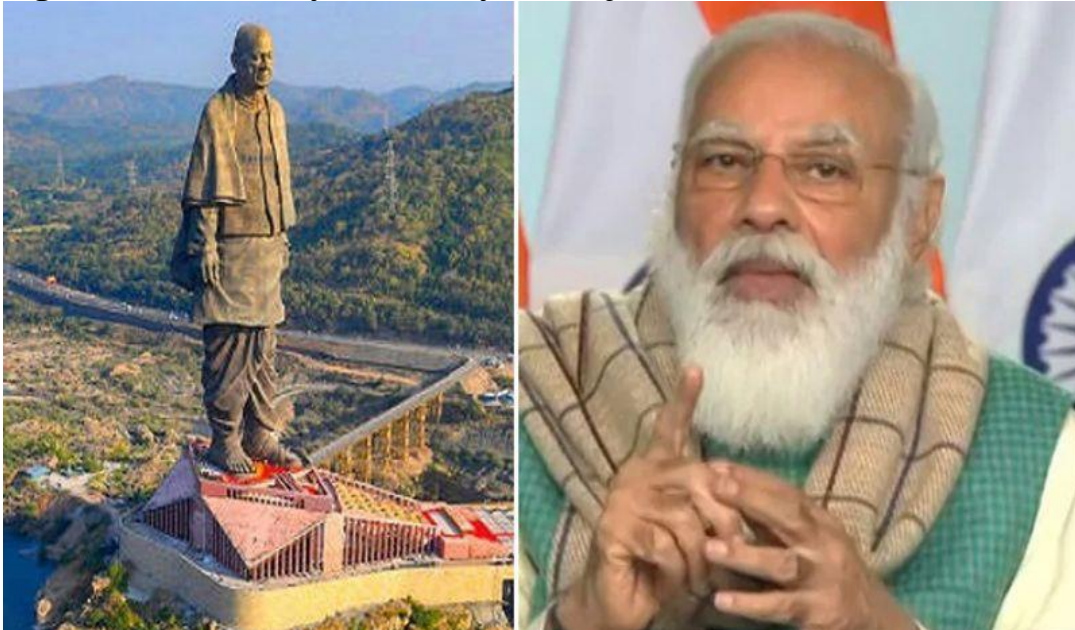


Daily Current Affairs- 18/01/2021

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi flags off eight trains connecting different regions of the country to Kevadiya in Gujarat



- This was the first time in the history of Railways that trains have been flagged off for the same destinations from different corners of the country.
- The new connectivity between Kevadiya and Chennai, Varanasi, Rewa, Dadar and Delhi along with MEMU service between Kevadiya and Pratapnagar and broad gauging of Dabhoi-Chandod and new Line between Chandod- Kevadiya will script a new chapter in the development of Kevadiya.
- **Note:** Kevadiya Station is India's first railway station to start with green building certification.
- The Statue of Unity, situated near Kevadiya in Gujarat's Narmada district, is the world's tallest statue.

2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches the pan India rollout of COVID-19 vaccination drive on 16 January



- This is the world's largest vaccination program covering the entire country.

- **Note:** India's drugs regulator gave emergency use authorisation to Covishield, produced by Pune-based Serum Institute of India after securing licence from British pharma company AstraZeneca, and Covaxin, indigenously developed jointly by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech and Indian Council of Medical Research scientists.

3. Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurates the 'Prarambh': Startup India International Summit'



- The two day 'Prarambh', Startup India International Summit (15-16 January 2021) held in New Delhi, with members of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) countries participating in the inaugural event.
- The Summit was organized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, M/o Commerce & Industry.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a seed fund worth Rs 1,000 crore for startups to provide them with initial capital to start and grow their business during the summit.
- **Note:** The summit marked the fifth anniversary of the Startup India initiative launched by Modi on this day in 2016.

4. 3rd phase of PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana) launched



- The 3rd phase of PMKVY was launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in 600 districts across the country.
- Skill India Mission-PMKVY 3.0 envisages training of eight lakh candidates over a scheme period of 2020-2021 with an outlay of Rs 949 crore.
- **Note:** The government had launched the PMKVY scheme in 2015 to mobilize youth to take up skill training with the aim of increasing productivity and aligning the training and certification to the needs of the country. The scheme was revamped as PMKVY -2 in 2016 with an aim to train one crore youth by the year 2020.

5. Reserve Bank of India has set up a working group to study digital lending activities of the regulated and unregulated players

- The group will suggest steps to regulate digital lending including online lending platform and mobile lending.



- The six-member panel comprising four RBI internal and two external members is expected to submit its report within three months. Jayant Kumar Dash, Executive Director, RBI will be chairman of the group.

6. India and Japan Sign MoU to enhance cooperation in the field of ICT (Information and Communications Technology)



- MoU was signed by Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad and the Japanese Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Takeda Ryota.
- Department of Telecom, Government of India and Ministry of Communications, Government of Japan will enhance mutual cooperation in the



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field of 5G technologies, telecom security, submarine optical fiber cable system to islands of India, spectrum management, smart cities, high altitude platform for broadband in unconnected areas, disaster management and public safety etc.

7. Donald Trump becomes first US President to be impeached twice



- Donald Trump became the first US president in history to be impeached twice when the House of Representatives voted to charge him with inciting mob attack on Congress.
- The second impeachment of Donald Trump occurred on January 13, 2021, one week before his term was due to expire.
- He has been previously impeached in December 2019 for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

8. Shri Amresh Kumar Chaudhary has been awarded prestigious "Chief of Army Staff Commendation"



- Shri Amresh Kumar Chaudhary has been awarded prestigious “Chief of Army Staff Commendation” for his outstanding contribution to Armed Forces during critical period of Covid19 pandemic and its various operations.
- He is currently working as Chief Controller in Mil Rail.
- **About Mil Rail:** Mil Rail is responsible for overall coordination, strategic planning & execution of Railway Logistics support to Defence forces during peace & emergency situations.



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9. Legendary Indian classical musician and Padma Vibhushan awardee Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan passes away



- He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1991, followed by Padma Bhusan in 2006 and Padma Vibhushan in 2018.
- In 2003, he was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.

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