

Weekly Current Affairs in English- 01/02/2021 to 07/02/2021

Important News: State

India's First 'Gender Park' in Kerala's Kozhikode

- The Kerala government is all set to launch Rs 300 crore three-tower 'Gender Park' in Kozhikode.
- This launch will coincide with the second edition of the International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE-II).
- Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugurate the February 11-13 ICGE-II and the Gender Park.
- He will also lay the foundation of the International Women's Trade and Research Centre (IWTRC), a Gender Museum, Gender Library, Convention Centre and an Amphitheatre will also be launched at the event.

Justice Sunil Kumar Awasthi tenders his resignation from office of Judge of MP High Court

- Shri Justice Sunil Kumar Awasthi has tendered his resignation from the office of Judge, Madhya Pradesh High Court, in pursuance of proviso (a) to clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution.
- He was appointed as an Additional Judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court on October 13, 2016 and as Permanent Judge on March 17, 2018.

Lucknow Metro becomes the first metro in the country to use ultraviolet (UV) rays to sanitise train coaches

- UPMRC got the idea from the New York Metro's experiment to sanitise trains with UV lamp rays.
- The remote operated equipment also reduces the cost by 40 times less than what comes in sanitizing the coach by sodium hypochlorite.
- **Facts about Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation (UPMRC):**
Founded: 25 November 2013
Headquarters: Lucknow
Managing Director: Kumar Keshav

Kerala's first Human Milk Bank (HMB) to be opened on February 5

- The HMB shall open at the Ernakulam general hospital in the city by Health Minister KK Shailaja.
- The milk bank will be set up to ensure breast milk for newborn babies whose mothers cannot breastfeed them.
- **Note:** Rotary Club of Cochin Global took the lead to bring the project to the state with two such breast milk banks - one at Ernakulam and the other at Jubilee Medical Mission Hospital at Thrissur.
- The collected milk can be stored up to 6 months safely in the bank.

PGIMER, Chandigarh launches India's first 'Amputee Clinic'

- India's **first amputee clinic** has been launched by the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (**PGIMER**), Chandigarh. It was inaugurated by the PGIMER Director Prof. Jagat Ram.
- It has been set up to improve the care of amputee patients by providing a wide range of services under one roof and with significant coordination.
- It will comprise specialists from various departments including orthopaedics, prosthetists, PMR (physical and medical rehabilitation), psychologists, occupational physiotherapy and nursing departments.
- **Note:** PGIMER has also stated that it will run amputee schools based on the successful knee school being run at PGI.

Punjab CM launches 'Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai' Mission

- Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh launched the 'Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai' mission as part of the state government's campaign to accomplish the goal of 100 percent potable piped water supply in all rural households by 2022.
- The scheme is being funded by the World Bank, Jal Jeewan Mission of GoI, NABARD, and State Budget.
- He also inaugurated one **Mega Surface Water Supply Scheme** covering 85 villages in the Moga district, 144 new water supply schemes for 172 villages, 121 Arsenic, and Iron removal plants.
- **Facts about Punjab:**
Capital: Chandigarh
Governor: V. P. Singh Badnore
Chief Minister: Captain Amarinder Singh

Important News: India

Prime Minister addresses 125th anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata'

- Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the 125th anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata' organised by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati in Uttarakhand.
- **'Prabuddha Bharata'** is a monthly journal of the Ramakrishna Order which was started by Swami Vivekananda. It has been in publication since 1896 and carries articles on social sciences and humanities comprising historical, psychological, cultural and social sciences themes.

Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' addresses the inaugural ceremony of the ASEAN-India Hackathon

- The ASEAN-India Hackathon is being organized online from 1st -3rd February 2021.
- Hackathon will provide a unique opportunity to India and ASEAN countries to solve their common identified challenges under two broad themes of "Blue Economy" and "Education".

- **About ASEAN- India Hackathon:** It is an initiative taken by the Ministry of Education. This unique hackathon offers opportunities for all the 10 ASEAN countries and India to forward their economic and cultural ties through collaboration in education, science and technology.

8th India International Silk Fair

- Union Minister for Women & Child Development and Textiles, Smt Smriti Zubin Irani inaugurated the 8th edition of India International Silk Fair on Virtual Portal from 31st January to 4th February.
- India International Silk Fair is the Sourcing Fair for silk and silk blend products organised by the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council under the aegis of Ministry of Textiles and sponsored by Department of Commerce.
- **Note:** India has a long history of silk production and is the **2nd largest producer of Silk after China**.
- India is the only country in the world which produces all the four major varieties of silk i.e. Mulberry, Eri, Tassar, and Muga.

Prime Minister to inaugurate 'Chauri Chaura' Centenary Celebrations on 4th February

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Chauri Chaura Centenary Celebrations at Chauri Chaura, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, on 4th February 2021.
- The day marks 100 years of the 'Chauri Chaura' incident, a landmark event in the country's fight for independence.
- Prime Minister will also release a postal stamp dedicated to the Chauri Chaura centenary during the event.
- **About Chauri Chaura incident:** It took place on 4 February 1922 at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of the United Province (modern Uttar Pradesh) in British India, when a large group of protesters participating in the Non-cooperation movement, clashed with police who opened fire.

Pattachitra Artform

- Bhagyashree Sahu belonging to Odisha's Rourkela found mention in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 73rd "Mann ki Baat" for her artwork to promote cloth-based scroll paintings "Pattachitra".
- **About Pattachitra:** It is a general term for traditional, cloth-based scroll painting, based in the eastern Indian states of Odisha and West Bengal.
- **Geographical Indication (GI) of Pattachitra:** Geographical indication of Pattachitra is registered under to different state of India as the style and motif of Odisha and West Bengal Pattachitra are so different. The Pattachitra of Odisha is registered as Orissa Pattachitra. The Pattachitra of West Bengal is registered as Bengal Pattachitra.

Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President, inaugurated the tribal festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' at Dilli Haat in New Delhi

- The Festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' at Dilli Haat, New Delhi is being held from February 01-15, 2021.
- The theme of the festival is "A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Crafts, Culture and Commerce", which represents the basic ethos of tribal life.
- **Note:** The **Aadi Mahotsav** is an annual event that was started in 2017. The festival is being organized by TRIFED (Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Union Ministers jointly launch unified web portal for monitoring progress of GOBARDHAN activities

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Animal Husbandry Minister Giriraj Singh, Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Minister of State for Jal Shakti Rattan Lal Kataria jointly launched a unified web portal for monitoring the progress of GOBARDHAN activities across the nation.
- Gobardhan is an important component of Swachh Bharat Mission Phase-2 for organic solid waste management.
- **About GOBARDHAN Scheme:** Ministry for Drinking Water and Sanitation on April 30, 2018 launched the **GOBAR - DHAN (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Fund)** Scheme.
- Under GOBAR-DHAN scheme, solid waste of dung and fields will be changed into compost and fuels such as biogas and bio-CNG.

Year-long birth centenary celebrations of legendary classical singer Pandit Bhimsen Joshi begins

- Different events have been organised including SwarBhaskar 100 by Jayateerth Mevundi, 'Abhivadan' by Arya Sangeet Prasarak Mandal.
- **Note:** Pandit Bhimsen Joshi (February 4, 1922 - January 24, 2011) was a vocalist from Karnataka.
- He received the Bharat Ratna in 2008.

Important News: World

Nepal decides to award hydropower project to India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam

- Nepal has decided to award the contract for construction of 679 megawatt Lower Arun Hydropower Project to India's Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN).
- This was decided at a meeting of the Investment Board Nepal (IBN), chaired by Prime Minister of Nepal.
- The project was awarded to the SJVN under the Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) delivery method.
- **Facts about Nepal:**
Capital: Kathmandu
President: Bidya Devi Bhandari
Prime minister: K. P. Sharma Oli
Currency: Nepalese Rupee

The Myanmar Military Tatmadaw has announced a one year state of emergency in the country

- The Vice President Myint Swe has been made the acting President and all powers have been transferred to the Commander in Chief Min Aung Hlaing.
- The development follows detention of the State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint and other senior leaders from the ruling party National League for Democracy (NLD) by the military.
- **Note:** Aung San Suu Kyi took over as the head of the civilian government in 2015 after a long period of military rule in Myanmar. The National Elections held on November last year saw a massive victory for NLD with the military supported USDP performing poorly.
- Aung San Suu Kyi won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991.

Oxford names "Aatmanirbharta" as Hindi word of the year 2020

- The word was chosen by an advisory panel of language experts Kritika Agrawal, Poonam Nigam Sahay and Imogen Foxell.
- **Note:** Previous Hindi words of the year are *Aadhaar* (2017), *Nari Shakti* (2018) and *Samvidhaan* (2019).

Economy

Economic Survey 2021

- Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey that details the state of the economy ahead of the government's budget for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2021.
- The Economic Survey 2020-2021, authored by a team led by chief economic adviser (CEA) Krishnamurthy V Subramanian, focused on the state of different sectors of the economy.
- The Economic Survey has been **dedicated to all the COVID-19 warriors**, who have really helped in upholding India.
- **Key highlights:** India's GDP is estimated to contract by 7.7% in FY2020-21.
- The survey expects the Indian economy to grow by 11 percent during 2021-22 which is close to the growth forecast of 11.5 percent made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- V-shaped economic recovery due to mega vaccination drive, robust recovery in the services sector and robust growth in consumption and investment.

Union Budget 2021-22

- The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget 2021-22 in Parliament on 01 February, which is the first budget of this new decade and also a digital one in the backdrop of unprecedented COVID-19 crisis.

- Additionally, also on the path to fast-implementation are the 13 promises of Budget 2015-16-which were to materialize during the AmrutMahotsav of 2022, on the 75th year of our Independence.
- **The Budget proposals for 2021-22 rest on 6 pillars:** Health and Wellbeing, Physical & Financial Capital and Infrastructure, Inclusive Development for Aspirational India, Reinvigorating Human Capital, Innovation and R&D, Minimum Government and Maximum Governance
- **The key highlights of the Union Budget 2021-22 are as follows:**
- Total spend of around Rs 2 lakh crore on healthcare, **Rs 35,000 crore for the Covid-19 vaccine**, Rs 1.10 lakh crore outlay for railways. To impose Rs 2.5 per litre agri infra cess on petrol and Rs 4 on diesel.
- The forthcoming Census could be India's first digital Census, allocating Rs 3,768 crore for FY21.
- Mega Investment Textiles Parks (MITRA), Mission Poshan 2.0, PM Aatmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana will be launched.
- Government has increased the FDI limit from 49 to 74 per cent in Insurance Companies.
- No change in the Income Tax Slabs. Senior citizens who are of 75 years of age and above, having an only pension and interest income will be exempted from filing their income tax return.
- Set up of an asset reconstruction company and an asset management company to clean up non-performing assets in the banking sector.
- A *voluntary vehicle scrappage policy* has been introduced.
- **Note: 15th Finance Commission's final report:** The 15th Finance Commission (Chairman: Mr N. K. Singh) was required to submit two reports. The first report, consisting of recommendations for the financial year 2020-21, was tabled in Parliament on February 1, 2020.
- The final report with recommendations for 2021-22 to 2025-26 was tabled along with Budget 2021-22.

CCI approves acquisition of Indo Gulf Fertilisers by Indorama India Private Limited

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approves acquisition of Indo Gulf Fertilisers by Indorama India Private Limited (IIPL) under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002.
- **IIPL** is principally engaged in manufacture, trading and sale of fertilisers, primarily, phosphatic fertilisers and speciality plant nutrients.
- **Grasim's fertiliser division, Indo Gulf Fertilisers (IGF)** is a leading agri-solutions provider. Indo Gulf Fertilisers is an Indian company (a unit of Aditya Birla Nuvo Ltd.) based in Mumbai and is part of the Aditya Birla Group of companies.

14 new Minor Forest Produce (MFP) items included under Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme to provide fair prices to tribal gatherers

- The government has decided to include 14 new minor forest produce items under the mechanism for marketing of minor forest produce through a minimum support price scheme to provide remunerative and fair prices to tribal gatherers of forest produces.
- Newly included items are Tasar Cocoon, elephant apple dry, bamboo shoot, malkangani seed and wild dry mushroom among others.
- **About MFP (Minor Forest Produce):** The Central government had introduced a minimum support price for a selected list of minor produce items through mechanism for marketing of Minor Forest Produce through Minimum Support Price and development of Value Chain of MFP Scheme in 2011.

RBI cancels license of Kolhapur's Shivam Sahakari Bank

- According to the RBI, the licence of Maharashtra-based Shivam Sahakari Bank has been cancelled as it does not have adequate capital and earning prospects.
- Consequently, the bank ceases to carry on banking business, with effect from the close of business on January 29, 2021.
- With the cancellation of licence and commencement of liquidation proceedings, the process of paying the depositors of Shivam Sahakari Bank as per the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) Act, 1961 will be set in motion.
- **Note:** Recently, RBI cancelled the licence of Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank Ltd., Osmanabad, Maharashtra.

Award and Honor

A.R. Rahman presented 'Alert Being Icon Award'

- Oscar Award-winning music director A.R. Rahman and social activist from Saidapet Hari Krishnan were among the 14 people who were presented the **4th edition of the Alert Being Awards 2020 by the NGO ALERT.**
- The equivalent award for organisations was given to Biocon Foundation founded by Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw.
- **Note:** This year, a special category, Alert Being Covid Warriors, was added, and 30 Covid warriors received the Alert Being Covid Frontline Warrior Award for their contribution amid the pandemic.

Defense

Asia's biggest Aero show 'Aero India 2021' begins at Bengaluru in Karnataka

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the three-day (03-05 February 2021) mega event that is taking place for the first time in a hybrid mode due to Covid Pandemic. The 13th edition of Aero India show will see participants in both physical and virtual mode.
- India will host **Indian Ocean Region Defence Ministers' Conclave** on February 04, 2021 during Aero India 2021.
- **Note:** Bengaluru has hosted all 13 editions of the show.

- Aero India is a biennial air show and aviation exhibition.
- It is organised by the Defence Exhibition Organisation, Ministry of Defence. The first edition of the air show was held in 1996.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates HAL's second LCA production line

- The Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on February 2, 2021, inaugurated the second Light Combat Aircraft- LCA production line of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.
- The Cabinet Committee of Security chaired by PM Modi on January 13, 2021, had given its approval to the massive deal for indigenous defence procurement. The deal is worth Rs. 48,000 crores for the purchase of 83 LCA Tejas Mark 1A fighter jets.
- **Facts about HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited):** Public Sector Undertaking (Aerospace and Defence)
Founded: 1940 (As Hindustan Aircraft), 1964 (Renamed Hindustan Aeronautics)
Headquarters: Bangalore, Karnataka
Chairman & MD: R Madhavan

New Appointment

Lt General Chandi Prasad Mohanty next Vice Chief of Army Staff

- Lieutenant General Chandi Prasad Mohanty will take over as the new vice-chief of Army staff on February 1.
- He is presently the Southern Army Commander and will be succeeding Lt General SK Saini on his superannuation.
- **Facts about Indian Army:**
Founded: 1 April 1895
Headquarters: New Delhi
Commander-in-Chief: President Ram Nath Kovind
Chief of the Army Staff: General Manoj Mukund Naravane

R S Sharma appointed as new CEO of Ayushman Bharat

- R S Sharma has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ayushman Bharat Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana) by the National Health Authority (NHA).
- RS Sharma was former chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). He will replace Indu Bhushan.
- **Note: AB PM-JAY (Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana):** It is the world's largest health assurance scheme which aims to provide a health cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization. PM-JAY was launched on 23 September 2018 at Ranchi, Jharkhand.

Kaja Kallas becomes first female Prime Minister of Estonia

- The former Member of the European Parliament, Kaja Kallas has become the first female Prime Minister of Estonia as the new two-party coalition government was sworn in on January 26, 2021.

Jay Shah takes over as Asian Cricket Council (ACC) President

- BCCI secretary Jay Shah was unanimously elected as the President of the Asian Cricket Council following its AGM held virtually.
- He replaces Nazmul Hassan, President, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).
- **Facts about the Asian Cricket Council (ACC):**
Headquarters: Colombo, Sri Lanka
Founded: 19 September 1983
Parent organization: International Cricket Council
- **Note:** ACC is responsible for organizing the Asia Cup tournaments.

Bhavya Lal, the Indian-American scientist, has been appointed as the Acting Chief of Staff of the US space agency (NASA)

- Lal brings "extensive experience" in engineering and space technology, serving as a member of the research staff at the Institute for Defence Analyses Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI) from 2005 to 2020.
- Lal served as a member of the Biden Presidential Transition Agency Review Team for the agency and oversaw the agency's transition under the administration of President Biden.
- **Facts about NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration):** It is an independent agency of the U.S. Federal Government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and space research.
Founded: 1 October 1958
Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States

Ajay Singh re-elected as president of Boxing Federation of India

- Spicejet airlines chairman Ajay Singh defeated Ashish Shelar in a contest to get re-elected as president of Boxing Federation India for a second term at the general elections held in Gurugram.
- **About Indian Boxing Federation:** It is the Indian national governing body for Olympic boxing and is India's member organization of the International Amateur Boxing Association. It is headquartered in New Delhi. Indian Boxing Federation is also known as all India boxing association.

Andy Jassy to replace Jeff Bezos as Amazon CEO

- Amazon founder Jeff Bezos has announced to step down from his position later this year as chief executive of the company he built from a startup into one of the world's most valuable firms.
- Andy Jassy is currently serving as CEO of Amazon Web Services (AWS).
- **Facts about Amazon:**
CEO: Jeff Bezos
Founder: Jeff Bezos

Founded: 5 July 1994

Headquarters: Seattle, Washington, United States

Science & Technology

Visual intelligence tool TEJAS, e-Auction India, 'Work from AnyWhere' portal launched on silver jubilee of NICS

- On the occasion of silver jubilee of National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICS), a public sector enterprise under National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has launched visual intelligence tool TEJAS, e-Auction India, 'Work from AnyWhere' and NIC products portfolio.
- **Facts about National Informatics Centre (NIC):**
Founded: 1976
Director General: Neeta Verma
Headquarters: New Delhi
Parent organisation: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

The Department of Space has entered into a Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA) with Skyroot Aerospace Pvt. Ltd.

- The NDA will enable the company to access the facilities and technical expertise available in ISRO centers to proceed with their launch vehicle development program.
- **About Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited:** It is an Indian private aerospace manufacturer and commercial launch service provider located in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- The company was founded by former engineers and scientists from ISRO, DRDO, and various aerospace companies.
- **Note:** The company has been developing its first launch vehicle, the "Vikram-I," which is on track for its initial launch around December 2021.

Environment & Ecology

National Marine Turtle Action Plan launched

- The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has released 'Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines' and 'National Marine Turtle Action Plan'.
- India has rich marine biodiversity along a vast coastline of over 7,500 km. India's coastal waters and beaches provide foraging and nesting sites for a variety of marine species, including sea turtles.
- **Five species of sea turtles are known to inhabit Indian coastal waters and islands.** These are the Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Green (*Chelonia mydas*), Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) and

the Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) turtles. Except the Loggerhead, the remaining four species nest along the Indian coast.

- They are protected in Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

2021: Year of Indo-French alliance towards a Greener Planet

- Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Prakash Javadekar and Ms Barbara Pompili, the French Minister for Ecological Transition launched the Indo-French Year of the Environment.
- The Indo-French Year of the Environment over the period 2021-2022 would be based on **five main themes**: environmental protection, climate change, biodiversity conservation, sustainable urban development, and the development of renewable energies and energy efficiency.
- **Note: India** has made significant progress towards climate change action & has already achieved 26% of reduction of emission intensity. As of 2020 the renewable capacity in India stands at 90 GW which includes 36 GW of solar energy & 38 GW of wind energy.

India gets its first Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management (CWCM)

- On the occasion of the World Wetland Day, the Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Babul Supriyo announced the establishment of a Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management, as a part of the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), Chennai, an institution under the Ministry.
- **Note:** India has nearly 4.6% of its land as wetlands, covering an area of 15.26 million hectares and has 42 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites), with a surface area of 1.08 million hectares.
- **NamamiGange** is the first of its kind program where Wetland Conservation is integrated with Basin Management Plan.

Uttarakhand sets up first arboretum for Shivalik range

- A first of its kind arboretum conserving over 210 species of trees found in the Shivalik range of Himalayas was inaugurated in Uttarakhand's Nainital district.
- The arboretum was inaugurated by Ajay Singh Rawat, a noted environmentalist from Uttarakhand.
- The Shivalik Arboretum has over 210 tree and shrub species, making it one of the biggest arboretum in the state. Some of the trees preserved include Kafal, Buransh, Tejpat and Sanjeevani.
- **Note: Shivalik range or Outer Himalayas** spreads across states and union territories like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and seven states in the country's northeast.

Summits & Conference

5th Joint Meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum

- India and Japan held the fifth joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum (AEF) on 28 January 2021 in New Delhi.
- The meeting was co-chaired by Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Foreign Secretary, and H.E. Mr. Suzuki Satoshi, Ambassador of Japan to India.
- **About Act East Forum (AEF):** It was established in 2017 to provide a platform for India-Japan collaboration in the North Eastern Region under India's "Act East Policy" and Japan's vision for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

Ranking & Index

India ranked 86th in Corruption Perception Index 2020

- India's rank is 86 out of 180 nations with a score of 40 released by Transparency International (TI).
- India's rank has slipped six places in 2020 as India was ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in 2019.
- New Zealand and Denmark were ranked at first position with scores of 88.
- Somalia and South Sudan were ranked lowest at 179th position.
- **Facts about Transparency International (TI):**
Headquarters: Berlin, Germany
Chairperson: Delia Ferreira Rubio
Founded: 4 May 1993

India ranks 86th on Covid-19 Response Index

- India has ranked 86th in a coronavirus performance index comprising 98 countries, according to the performance index compiled by the Sydney-based Lowy Institute.
- **Top three countries** are New Zealand, Vietnam, Taiwan respectively and Brazil was ranked at the bottom in the list.
- The study measured a number of key indicators, including confirmed cases, deaths, cases per million people and deaths per million people.

Reliance Jio ranked fifth strongest brand globally

- Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's four-year-old telecom venture Reliance Jio has been ranked the fifth strongest brand globally.
- Jio has entered the ranking for the first time and claimed fifth position with a BSI score of 91.7 out of 100 and the elite AAA+ brand strength rating.
- **According to the Brand Finance's Global 500, 2021, Chinese mobile app WeChat was at the top position.**

UN World Tourism Organization confirms 2020 as 'Worst Year on Record'

- Global tourism suffered its worst year on record in 2020, with international arrivals dropping by 74 percent according to the latest data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

- Destinations worldwide welcomed 1 billion fewer international arrivals in 2020 than in the previous year (2019), due to an unprecedented fall in demand and widespread travel restrictions.
- **Facts about the World Tourism Organization:** It is the United Nations specialized agency.
Headquarters: Madrid, Spain
Formation: 1 November 1974
Head: Zurab Pololikashvili

India ranks 10th in Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index

- India ranked 10th out of 11 Asia Pacific countries in a newly-launched health index to measure the progress towards personalised healthcare.
- Singapore ranked 1st, Taiwan 2nd and Japan 3rd in the index.
- **Note:** The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) report 'Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index', developed by the Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies in partnership with Roche, measures the readiness of 11 health systems across the region — Australia, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and New Zealand — in adopting personalised healthcare.

Maharashtra ranks first in justice delivery in India

- In the second edition of the **India Justice Report (IJR) 2020**, Maharashtra has retained the top spot on delivering justice to people among 18 large and medium sized states, followed by Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Punjab and Kerala.
- Only 29 % of Judges in High Courts across the country are women.
- Bihar, Uttarakhand, Tripura and Meghalaya have no woman judges in their High Courts.
- **About the India Justice Report:** It is an initiative of Tata Trusts in collaboration with Centre for Social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, DAKSH, TISS–Prayas, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, and How India Lives.

PHDCCI: India 2nd most resilient economy among the top 10 leading economies in 2021

- Germany ranks 1st in the **PHDCCI International Economic Resilience (IER) Rank** followed by India and South Korea at 2nd and 3rd positions respectively.
- The analysis of the leading economies conducted on the basis of the five leading macroeconomic parameters.
- India's Real GDP growth rate is projected to be the highest at 11.5% in the year 2021 among the top 10 leading economies in the world.
- **About PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry:** It is a proactive National Apex Chamber working as a catalyst in the promotion of industry, trade and entrepreneurship.
Establishment: 1905

President: Sanjay Aggarwal

Headquarters: New Delhi

Important Days

January 30, Martyrs' Day (Shaheed Diwas)

- Every year, Shaheed Diwas or Martyrs' Day is observed on 30 January in India. This day marks the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- On January 30, 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by Nathuram Godse in Birla House.
- **Note: March 23** is also celebrated as **Martyr's Day** to pay tribute to three extraordinary revolutionaries of India who were hanged to death by the British namely **Bhagat Singh**, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

World Leprosy Day 2021

- World Leprosy Day is celebrated on the last Sunday of January every year all over the world to increase knowledge about it and propagate the need and importance of eradicating the disease.
- This year World Leprosy Day took place on 31 January.
- **In India**, the day is celebrated on January 30, which is also remembered as the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, father of the nation.
- **National Leprosy Eradication Program** is a health scheme of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India to eradicate leprosy in India. It was launched in 1983 as a continuation of the National Leprosy Control Program of 1955.

February 2, World Wetlands Day

- 2 February each year is World Wetlands Day to raise global awareness about the vital role of wetlands for people and our planet.
- This day also marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea.
- The theme is Wetlands and Water.
- **Note:** There are 42 Ramsar sites in India. These are wetlands deemed to be of "international importance" under the Ramsar Convention.

February 4, World Cancer Day

- World Cancer Day is an international day marked on February 4 to raise awareness of cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.
- The theme for World Cancer Day 2021 is 'I Am and I Will.'
- **Note:** World Cancer Day was originated at the first World Summit against Cancer in 2000. It was held in Paris and was founded by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).
- Recent studies estimate about one out of six people worldwide died from cancer that's more than HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined.

- According to the World Health Organization, India contributes to nearly 60% of head and neck cancer patients worldwide and this number is expected to double by 2030.

Books and Authors

Tamil translation of French novel 'Le mariage de plaisir' won the Romain Rolland Book Prize at the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2021 in Kolkata

- The winners of the prize are translator Dr S A Vengada Soupraya Nayagar and publisher Amutharasan Paulraj of Thadagam Publishers for the Tamil translation of the book, authored by Tahar Ben Jelloun.
- **Note: Romain Rolland Book Prize**, started in 2017, aims at awarding the best translation of a French title into any Indian language, including English.

Dalai Lama's new book 'The Little Book of Encouragement'

- Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama shares quotes and words of wisdom to deal with the new realities of the panic-stricken world along with how to combat rising extremism, polarity and climate change besides his views on Tibet in his new book.
- "The Little Book of Encouragement", which has 130 quotes, is edited by Renuka Singh and published by Penguin Random House.
- **Note: Dalai Lama** is a title given by the Tibetan people to the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or "Yellow Hat" school of Tibetan Buddhism, the newest of the classical schools of Tibetan Buddhism. The 14th and current Dalai Lama is Tenzin Gyatso, who lives as a refugee in India.

Obituaries

Oscar-winning actress Cloris Leachman passes away at 94

- Cloris Leachman was known as one of Hollywood's most prolific performers having won an Academy Award, a Golden Globe, and eight Primetime Emmy Awards.

Paul J. Crutzen, Nobel laureate passes away

- He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995 for his work on atmospheric chemistry and specifically for his efforts in studying the formation and decomposition of atmospheric ozone. In addition to studying the ozone layer and climate change, he popularized the term Anthropocene.

Sports

Tamil Nadu beat Baroda to lift Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy

- In Cricket, Tamil Nadu lifted the coveted Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy after defeating Baroda by seven wickets in the final at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad.

- This was Tamil Nadu's second Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy triumph, after winning their first title way back in 2006-07.
- Baroda had won the title twice in the past (in 2011-12 and 2013-14).

No Ranji Trophy for first time in 87 years

- For the first time in 87 years, the BCCI decided that it won't be conducting country's premier first-class domestic tournament Ranji Trophy 2020-21.
- The cricket body decided to conduct the Vijay Hazare Trophy, instead of having a truncated Ranji Trophy. BCCI has also decided to host the U-19 National One Day tournament for the Vinoo Mankad Trophy and the Women's national 50-over tournament.
- **About Ranji Trophy:** The first edition of the Ranji Trophy was held in 1934 and it was the only national cricket championship that was played even during the World War 2.

India top medals tally at first Asian Online Shooting Championship

- India's 24-member shooting contingent topped the medals tally in the first Asian Online Shooting Championship.
- The squad won four out of the eight gold medals on offer, besides two silver and five bronze medals, for a total of 11 podium finishes.
- India's gold winners were Saurabh Chaudhary in the men's 10m air pistol, Divyansh Singh Panwar in the men's 10m air rifle, Kynan Chenai in men's trap and Rajeshwari Kumari in women's trap.
- **Note:** The two-day competition was organised by the Kuwait Shooting Federation and saw 274 shooters from 22 Asian countries take part.

Indian Cricketer Ashok Dinda announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- Fast bowler, Dinda, who has 420 first-class wickets in his bag, has also played 13 ODIs and nine T20s for India, taking 12 and 17 wickets respectively.
- Dinda made his T20 international Debut for India in December 2009 against Sri Lanka and his ODI debut against Zimbabwe in May 2010.