

## Top Current Affairs of the Week (7 March -13 March 2021)

### Ramesh Pokhriyal inaugurates New Delhi World Book Fair 2021

- Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal** has virtually inaugurated **New Delhi World Book Fair 2021-Virtual Edition**.
- 2021 is the 29th edition of the annual World Book Fair and for the first time the fair will be held virtually due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- It has been organized by National Book Trust (NBT).
- Theme of 2021 New Delhi World Book Fair: '**National Education Policy-2020**'.
- National Book Trust and its entire team is holding this virtual event.

### 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>

### DRDO successfully flight test SFDR technology

- DRDO has conducted successful flight test of **Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology** from **integrated test range (ITR), Chandipur, off Odisha coast**
- SFDR technology will enable DRDO to develop long-range air to air missiles.
- SFDR is a missile propulsion system being developed primarily by **Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL)** and **Research Centre Imarat (RCI)** in Hyderabad.
- **High Energy Material Research Laboratory (HEMRL)** has developed nozzle-less booster.

### Australia plans to build world's first platypus sanctuary

- **Australian conservationists** have planned to build **World's first sanctuary** for the platypus
- This new facility will promote breeding and rehabilitation of iconic creature **Platypus**, a duck-billed mammal, that are native to Australia.
- **Taronga Conservation Society Australia** and **New South Wales State govt** plans to build specialist facility by 2022, at a zoo 391-km from Sydney.
- It will have ponds and burrows for the semiaquatic creatures, and could house up to 65 platypuses.

### India-Sweden Virtual Summit 2021

- PM **Narendra Modi** and his Swedish counterpart **Stefan Lofven** participated in the virtual **India-Sweden summit**
- It was organized to exchange views on regional and global issues and to discuss the bilateral cooperation on digitalization, startups between the two countries
- It also focuses on **climate action, sustainable development, gender equality, counter-terrorism** and **disaster resilient infrastructure**.
- This was the fifth interaction between the two leaders since 2015

## Second Edition of Khelo India Winter Games concluded

- **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** has topped medals tally in the **2nd edition of Khelo India Winter National Games**
- **Khelo India Winter National Games** was five-day mega sports event that was held at Gulmarg in Baramulla, north Kashmir
- **J&K** won **11 gold, 18 silver** and **5 bronze medals**. It was followed by **Karnataka** and **Maharashtra**
- It was organized by **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** in collaboration with **J&K Sports Council** and **J&K Winter Games Association**

## International Women's Day: 08 March

- **International Women's Day (IWD)** is observed every year on **March 8** to celebrate women, their rights and their achievements.
- **IWD** began in the 1900s and has been celebrated for over a century now.
- It was first organized in **1911** by the early 20th century Marxist from Germany Clara Zetkin who was born in 1857 in Germany's Wiederau.
- Theme 2021: **Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world**.
- The day's slogan is **#ChoosetoChallenge**.

## PM to inaugurate 'Maitri Setu' between India and Bangladesh

- PM Modi will inaugurate '**Maitri Setu**' between India and Bangladesh
- **Maitri Setu**
  - It has been built over **Feni river** which flows between Tripura and Bangladesh
  - The name symbolizes growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between India and Bangladesh.
  - It has been built by **National Highways and Infrastructure Development**
- PM will also lay the foundation stone for setting up an Integrated Check Post at Sabroom and NH 208 connecting Unakoti with Khowai district

## India's first 'Transgender Community Desk' opens in Telangana

- **Cyberabad police** has inaugurated '**Transgender Community Desk**' at Gachibowli Police Station in Rangareddy district, Telangana
- It is the first-of-its-kind gender inclusive community policing initiative of India
- It will be managed by police liaison officer and transgender person who is designated as community coordinator.
- It will provide support to file cases in offences related to violence or discrimination against any transgender person.

## All-women crew of MT Swarna Krishna makes history

- Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways **Mansukh Mandaviya** has flagged off an **all-woman crew onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel, MT Swarna Krishna**.
- It is the first time in the world maritime history that a ship is being sailed by all women officers.
- This move demonstrated the gradual shift in the perception of seafaring as a male-oriented profession
- **M. T. SWARNA KRISHNA**: Oil Products Tanker that was built in 2010 and is being operated by SCI

## India downgraded to "Partly Free" in report by US Think Tank

- India was downgraded to '**partly free**' for the first time **since 1997** in an annual ranking of democracies by the U.S.-government funded research group **Freedom House**
- The status is given after worsening civil rights condition under PM Narendra Modi.
- India was among **73 nations** downgraded for declines in political rights and civil liberties, affecting three-fourth of population.
- **Report ranks 210 nations**, found that states designated '**Not Free**' have reached highest since 2006.

## UNGA adopts India's resolution for 2023 as International Year of Millets

- **United Nations General Assembly** has adopted a resolution sponsored by India and supported by **70 nations** declaring **2023 as the International Year of Millets**
- It is a big step to promote nutritional and ecological benefits of millets to the world as key component of the food basket
- Other co-sponsors for this resolution are **Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia, Senegal**
- Millets can grow on poor soils and are resistant or tolerant to many crop diseases and pests

## UP Govt launches second phase of Mission Shakti

- **UP govt** has launched **2nd phase of Mission Shakti** to encourage women empowerment on International women's day.
- Under this, CM inaugurates women special Police stations in 18 districts along with pink booths and pink toilets.
- UP govt has launched '**Mission Shakti**' program on Oct 17, 2020 for the security of women.
- Along with this, **first commercial flight after 24 years was flagged off in Bareilly**, operated by all women crew members' carrying 60 passengers to Delhi

## FICCI's Overall Business Confidence Index released

- **FICCI's Overall Business Confidence Index** has been released that witnessed **decadal high of 74.2** in the current round on account of improvement in present conditions as well as expectations
- The Index had stood at **70.9 in 2020 survey** and **59 in 2019 survey**
- It revealed recovery of demand conditions, improved capacity utilization.
- FICCI survey stated that percentage of participants citing higher profits over next 6 months has increased to **36% from 33%** in the last survey

## Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat wins Gold at World Ranking Series in Rome

- World Championship bronze medallist wrestler, **Bajrang Punia (27 years)** won a gold medal at **Matteo Pallicone** ranking series held in Rome, Italy.
- He defeated Mongolia's **Tulga Tumor Ochir** by 2-2 in 65kg freestyle event final.
- It was his successive gold medal, who had won previous gold at this competition in 2020.
- Apart from this, ace India woman wrestler **Vinesh Phogat (26 years)** won gold medal in the 53kg title, after beating Canada's Diana Weicker by 4-0

## SEBI cancels Sahara India Financial Corporation registration as Sub-broker

- **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has cancelled certificate of **registration of Sahara India Financial Corporation Ltd (SIFCL)**, as a sub-broker.
- The move has been taken by **SEBI**, due to failure of SIFCL to fulfill the **'fit and proper' criteria**, in terms of Intermediaries Regulations
- SEBI's order also mentioned actions taken against certain Sahara entities like Sahara India Real Estate Corporation Ltd and Sahara Housing Investment Corporation involving SEBI.

## Textiles, Agriculture Ministry signs MoU for sericulture activities

- **Ministry of Textiles** has signed MoU with **Ministry of Agriculture** to amplify sericulture activities in the country.
- MoU will focus on establishing tree based agro-forestry models in sericulture, along with exploring possibilities of activities through Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
- It will enhance training, boost technology and create sustainable livelihood for silk farmers or rearers.
- **Buniyaad Reeling Machines** to women silk rearers were also distributed.

## Manish Kaushik clinches gold at Boxam International Tournament

- **Manish Kaushik** has clinched gold in Boxing at **35<sup>th</sup> edition of Boxam International Tournament** with 10 medals in Castellon, Spain
- He defeated **Denmark's Nikolai Terteryan** with a split 3-2 decision in men's 63kg
- Bronze medallist **Vikas Krishan** went down fighting 4-1 against Ndiaye Sissokho to settle for silver medal in men's 69kg.
- **14-member (8 men and 6 women) Indian contingent** participated in 35th edition of Boxam International Tournament.

## Bangladesh to confer its highest civilian award 'Swadhinta Puraskar'

- **Bangladesh** has announced the names of 9 individuals and organization for conferring **'Swadhinta Puraskar' (Independence Award)**, the highest civilian award of Bangladesh for 2021
- **Winners:**
  - Freedom fighters posthumously: A K M Bazlur Rahman, Ahsan Ullah Master, Brig Gen. Khurshid Uddin Ahmed, Akhataruzzaman Chowdhury Babu
  - Science and Tech: **Mrinmoy Guha Niyogi**
  - Literature: **Mahadev Saha**
  - Culture: **Ataur Rahman and Gazi Mazharul Anwar**
  - Social and public service: **M Amzad Hossain**

## India's first forest healing centre inaugurated in Uttarakhand

- India's first-of-its-kind **'Forest Healing Centre'** has been inaugurated at **Kalika, Ranikhet in Uttarakhand**
- **About Forest Healing Centre:**
  - It is based on the concept of making people healthy by bringing them into direct contact with nature over 13 acres land
  - It is a **pine-dominated forest**, developed by **research wing of Uttarakhand Forest Dept**
  - It has various activities for visitors like hug trees, walk barefoot on the grass, lie on their back and gaze at the swaying trees

## J&K launches Super-75 Scholarship Scheme for meritorious girls

- J&K Lt Governor **Manoj Sinha** has launched **'Super-75' scholarship schemes for meritorious girls**

- **Aim:** To facilitate the education and entrepreneurship of women
- The scheme will support the education of meritorious girls from poor families, so that they can excel in streams like medicine, engineering, ITI and humanity and contribute to nation-building.
- **'Tejaswini' scheme** was also announced providing financial assistance of **Rs 5 lakhs** to the girls between **18 to 35 years**.

## Book on Smriti Irani's victory in Amethi to release on March 15

- Book titled **'Dynasty to Democracy: The Untold Story of Smriti Irani's Triumph'** has been scheduled to release on March 15
- The book traces the journey of Smriti Irani from her defeat in 2014 to her victory over Amethi, UP in 2019 LS election
- **Amethi** is **'karmabhoomi' of Nehru-Gandhi**, since its inception as LS constituency in 1967
- It is the English version of **'Amethi Sangram: Aitihāsik Jeet Ankahi Dastan'** written by journalist-author Anant Vijay
- It is published by **Westland**

## PV Sindhu settles for silver in BWF Swiss Open Super 300

- India's ace shuttler **PV Sindhu** has won **silver medal in BWF Swiss Open Super 300** in final of women's singles event held at Basel
- She lost to World No. 3 and reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin.
- **Other Winners:**
  - **Men's Singles:** Viktor Axelsen (Denmark) beat Kunlavut Vitidsarn (Thailand)
  - **Women's Singles:** Carolina Marin (Spain) beat PV Sindhu (India)
  - **Men's Doubles:** Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen (Denmark)
  - **Mixed Doubles:** Thom Gicquel-Delphine Delrue (France)

## Autobiography of 'Frontier Gandhi' released in English

- Autobiography of freedom fighter 'Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan', titled **'The Frontier Gandhi: My Life and Struggle'** has been released
- It is English translation of Abdul Khan's autobiography, which was first published in Iranian language Pashto in 1983
- English translation of the book is done by former Pakistani author **Imtiaz Ahmad Sahibzada**
- It is published by **Roli Book publishing house**
- **Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan:** Afghan independence activist against British colonial rule in India

## UNEP releases Food Waste Index Report 2021

- **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and **WRAP** has released **Food Waste Index Report 2021** to cut food waste to half by 2030
- Key findings:
  - It estimates that around 931 million tonnes of food waste was generated in 2019
  - Out of which, 61% came from households, 26% from food service and 13% from retail
  - Around 17% of total global food production was wasted
  - About 690 million people went hungry in 2019
  - In India, household food waste is about 68.7 million tonnes a year

## Tirath Singh Rawat to be new Uttarakhand Chief Minister

- **Tirath Singh Rawat (56 years)** will take over as **Chief Minister of Uttarakhand**, after the resignation of Trivendra Singh Rawat.
- He is a BJP MP from the **Pauri constituency**.
- He was the chief of BJP in Uttarakhand in 2013-15 and also an MLA from the state in the past.
- BJP was faced with challenge of balancing two groups: old-time BJP players were pitching for their candidate and imports from Congress, like Harak Singh Rawat and Satpal Maharaj, were pushing for theirs.

## NITI Aayog along with DEA organises virtual workshop on asset monetization

- **NITI Aayog**, along with **Dept of Economic Affairs (DEA)** has organized **national-level virtual workshop on asset monetization**.
- Workshop elaborated on the strategic context of core and non-core asset monetization, along with detailed discussions on the need for and modality of such monetization.
- He also highlighted the potential monetization opportunities for States and the pre-requisites for being successful in this regard.
- NITI Aayog CEO: **Amitabh Kant**.

## IOCL signs MoU with IDCO for Paradeep Plastic Park

- **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** has signed MoU with **Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO)** to develop Paradeep Plastic Park
- Govt has initiated the cluster development of the Industry through its Plastic Park scheme, keeping the enterprise and employment generation potential of the plastic sector in mind
- Currently, six such parks have been approved by Government of India, with Paradeep Plastic Park being one of them.

## Girish Murmu re-appointed Chairman of UN Panel of External Auditors

- Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, **Girish Chandra Murmu** has been re-appointed as **Chairman of United Nations Panel of External Auditors** for 2021
- He was elected as Chairman of this Panel for 2020
- **Panel of External Auditors:**
  - **Consists of 13 countries:** India, Germany, Chile, China, UK, France, Philippines, Switzerland, Italy, Ghana, Indonesia, Canada, Russia
  - Established: **1959**
  - It is a forum to support delivery of high quality, standards-based assurance.

## Singapore tops Economic Freedom Index 2021

- **Singapore** has topped in **Economic Freedom Index 2021**, for 2nd year in row with overall score of 89.7, followed by New Zealand and Australia
- The index is published by US conservative think-tank, **The Heritage Foundation**
- It covered **184 countries** that covered the period from July 2019 to June 2020
- India has been placed at **121** position in the index, with a score of **56.5 out of 100** under **Mostly Unfree category**
- Among Asia-Pacific countries, **India ranks 26 out of 40 countries**



## India-Uzbekistan joint military exercise DUSTLIK II commences in Ranikhet

- India - Uzbekistan joint military exercise titled '**DUSTLIK II**' has been commenced in Ranikhet in Uttarakhand.
- This is the **2nd Edition of annual bilateral joint exercise** of both armies.
- It will continue till the 19th March
- 1st edition of DUSTLIK II exercise: **Uzbekistan in November 2019.**
- It will culminate into a **36 hours joint validation exercise** scheduled from 17th to 18th March.
- The validation exercise will be a test bed for the soldiers of both armies.

## Rajya Sabha passes Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021

- **Parliament** has given its nod to **Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021**
- The new legislation will amend **Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996**
- It contains provisions related to domestic and international arbitration and defines the law for conducting conciliation proceedings.
- **Bill replaces an Ordinance** with the same provisions promulgated on 4th Nov, 2020
- Bill also aims at giving greater flexibility to the **Arbitration Council of**

## France launches first military exercises in space

- **France** has launched its **first military exercise in space** to evaluate its ability to defend its satellites and other defence equipment from an attack.
- This was the first such exercise for French army and Europe
- It has been codenamed as '**AsterX**' in memory of the first French satellite from **1965** and will be based on 18 simulated events
- French military will monitor potentially dangerous space object
- **US Space Force** and **German space agencies** are taking part in French exercise

## INS Karanj commissioned into the Indian Navy in Mumbai

- Third Scorpene-class submarine '**INS Karanj**' was commissioned into Indian Navy in Mumbai
- **INS Karanj:**
  - It is third in the series of six Scorpene-class diesel-electric submarine, being built for Indian Navy
  - It has been designed by France's Naval Group and is being built in India by Mazagon Dock Limited under Project 75.
  - Other submarines: **INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Vela, INS Vagir** and **Vagsheer.**

## Chess Player Koneru Humpy named BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2021

- World rapid chess champion **Koneru Humpy (33 years)** has won **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year award for 2021.**
- She was the youngest grandmaster in 2002 at the age of 15. She has received the Arjuna Award in 2003 and the Padma Shri in 2007.
- She hails from Andhra Pradesh
- Veteran athlete **Anju Bobby George** won the **Lifetime Achievement award.**
- Young shooter **Manu Bhaker** won the **Emerging Player-of-the-Year award.**

## China to launch e-health certificate for outbound Chinese travellers

- Chinese Foreign Minister **Wang Yi** will be launching **Chinese version of electronic health certificate**.
- It will be rolled out for outbound Chinese travelers but It did not say anything on its availability for foreigners in China
- It will be available in two formats, digital and in paper, with certificate-holder's NAT and IgG anti-body test results and vaccination status
- It will facilitate the issuance of visas, making cross-border travel much easier

## China inks MoU with Russia to jointly build Lunar Space Station

- **China** has signed MoU with **Russia** to jointly construct a lunar space station that will be open to all countries.
- This Lunar space station will be known as **International Scientific Lunar Station (ISLS)**
- **ISLS**: Complex of experimental and research facilities, created on the moon's surface or in orbit of the moon.
- It will be strengthening research cooperation and promoting the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes in the interests of all mankind.

## Amitabh Bachchan to be honoured with FIAF Award

- Noted Bollywood actor **Amitabh Bachchan (78 years)** has been chosen as the recipient of **2021 FIAF Award by International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF)**
- He is the **first Indian cinema personality to be bestowed with FIAF Award** for his exceptional dedication and contribution to the preservation of world's film heritage
- FIAF award will be presented to Amitabh Bachchan on **March 19, 2021**, virtually, by **Martin Scorsese and Christopher Nolan**
- FIAF award was introduced in 2001

## Kiran Bedi felicitated with Baton of Honor from President Ram Nath Kovind

- President of India, **Ram Nath Kovind** has presented '**Baton of Honour**' and a letter of appreciation to former Puducherry Lieutenant Governor **Kiran Bedi** at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi.
- She has been recognized for her services to the Union Territory of Puducherry.
- **Baton of Honor** is decorated with the emblem of the Indian Republic.
- Kiran Bedi was the **first female IPS officer of India** and started her service in 1972.

## Imran Amin Siddiqui appointed as Executive Director of Indian Bank

- General Manager of Indian Bank, **Imran Amin Siddiqui** has been appointed as the **Executive Director (ED) of the Bank** with effect from March 10, 2021
- He has been appointed for **3 years** with effect from the date of assumption of office, or until further orders
- He started his banking career with Allahabad Bank, which is now merged with Indian Bank, as a SSI Field Officer in 1987.
- **Shenoy Vishwanath V** and Shri **K.Ramachandran** are the other two ED on the board of Indian Bank

## Anurag Thakur promoted as Captain in Territorial Army



- Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, **Anurag Thakur** has been appointed as **Captain in the Territorial Army**.
- He belongs to **124 Infantry Battalion Territorial Army (Sikh)**.
- He was commissioned into **Territorial Army as a Lieutenant in July 2016**.
- He is the first serving Member of Parliament (MP) to become a regular commissioned officer in the Territorial Army.
- He is a four-time BJP MP from Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh.

## Ivory Coast Prime Minister Hamed Bakayoko passes away

- Incumbent Prime Minister of Ivory Coast, **Hamed Bakayoko (56 years)** passed away due to cancer in Germany
- He was named Prime Minister in July 2020 following the sudden death of his predecessor, Amadou Gon Coulibaly.
- **Patrick Achi** has been named as interim prime minister in place of Bakayoko by **President of Ivory Coast, Alassane Ouattara**.
- Patrick Achi was serving as the chief of Defence staff of the country.
- Capital of Ivory Coast: **Yamoussoukro**.

## First Quad Leader's Virtual Summit 2021 held

- **Quadrilateral Framework (QUAD) Leader's Summit 2021** has been held
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Joseph Biden, Australian PM Scott Morrison and Japanese PM Yoshihide Suga addressed 1st virtual Quadrilateral Framework (Quad) summit 2021
- It is first time leaders of the Indo-Pacific grouping (QUAD) are meeting.
- The meet focused on COVID-19 vaccines, cooperation on technology, climate change and Beijing's recent moves in Pacific as well as at LAC, Ladakh

## Mithali Raj becomes 1st Indian woman cricketer to score 10,000 runs

- Veteran cricketer **Mithali Raj (38 years)** became **first Indian woman cricketer** to complete 10,000 runs across all formats
- With this, she also became the 2nd largest woman scorer in international cricket
- She achieved the feat with a boundary off Anne Bosch in 28th over of India's innings during the ongoing 3rd ODI against South Africa.
- She scored **663 runs in 10 Test matches** with a best score of 214, while she has **6974 and 2364 runs from 212 ODIs and 89 T20 Internationals**

## Govt launches Mera Ration mobile app for migrant PDS beneficiaries

- Govt has launched '**Mera Ration**' mobile app for ration card holders, particularly migrant beneficiaries to identify the nearest fair price shop, check details of their entitlement and recent transactions.
- The app has been developed by **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**
- It is currently available in **Hindi and English** and will be made available in **14 languages**
- It will facilitate various **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)** related services **NFSA beneficiaries**.

## Russia curbs Twitter services over 'objectionable' content

- Media regulator of Russia, **Roskomnadzor** has announced to **slow down online access to the social media giant Twitter**
- Russia has accused the social media company of failing to remove around 3000 posts relating to objectionable content.
- If Twitter does not comply with Russian law, there will be further actions against the service, including a complete ban as per Roskomnadzor
- Roskomnadzor had made over **28,000 complaints** to Twitter since 2017

## Jammu & Kashmir launches e-Suvidha app

- **Ramban District Administration (J&K)** has developed a mobile application titled as '**e-Suvidha**'
- It will bring public delivery services and departments on the digital platform
- It will be available on the **Google Play-store**
- It will provide access to all basic services like plumbing, electric works, mobile and laptop troubleshooting, masonry, carpentry and skilled jobs
- It will also link many important departments like **Health, Community Services, Food-Civil Supplies, Banks**

## India hosted First Meeting of BRICS CGETI

- First Meeting of **BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI)** was held under India's Chairship
- It was held from **9th to 11th March**
- Theme of BRICS 2021: **BRICS at 15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus.**
- India presented the calendar of events for **BRICS CGETI 2021**, which included the priority areas for deliverables, schedule and scope of the MSME roundtable conference workshop on Services Statistics, and the BRICS Trade Fair.