (d) India
62. Digital University is set up by upgrading two-decade old _____.
 (a) Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Kerala (IIITM-K)
 (b) Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Maharashtra (IIITM-M)
 (c) Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Tamil Nadu (IIITM-TN)
 (d) Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Karnataka (IIITM-K)
63. Recently, Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched Intensified Mission Indradhanush _____ to expand immunization coverage across the country.
 (a) 1.0 (b) 2.0 (c) 3.0 (d) 5.0
64. Which of the following country scientists had detected the first case of transmission of the H5N8 strain of avian flu to humans and had alerted the World Health Organization?
 (a) Germany (b) Russia (c) France (d) Ireland
65. Who won the women's singles title in the Australian Open 2021?
 (a) Jennifer Brady (b) Serena Williams (c) Venus Williams (d) Naomi Osaka
66. The Indian and Indonesian navies carried out a military exercise in the Arabian Sea to enhance operational interoperability and overall cooperation. Name the military exercise?
 (a) RIMPAC (b) PASSEX (c) MALABAR (d) MILAN

67. Who among the following participated and expressed his views in WION and Zee Media's 'Population versus Planet' Conference which is a part of its year-long campaign called 'Mission Sustainability: Population vs Planet'?
- (a) Smt Smriti Irani (b) Shri Prakash Javadekar
(c) Shri Piyush Goyal (d) Dr. Harsh Vardhan
68. Name the Indian-American scientist who led the guidance, navigation, and control operations of the Mars 2020 mission.
- (a) Anandita Mitra (b) Deepa Bhaskar (c) Swati Mohan (d) Meenakshi Sargam
69. Who won her first WTA title with a doubles win at the Phillip Island Trophy?
- (a) Ankita Raina (b) Parul Sehgal (c) Deepika Pallikal (d) Amanmitra Saini
70. International Mother Language Day is held every year on:
- (a) 16th February (b) 18th February (c) 20th February (d) 21st February



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. b In a first for an Indian State, Bihar signed a memorandum of understanding with the UN Environment Programme to achieve climate resilience and low carbon development by 2040.
2. b The work to provide tap water connections to over 19 crore rural households under the Jal Jeevan Mission (Rural) by 2024.
3. c FDI in insurance to be hiked to 74% from 49% now.
4. b Rashmi Samant has made history by becoming the first Indian woman to head the Oxford Students' Union.
5. a Indian Army National Seminar-cum-Webinar, named as Divya-Drishti 202 on Multi-Domain Operations: Future of Conflicts was organised by Centre for Land Warfare Studies, CLAWS.
6. a Canada's main securities regulator has cleared the launch of the world's first bitcoin exchange-traded fund, an investment manager providing investors greater access to the cryptocurrency that has sparked an explosion in trading interest.
7. a UK is building the world's first airport for flying cars.
8. b U.S.-based electric car giant Tesla would set up its manufacturing unit in Karnataka.
9. b In Australian Open Tennis Hsieh Su-Wei has become the oldest first-time quarterfinalist in a Grand Slam.
10. c World Radio Day is an international day celebrated on 13 February each year.
11. c Filmmaker Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari has turned author with her debut fiction novel, titled Mapping Love.
12. c The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted an expert committee under the chairmanship of its former Deputy Governor N.S. Vishwanathan on Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks.
13. c Italy has got a super ministry recently to ensure a transition to green energy drives recovery and makes full use of European Union funds.
14. a Nigeria's Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed as the first female and first African head of the beleaguered World Trade Organization (WTO), saying a stronger WTO would be vital for the global coronavirus recovery.
15. c The first day of the spring called 'Pahela Phagun' was celebrated in Dhaka despite the continued shadow of Corona pandemic in the country.
16. a Uday Kotak is an Indian billionaire banker, and the executive vice chairman and managing director of Kotak Mahindra Bank.
17. b Researchers have discovered three fossils of the earliest known living animal — the 550-million-year-old 'Dickinsonia' — on the roof of the Bhimbetka Rock Shelters, about 40 km from Bhopal.
18. c Dr. Anthony Fauci has won the \$1 million Dan David Prize for "defending science" and advocating for vaccines now being administered worldwide to fight the coronavirus pandemic.
19. a The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (Ficci) announced the re-appointment of Sanjog Gupta, head-sports, Star India, as the chairperson to its sports committee for 2021.

- 20. c** Schools and hostels under the Ministry of Education's Samagra Shiksha scheme will now be renamed after Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- 21. d** Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the statue of Raja Suheldev in Bahraich district of Eastern Uttar Pradesh.
- 22. c** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched a Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan under Jal Jeevan Mission- Urban, JJM-U.
- 23. b** The Joint Conference of the 11th World PetroCoal Congress and World Future Fuel Summit was organized in New Delhi.
- 24. a** India has joined Iran and Russia in a two-day navy exercise dubbed "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021" in the northern part of the Indian Ocean.
- 25. a** Japan has conferred the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays decoration on Manipur physician and former president of state tourism forum, Dr Thangjam Dhabali Singh, to honour his contribution to strengthening ties between Japan and India, and Japan and Manipur.
- 26. b** Sanctuary Nature Foundation honours conservation hero S Theodore Baskaran with Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award 2020 for his role in wildlife conservation and his continuing legacy of writings in Tamil and English to the conservation discourse
- 27. a** The UN Capital Development Fund has appointed Indian-origin investment and development banker Preeti Sinha as its Executive Secretary, whose focus will be on providing micro-finance assistance to women, youth, small and medium-sized enterprises in under-served communities.
- 28. c** Parties to the International Criminal Court elected Britain's Karim Khan as the new prosecutor for a nine-year term.
- 29. d** Odisha's Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation stone of the country's largest hockey stadium in Rourkela during his one-day visit to Sundargarh district.
- 30. b** International Solar Alliance (ISA) has announced Dr. Ajay Mathur as its new Director General following his election at the first special assembly of ISA members.
- 31. b** Akrund and Navanagar villages in Aravalli district of Gujarat have become India's first smart villages with LiFi-based internet connectivity.
- 32. a** The National Informatics Centre has launched an instant messaging platform called Sandes on the lines of WhatsApp.
- 33. a** Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has urged the Centre to set up a Centre of Excellence on Maritime Biotechnology in Bhubaneswar in Odisha.
- 34. c** The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has been conferred the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year Award.
- 35. a** An IIT Madras-Incubated start-up has recently launched PiMo, a sustainable utility e-bike.
- 36. b** HCL Technologies (HCL) said it has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) to collaborate in the area of cybersecurity.
- 37. a** President Ram Nath Kovind has removed Dr. Kiran Bedi as Lieutenant-Governor of Puducherry and appointed Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan, Governor of Telangana, to discharge the functions of the Lieutenant-Governor of Puducherry.

- 38. d** Congo President Felix Tshisekedi appointed Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde Kyenge, director-general of Gécamines (General Quarries and Mines) as the new DRC Prime Minister.
- 39. b** The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the longest river bridge of the country over the Brahmaputra between Dhubri in Assam and Phulbari in Meghalaya.
- 40. b** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee launched “Maa” canteens for providing subsidised cooked meals for the poor and the destitute at a nominal cost of Rs. 5.
- 41. b** The centrally air-conditioned Sir M Visvesvaraya Railway Terminal at Baiyappanahalli in Bengaluru will soon be inaugurated at Bengaluru and will have state-of-art facilities.
- 42. d** Assam’s Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal laid the foundations for the first East India Skills University in Darrang district, which aims to educate more than 10,000 students in 12 disciplines. The university is also being built at a cost of Rs. 1000 crore.
- 43. d** The Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry announced the names of the 25 cities selected for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge under the Smart Cities Mission.
- 44. c** The Bangladesh Supreme Court launched the Artificial Intelligence (AI) based translation software ‘Amar Vasha’ through a virtual event. The software will translate orders and judgements of the Supreme Court from English to Bangla.
- 45. b** Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia announced his resignation, following a court ruling that ordered the arrest of a man who leads the ex-Soviet nation’s top opposition party.
- 46. b** The RBI issued directives to housing finance companies (HFCs) on maintenance of liquidity coverage ratio, risk management, asset classification and loan-to-value ratio.
- 47. c** Sikkim Chief Minister P. S. Tamang launched the ‘Free Gift Milk to Girl Students of Sikkim’ initiative at Gangtok.
- 48. a** Scientists have recovered the oldest DNA on record, extracting it from the molars of mammoths that roamed northeastern Siberia up to 1.2 million years ago in research that broadens the horizons for understanding extinct species.
- 49. a** Airth is ready to launch the first of its kind antimicrobial air purifier on (date). It is developed by the visionary team from IIT Bombay and uses patent filed & tested technology for protection against airborne diseases such as COVID-19.
- 50. b** Five Indian-origin personalities, including Twitter’s top lawyer Vijaya Gadde and UK’s finance minister Rishi Sunak, and an Indian activist feature in TIME magazine’s annual list of 100 “emerging leaders who are shaping the future”.
- 51. a** The Central Government launched the Go Electric campaign to boost the adoption of electric mobility vehicles and electric cooking appliances to ensure energy security in the country.
- 52. a** The International Solar Alliance (ISA) plans to launch the World Solar Bank (WSB) at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November a development that will support India’s attempt to secure leadership in the climate arena.
- 53. b** The Union Cabinet approved a production-linked incentive scheme for the telecom sector.
- 54. b** The Kaladan Road Project is a US\$484 million project connecting the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Rakhine State, Myanmar by sea.

- 55. a** Saleha Jabeen, US military's first India-born female Muslim chaplain, has graduated from Air Force Basic Chaplain Course, vowing to take her duty as a spiritual mentor very seriously.
- 56. c** Joint User Trials for Helina (Army Version) and Dhruvastra (Air Force Version) Missile Systems designed and developed by DRDO were carried out from Advanced Light Helicopter platform in desert ranges.
- 57. a** Chris Morris became the costliest ever player at an IPL auction for Rajasthan Royal while Krishnappa Gowtham became the costliest Indian uncapped player for Chennai Super Kings at the IPL 2021 auction.
- 58. b** In Tennis, the Belgian and Belarus pair of Elise Mertens and Aryna Sabalenka has won the WOMEN'S doubles final of the Australian Open 2021.
- 59. b** India hosted a health secretary-level meet virtually with other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation countries to discuss the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.
- 60. b** The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020 awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- 61. d** A comprehensive snapshot of our strong BRICS engagement and the exhaustive calendar of events during BRICS at 15 under the Chairmanship of India."
- 62. a** Digital University is set up by upgrading two-decade-old Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Kerala (IIITM-K).
- 63. c** Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0, (IMI 3.0) to expand immunization coverage across the country.
- 64. b** Russia said its scientists had detected the first case of transmission of the H5N8 strain of avian flu to humans and had alerted the World Health Organization.
- 65. d** Japan's Naomi Osaka cemented her place as the outstanding star of the women's singles game by beating American Jennifer Brady in the Australian Open final to win her fourth Grand Slam title.
- 66. b** "Enhancing Interoperability & strengthening Bilateral Maritime Cooperation Indian Navy Ship INS Talwar and Indonesian Navy's multirole Corvette KRI Bung Tomo, conducted Passage Exercise (PASSEX) in the Arabian Sea.
- 67. d** Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare participated and expressed his views in WION and Zee Media's 'Population versus Planet' Conference which is a part of its year-long campaign called 'Mission Sustainability: Population vs Planet'.
- 68. c** As the world witnessed the historic landing of NASA's Perseverance rover on the Martian surface, it was Indian-American scientist, Swati Mohan, who led the guidance, navigation, and control operations of the Mars 2020 mission.
- 69. a** India No 1 Ankit Raina added another memorable first to her Australia trip by claiming her first WTA title with a doubles win at the Phillip Island Trophy.
- 70. d** International Mother Language Day is held on 21st February recognizes that languages and multilingualism can advance inclusion and the Sustainable Development Goals' focus on leaving no one behind.