

Top Current Affairs of the Week (15 Feb – 20 Feb 2021)

Mario Draghi sworn in as Prime Minister of Italy

- Former European Central Bank Chief **Mario Draghi (73 years)** has been sworn in as the new **Prime Minister of Italy**.
- He served as **President of the European Central Bank** from 2011 until 2019.
- He was also chair of the **Financial Stability Board from 2009 to 2011** and governor of Bank of Italy from 2005 to 2011
- He succeeded **Giuseppe Conte**, who resigned recently after losing majority support.
- Capital of Italy: **Rome**.
- President of Italy: **Sergio Mattarella**.

Telegram Groups

NDA & Other Exams: <https://t.me/joinchat/TX7hKUXmUvKsOL5IFHsbRA>

CDS & Defence Exams: <https://t.me/joinchat/TX7hKVbSbpp5PDJuRccltw>

Air Force X & Y: <https://t.me/GradeupAirforce>

Famous Mandu Festival Begins in Madhya Pradesh

- The Famous '**Mandu Festival**' inaugurated at the historic town of Mandu in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh and will culminate on **February 15, 2021**
- It is a **3-day festival** and is organised by **Madhya Pradesh govt** to showcase every aspect of ancient Mandu, ranging from food, music, history-heritage, art, craft etc.
- **Dino Adventure Park, Astro Park** and **Fossils Museum in Mandu** was also inaugurated.
- Dinosaur Park is the **1st modern fossil park in India** which has 24 eggs.

Four Women Scientists wins SERB Women Excellence Award 2021

- **SERB** has announced **SERB Women Excellence Award 2021**, on the occasion of International Day of Women and Girls in Science (11 February)
- **Winners:**
 - Shobhna Kapoor
 - Antara Banerjee
 - Sonu Gandhi
 - Ritu Gupta
- **About the Award:**
 - It is a one-time award being presented by SERB to women scientists since 2013 to support basic research in the frontier areas of science and engineering.
 - Age: below 40 years

Peter Mukerjea pens memoir 'Starstruck: Confessions of a TV Executive'

- Former media baron **Peter Mukerjea** has penned down his memoir '**Starstruck: Confessions of a TV executive**'

- The book was published by **Westland**
- The book presented a recollection of his experiences in the satellite television industry in India and the changes it has gone through over the years
- He is the **former chief executive of Star India**
- Through this, he has shared his journey, to highlight and showcase the plenty of mistakes made and the plenty of lessons learnt.

Puducherry launches campaign to become Covid-free by February 28

- **Puducherry** govt has launched a campaign titled '**Zero Covid by Feb 28**' to ensure that there are no COVID-19 cases by the end of February 2021, in the Union Territory.
- Under this campaign, all those who had come into contact with people infected with coronavirus would be identified and provided treatment, so that the further spread of the pathogen could be prevented.
- Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry: **Kiran Bedi**.
- Chief Minister: **V. Narayanasamy**.

PM Modi laid the foundation stone of multiple projects in Kerala

- PM **Narendra Modi** lays the foundation stone of **Reconstruction of South Coal Berth at Cochin Port Trust** and dedicates various projects to the nation at Kochi in Kerala
- **Estimated cost:** Rs 19.19 crore under Sagarmala Scheme
- **Projects include:**
 - Propylene Derivative Petrochemical Project (PDPP)
 - Ro-Ro Vessels of Inland Waterways
 - International Cruise Terminal 'Sagarika' at Cochin Port Trust
 - Marine Engineering Training Institute

PM Modi lays down the foundation stone of multiple projects in Tamil Nadu

- PM **Narendra Modi** inaugurated and laid foundation stones for several key projects in Tamil Nadu
- PM also handed over indigenously designed and developed **Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A)** to the Indian Army at Chennai.
- **Projects include:**
 - Chennai Metro Rail Phase-I extension.
 - Railway Electrification of single line section in Villupuram to Thiruvavur.
 - Extension, renovation and modernization of Grand Anicut Canal System.
 - Discovery Campus of IIT Madras.

Puligoru Venkata Sanjay Kumar sworn-in as Chief Justice of Manipur HC

- Justice **Puligoru Venkata Sanjay Kumar** has been sworn-in as the **Chief Justice of Manipur High Court** at Raj Bhavan, Imphal.
- He has been administered an oath by Manipur Governor **Najma A. Heptulla** with strict adherence to COVID-19 SOPs.
- Before this, he served as a Judge in the Punjab and Haryana High Court.
- Manipur's Chief Minister: **Nongthombam Biren Singh**.
- Capital of Manipur: **Imphal**.

IIT Bombay launches fundraising campaign 'Cherish IIT Bombay 2021'

- **IIT Bombay** has launched its first-ever annual fundraising campaign in India, named **Cherish IIT Bombay 2021**.
- It will be used for the creation of world-class laboratory complexes, modernization of lecture halls and continuation of awards to attract and retain faculty.
- Donations made to IIT Bombay by corporate bodies and individuals are 100% tax-deductible under section 80G of the Indian Income Tax Act.

Textile Minister launches commercial Jute seed distribution scheme

- Union Textile Minister **Smriti Irani** has rolled out a **commercial Jute seed distribution scheme**
- **Jute Corporation of India signed MoU with National Seeds Corporation** in 2019-20 for commercial distribution of 1,000 Metric Tonne certified jute seeds for the year 2021-22.
- Apart from this, govt increased MSP for Jute by nearly 765 in the last 6 years and enhanced synergy to extend support to the Jute growing farmers.
- Mandatory packaging in jute materials has been initiated

Ajay Mathur elected as Director-General of International Solar Alliance

- **Ajay Mathur** has been elected as the new **Director-General of International Solar Alliance (ISA)** as announced at the first special assembly of ISA members.
- He will succeed **Upendra Tripathy**, who served as ISA's DG since its inception.
- He is currently serving as the **Director-General of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**
- ISA:
 - Founded: **2015**
 - Number of member nations: **73**
 - Aim: To mobilize over one trillion dollars of investment into solar projects by 2030
 - HQs: **Gurugram**.

India accounts for 11% of global death in road accidents: World Bank Report

- **World Bank** in association with **SaveLife Foundation** has prepared a report titled '**Traffic Crash Injuries and Disabilities: The Burden on Indian Society**' based on 2019 incidents
- The report was released by Union transport minister, **Nitin Gadkari**.
- As per the report, **India has only 1% of the world's total vehicles but accounts for 11% of the global death due to road accidents**
- This is the highest death rate due to a road accident in the world
- 70% of the fatalities belongs to 18-45 years

ISRO announces 'Bhuvan' as an alternative to Google Maps

- **ISRO** has agreed with '**MapmyIndia**' to offer an indigenous satellite-based mapping service as an alternative to Google maps and similar products to India
- **MapmyIndia**: Indian technology company that creates digital maps in India
- This indigenously-developed alternative app will be known as '**Bhuvan**' to provide mapping and other location-based services

- **ISRO's database of satellite images** and **MapmyIndia's digital map platform** will be used to develop a new app

Nomura Projects GDP of India to contract 6.7% in FY21

- Japanese brokerage **Nomura** has projected **the GDP of India to grow at 13.5% in FY22 (2021-22)**.
- Nomura also expects the real GDP of India to contract by 6.7% in FY21 (2020-21)
- As per Nomura India Business Resumption Index, Economic activity is on the '**verge of normality**' after getting severely hit by COVID-19.
- Earlier, RBI projected the GDP of India to grow at 10.5% in FY22.
- President and CEO of Nomura holdings: **Kentaro Okuda**.
- Headquarters of Nomura holdings: **Tokyo, Japan**.

Meghna Pant pens novel 'The Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Good News'

- Award-winning writer, journalist and speaker **Meghna Pant** has come up with her new novel titled '**The Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Good News**'
- It has been published by **Penguin Random House** India and will hit the stand in **April 2021**
- The book is about a small-town woman, '**Ladoo**', who scandalizes her conservative family when she decides to use a sperm donor to have a baby while continuing to look for Mr Right
- It will soon be seen as a major motion picture under **Badnam Ladoo**.

PM laid the foundation stone of Maharaja Suheldev Memorial in UP

- PM Modi has virtually laid down the **foundation stone of the Maharaja Suheldev Memorial and Development project** and dedicated to public **Maharaja Suheldev State Medical College (Bahraich)** marking the birth anniversary of Maharaja Suheldev
- He also laid down **development work of Chittaura Lake** in Bahraich district, UP
- It will include the installation of an **equestrian statue of Maharaja Suheldev** and the development of various tourist amenities like a cafeteria, guest house and a children's park.

Govt made FASTag mandatory on National Highways

- **The Centre has made FASTag mandatory on the National Highways** and all lanes in the fee plazas on National Highways were declared as FASTag lane
- As per **NH Fee Rules 2008**, any vehicle not fitted with FASTag or vehicle without valid, functional FASTag, entering into the FASTag lane of the fee plaza will have to pay a fee equivalent to two times the fee applicable
- It will help both the passengers and toll management authorities
- FASTag is an RFID tag linked with a payment instrument

Govt increases the budget of S&T Dept and Earth Sciences Ministers by 30%

- Govt has **increased budget of Dept of Science and Technology and Ministry of Earth Sciences by 30%** as compared to the revised estimate of 2020-21
- The two ministries have been provided with an allocation of Rs 16,695 crore that will add thrust to India's accelerated growth in S&T
- Rs 50 thousand crores have been also been allocated for the National Research Foundation.
- Apart from this, Deep Ocean Mission will also be launched with a budget outlay of over Rs 4,000 crores.

Best Marching Contingent award of Republic Day parade 2021

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** has presented the **Best Marching Contingent Award of Republic Day Parade 2021**, appreciating the efforts of armed forces and central armed police forces.
- Best marching contingent award in the Armed Forces category was presented to **Jat Regimental Centre**
- **'Best marching contingent among CAPF and other auxiliary forces'** was won by **Delhi Police** and was received by Commissioner of Delhi Police, Robin Hibu

UP started a training programme titled 'Abhyudaya Yojana'

- **UP Govt** has started a training programme for aspirants of various competitive examinations under **'Abhyudaya Yojana'**
- Under this, free of cost training will be provided to the candidates who are preparing for various competitive examinations like **UPSC, UPPCS, Subordinate Services, Banking Services, NEET, NDA, CDS TET exam**, etc.
- More than **5 lakh candidates** have done their registration and 50,000 aspirants have been selected for training in the first phase.

Preeti Sinha to head United Nations Capital Development Fund

- Indian-origin **Preeti Sinha** has been appointed as the **Executive Secretary of the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)**.
- She succeeded **Judith Karl**.
- She will work with a focus on providing micro-finance assistance to women, youth, small and medium-sized enterprises in under-served communities.
- **UNCDF:**
 - Founded: **1966**
 - It is an autonomous UN organization affiliated with UNDP
 - HQs: **New York**
 - **Aim:** Public and private finance work for the world's 47 least developed countries

China overtakes US as largest Trading Partner of the European Union

- **China** overtook the **United States (US)** as the **biggest trading partner of the European Union (EU) in 2020**, according to the data by the European Union statistics agency, Eurostat
- Britain was the 3rd-largest trading partner, behind China and the US, before leaving the European Union in 2020
- The trade volume of the EU with China reached **586 billion euros (\$711 billion) in 2020**, compared to **555 billion euros (\$673 billion)** for the US
- EU exports to China rose by **2.2%** while imports from China increased by **5.6%**

Defence Minister launches e-Chhawani portal for online civic services

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** has launched an online portal '**e-Chhawani**' and mobile app, to facilitate ease of living' and 'ease of doing' for Cantonment Boards residents
- **'e-Chhawani' portal:** It will provide online municipal services to more than 20 lakh citizens across all 62 Cantonment Boards of India while sitting at home. It can be accessed at <https://echhawani.gov.in/>
- **Developed by:** eGov Foundation, Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), DG Defence Estates and NIC.

Amazonia-1, Satish Dhawan Nanosatellite to be launched on Feb 28

- In its first mission in 2021, **ISRO** will launch **Brazilian satellite Amazonia-1** and three **Indian payloads by PSLV C-51**.
- Three Indian payloads satellites:
 - **Anand**: developed by Pixxel
 - **Satish Dhawan nano-satellite or SD SAT**: It is developed by Indian start-up, SpaceKidz India
 - **UNITYsat**
- Besides its scientific payloads, nanosatellite will also carry a copy of Bhagavad Gita, a photograph of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and names of 25,000 common individuals to space.

Naman Ojha announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- Former India wicketkeeper-batsman **Naman Ojha (37 years)** has announced his retirement, from all forms of cricket
- He made his first-class career debut for Madhya Pradesh in 2000-01
- He holds the record for the most dismissals by a wicketkeeper in **Ranji Trophy** scoring 7,861 run
- He has also represented India in all three formats, featuring in **1 Test, 1 ODI and two T20 Internationals**
- He represented teams including Sunrisers Hyderabad, RCB, Rajasthan Royals and Delhi Capitals

Former Bihar-Jharkhand Governor & Jurist M Rama Jois passes away

- Noted jurist and a former Governor of Bihar and Jharkhand, Justice (Retd.) **M. Rama Jois (88 years)** passed away, due to age-related ailments.
- He is a former Rajya Sabha MP and had also served as the Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court.
- He was also a senior advocate in the Supreme Court of India.
- His book '**The Legal and Constitutional History of India**' is a treatise. His 'Dharma: the Global Ethic' is a classic. A great mind.

Indo-Pak War Veteran Retired Major General BK Mahapatra passes away

- Major General (retired) **Basant Kumar Mahapatra (87 years)** passed away at a hospital in Bhubaneswar.
- He participated in major battles including the **1962 Indo-China war**, and the **1965 and 1971 India-Pakistan war**, has passed away.
- He was commissioned into armoured corps (Tanks) of the Indian Army as a Combat Officer and was popularly known as 'Tank Man'.
- Mahapatra was conferred with **Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM)**.

Atmanirbhar' Amazon announces first device manufacturing line in India

- E-commerce giant **Amazon** has announced plans to begin manufacturing devices in India.
- This is the **first Amazon manufacturing line in India** and reiterates the firm's commitment to the government's Make in India for an Aatmanirbhar Bharat
- Amazon will commence manufacturing with contract manufacturer **Cloud Network Technology**, a subsidiary of Foxconn, in Chennai, and start production later this year
- It will churn out hundreds of thousands of **Fire TV Stick devices** every year.

Kiran Bedi removed as Puducherry Lieutenant Governor

- Former IPS officer, **Kiran Bedi** has been removed from the post of **Puducherry's Lieutenant Governor**.
- Apart from this, Telangana Governor **Tamilisai Soundararajan** has been given **additional charge as Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry** during a press communiqué of Rashtrapati Bhawan
- The development in the Union territory comes amid a political crisis in the Puducherry Assembly after several Congress legislators resigned ahead of the elections due this year.

3rd Edition of Indian Sign Language dictionary

- Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, **Thaawarchand Gehlot** has virtually released **3rd edition of the Indian Sign Language (ISL) Dictionary** with 10,000 terms (including 6,000 earlier terms)
- The programme will be live at the link: <https://webcast.gov.in/msje/>
- **ISL Dictionary** has been brought out by the **Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC)**
- **1st edition of the ISL Dictionary:** 23rd March 2018 with 3000 terms
- **2nd edition:** 27th Feb 2019 with 6000 terms

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launches Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan

- **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** has launched **Pilot Pey Jal Survekshan** under Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban)
- It will be conducted in cities to ascertain the equitable distribution of water, reuse of wastewater and mapping of water bodies
- It will be initially conducted in 10 cities like **Agra, Badlapur, Bhubaneswar, Churu, Kochi, Madurai, Patiala, Rohtak, Surat and Tumkur**
- JJM (U) will provide universal coverage of water supply to all households through functional taps

Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy conferred Skoch CM of the Year award

- Andhra Pradesh CM, **Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy** has been conferred the **Skoch Chief Minister of the Year award**.
- This Award has been presented to the CM by Chairman of Skoch Group, **Sameer Kochhar** personally at Tadepalli in Andhra Pradesh
- Andhra state has taken **several revolutionary measures in the past two years** to make governance more efficient and transparent as evident in a year-long study of **123 projects** from across sectors that made them eligible for this award

The Mahabahu-Brahmaputra initiative launched by PM in Assam

- PM **Narendra Modi** launched the **Mahabahu-Brahmaputra** initiative in **Assam**.
- Aim: to improve connectivity in the eastern states
- Under which Ro-Pax vessel operations between **Neamati-Majuli Island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati** and **Dhubri-Hatsingimari** inaugurated.
- Foundation stone of Inland **Water Transport Terminal** at **Jogighopa** and various tourist jetties on **Brahmaputra** and launch of digital solutions for **Ease-of-Doing-Business** were also the parts of the initiative.

5 Indian-origin people feature in TIME magazine's 100 emerging leaders

- Five **Indian-origin** personalities have been featured in **TIME magazine's** annual list of **100 "emerging leaders"**.
- **Vijaya Gadde** (Twitter's lawyer), **Rishi Sunak** (UK FM), **Apoorva Mehta** (Instacart CEO) **Shikha Gupta** (ED Get Us PPE) are featured in the list.
- Bhim Army chief **Chandra Shekhar Aazad** is also on the list.
- The **2021 TIME100 Next** is an expansion of TIME's flagship **TIME100 franchise** of the most influential people in the world.

Govt to amend two legislation to privatize 4 PSU banks

- To facilitate the privatization of **PSU banks**, govt is likely to bring amendments to **2 Acts**.
- The two laws to be amended are the **Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970** and the **Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980**.
- The four banks to be privatized are the **Bank of Maharashtra, Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank** and the **Central Bank of India**.
- These two acts had facilitated the nationalisation of banks in two phases.

IIT Madras Incubated Startup Launched e-Bike PiMo

- An **IIT Madras**-Incubated start-up **Pi Beam** has recently launched **PiMo**, a sustainable utility **e-bike**.
- The e-Bike can charge faster than a smartphone and its riding 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**.

France passes anti-radicalism bill

- The lower house of the **French** parliament has approved the **Anti-Radicalism bill** in a bid to fight the **Islamic radicalism**
- The bill would strengthen oversight of mosques, schools and sports clubs to safeguard France from radical Islamists.
- It is a part of the broader **French** efforts that it initiated intending to fight extremism.
- To accommodate changes, the bill adjusts **France's 1905** law guaranteeing separation of church and state.
- President: **Emmanuel Macron**
- Capital: **Paris**

Govt launches new Instant Messaging platform like WhatsApp

- The **National Informatics Centre** has launched its instant messaging platform called **Sandes** on the line of **WhatsApp**.
- Currently, the Sandes platform is only available to authorised government employees
- Like WhatsApp, the app offers features like **groups, broadcast messages, message forwarding and emojis**
- While the **Sandes app** allows users to backup chat histories to a registered email.
- NIC works under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**.

Cabinet approves over Rs 12,000-crore PLI scheme for the telecom sector

- **Govt of India** has launched the **PLI scheme** for telecommunications and networking products, with an outlay of **Rs 12,195 cr** over **5 yrs**.
- The scheme will be operational from **1st April 2021**.
- Under the scheme, **Telecom manufacturing** will be boosted to enhance the production of more than **Rs 2.4 lakh cr**.
- The scheme also has higher proposed incentives for MSMEs.
- The PLI scheme was launched in **March 2020** in a bid to boost domestic **manufacturing**.

Labour Ministry launches software for 5 pan-India surveys

- Labour Minister **Santosh Gangwar** launched software applications for **five pan-India surveys** including on migrant and domestic workers.
- These five surveys being undertaken by the **Labour Bureau**.
- The Surveys includes **All-India Survey on Migrant workers, All-India Survey on Domestic Workers, All-India Survey on Employment Generated by Professionals, All-India Survey on Employment Generated in Transport Sector, and All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey**.

PM inaugurates Ramanathapuram – Thoothukudi natural gas pipeline in Tam

- PM **Narendra Modi** inaugurated "**Indian Oil's** 143-km-long pipeline from **Ramanathapuram to Thoothukudi**.
- The project will monetize the gas from ONG gas fields.
- This is a part of a larger national gas pipeline project being developed at a cost of **₹4,500 crores**.
- It will benefit Ennore, Thiruvallur, Bengaluru, Puducherry, Nagapattinam, Madurai and Thoothukudi.
- PM also laid the foundation stone of **the Cauvery Basin Refinery at Nagapattinam**.

India Joined Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021

- **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).
- **Purpose of drill:** to enhance the security of international maritime trade, confront maritime piracy and terrorism, and exchange information.

Kings XI Punjab officially renamed as 'Punjab Kings'

- Punjab Kings have played in all 13 seasons of the IPL thus far, but they are yet to win a title
- The next IPL (Indian Premier League) is set to start in the second week of April 2021.
- The franchise is jointly owned by Mohit Burman, Ness Wadia, Preity Zinta and Karan Paul.
- Captain of **Punjab Kings**: K. L. Rahul

Veteran Congress leader Captain Satish Sharma passes away

- Former Union minister **Captain Satish Sharma** (73-years) passed away in **Goa**.
- Sharma served as the Union Petroleum and **Natural Gas Minister** between 1993 and 1996 in the **PV Narasimha Rao government**.

- He first became a member of the Rajya Sabha in June 1986 and was later elected to the Lok Sabha from Amethi in 1991 after the death of Rajiv Gandhi.

WCCB receives Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020

- **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)** has received the **Asia Environmental Enforcement Award 2020** for combatting transboundary environmental crime
- It is the **5th edition of the awards.**
- Presented by: **UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), INTERPOL and World Customs Organization**
- Apart from WCCB, 7 others received the award for 2020

UNFAO recognizes Hyderabad as 2020 Tree City of the World

- **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO)** and **Arbor Day Foundation** have recognized **Hyderabad as the 2020 Tree City of World**
- Hyderabad has been selected for its commitment to growing and maintaining urban forestry under the Haritha Haram programme and its Urban Forest Parks plan
- **5 metrics of evaluation:** Establish Responsibility, Set the Rules, Know What You Have, Allocate Resources, Celebrate Achievements
- With this, Hyderabad joins 120 cities from 23 countries

Centre approves PLI Scheme for Telecom sector

- **Cabinet** has approved **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Telecom and Networking Products** to boost domestic manufacturing and attract investments in the sector
- Total outlay: **Rs. 12,195 crores for 5 years**
- It will also 'Made in India'.
- There will be a minimum investment threshold of Rs.10 crore for MSME with incentives from 7% to 4 % and Rs. 100 crores for others with incentives from 6% to 4 % over 5 year
- It will be operational from **1st April 2021**

Hyundai develops the ultimate mobility vehicle 'TIGER X-1'

- **Hyundai Motors** has launched a Transformer-like robocar named '**TIGER X-1**', that can travel over the most challenging terrains on the Earth as well as on other planets
- TIGER: **Transforming Intelligent Ground Excursion Robot**
- X-1: **experimental status**
- Key Features:
 - **Developed by: Hyundai** in partnership with **Autodesk** and **Sundberg-Ferar**
 - Tiger is designed as a battery-electric vehicle, that will be able to operate as either a 4-wheel-drive vehicle or a 4-legged walking robot.

Vivo is back as title sponsor for Indian Premier League 2021

- **Vivo** has returned as the **title sponsors of the Indian Premier League (IPL) for the 2021 edition** as informed by IPL Governing Council chairman Brijesh Patel in Chennai
- Vivo acquired IPL title sponsorship for **Rs 2,199 crores in 2018**
- However, military clashes at the India-China border in June 2020, replaced VIVO to pull out as sponsor of the Indian Premier League (IPL).
- VIVO was replaced by the Indian online gaming platform **Dream11** in 2020.

Kerala launches 'Snakepedia' app to help treat snake bites

- A team of scientists and photographers in Kerala have launched '**Snakepedia**' mobile app to help treat snake bites.
- It will have all relevant information on snakes to help the public as well as doctors in treating snake bites.
- This information on snakes will be available in the form of pictures, infographics and podcasts and will give relevant information.
- **Aim:** To help the public identify snakes, avail proper treatment on time for snakebites.

Cabinet approves economic agreement between India and Mauritius

- **Union Cabinet** has approved the signing of the **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) between India and Mauritius**
- It is the first trade agreement to be signed by India with an African country.
- **Aim:** Liberalising norms to boost two-way commerce between the two countries.
- It will cover **Trade in Goods, Rules of Origin, TBT, Dispute Settlement**
- The CECPA between India and Mauritius will cover 310 export items for India, while 615 products for Mauritius

India signs MoU with Nepal for reconstructing 6 secondary schools

- **India** has signed MoU with **Nepal's Central Level Project Implementation Unit (Education)** for the reconstruction of 6 secondary schools.
- Total cost: **Nepali Rupees 518 million**
- **Six Schools:** Kanti Bhairab Secondary School, Champa Devi Secondary School, Dhapasi Secondary School and Bishnu Devi Secondary School, Siddheshwar Secondary School and Harisiddhi Secondary School
- The groundbreaking ceremony of one was held yesterday amid a ceremony in Thali of Kathmandu.

Bangladesh Supreme Court launches 'Amar Vasha'

- **Bangladesh Supreme Court** has virtually launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) based translation software '**Amar Vasha**'.
- The software will translate orders and judgements of the Supreme Court from English to Bangla.
- It has been developed with the '**EkStep**' foundation of India.
- It is based on '**Anuvaad**' translation software used in India to translate from English to Indian languages
- Anuvaad was deployed by the Supreme Court of India as **SUVAS** (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software)

Kerala launches 'KFON' to Give Free Internet Connection to Poor Families

- The **Kerala Govt** has launched **Kerala Fibre Optic Network (KFON) project**, aimed at providing free internet connections to BPL families.
- **Phase I** of the project will also help connect users in schools, hospitals, offices and houses.
- In Kerala private sector **Vodafone-Idea** is a leading service provider with a **51.9% market share**.
- Both the **KSEB** and the **Kerala State Information Technology Infrastructure Limited (KSITIL)** have 50% shares each in KFON.

Ankita Raina wins maiden WTA title

- **Ankita Raina** won the women's double title in **Phillip Island Trophy** with Russian partner **Kamilla Rakhimova**.
- It is Ankita's **maiden WTA title**.
- The Ankita-Kamilla pair beat Russia's **Anna Blinkova** and **Anastasia Potapova** 2-6 6-4 10-7 in the final.
- The win will propel the 28-year-old Ankita to top-100 in the **WTA rankings** in doubles.
- She will be the second Indian woman player to be in top-100 after **Sania Mirza**.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0 launched

- Health and Family Welfare Minister **Dr Harsh Vardhan** launched **Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0** to expand immunization coverage across the country.
- He also launched the **IMI 3.0 portal** and released the **Operational Guidelines for IMI 3.0**.
- The Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0 will have two rounds starting from February 22 and March 22, 2021.
- It will be conducted in pre-identified **250 districts/urban areas** across **29 States/UTs** in the country.

User trial of Helina and Dhruvastra conducted jointly

- Joint User Trials for **Helina & Dhruvastra Missile Systems** were carried out from **Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH)** platform in desert ranges.
- 'Helina' is the Army version of the **Nag anti-tank** guided missile while '**Dhruvastra**' is the Airforce version of the Missile.
- The missile systems have been designed and developed indigenously by **DRDO**.
- The **Helina** is a third-generation fire and forgets the class anti-tank guided missile (**ATGM**) system mounted on the **ALH**.

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

- Indian-American scientist, **Swati Mohan** led the guidance, navigation, and control operations of **NASA's Mars 2020 mission**.
- 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 PhD from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Aeronautics/Astronautics.
- NASA's science rover **Perseverance** landed on the **MARS** on **February 18, 2021**.

Manika Batra wins Women's Singles Title in National Table Tennis Championships

- India's top paddler **Manika Batra** clinched her second title by defeating **Reeth Rishya** 4-2 in the women's singles final of the **82nd Senior National Table Tennis Championship**.
- **Commonwealth Games** gold medallist Manika, representing **Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB)**, had won her maiden title in **2015** at Hyderabad.
- She ranked **63rd** in the world ranking.
- 82nd Senior National Table Tennis Championship was held in **Tau Devi Lal Sports Complex** in **Panchkula**.

Naomi Osaka beats Jennifer Brady to win Australian Open title

- Japan's **Naomi Osaka** has won the women's singles title in the **Australian Open 2021**.
- She defeated American **Jennifer Brady** in the final held in **Melbourne, Australia**.

- It was Naomi's **fourth** Grand Slam title.
- Osaka has now won two Australian Open titles after also triumphing at Melbourne Park in 2019.
- She has not suffered a defeat since February **2020** after winning her past 20 matches.
- She had also won the **US Open** in **2018** and **2020**.

The Indian and Indonesian navies carried out a PASSEX military exercise

- The **Indian** and **Indonesian** navies carried out a **military exercise (PASSEX)** in the **Arabian sea**.
- the exercise aims to enhance operational interoperability and overall cooperation.
- The Indian Navy participated in maritime exercises in the last few months with several countries, including **Japan, Russia, Australia** and the **US**.
- Indian Navy Ship **INS Talwar** & Indonesian Navy's multirole **Corvette KRI Bung Tomo** participated in the exercise.

Govt launched the 'Go Electric' campaign for e-mobility

- The Union govt launched the '**Go Electric**' campaign to spread awareness about the benefits of **e-mobility** and electric vehicle charging infra.
- **The 'Go Electric' logo** was also unveiled on the occasion.
- Bureau of Energy Efficiency is mandated to undertake an awareness drive for promoting public charging, e-mobility and its ecosystem.
- **BEE** will extend technical support to the **SDAs** and other partners to ensure uniformity of information to implement the campaign.

Japan Olympics minister Seiko Hashimoto appointed head of Games

- The former Olympics Minister of Japan **Seiko Hashimoto** has been appointed as the next **President of Tokyo Olympic 2020**.
- She is a seven-time Olympian herself, having competed as a cyclist and a speed skater.
- Former chief **Yoshiro Mori** resigned following a backlash over sexist comments he made.
- The Summer Olympics will begin on 23 July, after already being postponed by a year due to the pandemic.