

Weekly Current Affairs Notes 1st Week of January 2021



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1. Union Education Minister inaugurates 'EDUCON-2020'

- Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** has inaugurated two-day Virtual International Akhand Conference 'EDUCON 2020' through video conferencing.
- It is being organized by **Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB)** in collaboration with **Global Educational Research Association (GERA)**
- Focal theme of EDUCON-2020: **Envisioning Education for Transforming Youth to Restore Global Peace**
- Scholars from UK, Canada, Thailand, USA, Australia, Bhutan and India participated

2. CBIC to introduce its flagship Liberalised MSME AEO Package

- **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** has introduced its flagship **Liberalised MSME AEO Package**
- This allow MSMEs who have filed min. 10 Customs clearance documents in 1 year having clean compliance record over 2 years to apply for the scheme.
- Grant of AEO status will be given in **15 days** from electronic submission of complete documents
- It is a voluntary compliance programme enabling swifter Custom clearance for accredited stakeholders in global supply chain

3. Sudhanshu Dhulia appointed as Chief Justice of the Guwahati High Court

- Uttarakhand High Court Justice **Sudhanshu Dhulia** has been appointed as the **Chief Justice of Guwahati High Court.**
- His appointment is made by President of India under **Article 217 (1)** of the Constitution.
- Sudhanshu Dhulia was enrolled as an Advocate in 1986 and practiced in Allahabad and Uttarakhand High Courts in Civil, Constitutional, Service and Labour matters.
- He was appointed as **Permanent Judge of Uttarakhand High Court in 2008.**

4. Centre to form committee to protect language, culture & land of Ladakh

- Centre has announced to form a **committee to protect the language, culture and land of Ladakh** ensuring citizen's participation in Ladakh's development.
- Members:
 - **Head: Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy**
 - **Other members:** elected representatives from Ladakh, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, central govt and Ladakh administration.
- It will also look at geographic location and strategic importance of Ladakh, its demographic changes and employment.

5. PM flags off world's 1st double-stack container train

- PM **Narendra Modi** has flagged off the **world's first double-stack long-haul container train** from New Ateli in Haryana to New Kishanganj, Rajasthan



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- It is **1.5 km long freight train** that will run at the maximum speed of **100 km per hour** as against the current maximum speed of 75 kmph on Indian tracks
- He also dedicated **306 km long New Rewari-Madar Section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC)** to nation connecting Haryana to Rajasthan
- Railway Minister: **Piyush Goyal**

6. Karnataka Govt launches Krishi Sanjeevani Vans to test soil, water

- Karnataka CM **S. Yediyurappa** along with state Agriculture Department has flagged off 40 **Krishi Sanjeevani vans** in Bengaluru
- It has been launched with Central assistance under **National Krishi Vikas Yojana**
- **Aim:** To take labs to the agriculture fields, study the conditions and address the needs of the farmers about pest control, fertility of the soil, weeds and suitable crops in the existing conditions, so that farmers get support for their farming techniques.

7. PNB partners with IIT Kanpur to set up Fintech Innovation Centre

- **Punjab National Bank** has tied-up with **IIT Kanpur** and **Foundation for Innovation & Research in Science & Technology (FIRST)** to set up '**Fintech Innovation Centre (FIC)**' at the institute's campus.
- **PNB** and **IIT Kanpur** will jointly work to set up **FIC** as a vehicle for research and development of technological solutions with the help of **FIRST**, addressing challenges and explore opportunities in the **BFSI** space.
- PNB CEO: **S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao**.

8. Google Cloud India Chief Karan Bajwa elevated to lead Asia Pacific division

- Incumbent head of Google Cloud in India, **Karan Bajwa** has been appointed as the **Chief of Google Cloud Asia Pacific division**.
- He will succeed **Rick Harshman**, who is leaving the company to pursue other opportunities.
- He will continue as the **interim leader for Google Cloud in India** until a new senior leader for the business is appointed.
- He will relocate to Singapore in 2021 for his new role.
- **Google cloud CEO: Thomas Kurian**.

9. Oldest living 1st-class cricketer of New Zealand, Alan Burgess passes away

- World's oldest living first-class cricketer from New Zealand, **Alan Burgess (100 years)** passed away at Rangiora, New Zealand.
- He was right-hand batsman and left-arm spinner.
- He played overall **14 first-class matches between 1940-41 and 1951-52**, out of which 11 first-class matches were played for Canterbury.
- He was a tank driver in World War II.
- After his death, India's **Raghunath Chandorkar** became the oldest living first-class cricketer.



10. IDFC Mutual Fund unveils new investor awareness campaign #PaisonKoRokoMat

- **IDFC Mutual Funds** has launched pan-India investor 360-degree awareness campaign titled **#PaisonKoRokoMat**.
- This new campaign urges savers to become investors and explore the smart and modern mutual fund vehicle for their investments.
- **Aim:** looking beyond the traditional ways of growing your money and using your goals to allocate your money across asset classes and investment solutions.
- It has been conceptualised and created by **TBWAIndia**.
- **IDFC HQs: Mumbai.**

11. RBI sets up College of Supervisors (Cos) chaired by N S Viswanathan

- **RBI** has set up an academic advisory council '**College of Supervisors (CoS)**' to strengthen supervision over regulated entities.
- It will be headed by former deputy governor **N S Viswanathan** and will have five other members:
 - **Arijit Basu (Former MD of SBI)**
 - **Paresh Sukhankar (former Deputy MD of HDFC)**
 - **S Raghunath (IIM)**
 - **Tadhagatha Bandyopphay (IIM)**
 - **Subrata Sarkar (Mumbai)**
- **Aim:** identify areas where skill building/up-skilling are required, plan and develop curricula, etc.

12. National Statistical Office projects India's GDP to contract 7.7% in FY21

- **First advanced estimates of national income** have been released by **National Statistical Office (NSO), MOSPI**
- As per the estimate, **India's GDP is expected to contract by 7.7% in the current fiscal year 2020-21**
- Sector wise contraction as per NSO:
 - **Manufacturing sector:** contraction 9.4% compared to 0.03% in the previous fiscal.
 - **Agriculture sector:** growth of 3.4% in 2020-21.
 - **Services sectors, trade, hotel, transport:** contract by 21.4% compared to growth of 3.6% a year ago.

13. India to chair three-key subsidiary bodies of UNSC

- India will be chairing 3-key subsidiary bodies panel of **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**.
- The three Panels are:
 - **Counter-Terrorism Committee (for 2022)**
 - **Taliban Sanctions Committee**
 - **Libya Sanctions committee.**
- This was announced by India's Permanent Representative at United Nations Security Council, TS Tirumurti.
- UNSC Headquarters: **New York.**



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14. RBI introduces Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) for Large Value Transactions

- **RBI** has introduced **Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) system** for all payment transactions of value ₹50 crore and above using **Centralized Payment Systems operated by RBI** like Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT).
- **LEI**: 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties for financial transactions worldwide. It has been introduced in phased manner.
- LEI can be obtained in India from **Legal Entity Identifier India Ltd. (LEIL)**

15. Shivalik Bank gets license to operate as Small Finance Bank (SFB)

- **Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank (SMCB)** has become first urban co-operative bank (UCB) in India to receive license from RBI to operate as a Small Finance Bank (SFB).
- SMC bank received commercial banking license from banking regulator RBI to transition to a SFB, under the voluntary transition scheme.
- The bank will start its banking operations from April 2021.
- **SMCB headquarters: Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh.**

16. Harsh Vardhan releases India report on LASI Wave-1 on virtual platform

- Health Minister **Harsh Vardhan** has released India report on ‘**Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI) Wave-1**’ on virtual platform
- **LASI**: Full-scale national survey of scientific investigation of health, economic, and social determinants and consequences of population ageing in India
- It covered a baseline sample of 72,250 individuals aged 45 and above and their spouses including 31,464 elderly persons aged 60 and above
- It is India’s first and the world’s largest ever survey

17. Justice Hima Kohli sworn in as Chief Justice of Telangana High Court

- Justice **Hima Kohli** has been sworn-in as the **Chief Justice of Telangana high Court.**
- His oath has been administered by Telanagana’s Governor **Tamilesai Sounderarajan** at a ceremonial programme, held on Raj Bhavan in Hyderabad.
- She has served as a judge of Delhi High Court and become the first woman Chief Justice of Telangana High Court.
- Shee will succeed **Justice RS Chauhan**, who has been appointed as Chief Justice of Jharkhand high court.

18. RBI unveils guidelines for digital payment infra fund

- **RBI** has announced operational guidelines for **Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) scheme**, aimed at encouraging deployment of more digital payments infrastructure across tier-3 to tier-6 centres
- PIDF will be used to subsidize banks and non-banks for deploying payment infrastructure, which will be contingent upon specific targets being achieved.
- RBI has constituted an advisory council under chairmanship of **B.P. Kanungo** (RBI deputy governor) to manage the fund



19. Ashish Pethe appointed as new Chairman of GJC

- **Ashish Pethe** has been appointed as the new **Chairman of All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC)**
- He has been closely associated with GJC and is serving as **West Zonal Chairman GJC**
- Apart from him, **Saiyam Mehra** has been appointed as Vice Chairman of GJC
- Both of them have been appointed for two years.
- **GJC:** National apex body of the gems and jewellery industry across India with headquartered at **Mumbai, Maharashtra.**

20. Centre constitutes high-level group for South Asia energy security

- **Central Govt** has set up high-level group for South Asia-focused energy security architecture named as **‘South Asia Group for Energy (SAGE)’**
- It will be headed by former Union Power Secretary **Ram Vinay Shahi.**
- SAGE has been set up under **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** run think tank **Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS).**
- **Aim:** To achieve balanced and optimal development of energy infrastructure through mutual understanding and cooperation.

21. India & Israel successfully test MRSAM air defence system

- India and Israel has successfully tested **‘Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM)’** defence system.
- **MRSAM missile defence system:** It has been developed jointly by **DRDO** and **Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)** to deal with airstrikes by enemy countries.
- It is an air and missile defence system that can destroy enemy aircraft from a distance of 50 to 70 km.
- It provides ultimate protection against a variety of aerial platforms.

22. Japan plans to launch world’s first wood-based satellite by 2023

- **Japan’s Sumitomo Forestry company** and **Kyoto University** aims to launch **world’s first wood-based space satellite** to combat the growing problem of space debris or junk.
- The 1st satellite is scheduled to be launched in **2023.**
- It is a wooden satellites that is considered good alternatives against the traditional satellites, as they can be easily burnt while re-entering the Earth’s atmosphere, thus leaving no harmful junk behind.

23. India and NDB signs agreement to upgrade road network in Andhra Pradesh

- New Development Bank (NDB) has signed **\$646 million loan agreements** with **Govt of India** for two road projects in Andhra Pradesh.
- Projects:
 - **Andhra Pradesh Roads and Bridges Reconstruction Project:** Widening 1,600 km of State Highways to double lane and reconstructing dilapidated bridges.
 - **Andhra Pradesh Mandal Connectivity and Rural Connectivity Improvement Project:** Widening 1,400 km of district roads to double lane and reconstructing dilapidated bridges.



24. Khelo India Ice Hockey tournament begins in Chiktan, Kargil

- **Zonal Physical Education Officer Chiktan** organized **Khelo India Ice Hockey Tournament** at Chiktan, Kargil (Ladakh)
- There are **13 teams** from different villages of Chiktan that are participating in the tournament, which include **11 men's teams** and **2 women's teams**
- Women's team of Chiktan has been included for the first time.
- tournament was inaugurated by **SDM Shakar Chiktan** and Chief Guest of the event **Kacho Asgar Ali Khan** in the presence of **ZPEO Chiktan Ghulam Rasool**

25. Harsh Vardhan inaugurates CEPI Centralized network lab at THSTI Faridabad

- Minister for S&T **Harsh Vardhan** has inaugurated one of the seven labs of the world named as 'centralized network lab of Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)'
- It has been established at **Translational Health Science & Technology Institute (THSTI), Faridabad**
- **THSTI**: institute of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT). This is the only laboratory of such kind in India and is also accredited by NABL.

26. Kamdhenu Gau-Vigyan Prachar-Prasar Exam announced

- **Rastriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA)** has announced **Kamdhenu Gau-Vigyan Prachar-Prasar Exam**.
- It will be an online exam to be conducted throughout the country on **25th Feb, 2021**.
- It will be conducted in 4 categories:
 - **Primary level up to Std 8th**
 - **Secondary level (from class 9th to class 12th)**
 - **College level (after 12th+)**
 - **For the general public.**
- It will be consists of 100 marks and one-hour duration in Hindi, English and 12 regional languages.

27. Sagarmala Seaplane Project Services commenced

- **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** is initiating **Project of Sagarmala Seaplane Services (SSPS)** with potential airline operators on the select routes
- The project will work through **Sagarmala Development Company Ltd (SDCL)**, under administrative control of Ministry.
- **Proposed Origin-Destination pairs under Hub and Spoke model**: Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep, Guwahati Riverfront & Umranso Reservoir in Assam, Yamuna Riverfront / Delhi (as Hub) to Ayodhya

28. Toyathon 2021 launched to promote manufacturing of indigenous toys

- Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** and Textile Minister **Smriti Zubin Irani** jointly launched '**Toyathon 2021**'
- **Aim**: to conceptualize innovative toys based on the Indian value system which will inculcate the positive behaviour and good value among children.
- It has two categories



- **online toys**
- **physical toys**
- Grand finale of the event will be organized from 23rd to 25th February
- It will majorly focus on conceptualizing new innovative toys using local material.

29. MP Govt launches 'Launch Pad Scheme' to make youth self-reliant

- **Madhya Pradesh Government** has launched a '**Launch Pad Scheme**' for the boys and girls coming out of child- care institutions and having completed 18 years of age.
- Under this scheme, the District Administration will provide space to these youths for opening of coffee shops, stationery, photocopying, computer typing and DTP work
- This scheme has been launched by the **Women and Child Development Department of the state.**
- MP CM: **Shivraj Singh Chouhan.**

30. Uttar Pradesh govt launches Kisan Kalyan Mission to double farmers' income

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister **Yogi Adityanath** has launched '**Kishan Kalyan Mission**' for farmer welfare from Sarojininagar development block of state capital Lucknow.
- The objective of the Mission is to double the farmers income of the state
- It will facilitate farmers with schemes like **PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, Kisan Credit Cards, and PMFBY**
- It will be **three week-long campaign** organised in every development block of all 75 districts.
- Governor of UP: **Anandiben Patel.**

31. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal launches Freight Business Development Portal

- Railway Minister Piyush Goyal launched **Freight Business Development Portal** as one stop solution for all the needs of freight customers.
- The new portal will be game changer in ensuring ease of doing business with Railways.
- It is aimed towards ensuring that all operations remains customer-centric, reducing costs for logistics providers.
- It has been designed basically to replace physical processes with online ones to minimize the need for a human to human interaction.

32. Alexander Ellis appointed as new British High Commissioner to India

- Alexander Ellis (53 years) has been appointed as the new British High Commissioner to India with effect from January 2021
- He succeeded **Sir Philip Barton.**
- **Mr Ellis** will take up his appointment this month.
- He was holding the portfolio of **Deputy National Security Adviser in the UK** for the government's Integrated Review on diplomacy, development and defence.
- Mr. Ellis has earlier served in Lisbon and Brazil as well.

33. Denmark's Oscar nominee 'Another Round' to be opening movie at 51st IFFI

- The **51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI)** will open on 16th January this year, with Indian premiere of the movie '**Another Round**' by **Thomas Vinterberg.**



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- The movie starring Cannes Best Actor Award winner Mads Mikkelsen is among a star-studded line up of movies being showcased at IFFI.
- The movie is also Denmark's official entry to Oscars.
- **51st IFFI** is being organised from **16th to 24th January in Goa** in both online and offline mode together

34. India's growth to rebound to 5.4% in FY 22: World Bank

- The **World Bank** estimates India's growth to recover to 5.4% in FY22, as the rebound from a low base is offset by muted private investment growth given financial sector weaknesses.
- According to the **World Bank's January 2021 Global Economic Prospects report**, Output is estimated to contract by 9.6% in fiscal year 2020-21, due to drop in household spending and private investment.
- World Bank Group President: **David Malpass**
- Headquarters: **Washington DC, USA.**

35. Legendary Indian Hockey Player Michael Kindo passes away

- Former India hockey player and 1975 World Cup-winning team member **Michael Kindo (73-years)** passed away due to age-related ailments.
- He was part of the **1972 Munich Olympics team** that won a bronze medal, beating Holland 2-1.
- Kindo was also part of the Indian team that won the World Cup in 1975 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- He was also the first tribal to be at the highest level in hockey.
- **Awards:** Arjuna Award
- **Native:** Odisha

36. World Bank commits USD 105 million to improve West Bengal waterways

- **Govt of India, Govt of West Bengal and World Bank** has signed **\$105 million West Bengal Inland Water Transport, Logistics and Spatial Development project** to improve inland water transport infrastructure in Kolkata, West Bengal
- It will facilitate passenger and freight movement across the Hooghly river; improve accessibility in Kolkata, enhance the quality of life
- The loan agreement has a maturity of 17 years, including a grace period of seven years.

37. Sanjay Kapoor elected as President of All India Chess Federation

- **Sanjay Kapoor** has been elected as the **President of All India Chess Federation (AICF)**, during the online polls that was held on Jan 4, 2021.
- **Bharat Singh Chauhan** has been re-elected as **AICF's Secretary** and **Naresh Sharma** has been elected as the **Treasurer of AICF.**
- Apart from the president, secretary and treasurer, six vice-presidents and six joint secretaries were also elected during the event.
- All India Chess Federation Headquarters: Chennai.



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38. Boris Johnson cancels Republic Day visit to India

- United Kingdom Prime Minister **Boris Johnson** cancelled his visit to India, hours after he announced a fresh lockdown in the United Kingdom over the new strain of coronavirus.
- Mr Johnson's government has announced a complete lockdown for England's 56 million people, which could last until mid-February.
- United Kingdom Capital: **London**
- Currency: **Pound sterling**

39. PM Modi dedicates Kochi-Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline to nation

- PM Narendra Modi has dedicated '**Kochi-Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline**' to nation in line with One Nation One Gas Grid.
- **Features:**
 - Length: **450 km**
 - Built by: **GAIL (India) Limited.**
 - Transportation capacity: **12 Million Metric Standard Cubic Metres per day.**
 - It will carry natural gas from Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Regasification Terminal at Kochi, Kerala to Mangaluru, Karnataka, passing through Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur, Kasaragod district

40. Pankaj Mithal takes oath as Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh high court

- **Pankaj Mithal** has been appointed as the **new Chief Justice of the common high court for Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh**
- His oath is being administered by Lieutenant Governor **Manoj Sinha**
- He succeeded Justice **Gita Mittal**
- Prior to him, Justice Rajesh Bindal has been serving as High Court's acting Chief Justice.
- He joined Allahabad High Court and was elevated as an additional judge in 2006. He became a permanent judge in 2008.

41. India launches 40th Scientific Expedition to Antarctica

- **India** has launched **40th Scientific Expedition to Antarctica** marking four decades of our nation's scientific endeavour to the southern white continent.
- 40th expedition journey will be flagged off from Goa with **43 members** onboard.
- The journey will take place through **chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasiliy Golovnin** and will reach Antarctica in 30 days.
- The vessel will return to India in April and will also bring back the winter team of the preceding trip.

42. Argentine filmmaker Pablo Cesar to head 51st IFFI's International Jury

- Information and Broadcasting Ministry has appointed **Pablo Cesar of Argentina** as the **Chairman of 51st edition of International Film Festival of India**
- **Other Jury of IFFI:**
 - Prasanna Vithanage of Sri Lanka
 - Abu Bakr Shawky of Austria
 - Priyadarshan of India



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- Rubaiyat Hossain of Bangladesh.
- IFFI is generally held in November but due to COVID-19, it will be held in Goa from Jan 16 to Jan 24.
- The festival will screen 224 films under different sections.

43. Bajaj Auto becomes world's most valuable two-wheeler company

- **Bajaj Auto** has become **world's most valuable two-wheeler company**, after crossing a market capitalization of more than Rs. 1 lakh crore
- Bajaj's share price on NSE closed at Rs. 3,479 per share on first day of 2021.
- This milestone has been achieved by Bajaj during its 75th anniversary in 2021.
- Bajaj is Indian multinational two-wheeler and three-wheeler manufacturing company
- Headquarter of Bajaj Auto: **Pune, Maharashtra**
- MD of Bajaj group: **Rajiv Bajaj**.

44. Indian Army inks pact with Goa Shipyard to get 12 fast patrol boats

- **Indian Army** has inked pact with **Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL)** to procure **12 Fast Patrol Boats for surveillance and patrolling of large water bodies**, especially in high altitude areas like Pangong Tso lake in Ladakh.
- The boats will be indigenously-built by GSL
- It will be delivered by **May 2021**.
- GSL will also carry out maintenance of these boats for 4 years.
- It will help during military tussle between Indian and Chinese troops along Line of Actual Control (LAC).

45. Former Maharashtra Minister Vilas Patil Undalkar passes away

- Former Maharashtra cabinet minister and seven-time Congress MLA **Vilas Patil Undalkar (82 years)** passed away, following a brief illness in Satara.
- He was popularly known as '**kaka**' and was elected seven times from **Karad-South Assembly constituency** for 35 consecutive years, from 1980 to 2014.
- He held the Cooperation and Law and Justice portfolios in the State Cabinets during the previous Congress-led state governments.

46. GRSE delivers eighth & final Landing Craft Utility ship to Indian Navy

- **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE)** has delivered last ship of MK IV Landing Craft Utility (LCU) class vessel '**IN LCU L-58**' (**Yard 2099**) to Indian Navy
- **IN LCU L-58**: Eighth and final ship in the series of 8 LCUs manufactured by GRSE for Indian Navy.
- The ships will be based in **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**, to undertake landing operations in most difficult beaching areas and accommodate battle tanks, troops, personnel carriers and Army vehicles

47. US. Congress passes 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' for Pakistani women

- US Congress has passed '**Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act**' to increase number of scholarships for Pakistani women in higher education under merit and needs-based programme.



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- **US Agency for International Development (USAID)** will award at least 50% of scholarships under Pakistan-based higher education scholarship programme to Pakistani women, from 2020-2022, across a range of academic disciplines
- **Malala Yousafzai:** Pakistani activist and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate.

48. ADB approves \$100 million loan for power distribution system in Bengaluru

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has signed **\$100 million loan agreement** with **Govt of India** to modernise and upgrade the power distribution system in Bengaluru to enhance the quality and reliability of electricity supply in the city.
- Apart from this, ADB will also provide \$90 million without sovereign guarantee loan for project to **Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM)**
- It is one of 5 state-owned distribution utilities in Karnataka.
- ADB President: **Masatsugu Asakawa**

49. DoE issues circular for schools to follow the new ‘School Bag Policy, 2020’

- **Directorate of Education (DoE)** has issued circular asking schools to follow the **new ‘School Bag Policy, 2020’** released by NCERT
- According to the DoE circular, schoolteachers should inform the students in advance about the books and notebooks to be brought to school on a particular day
- **Weight of school bags:**
 - 6 to 2.2 kg (Classes I and II)
 - 7 to 2.5 kg (Classes III, IV, V)
 - 2 to 3 kg for VI and VII
 - 5 to 4 kg for VIII
 - 5 to 4.5 kg for IX and X

50. Dept for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade organizes Udyog Manthan

- **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce & Industry** has organized ‘**Udyog Manthan - a marathon of focused sector-specific webinars for promoting Quality and Productivity in Indian Industry**’
- It has been launched in association with **Quality Council of India, National Productivity Council, and Industry bodies.**
- It is to be held from January 4, 2021 to March 2, 2021.
- It will comprise 45 sessions covering various major sectors

51. RBI introduces Digital Payments Index (DPI)

- **RBI** has launched **Digital Payments Index (DPI)** to capture the extent of digitization of digital/electronic payments
- It has 5 broad parameters for measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments:
 - **Payment Enablers**
 - **Payment Infrastructure**
 - **Payment Infrastructure**
 - **Payment Performance**
 - **Consumer Centricity**



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- Base period for RBI-DPI: **March 2018**
- DPI for March 2019 and March 2020 at 153.47 and 207.84
- It shall be published on semi-annual basis from March 2021

52. World Braille Day being observed today

- **World Braille Day** is being observed every year on **4th January** to celebrate the birth anniversary of **Louis Braille** (Born: January 4, 1809 in France)
- Louis Braille was the inventor of Braille
- **World Braille Day** was celebrated for the first time on **January 4 in 2019** after it was approved by **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**.
- **Braille:** Language used by visually impaired for reading and writing. The world over, Braille had helped several people in reading and writing.

53. Umesh Sinha appointed as Deputy Election Commissioner

- **Umesh Sinha** has been appointed as the **deputy election commissioner in the Election Commission of India**.
- He is a **1986-batch IAS officer** (retired) of Uttar Pradesh cadre
- Prior to this, he was the secretary general in the commission
- He has been appointed on contract basis for six months from January 01, 2021 to June 30, 2021.
- With this, ECI has 4 deputy election commissioners. Other three: **Sudeep Jain, Chandra Bhushan Kumar, and Ashish Kundra**.
- Chief ECI: **Sunil Arora**

54. FSSAI slashes limit for trans-fat levels in foods

- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has capped trans fatty acids (TFA) in oils and fats amount to 3% for 2021 and 2% by 2022 from the current permissible limit of 5%
- The regulation has been amended by **Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations**
- Revised regulation applies to edible refined oils, vanaspati (partially hydrogenated oils), margarine, bakery shortenings.
- India first passed TFA limit in oils and fats in 2011

55. PM inaugurates National Metrology Conclave 2021

- **PM Narendra Modi** delivered inaugural address at **National Metrology Conclave 2021** through video conferencing.
- It is being organised by **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory**, New Delhi
- Theme 2021: **Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation**.
- He also inaugurated **National Atomic Timescale** (that generates Indian Standard Time with an accuracy of 2.8 nanosecond), **Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya** and **National Environmental Standards Lab**



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56. Karnataka govt permitted all shops to remain open for 24X7

- **Karnataka govt** has allowed all shops and commercial establishments employing 10 or more persons to **operate round the clock all days of week (24X7)** for the next **3 years** under **Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments Act 1961**
- It will help businesses recover from financial difficulties they faced during COVID lockdown which led to a decline in economic activity.
- Permitted time allowed for each employee to work in a week is fixed at **48 hours per week (8 hours a day)**.

57. Veteran Odia music director Shantanu Mohapatra passes away

- Legendary Odia music director **Shantanu Mohapatra (84 years)** passed away due to old age-related ailments.
- He has been associated with **Odia music industry** for almost 60 years.
- He was the first Odia music director to work with acclaimed singers and music composers of Hindi film industry like Lata Mangeshkar, Mohd Rafi, Manna Dey, etc.
- He composed first modern lullaby in AIR, first qawali, first bhangra tune, and first fusion and jumping note

58. Indian Railways to start train service connecting international airport

- **Indian Railways' South Western Railway zone** will commence operating train services from **Bengaluru city station to KIA, Devanahalli Railway halt station**
- **Kempegowda International Airport halt:** Indian Railways' Train station located near Kempegowda International Airport, Bangalore (Karnataka).
- It has been built by airport operator, **Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL)** and on its completion was handed over to the railways.
- Railway Minister: **Piyush Goyal**

59. Prasar Bharati digital channels grow 100% in 2020

- **Digital channels of Prasar Bharati across DD and Akashvani have registered more than 100 % growth in 2020**, hitting over a billion digital views and 6 billion digital watch minutes.
- During 2020, NewsOnAir App added more than 25 lakh users with registering over 300 million views
- Prasar Bharati Archives and DD Kisan have been steady digital performers featuring in top 10.
- **Pakistan bagged 2nd-highest digital audience for DD and AIR content** after domestic audience

60. Justice S Muralidhar takes oath as Chief Justice of Odisha High Court

- **Justice S Muralidhar** has taken oath as the **Chief Justice of the Odisha High Court** at Raj Bhawan in Bhubaneswar in a simple ceremony.
- His oath has been administered with **Governor of Odisha, Ganeshi Lal**.
- He is the **32nd Chief Justice of Orissa High Court**.
- He succeeded **Justice Mohammad Rafiq**.
- He was appointed as an **Additional Judge of Delhi High Court** and was transferred to **Punjab and Haryana High Court** on March 6, 2020.



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