

Weekly Current Affairs 1st Week of January 2021



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1. India hoists Blue Flags at 8 beaches

- **India, which has become the first country in the world to receive the Blue Flag Certification for 8 beaches** in a single attempt, **hosted the Blue flags in all its beaches on Monday.**
- **Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar** lauded the outstanding efforts while virtually hoisting the flags in all 8 beaches. Blue Flag certification is a globally recognised eco-label accorded by "**Foundation for Environment Education in Denmark**" based on 33 stringent criteria.
- National level campaign integrated with the **BEAMS (Beach Environment & Aesthetics Management Services) program** for continuous awareness and education of people for "Blue Flag" certification journey.
- The **objective of BEAMS program is to abate pollution in coastal waters, promote sustainable development of beach facilities, protect & conserve coastal ecosystems & natural resources, and seriously challenge local authorities & stakeholders to strive and maintain high standards of cleanliness, hygiene & safety for beachgoers in accordance with coastal environment & regulations.** This program promotes beach recreation in absolute harmony with nature and is unique in that sense.
- **BEAMS is an Integrated Coastal Zone Management initiatives undertaken for sustainable development of 13 coastal regions of India, with a prime objective to conserve the pristine coastal and marine ecosystems And to develop and deliver 100 more beaches in the next 5 years.**

Source:- DDNEWS

2. PM Modi inaugurates country's first ever driverless metro train in Delhi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has stressed that **rapid urbanisation must be seen as an opportunity rather than as a challenge.**
- He said, this opportunity can provide the platform to build better infrastructure in the country and improving the ease of living.
- **Mr. Modi today flagged off India's first ever driverless train operations on Delhi Metro's Magenta Line which will connect Janakpuri West to Botanical Garden metro stations.**
- He also inaugurated the fully operational National Common Mobility Card service on the Airport Express Line.
- The **National Common Mobility Card** will enable the passengers to travel on the **Airport Express Line using the RuPay-Debit Card issued from any part of the country.**

Source:- Newsonair

3. PM Modi to flag off 100th Kisan Rail from Sangola in Maharashtra to Shalimar in West Bengal

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will flag off the **100th Kisan Rail from Sangola in Maharashtra to Shalimar in West Bengal** at 4:30 pm today through video conferencing.



- The multi-commodity train service will carry vegetables such as cauliflower, capsicum, cabbage, drumsticks, chillies, onion, as well as fruits like grapes, oranges, pomegranate, banana and custard apple.
- Loading and unloading of perishable commodities will be permitted at all enroute stoppages with no bar on size of consignment.
- The Central Government has extended a subsidy of 50 per cent on transportation of fruits and vegetables.
- **Kisan Rail has been a game changer in ensuring fast transportation of agriculture produce across the nation.**
- **It provides a seamless supply chain of perishable produce.**

Source:- DDNEWS

4. Dry run for Coronavirus vaccination begins in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Assam

- The **dry run for COVID-19 vaccination has begun in India**. In the first phase, four states - **Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab and Assam** began the two day exercise from today.
- The aim of the exercise is to identify challenges and make required changes in the plan so that the final process becomes foolproof.
- The Health Ministry said, this two days exercise **will provide a hands-on experience to programme managers at various levels.**
- **This will also enable end-to-end mobilisation and testing of COVID-19 vaccination process**, except the vaccine and check the usage of **Co-WIN** in field environment, the linkages between planning, implementation and reporting mechanisms and identify challenges and guide way forward prior to actual implementation including improvements that may be required in the envisaged process.

Source:- NEWSONAIR

5. PM Modi launches 'PMJAY - SEHAT' scheme

- PM Narendra Modi launched **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana** (AB-PMJAY) SEHAT scheme for the residents of Jammu and Kashmir, via video conferencing.
- Under this scheme, people of Jammu and Kashmir will be able to avail free medical facilities up to Rs 5 lakh.
- Nearly **229 govt hospitals** and 35 private hospitals have been listed under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.
- All **21 lakh families** will get the same benefits after the SEHAT scheme

6. Jai Ram unveils Vajpayee's statue at Ridge

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister **Jai Ram Thakur** unveiled the statue of former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna recipient **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** on his **96th birth anniversary** at The Ridge in Shimla.
- The **18-feet structure**, which was constructed for Rs 1.08 crores.
- **December 25** is also marked as **Good Governance Day**, which was established in 2014 to honour Vajpayee by fostering awareness on accountability in government among the people.

7. Former England batsman John Edrich passes away

- England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) on announced that former batsman **John Edrich** (83-years) passed away.
- Edrich, a left-handed batsman, scored more than 5,000 runs for England during 77 Tests spanning 13 years between 1963 and 1976.
- He also captained **England** in one Test.

8. Punjab Govt. launches mobile app and web portal 'PR Insight'

- Punjab CM **Captain Amarinder Singh** has launched **Mobile application** and web portal called '**PR Insight**', to improve the delivery of citizen-centric services, based upon the feedback of its citizens on government policies
- The objective of '**PR Insight**' is to re-orient the existing schemes & programmes of the state govt. to the people's satisfaction after meticulously monitoring their feedback
- It has been developed by the state Information & Public Relations Department

9. Gujarat State to host India's first Lithium refinery

- India's first **Lithium refinery** which will process Lithium ore to produce battery-grade material will be set up in Gujarat.
- The country's one of the largest power trading and renewable energy company **Manikaran Power Limited** will be investing over Rs 1,000 crore to set up this refinery.
- The company will be importing Lithium ore from Australia and will be processing it in Gujarat.
- Lithium is a rare element not usually found in India.

10. Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launches E-Sampada web portal & mobile app

- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister **Hardeep Singh Puri** has launched **E-Sampada**, a new web portal and mobile app.
- The new application provides a single-window for all the services including an allotment for **residential accommodations**, office space allotment in **45 office complexes** in 28 cities and booking of 1,176-holiday homerooms.
- The **portal provides online facility** to users across India to lodge complaints, submit documents and appear for the virtual hearing.

11. Urdu poet and critic Shamsur Rahman Faruqi passes away

- Legendary Urdu poet and critic **Shamsur Rahman Faruqi** (85-years) passed away at his Allahabad home, a month after recovering from COVID-19.
- Padma Shri poet Faruqi is credited to have revived "Dastangoi", a 16th century Urdu oral storytelling art form.
- He also received Saraswati Samman in 1996 for his work "She'r-e Shor-Angez".

12. FIFA postpones Under-17 and Under-20 World Cups till 2023

- The World football's governing body, FIFA has cancelled **Under-17** and **Under-20 World Cups** that were scheduled to be played next year due to a coronavirus pandemic.



- Now, these World Cups will be played in 2023, with Indonesia still hosting the Under-20s and Peru the Under-17s.
- According to the Bureau of the FIFA Council, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present challenges for the hosting of international sporting events.

13. Karnataka Government launches portal 'FRUITS' for farmers

- **Karnataka Govt.** has unveiled an e-governance portal named 'Farmer Registration and Unified beneficiary Information System (FRUITS)', for the benefit of the farmers of the state.
- This portal will create a **repository of farmland information** and farm loan details on a single platform.
- All **farmers** will be registered and given an identification number on the portal.
- Karnataka Governor: **Vajubhai Vala**
- Karnataka CM: **B. S. Yediyurappa**

14. India's 1st tiger reserve hot air balloon safari in Madhya Pradesh

- India's first hot air balloon wildlife safari in a tiger reserve was launched in the world-famous **Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve** by Madhya Pradesh.
- The activity will be restricted to the buffer area and people can watch tigers, leopards, Indian sloth bear and other wild animals from a height.
- It is the first in any **tiger reserve** in the country.
- The service is being operated by Jaipur-based Sky Waltz.

15. MS Dhoni named captain of ICC Men's ODI Team of the Decade

- Former Indian skipper **Mahendra Singh Dhoni** has been named as the '**captain of ICC Men's ODI Team of the Decade**' by International Cricket Council (ICC)
- **Virat Kohli** and **Rohit Sharma** have also been featured on '**ICC Men's ODI Team of the Decade**'.
- He was also named the captain of '**ICC T20I Team of the Decade**'
- **ICC Men's ODI Team of the Decade (India):** Rohit Sharma, , Virat Kohli, MS Dhoni (capt, wk).
- **ICC's Test Team of the Decade (India):** Virat Kohli (c), Ravi Ashwin.

16. Russia's Khakimov banned for five years over betting, fixing offences

- **Badminton World Federation (BWF)** has imposed 5-year ban on Russian shuttler **Nikita Khakimov (32-years)** for charges of betting, wagering and irregular match results.
- He breached BWF's integrity regulations, including approaching a player and offering money to manipulate a match, betting on badminton games and deliberately destroying evidence of a corruption offence to conceal from BWF
- He was part of **Russian men's team** that won bronze medal at **2020 European Championships**.

17. Govt. extends validity of Vehicular documents till 31st March 2021

- Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has extended the validity of vehicular documents like DLs, RCs, Permits etc till 31st March 2021



- Earlier, MoRTH had issued advisories dated 30th March 2020, 9th June 2020 and 24th Aug 2020 regarding extension related to **Motor Vehicles Act, 1988** and **Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989**
- Validity of Fitness, Permit (all types), License, Registration or other concerned documents may be treated to be valid till 31 Dec 2020

18. Myanmar commissions submarine gifted by India

- **Myanmar Navy** has officially inducted submarine **INS Sindhuvir**, which was handed over by Indian Navy in October 2020.
- **INS Sindhuvir** has been renamed as **UMS Minye Theinkhathu** by Myanmar Navy.
- This is the first submarine in the Myanmar Navy's arsenal.
- It is a **diesel-electric Kilo-class submarine**, which was in operation in the Indian Navy since 1988.
- It has been refurbished for Myanmar Navy by state-run defense shipbuilder, **Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL)** in Visakhapatnam.

19. Madhya Pradesh cabinet approves Dharma Swatantrya (Religious Freedom) Bill

- **Madhya Pradesh govt** approved **Dharma Swatantrya (Religious Freedom) Bill 2020**.
- Under this, forced conversion of a woman will be punishable for a term up to **10 years** and minimum fine of **Rs 50,000**.
- Specific provisions are also made in the cases of religious conversion of minors, groups, or those belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.
- Blood relatives, including parents of victims of such religious conversion, can file complaints under the proposed Act.

20. Wrestler Jon Huber passes away

- American professional wrestler **Jon Huber (41-years)** passed away in Jacksonville, Florida, due to non-covid lung problems.
- He was best known for his time in WWE under the ring names Luke Harper and Harper, and in All Elite Wrestling (AEW) as Brodie Lee and Mr. Brodie Lee.
- He won '**Tag Team titles**' twice while also winning the Intercontinental Championship (AEW)
- After joining AEW, he won **AEW TNT Championship**.

21. Kailash Satyarthi pens new book 'Covid-19: Sabhyata Ka Sankat Aur Samadhan'

- Nobel laureate **Kailash Satyarthi** has penned down book titled '**Covid-19: Sabhyata ka Sankat aur Samadhan**'.
- It is written in Hindi and is published by **Prabhat Prakashan**.
- It has been launched by former **CJI Dipak Misra** and **Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh**.
- The book discusses how Covid-19 has impacted the common way of life including the education system, business, politics, public safety, foreign policy, law, medicine, economy and development of countries



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22. India to replace UK as fifth-biggest economy in 2025

- According to **Centre for Economics and Business Research (UK based think-tank)**, Indian economy will overtake UK becoming the **5th largest economy in 2025 and will reach 3rd spot by 2030**.
- India had overtaken UK in 2019 to become **5th largest economy in the world** but has been relegated to 6th spot in 2020
- Report forecasts that Indian economy will expand by 9% in 2021, 7% in 2022
- **China** will become the **world's biggest economy in 2028**
- **Japan** will remain on 3rd spot till 2030s

23. Former England Bowler & Cricket Commentator, Robin Jackman passes away

- Former England cricketer and commentator, **Robin Jackman (75 years)** passed away in cape town, South Africa
- He had represented England in **4 Tests and 15 ODIs in his international career** between 1974 to 1983, picking 33 wickets
- His domestic career began in 1966 and was spread across 16 seasons, during which he took 1402 first-class wickets in 399 matches at an average of 22.80 and also scored 5681 runs.
- He served as a commentator for South African cricket for many years.

24. PayU collaborates with Google Pay to launch tokenised payments for merchant

- **PayU** has partnered with **Google Pay** to introduce **tokenised payments for merchants in India**.
- Google Pay users will be able to make recurring payments with their debit cards, credit cards, or Google Pay UPI, PayU merchant without sharing card details
- Tokenised payments are highly convenient, safe, and friction-free payment system
- This will help PayU to build lasting trust and loyalty with customers, reduce risks of card abandonment and payment failures.

25. First batch of Indian Institute of Skills inaugurated in Mumbai

- Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship **Mahendra Nath Pandey** has inaugurated **1st batch of Indian Institute of Skills in Mumbai**
- It is a joint initiative of **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship** and **Tata Indian Institute of Skills**.
- It will commence training with 2 courses in Factory Automation.
- It will be held for **1 to 4 weeks**, offering scholarships to first 100 students along with attractive fee options during initial launch phase

26. Home Secretary, A K Bhalla releases progress report of e-HRMS

- Home Secretary and Secretary DoPT, **A K Bhalla** has released the progress report of **e-HRMS (Electronic-Human Resource Management System)**.
- It is an effective tool for all the Ministries facilitating policy making and matters related to personnel
- **e-HRMS:**



- Launched: **Minister for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions** in 2017
- It is also known as **Manav Sampada**
- It is a standard ICT solution for Govt sector, addressing max requirements of State Govt personnel management

27. Delhi airport's Terminal 3 installs new passenger tracking system

- **Delhi airport's Terminal 3** has installed **new passenger tracking system 'Xovis'** named to manage the flow of people, reducing waiting time and ensuring social distancing
- It is basically a **queue management system** that will display live waiting time, taken at various processes like check-in, security check etc., on screens put up at various places
- It receives data streams using **ceiling-mounted sensors** and provides the airport operator with valuable key performance indicators

28. Amar Singh College conservation project gets 2020 UNESCO Awards

- **Amar Singh College, Srinagar** has been named as one of the seven conservation projects to be recognised with the **2020 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation**.
- It was built in 1913 and its restoration brought back one of the most prominent institutional buildings in Kashmir to its former glory.
- The restoration of the college has been done by **Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) Jammu and Kashmir chapter**.

29. Physical verification of premises made mandatory for GST registration

- Govt has introduced **mandatory physical verification of business premises for the purposes of obtaining GST registration** to control the menace of GST fake invoice frauds
- The move was recommended by **GST Council's law committee**
- As per this, there will be **in-person verification before GST registration** for any applicant.
- In case an applicant opts for Aadhaar authentication, he will have to undergo biometric-based Aadhaar authentication at one of the facilitation Centres

30. Businesses with monthly turnover of 50 lakh to pay 1% GST liability

- **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs** has introduced new rule that mandates **businesses with monthly turnover of over ₹50 lakh to pay at least 1% of their GST liability in cash** instead of using input tax credits
- It introduced **Rule 86B in GST rules** that restricts use of input tax credit (ITC) for discharging GST liability to 99%.
- The validity of e-way bills has also been tweaked, doubling the distance to be covered for each day of validity, effective January 1.



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31. Union Home Minister launches several development projects in Manipur

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah has launched various development projects in Manipur through virtual mode
- Projects launched:
 - e-office and Thoubal Multipurpose Project (Thoubal Dam) in Imphal.
 - foundation stone of 7 development projects, including Churachandpur Medical College, IT-SEZ, Manipur Bhawan and Integrated Command and Control Center
- It will help in overall development of Manipur providing them with education, employment and better representation.

32. Union Home Minister lays foundation stone of Medical College in Guwahati

- Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** has launched several development projects in Assam. They are:
 - New Medical College in Guwahati with a cost of around Rs 850 crore
 - Nine law colleges in different parts of Assam
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah distributed **financial grants to 8,000 Namghars (traditional Vaisnavite monasteries of Assam)** under **Assam Darshan programme**
- **Namghars (Prayer House):** Places for congregational worship of Assamese community and Ekasarana sect of Hinduism

33. BCCI approves 10-team IPL from 2022

- Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in its 89th Annual General Meeting held at Ahmedabad has decided 10 teams of Indian Premier League (IPL) from 2022 against present 8 teams.
- 2021 season of IPL will be played with regular 8 teams and bids will be invited for the addition of two new teams from 2022
- Former cricketer **Chetan Sharma** has been appointed as **new chairman of selectors for national men's cricket team** by Cricket Advisory Committee headed by Madan Lal

34. RCP Singh unanimously elected as National President of JD

- Second-term Rajya Sabha MP, **RCP Singh** has been elected as the **National President of Janata Dal (JD-independent)**
- He succeeded **Nitish Kumar**, who stepped down to hand over the reins of the party to him
- Prior to this, he was general secretary of JD (U)
- He was a former bureaucrat turned politician and is a close associate of Nitish Kumar
- He has been actively carrying on the JD (U) organizational work, since he became an MP in 2010.



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35. PM Modi dedicates to nation section of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor in UP

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** dedicated to the nation the ambitious **New Bhaupur-New Khurja section of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor in Uttar Pradesh** through video conference today.
- He said that this corridor will become a medium of **Atmanirbhar Bharat and help the Kisaan Rails**.
- He also opined that this corridor will open new economic activities and boost employment opportunities in the region.
- The **351-kilometre New Bhaupur- New Khurja section of EDFC** is built at a cost of **Rs. 5,750 crore** and most of its part passes through Uttar Pradesh.

Source:- Neswonair

36. Mission Sagar III : INS Kiltan arrives at Sihanoukville, Cambodia

- **Indian Naval Ship Kiltan** arrived at **Sihanoukville Port, Cambodia** on 29 December 2020 as part of ongoing **Mission Sagar-III**.
- The ship will deliver **15 Tons of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** Stores for the flood-affected people of Cambodia, which will be handed over to Cambodia's National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC).
- This assistance is reflective of the deep people-to-people connect between the two friendly countries.
- **Mission Sagar-III is part of India's HADR assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries during the ongoing pandemic.**
- This Mission is being undertaken in accordance with **Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region)** and reiterates India's position as a dependable partner, and the Indian Navy as the Preferred Security Partner and First Responder.
- The Mission also highlights the importance accorded to **ASEAN countries** and further strengthens the existing bonds.

Source:- AIR

37. Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurates India's highest Meteorological Centre in Leh

- **Union Minister of Earth Sciences, Dr Harsh Vardhan**, virtually inaugurated **India's highest Meteorological Centre in Leh**, today. After **Itanagar Centre in Arunachal Pradesh**, **Leh Met centre at 3500 meters highest from mean sea level is the highest in the Himalayan region**. With **four Automatic Weather Stations (AWS)** a **Meteorological Department centre for Ladakh region** started working from today. Despite Covid pandemic, within Nine months of time the new centre is established to cater the arid cold desert and geo politically all important Ladakh weather requirements.
- **Ladakh Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur** appealed Dr. Harsh Vardhan for Ladakh specific Weather App, Data integration of large number of micro climatic conditions of Ladakh and Display boards at entry points into Ladakh region to make the public and tourists aware of weather conditions and prepare.



- Ladakh MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, **Earth Sciences Secretary Dr. M Rajeevan**, **IMD DG Dr. M Mohapatra**, Additional DG, Mr. Anand Sharma, Ladakh Weather station director Sonam Lotus were also present in the virtual inauguration event.

Source:- newsonair

38. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated India's first pneumococcal conjugate vaccine

- Health Minister **Harsh Vardhan** has inaugurated India's first pneumococcal conjugate vaccine named as '**Pneumosil**'
- It has been developed by **Serum Institute of India Private Limited (SIPL)** in collaboration with **PATH** and **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**
- It is available at an affordable price in single dose (vial, pre-filled syringe) and Multidose (vial)
- It has been evaluated in 5 randomized controlled clinical trials and has demonstrated safety and immunogenicity

39. ICC Awards of the Decade winners announced

- **ICC Awards of the Decade 2020** has been announced virtually that recognise the best players across Cricket over the past 10 years.
- **Winners:**
 - Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC Male Cricketer of the Decade: **Virat Kohli**
 - Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award for ICC Female Cricketer of the Decade: **Ellyse Perry**
 - ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Decade: **Steve Smith**
 - ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Decade: **Virat Kohli**
 - ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Decade: **Ellyse Perry**

40. Skyroot Aerospace successfully test-fired Kalam-5

- Space-tech startup, **Skyroot Aerospace** has successfully test fired solid propulsion rocket stage named as **Kalam-5**.
- This is the first time that a private company has successfully designed, developed and tested a full solid propulsion rocket stage in India
- **About Kalam-5**
 - built with advanced carbon composite structure
 - uses 15 different advanced materials, 9 different manufacturing processes, and has zero moving parts.
- Co-founder-CEO of Skyroot: **Pawan Kumar Chandana**

41. 'Counting the cost 2020: A year of climate breakdown' report released

- UK based non-profit organisation **Christian Aid** has released '**Counting the cost 2020: A year of climate breakdown**'
- It analyses 15 most destructive climate disasters of 2020 and found 9 of extreme events, including two in India causing \$5 billion damage
- **It includes:**
 - **Cyclone Amphan (India)**
 - Bushfires (Australia)



- West Coast Fire (US)
- US and Caribbean hurricanes
- Floods in China, India, Pakistan and Japan
- Locust Swarms (Africa)
- **Windstorms Ciara and Alex (Europe)**

42. Eminent dance historian and critic Sunil Kothari passes away

- Noted Indian dance historian, scholar and critic **Sunil Kothari (87 years)** passed away due to COVID-19 complications.
- He was instrumental in establishing School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University
- He wrote **12 books** on different forms of **Indian classical dance** (Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Sattriya and Manipuri) and allied art-forms.
- **Awards:** Padma Shri in 2001, Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 1995 and Litt. by Rabindra Bharti University

43. UGC sets up 7-member panel to recommend Common test for UG admission

- UGC set up **7-member committee** to consider the issue of holding **common entrance test at undergraduate level from next academic year (2021)**
- Committee is headed by Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Punjab **R P Tiwari**
- The step is taken in accordance with **New National Education Policy (NEP)** that advocates reducing number of entrance tests
- **National Testing Agency** will be tasked to conduct '**common aptitude test**' for different disciplines for admission to bachelor's course

44. India-Vietnamese Navy Conducts PASSEX-2020 in South China Sea

- **Indian Navy** and **Vietnamese Navy** has undertaken naval passage exercise '**PASSEX-2020**' in **South China Sea**.
- It is a **two-day exercise** that is conducted to boost maritime cooperation between two countries.
- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kiltan participated in the exercise.
- Mission of INS Kiltan is part of India's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries during the ongoing pandemic
- **Vietnam Capital: Hanoi.**

45. Shripad Naik releases book 'Sutranivednachi sutra- ek anav'

- Union Minister of state (I/C) for AYUSH **Shripad Naik** has released Konkani book titled '**Sutranivednachi sutra- ek anav**'
- It has been written by **Roopa Chari** (well-known personality in Compering in Goa)
- It is published by **Sanjana Publications**
- This book will facilitate aspiring youngsters, who wish to make a career in the field of Compering.
- **Compere:** Person who introduces the performers or contestants in different show and acts as a link between the audience and the speaker.

46. President Ram Nath Kovind confers Digital India Awards 2020

- President **Ram Nath Kovind** virtually confer 'Digital India Awards 2020' via video conferencing.
- It is being conducted biennially by National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)
- **Categories:**
 - Innovation in Pandemic
 - Excellence in Digital Governance (Centre)
 - Excellence in Digital Governance (State / UT)
 - Excellence in Digital Governance (District)
 - Open Data Champion
 - Exemplary Product

47. Former Union Minister Kadambur Janarthanan passes away

- Former Union minister and senior AIADMK leader **Kadambur R Janarthanan** (89-years) passed away at a private hospital in Tuticorin due to age-related problems.
- He was minister of state for personnel, public grievances and pensions with the additional charge of finance in the A B Vajpayee cabinet from 1998 to 1999.
- He was elected to the **Lok Sabha** four times in 1984, 1989, 1991 and 1998.

48. Harsh Vardhan launches Ocean Data Management 'Digital Ocean'

- Minister of Earth Sciences Harsh Vardhan has inaugurated web-based application 'Digital Ocean do.incois.gov.in during a Virtual Meet in New Delhi
- It has been developed by INCOIS of M/o Earth sciences
- It is a first of its kind digital platform for Ocean Data Management that will expand our '**Blue Economy**' initiatives
- This will provide free access information about the ocean with a wide range of users including research institutions, operational agencies, general public, etc.

49. AU Small Finance, ICICI Pru Life partners to offer life insurance solutions

- AU Small Finance has partnered with **ICICI Pru Life partners** to offer life insurance solutions enhancing customer experience.
- The partnership aims to deliver paperless, secure, and hassle-free life insurance solutions to over **18 lakh customers** through digital platforms.
- Through this, **700 banking touchpoints** of AU Bank across 13 states and 2 UT will receive customer-centric protection and long-term savings products of ICICI Prudential Life.

50. Centre issues Rs 5,500 cr worth of zero-coupon bonds for P&S Bank

- Govt has issued **Rs 5,500-crore** worth of non-interest bearing bonds valued at par or special zero-coupon bond as financial innovation to recapitalise **Punjab & Sind Bank**.
- They are not tradable and the lender has to keep them in **Held-To-Maturity** (HTM) bucket, not requiring it to book any mark-to-market gains or losses from these bonds.
- They will earn not interest for subscriber but market participants termed as 'financial illusion' and 'great innovation' by govt.



51. Harsh Vardhan nominated to the Board of GAVI, The Vaccine Alliance

- Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, **Harsh Vardhan** has been nominated as the board member of Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI).
- He will be representing the South East Area Regional Office/ Western Pacific Regional Office constituency on the GAVI Board, representing India from 1st January 2021 until 31st December 2023.
- He will succeed in Myint Htwe of Myanmar.
- Chair of the GAVI: Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

52. K. Veeramani honoured with Dr. Narendra Dabholkar Memorial Award

- The **Dr. Narendra Dabholkar Memorial Award** for this year has been conferred upon **Dravidar Kazhagam** president K. Veeramani.
- The award was instituted in the memory of the Maharashtra-based rationalist Dabholkar, who was killed some years ago.
- The award includes Rs. 1 lakh and a citation.
- **Mr. Veeramani** has dedicated his whole life to propagate rationalism and served for the cause of social justice in society.

53. Skyroot Aerospace successfully test fires a solid propulsion rocket stage

- **Skyroot Aerospace** has successfully test-fired a solid propulsion rocket stage (named Kalam-5).
- This is the first time in India that a private company has successfully designed, developed and tested a full solid propulsion rocket stage.
- A special feature of this is that it is built with an advanced carbon composite structure in a completely automated process.
- Kalam-5 uses **15 different advanced materials**, 9 different manufacturing processes, and has zero moving parts.

54. Cristiano Ronaldo wins 'Player of the Century' at Globe Soccer Awards

- Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo has won the 'Player of the Century' award at the Globe Soccer Awards.
- Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski won the Player of the Year award.
- Manchester City manager **Pep Guardiola** won the Coach of the Century award.
- Spanish giants **Real Madrid** won the Club of the Century award during the event.

55. Kerala's Arya Rajendran elected as Thiruvananthapuram Mayor

- **Arya Rajendran** (21-years) became the youngest-ever Mayor in the country.
- She became the next Mayor of **Thiruvananthapuram** after tasting victory in the recent civic polls in Kerala.
- Arya is a second-year student of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) in Mathematics at the All Saints College.
- The Mayor is the head of the municipal corporation, but in most states and territories of India, the role is largely ceremonial as **executive powers** are vested in the Municipal Commissioner.

56. PM lays foundation stone of AIIMS at Rajkot in Gujarat

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of **All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Rajkot in Gujarat** today through video conferencing.
- Addressing on the occasion, PM Modi said, **if 2020 was an year of health challenges, 2021 will be an year of health solutions**. Mr Modi said, his government started working holistically in the health sector focusing on preventive care as well as modern treatment facilities.
- Mr Modi said, **over 30,000 crore rupees of poor's money has been saved due to Ayushman Bharat Yojana**. This scheme has freed the people from the struggles of good treatment due to lack of money.
- Congratulating Gujarat on developing huge medical infrastructure in the past two decades, Prime Minister said, AIIMS will further strengthen the health network in the state.
- **Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani** said, the AIIMS will play a big role in ensuring the modern health care facility reaches to the last mile in the state.
- **201 acres of land has been allotted near Rajkot for the AIIMS project. It will be built at an estimated cost of one thousand one hundred 95 crore rupees and is expected to be completed by mid of 2022. The state-of-the-art 750-bed hospital will also have a 30-bed AAYUSH block. It will have 125 MBBS seats and 60 nursing seats.**
- **Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan and Union Minister of State for Health Ashwini Kumar Choubey** were also present on the occasion.

Source: Newsoair

57. Govt approves export of indigenous Akash missile system

- The government has approved the **export of the indigenous Akash missile system**. **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** has welcomed the move and said it will help India increase its revenue from defence export. Mr Singh said, under the **AtmaNirbhar Bharat**, India is growing in its capabilities of manufacturing wide variety of Defence platforms and missiles.
- The Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister today approved the export of **Akash Missile System and a Committee for faster Approvals has been created**. Mr Singh said the Akash missile system is an important defence asset for the country with over 96 per cent indigenization. He also noted that the Akash is a surface-to-air missile with a range of 25 kilometres.
- **Developed by DRDO, it is India's first indigenously designed missile system and can target fighter jets, cruise missiles, drones and other aerial assets.**

Source:- Newsonair



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58. Niranjan Banodkar appointed as new CFO of Yes Bank

- **Niranjan Banodkar** has been appointed as the new **Group Chief Financial Officer (CFO)** of **Yes Bank**.
- He succeeded **Anurag Adlakha**, who has been designated as the new Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO).
- He will assume the new role with effect from January 1, 2021.
- He started his career with Yes Bank in April 2006 and is currently Group President & Head of Strategy, Sustainability & Investor Relations.
- MD-CEO of Yes Bank: **Prashant Kumar**.

59. ICICI Bank and Google Pay collaborates to issue FASTag digitally

- **ICICI Bank** has partnered with **Google Pay** to issue **FASTag** to users digitally.
- This will allow users to order, track, and recharge ICICI Bank FASTag digitally through UPI on the Google Pay, ensuring safety of users ending visiting the merchants in person, or going to toll locations to buy a FASTag.
- ICICI Bank is the first bank to partner with Google Pay for issuing FASTags.
- ICICI Bank MD & CEO: **Sandeep Bakhshi**.

60. DRDO & Indian Navy conduct successful maiden test trial of SAHAYAK-NG

- **DRDO, Indian Navy** has successfully conducted maiden test trial of **SAHAYAK-NG** from **IL 38SD aircraft of Indian Navy off the Goa coast**
- It is India's first indigenously designed and developed Air Dropped Container that has the capability to carry 50 kg payload
- It is developed by DRDO laboratories: **NSTL, Visakhapatnam and ADRDE, Agra**
- It will enhance Navy's operational logistics capabilities and provide critical engineering stores to ships
- Chairman DRDO: **G Satheesh Reddy**

61. Harsh Vardhan releases Action Agenda for an Atma Nirbhar Bharat report

- Union Minister **Harsh Vardhan** has released 'Action Agenda for an Atma Nirbhar Bharat' report in New Delhi virtually.
- It has been prepared by **Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC)**.
- It is an comprehensive report that is a consequential follow-up of the TIFAC's White Paper on Focused Interventions for Make in India: post COVID -19 which was released earlier in July 2020.

62. Justice Rajindar Sachar Autobiography 'In Pursuit of Justice' released

- Autobiography of late Justice **Rajindar Sachar** named as '**In Pursuit of Justice: An Autobiography**' was launched posthumously by Sachar's family on his birth anniversary (29 December 2020) virtually.



- It was launched in association with **The Indian Society of International Law** and **The Indian Law Institute**.
- It is a story of a great jurist who was an even a greater human being, as he delivered a lot to the society and did not allowed politics to cloud his judgements.

63. Assam Assembly passes bill to abolish all state-run Madrasas

- Assam Assembly has passed '**The Assam Repealing Bill 2020**' to abolish all state-run Madrasas by converting them to general schools.
- The bill will convert all madrasas being run under govt into regular educational institute with effect from **1st April, 2021**
- Assam has decided to make education secular, converting **198 high madrasas** and **542 other madrasas** in the state to operate as any other general educational institute
- Theological studies will not be permitted.

64. Bihar wins Digital India Award for aiding stranded workers during Covid

- Bihar CM Secretariat, Disaster Management Dept and National Informatics Centre (NIC), Bihar have jointly conferred as winners in 'pandemic category' of Digital India Awards 2020
- Bihar has bagged the award for its departments initiative to transfer financial assistance directly to the accounts of beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Bihar Sahayata Mobile App** provided financial assistance to more than 21 lakh stranded workers outside Bihar.

65. BARC-developed plaque therapy successfully used on eye cancer patients

- **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Mumbai** has developed **Eye Cancer therapy** in the form of indigenous **Ruthenium 106 Plaque for treatment of Ocular Tumours**
- Handling of plaque is very convenient for the Surgeon and it has been acknowledged to be at par with international standards
- **Ocular tumours:** Tumours inside eye. They are collections of cells that grow and multiply abnormally
- **Ruthenium-106:** It is a radioactive form of ruthenium, which is platinum group metal.

66. MP Govt to organise 'Raag-Bhopali' exhibition to promote Zari-Zardozi craft

- **Madhya Pradesh Govt** is organizing '**Raag-Bhopali**' exhibition to promote **Zari-Zardozi crafts of Bhopal**.
- **Zari:** Embroidery done with metallic threads is called kalabattu and forms zari
- Main zari production centres: **Bhopal, MP**.
- **Different zari work:**
 - **Zardozi:** heavy and more elaborate embroidery work that threads, spangles, beads and gota.
 - **Kamdani:** lighter needlework on scarves, veils, and caps.
 - **Mina Work:** embroidery is done in gold.

67. Indian Railways' new Vistadome coach successfully completes 180 kmph trial

- **Indian Railways** has successfully completed 180 km per hour speed trial of '**Vistadome**' tourist coaches.
- It is the **luxurious European-style tourists coaches** that have been manufactured by Integral Coach Factory, Chennai.
- The coach will make train journeys memorable for the passengers, and will boost tourism
- They are made with see-through glass rooftops and wide windows for the indulgent sightseeing experience.

68. Health Minister organises 7th National Summit on Good, Replicable Practices

- Health Minister **Harsh Vardhan** digitally inaugurated **7th National Summit on Good, Replicable Practices**
- Aim: to recognize, showcase and document various best practices and innovations in public healthcare system
- He also launched New Health Management Information System (HMIS) along with Operational Guidelines for TB services at AB-HWCs and the Operational Guidelines 2020 on Active Case Detection and Regular Surveillance for Leprosy
- It was first held in **2013** at **Srinagar**.

69. MEA launches Global Pravasi Rishta portal and mobile App

- Minister of State for External Affairs **V. Muraleedharan** has launched the **Global Pravasi Rishta portal** and mobile App, to connect with Indian Diaspora across the world.
- The portal will act as a dynamic communication platform between our pravasis, the Ministry of External Affairs and missions abroad.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** (PBD) is celebrated on **9th January** every year to mark the contribution of the Overseas Indian community in the development of India.

70. Suneet Sharma appointed new Chairman and CEO of the Railway Board

- Former Eastern Railway GM **Suneet Sharma** (SCRA Officer of the 1978 batch) has been appointed as the new **Chairman** and CEO of the Railway Board.
- The extended one-year tenure of Sharma's predecessor, **Vinod Kumar Yadav**, who also became the restructured Board's first CEO, ended on December 31.
- Earlier, **Mr Sharma** has served as the general manager of Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli, and divisional railway manager, Pune, Central Railway, etc.

71. PM lays foundation stone of AIIMS at Rajkot in Gujarat

- PM **Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of **All India Institute of Medical Sciences** (AIIMS) at Rajkot in Gujarat through video conferencing.
- It will be built at an estimated cost of one thousand one hundred **95 crore rupees** and is expected to be completed by mid of 2022.
- 201 acres of land has been allotted near **Rajkot** for the AIIMS project.



- The state-of-the-art **750-bed hospital** will also have a 30-bed AAYUSH block.
- It will have **125 MBBS seats** and 60 nursing seats.

72. Gujarat announces its new Solar Power Policy-2021

- **Gujarat Government** has announced its new **Solar Power Policy - 2021** for the next five years.
- As per the policy, any person, developer or industry can set up a solar project in its premises or land without any limit.
- A limit of only **50 per cent** of sanctioned load/contract demand for industry to set up the solar project has been removed in the new policy.
- This policy will bring down power cost to industry from **Rs. 8 per unit** to around Rs. 4.50.

73. Justice Hima Kohli appointed Chief Justice of Telangana High Court

- The President of India, in the exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution of India, appointed the following Judges as **Chief Justices** of the High Courts.
- **Dr. S. Muralidhar** - Chief Justice of Orissa High Court.
- **Ms. Hima Kohli**- Chief Justice of Telangana High Court.
- **Sanjib Banerjee** - Chief Justice of Madras High Court.
- **Pankaj Mithal** - Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh High Court.

74. Veteran broadcaster Indira Joseph Venniyoor passes away

- Veteran broadcaster, **Indira Joseph Venniyoor** (94-years) passed away at her residence at **Poojapura**.
- She was an Indian news broadcaster and the first English-language news broadcaster of Travancore radio.
- She was the wife of well-known literary scholar & art critic the late E.M.J. Venniyoor.

75. PM lays foundation stone of Light House Projects at six sites

- PM **Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of **Light House Projects** under Global Housing Technology Challenge India through video conferencing.
- The **LHPs showcase** the best of new-age alternate global technologies, materials and processes in the construction sector for the first time in the country.
- The **LHPs** are being constructed at Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Rajkot in Gujarat, Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Ranchi in Jharkhand, Agartala in Tripura and Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh.

76. GST collections for December 2020 highest ever at Rs 1.15 lakh crore

- **GST Revenue collection** for last month has been recorded to be an **all-time high** (1 lakh 15 thousand 174 crore rupees) since the implementation of the **Goods and Services Tax** in the country.
- The revenue collected is **12 per cent** higher than the GST revenues in the corresponding period lasting last financial year.



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- This has been due to the combined effect of the rapid **economic recovery** post-pandemic and the nation-wide drive against GST evaders.

78. Mother Teresa Memorial Awardees for Social Justice felicitated

- **Harmony Foundation** hosted the Mother Teresa Memorial Awards for Social Justice.
- The theme for 2020 - '**Celebrating Compassion In Times Of Covid**'.

This year awardees:

- Dr. Anthony Fauci (US)
- Fr. Fabio Stevenazzi (Milan, Italy)
- Dr. Pradeep Kumar (Chennai)
- Cristian Fracassi and Alessandro Romaioli (Italy)
- Sanjay Pandey, IPS (DG Home Guards, Maharashtra)
- Vikas Khanna (Manhattan, US)
- KK Shailaja (Minister of Health, Kerala)

79. Col Narendra 'Bull' Kumar passes away

- Colonel (retd) **Narendra Kumar**, a legendary mountaineer passed away at the Army's Research and Referral hospital.
- He had spotted Pakistani activities around the Siachen glacier in 1984 that helped India secure it subsequently.
- He earned the nickname 'Bull' for relentlessly charging into everything he did.

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