

Monthly Current Affairs December 2021

मासिक समसामयिकी दिसम्बर 2021

Attempt December
Month Current
Affairs Quiz



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Important News: World

Humanitarian trust fund for Afghanistan: Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

Why in News

- A meeting of foreign ministers from the **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)** agreed to establish a humanitarian trust fund to address the growing economic crisis in Afghanistan.

Key Points

- The fund will be set up under the **Islamic Development Bank** to channel aid to Afghanistan in coordination with other groups.
- Allowing Afghanistan access to its financial resources would be pivotal to preventing economic collapse and said realistic pathways to unfreezing billions of dollars in frozen central bank reserves should be explored.

Trust Fund by United Nation:

- The United Nations has set up a special trust fund to provide urgently needed cash directly to Afghans through a system that has pulled billions of dollars from Afghanistan's closed central bank reserves since the Taliban takeover in August 2021. Germany is a first contributor to the fund.

About Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC):

- OIC, formerly the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, is an international organization (Muslim-majority countries).
- **Membership:** 57 member states
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- **Founded:** 1969

Facts about Islamic Development Bank:

- **Membership:** 57 countries
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- **Founded:** 1975

Source: Indian Express

3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue

Why in News

- The **3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue** was held in New Delhi on 19 December 2021 under the chairmanship of the External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar.
- The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan took part in the meeting.
- The 2nd meeting was organized by India in October 2020 in digital video-conference format.

Key Points

- A joint statement issued at the end of deliberations as part of the third India-Central Asia dialogue.

- The dialogue also decided to explore establishing joint working groups to address issues of free movements of goods and services between India and Central Asian countries.
- They focused on trade and connectivity, development partnership and regional developments, including the situation in Afghanistan.
- Emphasis on optimum usage of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as well as Ashgabat Agreement on International Transport and Transit Corridor to enhance connectivity between India and the Central Asian countries.

Note: India and the Central Asian countries will mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations next year.

Source: The Hindu

United Nations grants observer status to International Solar Alliance

Why in News

- The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** has granted Observer status to the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- This is going to give impetus to “One Sun One world One Grid “. This will help in bringing equitable energy solutions to the world.

Key Points

- This would immensely help towards achieving the goal of net-zero carbon emissions through global co-operations.

Note:

- The fourth general assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) was held in October 2021.
- A total of 108 countries participated in the Assembly, including 74 Member Countries and 34 Observer and Prospective Countries, 23 Partner Organizations and 33 Special Invitee Organisations.

About International Solar Alliance (ISA):

- The launch of the ISA was announced by Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India and Francois Hollande, former President of France on 30th November 2015, at the 21st session of United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP-21) in Paris, France.
- The U.S. became the 101st country to sign the framework agreement of the ISA.
- **Headquarters:** Gurugram, Haryana, India
- **Founded:** 30 November 2015
- **Director General:** Ajay Mathur

Source: Business Standard

21st India – Russia Annual Summit

Why in News

- 21st India-Russia Annual Summit was held between the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin in New Delhi on 06 December 2021.

Key Points

- The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the sustained progress in the ‘Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership’ between both countries despite the challenges posed by the COVID pandemic.

- They welcomed the holding of the first meeting of the **2+2 Dialogue of Foreign and Defence Ministers** and the meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military & Military-Technical Cooperation in New Delhi on 6 December 2021.
- The role of connectivity through the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the proposed Chennai - Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor figured in the discussions.
- 28 MoUs were signed between India and Russia on various sectors.
- The Joint Statement titled India-Russia: Partnership for Peace, Progress and Prosperity aptly covers the state and prospects of bilateral ties.
- Coinciding with the visit, several Government-to-Government Agreements and MoUs, as well as those between commercial and other organizations of both countries, were signed in different sectors such as trade, energy, science & technology, intellectual property, outer space, geological exploration, cultural exchange, education, etc.

Note: 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit will be held in Russia in 2022.

Source: PIB

India and Bangladesh celebrates 'Maitri Diwas' on 6 December

Why in News

- '**Maitri Diwas**' also known as **India-Bangladesh Friendship day**, was commemorated in 18 countries across the world on 6 December, 2021.
- The day was commemorated in Belgium, Canada, Egypt, Indonesia, Russia, Qatar, Singapore, UK, Australia, France, Japan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, UAE, and USA.

Key Points

- The Maitri Diwas is a reflection of the deep and abiding friendship between the people of India and Bangladesh.
- Ten days before the liberation of Bangladesh, India had recognised Bangladesh on 06 December 1971.
- India was one of the first countries to establish bilateral diplomatic ties with Bangladesh on December 6, 1971.

Note: During the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in March 2021 to attend the national day of Bangladesh, it was decided to commemorate December 6 as the Maitri Diwas or Friendship Day.

Source: newsonair

EIU's Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2021

Why in News

- The **Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2021** released by the **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)** has listed the world's most expensive cities to live in 2021.
- **Tel Aviv, Israel** has become the world's most expensive city to live in, surpassing Paris and Singapore.

Key Points

- The index explored the cost of living in 173 cities, 40 more than last year.
- It stated that prices for goods and services have risen by 3.5 percent year-on-year, the highest inflation rate seen in the last five years.

List of world's top 10 expensive cities:

1. Tel Aviv
2. Paris
2. Singapore
4. Zurich
5. Hong Kong
6. New York
7. Geneva
8. Copenhagen
9. Los Angeles
10. Osaka

- **Syria's Damascus** was ranked as the **world's cheapest city**.

Facts about Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU):

- **Headquarters:** London, United Kingdom
- **Founded:** 1946
- **Parent organization:** The Economist Group

Source: Indian Express

Important News: India

Union Minister of Tribal Affairs inaugurates a pictorial chronicle on Van Dhan programme and 14 Honey Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)

Why in News

- Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda launched the '**TRIFED Van Dhan- A Chronicle of Tribal Grit & Enterprise**'.
- He launched the formation of **14 Honey Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)** and a **MIS Portal** for Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produces (MFP).
- He launched 9 promotional videos for promoting TRIBES INDIA and Van Dhan products.
- In addition, UNICEF and TRIFED signed an MoU on **Tribal Samvaad Network** (Communication campaign).
- The research report titled, 'Tribal Livelihoods: From Sustenance to Sustainability', has also been launched.

Key Points

- In a short span of two years, it has successfully now sanctioned 52976 Van Dhan SHGs subsumed into 3110 VDVKCs covering 9.27 lakh beneficiaries & 27 States/UTs.

Formation of 14 Honey Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs):

- Beekeeping activity has been recognized as one of the important activities by Govt of India for its promotion and development to achieve "**Sweet Revolution**" in the endeavor of enhancing income of farmers.
- A central scheme titled "Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)" was launched to ensure economies of scale for farmers over the next five years.
- The National Bee Board (NBB), under the National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM), has planned to develop the scientific bee-keeping value chain for honey across 100 clusters in the country.

- TRIFED has been made the implementing agency by the Ministry of Agriculture to undertake the formation of 14 Honey FPOs alongside NAFED and NDDDB in the states of Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Gujarat.

Source: PIB

Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021

Why in News

- Central Government in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (zg) of sub-section (2) of section 101 read with section 94 of the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** has notified the **Consumer Protection (Direct Selling) Rules, 2021**.

Key Points

- These Rules shall apply to all goods and services bought or sold through direct selling, all models of direct selling, all direct selling entities offering goods and services to consumers in India, all forms of unfair trade practices across all models of direct selling and also to a direct selling entity which is not established in India, but offers goods or services to consumers in India.
- Existing direct selling entities need to comply of these rules within ninety days from the date of publication of these rules in the Official Gazette.
- The direct sellers as well as the direct selling entities using e-commerce platforms for sale shall comply with the requirements of the **Consumer Protection (e-Commerce) Rules, 2020**.

The Rules provide for certain obligation upon Direct Selling Entities which inter alia include:-

- incorporation under the **Companies Act, 2013** or if a partnership firm, be registered under the **Partnership Act, 1932**, or if a limited liability partnership, be registered under the **Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008**
- have a minimum of one physical location as its registered office within India
- make self-declaration to the effect that Direct Selling Entity has complied with the provisions of the Direct Selling rules and is not involved in any Pyramid Scheme or money circulation scheme

Source: PIB

Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog releases 'Innovations For You' & 'The Ingenious Tinkerers'

Why in News

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)**, NITI Aayog released the 2nd edition of – **'Innovations for You'**- a compendium of innovations focused on agriculture featuring 70 startups supported by Atal incubation Centers (AICs) of AIM and **'The Ingenious Tinkerers'** – a compendium on the innovations on technology featuring 41 innovations from **Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL)** of India.

Key Points

- The **'Innovations For You'** is a compilation of successful innovations by the entrepreneurial minds of India solving problems of present for future, while as **'The Ingenious Tinkerers'** is a compilation of the top innovations created by young student innovators who participated in the ATL Marathon - which invites school students to address a problem that they see or face on a day-to-day basis.

- The '**Innovations For You**' in its second edition, focuses on the startups and innovations in the field of **Agriculture and Allied services**.
- The book is a compilation of 70 Ag-Tech startups, incubated at Atal Incubation Centres spread across the country.

Note: The first edition of this book was focused on innovations in Health Care, which was launched in October, 2021.

Source: PIB

Global State of Democracy Report 2021

Why in News

- The number of countries moving towards authoritarianism in 2020 was higher than that of countries going in the other direction, towards democracy according to the **Global State of Democracy Report, 2021**.
- The report is released by the **International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International-IDEA)**.

Key Points

- The report aims to influence the global debate and analyses current trends and challenges to democracy, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It offers specific policy recommendations to spark new and innovative thinking for policymakers, governments and civil society organizations supporting democracy.
- The pandemic placed considerable stress on democracy across the region by imposing inevitable restrictions on movement and—where governments were sensitive to criticism—also restrictions on freedom of expression.
- Democratically elected Governments, including established democracies, are increasingly adopting authoritarian tactics.
- The report highlighted the case of Brazil and India as some of the most worrying examples of backsliding.
- **India** remained in the **category of a mid-level performing democracy** as it has since 2000.

Source: The Hindu

Union Minister for Jal Shakti launches River Cities Alliance

Why in News

- **Union Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** launched the **River Cities Alliance (RCA)**, a dedicated platform for river cities in India to ideate, discuss and exchange information for sustainable management of urban rivers.
- This first of its kind Alliance in the world symbolizes the successful partnership of the two Ministries i.e., **Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.

Key Point

- The Alliance will focus on three broad themes- Networking, Capacity Building and Technical Support.
- The Secretariat of the Alliance will be set up at the National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA), with NMCG's support.
- The participating cities in the River Cities Alliance are Dehradun, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Srinagar, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Munger, Patna, Berhampore, Hooghly-Chinsurah, Howrah, Jangipur, Maheshtala, Rajmahal, Sahibganj, Ayodhya, Bijnor, Farrukhabad, Kanpur, Mathura-Vrindavan, Mirzapur,

Prayagraj, Varanasi, Aurangabad, Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad, Pune, Udaipur and Vijayawada.

Related Initiatives:

- Namami Gange Programme
- Ganga Action Plan
- National River Ganga Basin Authority
- Clean Ganga Fund
- Bhuvan-Ganga Web App
- Ban on Waste Disposal

Source: PIB

SWADESH project, World's First Multimodal Brain Imaging Data and Analytics

Why in News

- **DBT-National Brain Research Centre (DBT-NBRC), Haryana** has recently developed the **SWADESH project, World's First Multimodal Brain Imaging Data and Analytics.**

Key Points

- SWADESH is a unique brain initiative focusing on certified neuroimaging, neurochemical, neuropsychological data and analytics that are made accessible to researchers for managing brain disorders.
- SWADESH is the **first large-scale multimodal neuroimaging database** designed specifically for the Indian population with big-data architecture and analytics for various disease categories under one platform.

About Department of Biotechnology (DBT):

- The Department of Biotechnology, under the Ministry of Science and Technology, promotes and improves biotechnology development in India through its development and implementation in agriculture, healthcare, animal sciences, the environment, and industry.

About National Brain Research Centre (NBRC):

- National Brain Research Centre is the only institute in India dedicated to Neuroscience Research and Education.
- Scientists and students at NBRC come from diverse academic backgrounds, including biological, computational, mathematical, physical, engineering and medical sciences, and use multidisciplinary approaches to unravel secrets of the brain.

Source: PIB

India to chair Counter-Terrorism Committee of UNSC in January 2022

Why in News

- **India** will chair the **Counter-Terrorism Committee of United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** in January 2022 after 10 years.
- India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) Ambassador TS Tirumurti had announced in January, 2021 that, India will chair 3 important communities (**Taliban Sanctions Committee, Libya Sanctions Committee and Counter-Terrorism Committee**) at the UNSC in 2021-22.

Key Points

- The **Counter-Terrorism Committee** was established by Security Council resolution 1373 adopted unanimously on 28 September 2001 in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks in the US.
- The Committee was tasked with monitoring implementation of resolution 1373 which requested countries to implement a number of measures aimed at enhancing their legal and institutional ability to counter terrorist activities at home and around the world.

Facts about United Nations:

- **Formation:** 24 October 1945
- **Headquarter:** New York, USA
- **Membership:** 193 member states

The United Nations has six principal organs:

- The General Assembly
- The Security Council
- The Economic and Social Council
- The International Court of Justice
- The UN Secretariat
- The Trusteeship Council

Facts about UNSC (United Nations Security Council):

- **Formation:** 24 October 1945
- **Membership:** 15 countries
- **Permanent members:** 5 (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States)
- **Non-permanent members:** 10 including India

Source: newsonair

State of India's Livelihood (SOIL) Report 2021: Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)

Why in News

- The **State of India's Livelihood (SOIL) Report 2021** has stated that just 1-5 % of **Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)** have received funding under central government schemes in the last 7 years.

Key Points

- Access Development Services, a national livelihoods support organisation has prepared the SOIL report.
- It has analysed only Farmer Producer Companies (FPC — FPOs registered under The Companies Act, 2013) since they make up a large majority of the organisations started in recent years.
- The number of FPOs registered as cooperatives or societies is very small.

About Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs):

- The concept of 'Farmer Producer Organisations (FPO)' consists of collectivization of producers especially small and marginal farmers so as to form an effective alliance to collectively address many challenges of agriculture such as improved access to investment, technology, inputs, and markets.
- FPO is one type of Producer Organisation (PO) where the members are farmers.

Support for FPOs:

- FPOs are generally mobilized by promoting institutions/ Resource Agencies (RAs).
- Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is providing support for the promotion of FPOs.

- The resource agencies leverage the support available from governments and agencies like **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** to promote and nurture FPOs.

Note: The **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** has launched the Central Sector Scheme titled '**Formation & Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)**'.

Source: DTE

India clears 2 new vaccines and Merck's COVID Pill

Why in News

- **India** cleared two more vaccines and one anti-viral drug to boost the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The two latest vaccines cleared by India are **Corbevax** and **Covovax**. The anti-viral drug **Molnupiravir** can be used during emergency.

Key Points

- **Corbevax** is India's first homegrown "RBD protein sub-unit vaccine". It is made by the Hyderabad-based firm Biological-E.
- It's now the third vaccine developed in India.
- The other two vaccines developed in India are Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and the Serum Institute of India's (SII) Covishield.
- The nanoparticle vaccine, **Covovax**, will be manufactured by the Pune-based SII.
- The anti-viral drug **Molnupiravir** will be manufactured in India by 13 companies for restricted use under emergency situations to treat adult patients with COVID-19.

Number of approved COVID vaccines:

- With the latest approvals, a total of **eight COVID-19 vaccines** have got emergency use authorisation from India's drug regulator - **Covishield, Covaxin, ZyCoV-D, Sputnik V, Moderna, Johnson and Johnson, Corbevax and Covovax**.

Source: ndtv

India welcomes Egypt as 4th member of BRICS New Development Bank

Why in News

- India has welcomed **Egypt's** entry as the 4th new member of the **BRICS New Development Bank (NDB)**.
- The NDB admitted **Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Uruguay** as its new members in September 2021.

Key Points

- The BRICS set up the bank with an aim to mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in emerging economies.

About New Development Bank (NDB):

- It is a multilateral development bank established by the **BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)** countries.
- It is headquartered in **Shanghai, China**.
- On 15 July 2014, the first day of the 6th BRICS summit held in Fortaleza, Brazil, the BRICS states signed the Agreement on the New Development Bank.

- **Authorized Capital:** NDB has an authorized capital of US\$ 100 billion, which is open for subscription by members of the United Nations.
- Since the beginning of its operations, the bank approved about 80 projects in all of its members, totalling a portfolio of USD 30 billion.

Source: ET

Defence Ministry restricts import of 351 more items for 'Make in India' push

Why in News

- The **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** announced curbs on the import of **351 systems and components** to boost indigenisation in defence manufacturing and to ensure foreign exchange savings of ₹3,000 crore a year.
- This was the third such list issued by the defence ministry in the past 16 months as part of efforts to make India a hub for developing and manufacturing military hardware.

Key Points

- The curbs on the import of 351 items – including components such as a missile approach warning sensor, shells, propellants, electrical parts, missile containers, a torpedo tube launcher and a gun fire control system – will kick in over the next three years.
- The import of 172 systems and components will be stopped from December 2022, while curbs on another batch of 89 items will come into effect from December 2023. The import of a further 90 items will be stopped from December 2024.

Note:

- The defence ministry announced in August 2020 that India will stop importing 101 weapons and military platforms.
- A second list issued in May, 2021 restricted the import of 108 more weapons and systems.

Related Initiatives:

- In May 2020, the **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** limit under the automatic route in the defence sector was hiked from 49% to 74%.
- In October 2021, the government dissolved the four-decade-old Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) and amalgamated 41 factories under seven new state-owned companies to manufacture defence hardware ranging from munitions to heavy weapons and vehicles.

Source: HT

Centre approves Rs 3,063.21 crore additional assistance to states for natural disasters

Why in News

- The **High Level Committee (HLC)**, under the Chairmanship of the Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, has approved additional Central assistance under the **National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)**, to six States, which were affected by floods, landslides and cyclones during 2021.

Key Points

The HLC approved additional Central assistance of **Rs. 3,063.21 crore** from the NDRF:

- For Cyclone 'Tauktae'- 2021, **Rs.1,133.35 crore to Gujarat;**

- For Cyclone 'Yaas'- 2021, **Rs.586.59 crore to West Bengal;**
- For floods/landslides during the South West Monsoon, 2021, **Rs. 51.53 crore to Assam, Rs. 504.06 Crore to Karnataka, Rs. 600.50 crore to Madhya Pradesh and Rs. 187.18 crore to Uttarakhand.**
- This additional assistance is over and above the funds released by the Centre to the States in the **State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)**, already placed at the disposal of the States.

Note: During the year 2021-22, the Central Government had deputed 22 Inter-Ministerial Central Teams (IMCTs) immediately after natural calamities, without waiting for the receipt of a Memorandum from the affected State Governments.

Source: PIB

Vernacular Innovation Program (VIP): NITI Aayog

Why in News

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog** has launched a first of its kind **Vernacular Innovation Program (VIP)** to Empower Innovators, Entrepreneurs.
- The programme will enable innovators and entrepreneurs in India to have access to the innovation ecosystem in **22 scheduled languages** by the Government of India.

Key Points

- **Vernacular Innovation Program (VIP)** is an initiative to lower the language barrier in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship such that it will systematically decouple creative expressions and languages of transaction.
- To build the necessary capacity for the VIP, AIM has identified and will be training a Vernacular Task Force (VTF) in each of the 22 scheduled languages.
- Each task force comprises vernacular language teachers, subject experts, technical writers, and the leadership of regional Atal Incubation Centers (AICs).

Note:

- According to the 2011 census, only 10.4% of Indians speak English, most as their second, third, or fourth language.
- Only 0.02% of Indians spoke English as their first language.

Other Initiatives Related to Entrepreneurship/ Innovation:

- IMPRINT (IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology)
- Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana
- India Innovation Index
- Mission Innovation 2.0
- StartUp India initiative
- AIM-PRIME
- AIM-iCREST: NITI Aayog
- Atal Tinkering Labs
- Atal Community Innovation Center

Source: PIB

Union Agriculture Minister releases the book "Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021"

Why in News

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar released the book '**Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021**'.

Key Points

- The book is a compendium of all the spices statistics like, area, production, productivity, export, import, price and value of output of various spices produced in the country.
- The book is published by the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development (DASD), Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, the nodal agency for collection and compilation of area and production estimates of spices at National level.
- The book highlights the growth achieved in the spices sector during the last seven years from 2014-15 to 2020-21 in the country.
- Spices production in the Country grew from 67.64 lakh tonnes in 2014-15 to 106.79 lakh tonnes in 2020-21 with an annual growth rate 7.9%, following an increase in area from 32.24 lakh hectare to 45.28 lakh hectare.
- The export of spices contributes 41% of the total export earnings from all horticulture crops in the country and it ranks fourth among agricultural commodities, falling behind only the marine products, non basmati rice and basmati rice.

Related Government Initiative:

- Recently, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) inaugurated the fifth session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH) established under Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC).

Source: PIB

Dr. Subhas Sarkar releases the Hindi translation of *Tolkāppiyam*

Why in News

- Minister of State for Education, Dr. Subhas Sarkar released the Hindi translation of **Tolkāppiyam** and the Kannada translations of 9 books of Classical Tamil literature.

Key Points

- Tamil literature goes back to the Sangam Era, named after the assembly (sangam) of poets.
- Tamil writing systems date back to 250 BCE and Tamil *sangam* poetry contains 2381 poems in Tamil composed by 473 poets, some 102 anonymous.
- Most scholars suggest the historical *cankam* literature era spanned from c. 300 BCE to 600 CE to be among the finest of world literature.
- *Tolkappiyam* is the most ancient extant Tamil grammar text and the oldest extant long work of Tamil literature.
- Some in the Tamil tradition place the text in the mythical second *sangam*, variously in 1st millennium BCE or earlier.
- *Tolkappiyam*, a unique work on grammar and poetics, in its three parts of nine sections each, deals with *Ezhuttu* (letter), *Col* (word) and *Porul* (subject matter).
- The *Tolkappiyam in Hindi translation in verse (Text, Transliteration, and Translations)* was translated by Dr. H. Balasubramaniam and Prof. K. Nachimuthu.

Source: PIB

Use of Drone in Pesticide Application for Crop Protection and for spraying Soil and Crop Nutrients

Why in News

- The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare released **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** for use of **Drone** in Pesticide Application for Crop Protection and for spraying Soil and Crop Nutrients.

Key Points

- The use of **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)** commonly known as **drones** have great potential to revolutionize Indian agriculture and ensure the country's food security.
- The drones were used for the first time in warding off locust attacks in various states of the country.

Other Uses of Drone Technology in Agriculture:

- Crop Monitoring
- Optimum Nutrient Delivery
- Better Crop Management

Rules for Drone Regulations in India: The National drone policy has been notified and the **Drone Rules 2021** have been made significantly easier for people and companies in the country to now own and operate drones.

Source: PIB

Sports Ministry released ₹ 6,801.30 crore under various sports development schemes in the last 5 years

Why in News

- The **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports** has released ₹ 6,801.30 crore under various sports development schemes in the last 5 years.
- This information was given by the Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports Anurag Thakur in Lok Sabha.

Key Points

- The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports runs the following schemes for the development of sports in the country, including at the village level:
 - (i) Khelo India Scheme
 - (ii) Assistance to National Sports Federations
 - (iii) Special Awards to Winners in International Sports Events and their Coaches
 - (iv) National Sports Awards
 - (v) Pension to Meritorious Sportspersons
 - (vi) Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Sports Welfare Fund
 - (vii) National Sports Development Fund
 - (viii) Running Sports Training Centres through Sports Authority of India

Note:

- During the last five years, a sum of ₹ 7,072.28 crore was allocated and a sum of ₹ 6,801.30 crore was released under the various sports development schemes of this Ministry.

Source: PIB

NITI Aayog signs a Statement of Intent with United Nations World Food Program

Why in News

- **NITI Aayog** signed a **Statement of Intent (SoI)** with the **United Nations World Food Program (WFP)**.
- The partnership focuses on mainstreaming of **millets** and supporting India in taking lead globally in knowledge exchange using the opportunity of **2023 as an International Year of Millets**.

Key Points

- Further, the partnership will aim at building resilient livelihoods for small-holder farmers and adaptation capacities to climate change and transforming food systems.
- The Sol focuses on strategic and technical collaboration between NITI Aayog and WFP, to strengthen climate resilient agriculture for enhanced food and nutrition security in India.
- Recognizing the importance of millets, the Government of India observed 2018 as a year of millets.
- Leading this initiative further, Government of India spearheaded the UNGA resolution for declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
- Numerous steps have been taken to promote millets including establishment of centre for Excellence, Integration of nutri-cereals in National Food Security Act and establishment of Millet Mission in multiple states.

Note: Recently, **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)**, **NITI Aayog** and the **United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)** launched the **first AgriTech Challenge cohort** for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program that aims to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Source: PIB

PM Modi visits Prayagraj and participates in a programme attended by lakhs of women **Why in News**

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** visited Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh and participated in a programme being held to empower women, especially at the grassroot level.

Key Points

- The Prime Minister transferred an amount of Rs. 1000 crore in the bank account of **Self Help Groups (SHGs)**, benefitting around 16 lakh women members of the SHGs.
- This transfer is being done under the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM)**, with 80,000 SHGs receiving Community Investment Fund (CIF) of Rs. 1.10 lakh per SHG and 60,000 SHGs receiving Revolving Fund of Rs. 15000 per SHG.
- The programme witnessed the Prime Minister encouraging **Business Correspondent-Sakhis (B.C.-Sakhis)**, by transferring Rs. 4000 as first month's stipend in account of 20,000 B.C.-Sakhis.
- During the programme, the Prime Minister also transferred a total amount of over 20 crore to more than 1 lakh beneficiaries under the **Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangala Scheme**.
- The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of 202 Supplementary Nutrition Manufacturing Units.

Source: PIB

Bajrang Punia to take Prime Minister's 'Meet the Champions' campaign ahead **Why in News**

- **Olympic Bronze Medallist Bajrang Punia** will take Prime Minister's '**Meet the Champions**' campaign ahead.

Key Points

- The unique initiative is part of the Government's 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', and was kicked off by Olympic Gold Medallist Neeraj Chopra in Gujarat this month.

- Taking the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unique school visit campaign ahead, Indian wrestler and Tokyo Olympics Bronze Medallist Bajrang Punia will visit Haryana's Aarohi Model School in Panipat on December 23rd and meet the young students to talk about the importance of Santulit Aahaar (Balanced Diet), Fitness and Sports.
- The special school campaign is jointly being organized by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Source: PIB

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurates Good Governance Week (20-25 December, 2021)

Why in News

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the **Good Governance Week (20-25 December, 2021)** to showcase and replicate the best governance practices at Grassroots level.
- The Minister also launched '**Prashasan Gaon ki Aur**'- A Nation-wide campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery.

Key Points

- As a part of Azaadi ka Amrut Mahotsav celebrations in the 75th Year of India's Independence, a Good Governance Week is being celebrated with the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)** as the Nodal Department.
- Through "Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur"- a Nation-wide campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery will be held in all Districts, States, and Union Territories of India.
- Over 700 District Collectors will be participating in "Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur" and during the weeklong event, will visit Tehsil/Panchayat Samiti Headquarters to provide timely grievance redressal and improve service delivery.

Note:

- During the event, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the Exhibition on Good Governance Practices – "**Shaasan Ki Badalti Tasveer**".
- He also launched the **Good Governance Week Portal** and released the booklet on 2 year achievements of DARPG.

Source: PIB

The Tourism Ministry under 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme has sanctioned 5 projects under Buddhist circuit

Why in News

- The **Ministry of Tourism** with an objective to create tourism infrastructure in the country, provides financial assistance to the State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations/ Central Agencies under its schemes of '**Swadesh Darshan**' and '**Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive**' (PRASHAD).
- This information was given by Minister of Tourism Shri G. Kishan Reddy in Lok Sabha.

Key Points

- The Ministry under 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme has sanctioned 5 projects under Buddhist circuit theme including 1 project in Uttar Pradesh.
- In addition, another project 'Development of Wayside Amenities in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar' for an amount of Rs. 17.93 Crore at Varanasi-Gaya; Lucknow-Ayodhya-Lucknow; Gorakhpur Kushinagar; Kushinagar - Gaya Kushinagar routes has also been sanctioned.
- In addition, an Action Plan has been formulated with a view to evolve a coordinated strategy for "Revival of India as a Global Centre of Buddhist Culture and Tourism with Special Focus on Bodhgaya".
- The Action Plan includes interventions under 4 verticals: i) Connectivity; ii) Infrastructure and Logistics; iii) Cultural Heritage, Research & Education; and iv) Public Awareness, Communication & Outreach and the Ministry of Tourism has been made the nodal Ministry for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan.

Source: PIB

19,535 villages declared as "Sampoorna Sukanya Gram" under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana campaign

Why in News

- The Government has taken many effective steps for successful implementation of 'Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana' to ensure maximum benefits to girls.
- This was stated by Union Minister of State for Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary in Lok Sabha.

Key Points

- Giving more details, the Minister stated that the campaign run by DoP is given below:

Sr. No.	Details of Campaign	Duration
1	Balika Shakti Campaign	09.12.2019 to 18.01.2020
2	Mahila Divas Campaign	24.02.2020 to 07.03.2020
3	National Girl Child Day Campaign	January, 2021
4	Sampoorna Sukanya Gram Campaign - To ensure the reach of Sukanya Samriddhi Account (SSA) till last mile, a "Sampoorna Sukanya Gram Campaign" was launched during June 2019. In this campaign at least 5 villages to be enmarking Sampoorna Sukanya Village (Gram). It covers opening of Sukanya Samriddhi Account for all eligible girl child in that village. Till 31.03.2021, a total of 19,535 villages declared as "Sampoorna Sukanya Gram".	

Source: PIB

Cabinet approves Treaty between India and Poland concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the **Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters** between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland.

Key Points

- The Treaty aims to enhance effectiveness of both the countries in investigation and prosecution of crime, through cooperation and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.
- In the context of transnational crime and its linkages to terrorism, the proposed Treaty will provide a broad legal framework for bilateral cooperation with Poland in investigation and prosecution of crime as well as in tracing, restraint and confiscation of proceeds and instruments of crime as well as the funds meant to finance terrorist acts.

Note: India has entered into Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties/Agreements with 42 countries (November 2019).

Facts about Poland:

- **Capital:** Warsaw
- **Currency:** Polish złoty
- **President:** Andrzej Duda

Source: PIB

India among most unequal nations; top 1% of population holds 22% of national income: World Inequality Report 2022

Why in News

- India is now among the most unequal countries in the world.
- The report, titled '**World Inequality Report 2022**', has been authored by Lucas Chancel, co-director of the World Inequality Lab, and coordinated by several experts, including French economist Thomas Piketty.

Key Points

- India stands out as a poor and very unequal country, with the top 1% of the population holding more than one-fifth of the total national income in 2021 and the bottom half just 13%.
- The report pointed out that the average national income of the Indian adult population is ₹2,04,200. While the bottom 50% earns ₹53,610, the top 10% earns more than 20 times (₹1,166,520).
- While the top 10% and top 1% hold respectively 57% and 22% of total national income, the bottom 50% share has gone down to 13%.
- Average household wealth in India stands at ₹983,010.
- It also said gender inequalities in India are very high.
- The female labour income share is equal to 18%.
- This is significantly lower than the average in Asia (21%, excluding China).

Related Reports:

- India Inequality Report 2021
- Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)

Source: The Hindu

Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj releases 'Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' Report

Why in News

- Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Giriraj Singh released the Report on **“Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Panchayati Raj Institutions”**.

Key Points

- On this occasion, two dedicated Dashboards namely (i) Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) Monitoring Dashboard on monitoring the progress of GPDP and (ii) Training Management Portal on Capacity Building and Training of Elected Representatives and Functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institutions were launched.
- Handbook on Training Management Portal was also released.
- This informative report will serve as plan for action towards achieving the SDGs.

Background:

- India is a signatory of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is committed to the achievements of SDGs through the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) Scheme.
- The RGSA scheme mandates to capacitate elected representatives for good governance through attainment of SDGs through participatory local planning at Gram Panchayat level.

Source: PIB

Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021P

Why in News

- Rajya Sabha has passed the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021.
- The Bill has already been passed by the Lok Sabha.
- The Upper House also passed the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2020 with amendments moved by the government.

Key Points

- The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021 provides for the regulation and supervision of the assisted reproductive technology clinics and the assisted reproductive technology banks.
- The Bill provides that every Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) clinic and bank must be registered under the National Registry of Banks and Clinics of India.
- The Legislation also envisages prevention of misuse, safe and ethical practice of assisted reproductive technology services for addressing the issues of reproductive health where assisted reproductive technology is required for becoming a parent or for freezing gametes, embryos, embryonic tissues for further use due to infertility, disease or social or medical concerns.

Source: newsonair

Three Indian companies among top 100 in arms sales globally: SIPRI Report

Why in News

- **Three Indian companies** are among the world's top 100 for combined arms sales in 2020, according to a new report by **the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**.

- The three are: **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**, **Indian Ordnance Factories** and **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**.

Note: The three were ranked among the top 100 in arms sales in 2019 as well.

Key Points

- In the latest rankings, **HAL** is at number 42 with US\$ 2.97 billion, up 1.5 percent from 2019 sales.
- **Indian Ordnance Factories** are at the 60th spot, with US\$ 1.9 billion in sales, up 0.2 percent from the previous year.
- **BEL** is ranked 66, with US\$ 1.63 billion in arms sales, up 4 percent compared to 2019.
- India's share of arms sales globally in 2020 was 1.2 percent.

Top Countries:

- With 41 arms companies, the **USA** has the highest number of companies in the top 100 worldwide. Together, their arms sales amounted to \$285 billion, an increase of 1.9 percent compared with 2019.
- China was second at 13 percent, followed by the UK at 7.1 percent.

Source: Indian Express

Launch of the Resource Book on Springshed Management in the Indian Himalayan Region by NITI Aayog

Why in News

- The **Resource Book on Springshed Management** in the Indian Himalayan Region was released by **NITI Aayog**.
- This Resource Book is a summarised guiding document on best practices in springshed management developed by NITI Aayog in collaboration with IWMI and SDC under the "Strengthening Climate Change Adaptation in Himalayas (SCA-Himalayas)" project.

Key Points

- This resource book offers practical guidance on revival and conservation of mountain springs.
- The resource book is an easy-to-use document building upon the processes, methods, and learnings from more than a decade of spring revival efforts by various agencies in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) and neighbouring Nepal and Bhutan.

Note:

- Springs are the primary water source for over 90% of rural communities in the IHR.
- However, there has been increasing concern over the decline of springs and the larger Himalayan groundwater systems, which threatens the water security of the hill populations and the entire Indo-Gangetic plains.

Source: PIB

NDPS (Amendment) Bill, 2021

Why in News

- A Bill to replace an ordinance amending the **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS), 1985** was introduced in the Lok Sabha.

Key Points

- The **NDPS (Amendment) Bill, 2021** would replace an ordinance promulgated in September 2021 to correct a drafting error in a 2014 amendment to the Act.
- Before the 2014 amendment, clause (viii-a) of Section 2 contained sub-clauses (i) to (v), which defined the term “illicit traffic”.

About Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985:

- The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, commonly referred to as the NDPS Act, is an Act of the Parliament of India that prohibits a person the production/manufacturing/cultivation, possession, sale, purchasing, transport, storage, and/or consumption of any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.

Initiatives to Tackle Drug Addiction:

- Narco-Coordination Centre
- Seizure Information Management System
- National Drug Abuse Survey
- Nasha Mukta Bharat

Source: The Hindu

NITI Aayog and Bharti Foundation announce the launch of ‘Convoke 2021-22’

Why in News

- **NITI Aayog** in partnership with Bharti Foundation, the philanthropic arm of **Bharti Enterprises**, launched ‘**Convoke 2021-22**’.

Key Points

- **Convoke** is a National research Symposium which aims at addressing challenges in imparting education and strengthening its quality with special focus on all teachers, educationists, heads of schools across India.
- Through this platform, **School Teachers/ Heads/Principals of Government Schools** and teachers from Bharti Foundation network will be encouraged to use research-based solutions through scientific approach, and showcase their efforts taken at the grass-root level in improving learning outcomes.
- It will promote the suggestions of the National Education Policy 2020 on recognizing novel approaches to teaching that improve learning outcomes in their classrooms.

Source: PIB

Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar Scheme

Why in News

- Recently, **NEDFi** announced the **Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar Scheme** for the Artisans under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.

Key Points

- With the objective to develop the petty artisans of the North Eastern Region by providing financial assistance in the form of term loan for income generating activities for setting up / expansion / modernization / working capital requirement and other activities related to the sector, NEDFi has introduced **Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar Scheme** to the grass root Artisans of the region.
- During the launching ceremony, a total of 17 artisans have been provided with credit assistance of Rs.1 lakh per artisan.
- The credit facility is collateral free and carries a subsidized interest rate of 6% p.a., which is repayable in 24 months.
- For regular repayment, an incentive of 1% on the interest rate is provided, which will be refunded to the artisans on successful repayment of loans.

About North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFi):

- NEDFi, a premier financial institution in the North-Eastern Region with its head office at Dispur, Guwahati and branch offices all across North-Eastern Region has completed an eventful twenty-six years since its establishment in 1995.
- Over the years, the Corporation has provided loans to over 7500 projects and taken up several development initiatives through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities in the eight states of North-East India.

Source: PIB

MoHUA and UNDP sign MoU for strengthening Waste Management Sector under SBM-U 2.0

Why in News

- The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**, Government of India signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** India to strengthen the waste management sector in India under the **Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0)**.

Key Points

- The MoU will be operational for a period of five years (2021-26).
- Through this MoU, UNDP India will also be facilitating the setting up of 75 Smart Swachhata Kendras across the country, working with local partners and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- The collaboration between MoHUA and UNDP India is another step towards realizing the vision of 'Clean Air, Clean Water, Clean Land' in urban India through a circular economy approach based on the 3R (reduce, reuse, recycle) principle.
- With concerted focus on source segregation and scientific processing of municipal solid waste, the waste processing capacity in India has gone up by nearly 4 times, from 18% in 2014, to 70% on date.

About Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0):

- It envisions to make all cities 'Garbage Free' and ensure grey and black water management in all cities other than those covered under AMRUT, make all urban local bodies as ODF+ and those with a population of less than 1 lakh as ODF++, thereby achieving the vision of safe sanitation in urban areas.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched SBM-U 2.0 on October 01, 2021.

Source: PIB

Ministry of Culture implements Scheme of Financial Assistance for the Development of Buddhist/Tibetan Culture and Art under “Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojna”

Why in News

- Recently, the **Ministry of Culture** implemented a Scheme of Financial Assistance for the Development of Buddhist/Tibetan Culture and Art under **“Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojna (KSVY)”**.

Key Points

- Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided to the voluntary Buddhist and Tibetan Organizations including Monasteries engaged in the propagation and scientific development of Buddhist/ Tibetan Culture and tradition, located in any part of the country.
- The quantum of funding is Rs.30.00 lakhs per year for an organization.
- The Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) on the scheme is empowered to recommend the amount beyond the maximum limit but not exceeding Rs.1.00 crore from this scheme.

Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojna (KSVY):

- It is an umbrella scheme under the Ministry of Culture for the promotion of art and culture in the country. It is a central sector scheme.

Source: PIB

BEE announces 31st National Energy Conservation Awards and 1st National Energy Efficiency Innovations Awards

Why in News

- **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)**, under the guidance of Ministry of Power, recognizes and encourages endeavors of industrial units, institutions and establishments in reducing energy consumption by felicitating them with **National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA)** on the occasion of **National Energy Conservation Day**, celebrated on **14th December** every year.
- This year, a new award - **National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards (NEEIA)** is also institutionalized.

Key Points

- This year, the NECA and NEEIA awards are being organized as part of the “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav”.
- The National Energy Conservation Awards are given to the energy-intensive units of various sectors of the Indian economy for their exceptional achievements in reducing the specific energy consumption.

About Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE):

- The BEE is a statutory body established through the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 under the Union Ministry of Power.

Efforts Related to Energy Efficiency and Conservation:

Global:

- International Energy Agency
- Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL)
- Paris Agreement

Indian:

- Energy Conservation Act, 2001
- PAT Scheme: Perform Achieve and Trade Scheme
- Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC)
- Demand Side Management

Source: PIB

Data on job loss during the 2020 lockdown for COVID pandemic**Why in News**

- Recently, the **Ministry of Labour and Employment** presented the data on job loss during the 2020 lockdown for COVID pandemic.
- The data is based on the **All India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey (AQEES)**.

Key Points

- About 7.5 percent job losses were seen during the lockdown for COVID pandemic last year, with the manufacturing, construction, education and trade sectors bearing the brunt more than white-collared employment in IT/BPOs, financial services and health sectors.
- Among the nine key sectors covered for the AQEES, the manufacturing sector recorded job losses of 14.2 lakh between the pre-lockdown (March 25, 2020) and post-lockdown (July 1, 2020) period.
- Construction sector recorded a loss of 1 lakh, while trade and education sectors registered job losses of 1.8 lakh and 2.8 lakh, respectively.
- Job losses in the financial services sector, on the other hand, were recorded at 0.4 lakh and at 1 lakh for the IT/BPOs sector during the same period.
- Female workers registered a job loss of 7.44 per cent among the nine key sectors, while the job loss figure for male workers between the pre-lockdown and post-lockdown period stood at 7.48 percent, data showed.

About All-India Quarterly Establishment-based Employment Survey (AQEES):

- The **AQEES** has been taken up by the **Labour Bureau** to provide frequent (quarterly) updates about the employment and related variables of establishments, in both organised and unorganised segments of nine selected sectors.
- The 9 sectors are Manufacturing, Construction, Trade, Transport, Education, Health, Accommodation and Restaurants, IT/BPO, Financial Service Activities.

Components:

- Quarterly Employment Survey (QES)
- Area Frame Establishment Survey (AFES)

Related Initiatives:

- Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana
- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

- The Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat package 3.0
- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission

Source: Indian Express

Important News: State

Amit Shah inaugurates 'Bharat Darshan Park' in Delhi

Why in News

- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** inaugurated the '**Bharat Darshan Park**' in New Delhi which showcases attractive replicas of several iconic monuments of India built with scrap and waste material.

Key Points

- The recreational garden was built by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation on the '**waste-to-wealth**' model.
- A total of 22 replicas have been put up in the park. These include replicas of 21 monuments and a tree.
- The theme of the park is 'Unity and Diversity'.
- These replicas have been built with scrap and waste material such as dumped old vehicles, fans, iron rods, nuts and bolts, lying unused or abandoned.
- Like 'Waste to Wonder Park', 'Bharat Darshan Park' will also become a popular tourist spot of Delhi, where people will be able to see 'mini India' in one place.
- 'Waste-to-Wonder Park' in Sarai Kale Khan Area was opened in February 2019.

Source: Business Standard

PM Modi inaugurates & lays foundation stone of hydropower projects in Himachal Pradesh

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of hydropower projects worth over Rs 11,000 crore in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh.

Key Points

Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of:

- **Luhri Stage- I HEP (210 MW)**, River: Satluj, Location: Near Nirath Village, Distt. Shimla and Kullu (HP)
- **Dhaultasidh HEP (66 MW)**, River: Beas, Location: Dhaultasidh, Distt. Hamirpur (HP)
- He also laid the foundation stone of **Renukaji Dam project (40 MW)** and inaugurated **Sawra-Kuddu Hydro Power Project (111 MW)**.
- He mentioned that 'In 2016, India had set a target to meet 40 percent of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil energy sources by 2030'.

Note: The first edition of the **three-day Kashi Indian International Film Festival** commenced in Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi on 27th December 2021.

Source: PIB

Centre extends AFSPA in Nagaland for six more months

in News

- The Centre has extended the **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)** in **Nagaland** for another six months.

Key Points

- The AFSPA empowers security forces to conduct operations and arrest anyone without any prior warrant.

Note:

- Recently, the Union government instituted a high-level committee chaired by a Secretary-level officer to examine the possibility of withdrawing the AFSPA in Nagaland.
- Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India Vivek Joshi will head the five-member committee.

Source: India Today

Indian Army establishes Quantum Laboratory at Mhow (MP)

Why in News

- The **Indian Army**, with support from the **National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS)** has recently established the **Quantum Laboratory** at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Mhow (MP) to spearhead research and training in this key developing field.

Key Points

- Indian Army has also established an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre at the same institution with over 140 deployments in forward areas and active support of industry and academia.
- Ideation for Army's involvement in Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations was done in a seminar on Electromagnetic Spectrum and National Security organised in October 2020.
- Since then, an impetus has been given to Indian Army's Technology Institutions for investing in AI, Quantum and Cyber.

Source: PIB

Sankalp Smarak

Why in News

- **Sankalp Smarak** was dedicated to the nation by Lt Gen Ajai Singh, **Commander-in-Chief Andaman and Nicobar Command (CINCAN)**, exactly 78 years after **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's** arrival on 29 Dec 2021.

Key Points

- In the saga of India's freedom struggle, 30 December 1943 holds a special place etched in time.
- It was on this day that a national flag was hoisted for the first time on Indian soil, at Port Blair.
- It is also significant that Netaji escaped British surveillance from Kolkata on 16 Jan 1941 and stepped back on Indian soil after nearly three years, at Port Blair Aerodrome on 29 Dec 1943 and unfurled a National flag the next day.
- Netaji's visit to the islands as the Head of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and Supreme Commander of Indian National Army marked a symbolic fulfillment of

his promise that the Indian National Army would stand on Indian soil by the end of 1943.

- This historic visit also marked a declaration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands as the “first liberated territory of India”.

Source: PIB

PM Modi inaugurates and lays the foundation of multiple projects in Varanasi

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated and laid the foundation of multiple projects in **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**.

Key Points

- The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of ‘**Banas Dairy Sankul**’ at the UP State Industrial Development Authority Food Park, Karkhiyaon, Varanasi.
- He laid the foundation stone for the **Biogas based Electricity generation plant** for the Milk Producers Cooperative Union Plant, Ramnagar, Varanasi.
- He launched a Portal and Logo dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme of milk products, developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) with the help of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).
- He distributed the rural residential rights record ‘**Gharauni**’ under the **Swamitva scheme** of the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj, to over 20 Lakh residents of Uttar Pradesh.

Note: Rajeev Chandrasekhar- Minister of State, Electronics and Information Technology inaugurated the **7 new internet exchange nodes** in multiple cities of Uttar Pradesh.

Source: HT

Odisha CM inaugurates longest bridge ‘T-Setu’ over Mahanadi River in Cuttack

Why in News

- **Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated **Odisha's longest bridge, ‘T-Setu’** over the Mahanadi River at Gopinathpur in Cuttack.

Key Points

- The 3.4 km long bridge, connecting Gopinathpur in Badamba, Baideswar in Banki to Singhanath Pitha located in the middle of the river, has been built in the shape of the English alphabet ‘T’ at a cost of Rs 111 crore.
- It will benefit over 5 lakh people as well as contribute to the development of tourism, agriculture and commerce in the region.

Source: Business Standard

PM Modi inaugurates Kanpur Metro Rail Project

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated **Kanpur Metro Rail Project**.
- He inaugurated the **Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project**.
- He attended the **54th Convocation Ceremony of IIT Kanpur** and issued digital degrees through in-house blockchain-driven technology.

Key Points

About Kanpur Metro Rail Project:

- The entire length of the Kanpur Metro Rail Project is 32 km and is being built at a cost of over Rs 11,000 crore.
- Kanpur Metro is going to be the fastest built metro project in the country.

About Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project:

- The Multiproduct pipeline from Bina Refinery (Madhya Pradesh) to POL Terminal at Panki, Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh) was dedicated to the nation.
- 356 Km long project has a capacity of around 3.45 million metric tonne per annum.
- Project will cover 5 districts of UP: Lalitpur, Jhansi, Jalaun, Kanpur Dehat and Kanpur Nagar, and 2 of MP: Sagar and Tikamgarh.

Source: TOI

Centre sets up panel to look into withdrawal of AFSPA in Nagaland

Why in News

- The Union government instituted a high-level committee chaired by a Secretary-level officer to examine the possibility of withdrawing the **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)** in Nagaland.
- Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India **Vivek Joshi** will head the five-member committee.

Key Points

- The committee will submit its report within 45 days and withdrawal of Disturbed Area and AFSPA from Nagaland will be based on the recommendations of the committee.
- Recently, the demands for repeal of AFSPA – an Act that gives sweeping powers to the armed forces to arrest without warrants and even shoot to kill in certain situations in 'disturbed areas' – from Nagaland and other north-eastern states have been growing louder.

Note:

- In March 2018, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs ordered removal of AFSPA completely from Meghalaya.
- In Arunachal Pradesh too, AFSPA was removed from several police stations during 2018 and 2019; at present in the state, only three districts and four police stations that border Assam are under AFSPA.

Source: Indian Express

Delhi to get first Teachers' University

Why in News

- **Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi Cabinet** has approved a proposal to establish the '**Delhi Teachers University**'.

Key Points

- 'Delhi Teachers University' Bill 2021 will be placed before the Delhi Vidhan Sabha in the coming session.
- Delhi Teachers University' will be a public university dedicated to preparing excellent quality Teachers for the city across different school stages.
- Admission to the new University will start for the academic session 2022-23.

Source: India Today

Nagaland creates three new districts- Tseminyu, Niuland, Chumukedima

Why in News

- **Nagaland government** created three new districts in the state, taking the total number of districts to 15.
- The three new districts are **Tseminyu, Niuland and Chumukedima**.

Key Points

- Tseminyu became the 13th, Niluland 14th, and Chumukedima the 15th district of the northeastern state.
- Niuland and Chumukedima have been carved out of Dimapur district, while the Tseminyu sub-division in Kohima district has been upgraded to a district.

Facts about Nagaland:

- **Capital:** Kohima
- **Governor:** Jagdish Mukhi
- **Chief Minister:** Neiphiu Rio

Source: Business Standard

Odisha CM inaugurates Mukhyamantri Vayu Swasthya Seva scheme

Why in News

- **Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated the **Mukhyamantri Vayu Swasthya Seva scheme** and launched air ambulances for residents of four tribal-dominated districts — Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Nuapada and Kalahandi.

Key Points

- Under the new scheme, critical patients can be airlifted to hospitals in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, and specialised doctors — neurologists, nephrologists and cardiologists from various medical colleges and private hospitals — will fly to the four districts under per a pre-arranged schedule to treat patients.
- A team of doctors, including a cardiologist and urologist, took the inaugural flight from Biju Patnaik airport in Bhubaneswar to Malkangiri.

Source: Indian Express

Punjab CM declares Sri Krishan Balram Rath Yatra as state festival

Why in News

- **Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi** declared the annual **Sri Krishan Balram Rath Yatra** a state festival.

Key Points

- The announcement was made during flagging off the 25th Sri Krishan Balram Rath Yatra.
- The yatra was carried out after a gap of two years due to coronavirus restrictions.
- The chief minister also announced Rs 2.51 crore for the ISKCON temple in Ludhiana.

Source: HT

Indian Desert Cat spotted in Panna Tiger Reserve

Why in News

- An **Indian Desert Cat** has been spotted for the first time in **Madhya Pradesh's Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR)**.
- It is also known as the Asiatic Wildcat or the Asian Steppe Wildcat.

Key Points

- Its Scientific Name is *Felis silvestris ornate*.
- As the name suggests, this cat is found in deserts and can survive without water.
- The toes of the species have cushion like hair which help it balance the fluctuating desert temperatures.

Protection Status:

- Wildlife Protection Act: Schedule-I
- IUCN Red List: Least Concern
- CITES: Appendix-II

About Panna Tiger Reserve:

- It was established in 1981 and is situated in the Vindhya mountain range in the northern part of Madhya Pradesh.
- Ken River (a tributary of the Yamuna River) flows through the reserve.
- Ken-Betwa river interlinking project will be located within the tiger reserve.
- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated the Panna Tiger Reserve as a Biosphere Reserve on August 25, 2011.

Source: Indian Express

India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre

Why in News

- India's first **International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC)** was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad.

Key Points

- Life trustee of the centre, Justice R.V. Raveendran, Supreme Court judges L. Nageswara Rao, Hima Kohli and judges from the Telangana and Andhra Pradesh high courts attended the event.
- Till now, the complicated legal matters of all regional countries and common people including India used to be resolved in the arbitration centers of **Singapore and UK**, but with the start of this mediation center in Hyderabad, now the process of arbitration can be carried out here.
- The setting up of IAMC at Hyderabad is an important step towards enhancing the ADR (Alternate Dispute Resolution) landscape of the country.

Source: TOI

Central government: 'In-principle' nod for 6 nuclear reactors in Jaitapur

Why in News

- The Central government has given "In-principle" approval for setting up of six nuclear power reactors at Jaitapur in Maharashtra.

Key Points

- The six nuclear power reactors, which will have a capacity of 1,650 MW each, will be set up with technical cooperation from **France**.
- It will be the country's largest nuclear power generating site with a total capacity of 9,900 MW.

Note:

- The present installed nuclear power capacity in the country is 6,780 MW and the share of nuclear power in the total electricity generation in 2020-21 is about 3.1%.
- The nuclear power plants have so far generated about 755 billion units of electricity, saving about 650 million Tons of CO₂ emission.
- In this context, the present nuclear power capacity of 6,780 MW is expected to be increased to 22,480 MW by 2031 on completion of projects.
- The government has also amended the Atomic Energy Act 1962 to enable joint ventures of public sector companies to set up nuclear power projects.

Nuclear Power plants in Operation:

- Rawatbhata (Rajasthan)
- Tarapur (Maharashtra)
- Kudankulam (Tamil Nadu)

- Kakrapar (Gujarat)
- Kalpakkam (Tamil Nadu)
- Narora (Uttar Pradesh)
- Kaiga (Karnataka)

Source: Indian Express

PM Modi lays the foundation stone of Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh

Why in News

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of **Ganga Expressway** in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points

- The 594 Km long six-lane Expressway will be built at a cost of over Rs 36,200 crore.
- Starting near the Bijauli village in Meerut, the Expressway will extend till near the Judapur Dandu village in Prayagraj.
- It passes through Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Sambhal, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, RaeBareilly, Pratapgarh and Prayagraj.
- Upon completion of work, it will become the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh, connecting the western and eastern regions of the state.
- A 3.5 Km long air strip for assisting emergency take off and landing of Air Force planes will also be constructed on the Expressway in Shahjahanpur.
- An industrial corridor is also proposed to be built along the Expressway.

Source: PIB

India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Project to be set up in Andhra Pradesh

Why in News

- **National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC)** has awarded a project of Standalone Fuel-Cell based Micro-grid with hydrogen production using electrolyser in NTPC Guest House at Simhadri (near Visakhapatnam).
- It is India's first Green Hydrogen based Energy Storage Project.

Key Points

- This unique project configuration is designed in-house by NTPC.
- It would be a precursor to large scale hydrogen energy storage projects and would be useful for studying and deploying multiple microgrids in various off grid and strategic locations of the country.
- The hydrogen would be produced using the advanced 240 kW Solid Oxide Electrolyser by taking input power from the nearby Floating Solar project.
- The hydrogen produced during sunshine hours would be stored at high pressure and would be electrified using a 50 kW Solid Oxide Fuel Cell.

Note:

- The project is in-line with the vision of India for becoming carbon neutral by 2070.
- Earlier, NTPC had commissioned the development of India's biggest floating solar plant in Telangana's Ramagundam.

Source: Business Standard

Haiderpur wetland in Uttar Pradesh recognised as Ramsar Site

Why in News

- The **Haiderpur wetland** in **Uttar Pradesh** has been designated as the country's **47th Ramsar site** and 2,463rd Ramsar site internationally.

Key Points

- Haiderpur Wetland covers an area of 6,908 hectares and is situated on the Muzaffarnagar-Bijnor border in **Uttar Pradesh**.
- It was formed in 1984 by the construction of Madhya Ganga Barrage at the confluence of Solani and Ganga rivers and is a part of Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **Uttar Pradesh** is now home to 9 Ramsar wetlands.

About Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, an international treaty, aims at the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.
- Named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, the convention was signed in 1971.

Note:

- Earlier in August 2021, four more wetlands from India were recognized as Ramsar sites – Thol and Wadhvana from Gujarat and Sultanpur and Bhindawas from Haryana.
- Recently, Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand has been declared as the **Askot Wildlife Sanctuary Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ)**.

Source: TOI

Kazhuveli Wetland in Tamil Nadu declared as 16th Bird Sanctuary

Why in News

- The **Kazhuveli Wetland** located near Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu has been declared as the 16th Bird Sanctuary by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change.

Key Points

- The Kazhuveli Wetland is referred to as the 2nd largest Brackish Water Lake in South India, only after Pulicat Lake.
- The declaration was made under subsection (1) of section 18 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

About Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary:

- It covers 3,027.25 hectares of land in Marakkanam taluks and 5,151.60 hectares in Vanur taluk.
- The sanctuary lies adjacent to the Bay of Bengal along the East coast.
- Kazhuveli is a wetland of international importance that is spread over 670 square km in the east coast of Tamil Nadu.

Source: Indian Express

PM Modi inaugurates the Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur, UP

Why in News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh.
- Earlier, Prime Minister inaugurated AIIMS, Fertilizer Plant and ICMR Centre in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points

- Saryu Nahar National Project which will provide assured water for irrigation of over 14 lakh hectares of land and benefit about 29 lakh farmers of the region.
- It will benefit nine districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh, namely Bahraich, Shravasti, Balrampur, Gonda, Siddharthnagar, Basti, Sant Kabir Nagar, Gorakhpur and Maharajganj,
- The project has been built at a total cost of over Rs 9,800 crore.
- The project involves interlinking of five rivers -- Ghaghara, Saryu, Rapti, Banganga and Rohini -- to ensure optimum usage of water resources of the region.

Source: HT

Cabinet approves Ken-Betwa Interlinking of Rivers Project

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the funding and implementation of **Ken-Betwa Inter-Linking of Rivers Project**.

Key Points

- The total cost of Ken-Betwa link project has been assessed at Rs.44,605 crore at 2020-21 price levels.
- This project involves transfer of water from the Ken to the Betwa River through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers, the Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage -and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project.
- The project will provide an annual irrigation of 10.62 lakh ha, drinking water supply to a population of about 62 lakhs and also generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW solar power.
- The Project is proposed to be implemented in 8 years with state of the art technology.
- The Project will be of immense benefit to the water starved Bundelkhand region, spread across the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- This project will provide enormous benefits to the districts of Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi & Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh.

Background:

- On 22nd March 2021, a historic agreement was signed between the Union Minister of Jal Shakti and the Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh to implement the first major centrally driven river interlinking project in the country.

Note:

- Ken and Betwa Rivers originate in Madhya Pradesh and are the tributaries of Yamuna.
- Ken meets with Yamuna in Banda district of Uttar Pradesh and with Betwa in Hamirpur district of Uttar Pradesh.
- Rajghat, Paricha and Matatila dams are over Betwa River.
- Ken River passes through Panna tiger reserve.

Source: PIB

Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti conservation project wins 2 UNESCO Awards 2021

Why in News

- **Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti conservation project** won 2 **UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2021**.
- The project has won the prestigious **Award of Excellence** and another award in the **Special Recognition for Sustainable Development** category.
- 9 projects from 6 countries — Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand — have been honoured by a jury of heritage experts.

Key Points

- The **Nizamuddin Area** comprises the World Heritage Site of Humayun's Tomb, Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti and Sunder Nursery, Batashewala Tomb-Garden Complex, tomb of courtier poet Khan I Khanan 'Rahim' and the Mughal-period caravanserai of Azimganj Serai.
- The Urban Renewal project, which started in 2007, has successfully unified these segregated zones of the conservation area into an urban historic district of considerable cultural significance.
- The conservation is being undertaken by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) in partnership with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation, and the Dargah Committee/resident community groups of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti.

Source: Indian Express

Important News: Polity

Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill, 2021

Why in News

- The Karnataka legislative Assembly has **passed** the **Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill, 2021**, commonly referred to as the **anti-conversion Bill**.

Key Points

- The Bill states, "No person shall convert or attempt to convert either directly or otherwise any other person from one religion to another by use of misrepresentation, force, undue influence, coercion, allurement or by any fraudulent means or by marriage, nor shall any person abet or conspire for conversions."
- According to the proposed legislation, complaints regarding conversions can be filed by family members or any other person who is related to the individual who is getting converted.
- A jail term of three to five years and a fine of Rs 25,000 has been proposed for those violating the law in the case of people from general categories, and a jail term of three to 10 years and a fine of Rs 50,000 has been mooted for those converting minors, women or persons from SC/ST communities.

Anti-Conversion Laws in India:

- **Constitutional Provision:** The Indian Constitution under Article 25 guarantees the freedom to profess, propagate, and practise religion, and allows all religious sections

to manage their own affairs in matters of religion; subject to public order, morality, and health.

- **Existing Laws:** There has been no central legislation restricting or regulating religious conversions.

Note: Other States like Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh have also passed laws restricting religious conversion.

Source: Indian Express

Maharashtra Legislative Council passes Public University Act, 2016 (Third Amendment) Bill

Why in News

- The **Maharashtra Legislative Council** passed the **Maharashtra Public University Act, 2016 (Third Amendment) bill** which gives more powers to the Higher and Technical Education Minister with regard to the state-run universities.

Key Points

- The bill allows the minister to make recommendations to the governor who is the chancellor of the universities.
- It also proposes appointment of the Higher and Technical Education Minister as pro-chancellor of the universities.

Source: newsonair

Election Laws (Amendment) Bill 2021

Why in News

- The Lok Sabha has passed the **Election Laws (Amendment) Bill 2021**.

Key Points

- The bill provides linking of Aadhar number with electoral rolls besides giving four opportunities to enroll in a calendar year as voter upon attaining 18 years of age.
- The amendments are based on the recommendations made by the Election Commission of India and the Parliamentary Standing Committee as well.
- According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, it provides for amendment of section 23 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (RP Act, 1950), enabling for the linking of electoral roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem to curb the menace of multiple enrolment of the same person in different places.
- It also seeks to amend clause (b) of section 14 of the RP Act, 1950 specifying the 1st day of January, 1st day of April, 1st day of July and 1st day of October in a calendar year as qualifying dates in relation to the preparation or revision of electoral rolls.

Source: Indian Express

Raising legal age of marriage for women

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet took the decision to **raise the legal age of marriage for women** from 18 to 21 years. The legal age of marriage for men is 21 years.
- With this decision, the government will be bringing the age of marriage for both men and women at par.
- The Cabinet's decision to **raise the legal age of marriage** for women is based on the recommendation of a **panel led by Jaya Jaitly**.

Key Points

- The law prescribes a minimum age of marriage to essentially outlaw child marriages and prevent the abuse of minors.
- For Hindus, The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 sets 18 years as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom. In Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid.
- The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 also prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men, respectively.
- The recently released National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 5 revealed that **child marriage has come down marginally** from 27 percent in 2015-16 to 23 percent in 2019-20 in the country, but the government has been pushing to bring this down further.

About Jaya Jaitly committee:

- In June 2020, the Ministry for Women and Child Development set up a task force to look into the correlation between the age of marriage with issues of women's nutrition, prevalence of anemia and other social indices.
- The committee, headed by former Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly, also had on board NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul and secretaries of several ministries.
- The committee has recommended the age of marriage be increased to 21 years.

Source: Indian Express

Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021

Why in News

- The **Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021**, introduced in the Lok Sabha, exempts Ayush practitioners from the ambit of the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, and facilitates access to biological resources and traditional knowledge by the Indian traditional medicine sector.
- Legal experts have, however, expressed concerns that easing the norms for the sector could be detrimental to ecology and go against the principle of sharing commercial benefits with indigenous communities.

Key Points

- The **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** was enacted for the conservation of biological diversity and fair, equitable sharing of the monetary benefits from the commercial use of biological resources and traditional knowledge.
- The Bill looks to encourage farmers to increase cultivation of medicinal plants.
- It also seeks to give a fillip to "Indian system of medicine", and facilitate fast-tracking of research, patent application process, transfer of research results while utilising the biological resources available in India — "without compromising the objectives of United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity and its **Nagoya Protocol**".
- The Ministry said the "amendment is necessary because on 4th Oct 2012, India ratified **Nagoya Protocol** on access to generic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization."

Source: HT

Dam Safety Bill (2019)

Why in News

- The Rajya Sabha passed the landmark **Dam Safety Bill (2019)**, paving the way for enactment of the Dam Safety Act in the country.
- The Dam Safety Bill (2019) was passed by the Lok Sabha in August 2019.

Key Points

About Dam Safety Bill:

- The Dam Safety Bill provides for adequate surveillance, inspection, operation, and maintenance of all the large dams in the country so as to prevent dam failure related disasters.
- The Bill provides for an institutional mechanism at both Central and State levels to address structural and non-structural measures required for ensuring the safe functioning of dams.
- As per the provision of the Bill, a **National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS)** will be constituted to help evolve uniform dam safety policies, protocols, and procedures.
- The Bill also provides for the establishment of a **National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA)** as a regulatory body for ensuring the nationwide implementation of dam safety policies and standards.
- At the State level, the Bill prescribes for the constitution of **State Committees on Dam Safety (SCDS)** and the establishment of the **State Dam Safety Organizations (SDSO)**.

Note:

- After China and USA, India is the 3rd largest dam-owning nation in the world.
- There are around 5,700 large dams in the country, of which about 80% are already over 25 years old. Nearly 227 dams that are over 100 years old are still functional.

Source: PIB

Public Accounts Committee (PAC)

Why in News

- Recently, the **Public Accounts Committee (PAC)** has completed 100 years.

Key Points

- The **Public Accounts Committee (PAC)** is a committee of selected members of parliament, constituted by the Parliament of India, for the purpose of auditing the revenue and the expenditure of the Government of India.
- This committee along with the Estimates committee (EC) and Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU) are the three financial standing committees of the Parliament of India.

About Public Accounts Committee (PAC):

- The Public Accounts Committee was introduced in 1921 after its first mention in the Government of India Act, 1919 also called Montford Reforms.
- The Public Accounts Committee is now constituted every year under Rule 308 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.
- It presently comprises 22 members (15 members elected by the Lok Sabha Speaker, and 7 members elected by the Rajya Sabha Chairman) with a term of one year only.
- **Current Chairperson:** Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury
- **Chairperson party:** Indian National Congress

Source: PIB

Important News: Economy

Centre declares 'Soya Meal' as an Essential Commodity up to 30th June, 2022

Why in News

- Central Government has notified an Order under the Essential Commodities Act to declare '**Soya Meal**' as an Essential Commodities up to 30th June, 2022 by amending the Schedule of the **Essential Commodities Act, 1955**.

Key Points

- Government of India has issued a landmark Order where it has mentioned that in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, in the Schedule, after serial No. (8), the following item shall be added, "**(9) Soya Meal**".
- It will stop unfair market practices and enhance the availability for consumers like Poultry farm and Cattle feed manufacturers.
- **About Soybean Meal:** Soybean meal is the most important protein source used to feed farm animals. Soybean meal is the by-product of the extraction of soybean oil.
- **About Essential Commodities Act 1955:** It was legislated at a time when the country was facing a scarcity of foodstuffs due to persistent low levels of food grains production. To prevent hoarding and black marketing of foodstuffs, the Essential Commodities Act was enacted in 1955.

Source: PIB

India to become 3rd largest economy in 2031: CEBR

Why in News

- The **Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)** from the UK has predicted that the Indian economy will become the world's third largest by the year 2031.
- In the year 2022, India is set to regain its sixth position in **World Economic League Table (WELT)** from France, as per CEBR.

Key Points

- China will overtake the US in 2030.
- In the year 2020, India's GDP had witnessed a contraction of 7.3% due to COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown leading to constraints on economic activity.
- Economic activity has rebounded in 2021, due to a drop in daily new cases of infections.
- The economy is estimated to grow 8.5% in 2021, due to economic recovery after a contraction of 7.3% in 2020.

Source: TOI

Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM)

Why in News

- **Telangana** stood first in the implementation of the **Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM)**.
- **Tamil Nadu** and **Gujarat** took the second and third positions respectively.

Key Points

Top 3 State on Performance based Indicator:

State Name	Rank
Telangana	1
Tamil Nadu	2
Gujarat	3

- In Telangana, in as many as 17 clusters (12 non-tribal and 5 tribal), the programme was being implemented at an estimated cost of ₹1,885.12 crore.
- The provision of urban infrastructure in rural areas is the main purpose of the Rurban Mission, with Telangana having the highest points due to the outstanding performance of Panchayat Raj and rural development.
- **Sangareddy** and **Kamareddy** districts in Telangana stood in the first two positions among the 300 clusters across the country where the programme was being implemented.

About Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM):

- It was launched in the year 2016 by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) in mission mode to develop 300 clusters in the country holistically by provisioning of economic, social and physical infrastructure facilities.
- The main objectives of SPMRM are to stimulate local economic development, enhance basic services, and create well planned Rurban clusters.

Source: The Hindu

CESL achieves 50 lakhs LED bulb distribution milestone under flagship Gram Ujala programme

Why in News

- **Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)**, has achieved a remarkable milestone of distributing 50 lakhs LED bulbs under Project Crore of their **Gram Ujala programme**.
- Targets to distribute 10 million LED bulbs under Project Crore in 2 million households till March 31, 2022

Key Points

- **Gram Ujala scheme** is being implemented in rural households in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana.
- CESL is providing high quality 7-Watt and 12-Watt LED bulbs with 3 years guarantee at a cost of INR 10 per bulb in exchange of working incandescent bulbs.
- Every household can exchange a maximum of 5 bulbs.
- The programme is active till March 31, 2022.
- CESL is supported by C-Quest Capital in the entire distribution journey under the SHINE programme.

Other Schemes for Encouraging Use of LED Bulbs:

- Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP)
- Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA)

Source: ET

Defence Minister dedicates to the Nation 24 bridges & 3 roads built by BRO

Why in News

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** dedicated to the Nation **24 bridges and 3 roads**, built by **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** in four States and two Union Territories.
- To boost tourism and facilitate the Armed Forces personnel in border areas, the Raksha Mantri announced setting up of '**BRO Cafes**' at 75 places, as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations.

Key Points

- Of the 24 bridges, nine are in Jammu & Kashmir; five each in Ladakh & Himachal Pradesh; three in Uttarakhand and one each in Sikkim & Arunachal Pradesh.
- Of the three roads, two are in Ladakh and one is in West Bengal.
- The main highlight was the inauguration of **India's first indigenous Class 70 140-foot Double-Lane Modular Bridge**, built at the height of 11,000 feet at Flag Hill Dokala, Sikkim and Chisumle-Demchok road at Umling La Pass at over 19,000 feet in Ladakh which also holds the **Guinness World Record** of world's highest motorable road.
- The e-inauguration has taken the tally of infrastructure projects executed by BRO to a record 102 in a single working season.

Note: Earlier in June 2021, Rajnath Singh had dedicated to the Nation 12 roads and 63 bridges – totalling 75 projects - in the 75th year of Independence under the aegis of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

Source: PIB

Global Health Security Index 2021

Why in News

- Countries across all income levels remain dangerously unprepared to meet future epidemic and pandemic threats, according to the **Global Health Security (GHS) Index 2021**.

Key Points

- The world's overall performance on the GHS Index score slipped to 38.9 (out of 100) in 2021, from a score of 40.2 in the GHS Index, 2019.
- Some 101 high, middle and low-income countries, including India, have slipped in performance since 2019.
- In South Asia, India, with a score of 42.8 (out of 100) too, has slipped by 0.8 points since 2019.
- But three neighbouring countries — Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives — have improved their score by 1-1.2 points.
- In 2021, no country scored in the top tier of rankings and no country scored above 75.9.

About Global Health Security Index:

- It was jointly released by non-profits Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) and the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security.
- The findings of the GHS Index 2021 are based on a revised framework and updated data collection conducted between August 2020 and June 2021.
- It has assessed countries across 6 categories, 37 indicators and 171 questions, using instantly available information.

Source: DTE

SAMPANN project

Why in News

- More than One Lakh pensioners are currently being serviced by Principal Controller of Communication Accounts/ Controller of Communication Accounts offices all over India through **SAMPANN project**.
- It has ensured recurring monthly savings to the Government of India on account of Commission being paid to Banks/Post Offices for payment of Pension which approximately amounts to Rs. 11.5 Crores as of June, 2021.

Key Points

About SAMPANN – ‘System for Accounting and Management of Pension’:

- SAMPANN is an ambitious project of Government of India being implemented by the Controller General of Communication Accounts, Department of Telecommunications, the Ministry of Communications.
- It was dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 29th December, 2018.
- It is a seamless online pension processing and payment system for the Department of Telecommunications pensioners.
- It provides direct credit of pension into the bank accounts of pensioners.
- The system has helped the Department in faster settlement of pension cases, improved reconciliation/auditing and ease of accounting.

Source: PIB

Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G)

Why in News

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the proposal of the Department of Rural Development for continuation of **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G)** beyond March 2021 wherein financial assistance is to be provided for the construction of the remaining 155.75 lakh houses within total target of 2.95 crore houses.

Key Points

The details of the approval given by the Cabinet are as follows:

- Continuation of PMAY-G beyond **March 2021 till March 2024** as per the existing norms to complete remaining houses within a cumulative target of 2.95 crore houses.
- The total financial implication for construction of the remaining 155.75 lakh houses is Rs. 2,17,257 crore (Central Share Rs.1,25,106 crore and State Share Rs.73,475 crores) for achieving cumulative targets of 2.95 crore houses in rural areas under the PMAY-G and an additional requirement of Rs.18,676 Crore towards the interest repayment to NABARD.
- Continuation of Program Management Unit (PMU) and National Technical Support Agency (NTSA) till FY 2023-24.

About Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G):

- Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana, previously Indira Awaas Yojana, is a social welfare programme, created by the Indian Government, to provide housing for the rural poor in India. A similar scheme for urban poor was launched in 2015 as Housing for All by 2022.

Source: PIB

Important News: Defence and Science

Russia's latest nuclear powered icebreaker 'Sibir' to boost India's Arctic plans

Why in News

- **Russia** has launched a new **nuclear powered icebreaker 'Sibir'** that will contribute to the rapidly growing fleet of lethal icebreakers to keep the Northern Sea Route open for year-round shipping through the Arctic enabling wider presence of India in the region.
- The commissioning of the first-in-series Project 22220 versatile nuclear icebreaker Sibir will strengthen Atomflot's position in the Arctic.

Key Points

- During the 21st edition of the India-Russia summit held on December 6, 2021, the Indian Side also expressed its interest in collaborating with Russia on the Northern Sea Route.

Note: Russia has a fleet of six nuclear-powered icebreakers: "Taymyr", "Vaygash", "50 Let Pobedy", "Yamal", "Arktika" and "Sibir". Also, the nuclear-powered cargo ship "Sevmorput" belongs to Rosatomflot's fleet based in Murmansk.

Source: ET

DRDO conducts maiden launch of indigenously developed new generation surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay'

Why in News

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully conducted maiden flight test of indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay', from Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

Key Points

- Pralay Missile is powered with a solid propellant rocket motor and many new technologies.
- The missile has a range of 150-500 kilometre and can be launched from a mobile launcher.
- The missile guidance system includes state-of-the-art navigation system and integrated avionics.

Note: Earlier, the first set of indigenously developed next generation **Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle** was inducted into the Corps of Engineers of Indian Army.

Source: PIB

Mormugao, Indian Navy's second ship of the Project 15B, sails for maiden sea trials

Why in News

- **Mormugao**, Indian Navy's second indigenous stealth destroyer of the P15B class, planned to be commissioned in mid 2022, proceeded on her maiden sea sortie.

Key Points

- Mormugao is being built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDSL) as part of the Project 15B destroyers.
- The ship incorporates several niche indigenous technologies and is a shining example of Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

Note:

- With the recent commissioning in November 2021 of INS Visakhapatnam and the fourth P75 submarine INS Vela, commencement of sea trials of Mormugao is

testimony to the cutting-edge capabilities of MDSL and the strong indigenous shipbuilding tradition of a modern and vibrant India.

- Recently, **Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE), Agra** conducted a flight demonstration of the **Controlled Aerial Delivery System** of 500 kg capacity (CADS-500).
- ADRDE, Agra is an R&D laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Source: PIB

New generation ballistic missile 'Agni P' successfully test-fired by DRDO

Why in News

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully tested the new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile '**Agni P (Prime)**' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

Key Points

- **Agni P** is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles.
- **Agni P** was developed under the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Program**.
- It is a canisterised missile with range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 kms.
- This was the second test of the Agni Prime missile.

About Agni missile:

- The Agni missile is a family of medium to intercontinental range ballistic missiles developed by India.
- Agni missiles are long range, nuclear weapons capable of surface to surface ballistic missiles.

The family comprises the following:

- **Agni-I:** Range: 700–1,200 km (Operational)
- **Agni-II:** Range: 2,000–3,500 km (Operational)
- **Agni-III:** Range: 3,000–5,000 km (Operational)
- **Agni-IV:** Range: 3,500–4,000 km (Operational)
- **Agni-V:** Range: 5,000–8,000 km (Operational)
- **Agni-VI:** Range: 11,000–12,000 km (Under development)

Missiles developed:

- Intermediate-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile: **Agni**
- Short-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile: **Prithvi**
- Short-range low-level surface-to-air missile: **Trishul**
- Medium-range surface-to-air missile: **Akash**
- Third generation anti-tank missile: **Nag**

Source: PIB

Curtain Raiser PANEX-21

Why in News

- Recently, a Curtain Raiser Event for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief exercise, **PANEX-21**, for the member nations of **BIMSTEC countries**, was held at Kothari Auditorium DRDO Bhawan, New Delhi.

- The exercise is planned to be conducted from 20-22 Dec 21 at Pune and will witness participation from subject matter experts and delegates from **India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand.**

Key Points

- Last two BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercises are: DMEx-2017 at Delhi, DMEx-2020 at Puri)

About BIMSTEC:

- The **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** is an international organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations, housing 1.73 billion people and having a combined gross domestic product of \$3.8 trillion.
- **Headquarters:** Dhaka, Bangladesh
- **Founded:** 6 June 1997

Source: PIB

Pinaka-ER Range System

Why in News

- Successful tests of **Pinaka Extended Range (Pinaka-ER)**, Area Denial Munitions (ADM) and indigenously developed fuzes have been carried out at various test ranges.
- The Pinaka-ER Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System was successfully tested at Pokharan range.

Key Points

- The system is jointly designed by laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) - Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune.
- The DRDO, after establishing the performance efficacy of the enhanced range Pinaka, transferred the technology of the system to the industry. The Industry Partner has manufactured enhanced Pinaka Mk-1 rockets with DRDO's hand holding during the production and Quality Assurance.
- The Pinaka-ER is the upgraded version of the earlier Pinaka version which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade.

Source: PIB

Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo System

Why in News

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** developed the **Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo System** which was successfully launched from Wheeler Island in Odisha.

Key Points

- The system is a next generation missile-based standoff torpedo delivery system.
- The system has been designed to enhance anti-submarine warfare capability far beyond the conventional range of the torpedo.
- This canister-based missile system consists of advanced technologies *viz.* two stage solid propulsion, electro-mechanical actuators and precision inertial navigation. The missile is launched from a ground mobile launcher and it can cover a range of distances.

Note:

A major breakthrough for stand-off capability in anti-submarine warfare:

- **Project 75** is a programme by the Indian Navy that entails building 6 Scorpene-Class attack submarines (Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj, Vagir, Vela and Vagsheer).
- **Project 28**, approved in 2003, is a class of anti- submarine warship corvettes currently in service with the Indian Navy. It includes INS Kamorta, INS Kiltan, INS Kadmatt and INS Kavaratti.

Source: PIB

DRDO & IAF successfully flight-test indigenous Stand-Off Anti-Tank (SANT) Missile

Why in News

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** and **Indian Air Force (IAF)** flight-tested the indigenously designed and developed Helicopter launched **Stand-Off Anti-Tank (SANT) Missile** from Pokhran ranges.

Key Points

- The release mechanism, advanced guidance and tracking algorithms, all avionics with integrated software, performed satisfactorily and tracking systems monitored all mission events.
- The SANT missile has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad in coordination with other DRDO labs and participation from industries.
- This is the third in the series of indigenous stand-off weapons to be tested in recent times after Long Range Bomb and Smart Anti Airfield Weapon (SAAW) for strengthening the arsenal of IAF.
- The indigenous development of various configurations for different applications with advanced technologies is a firm march towards 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence.

Source: India Today

Defence Minister lays foundation stone for Defence Technology & Test Centre and BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre in Lucknow

Why in News

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** laid the foundation stone for **Defence Technology & Test Centre** and **BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre**, established by **Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO)** in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points

- A first of its kind **Defence Technologies & Test Centre (DTTC)**, over approximately 22 acres is being set up to accelerate the growth of the defence and aerospace manufacturing clusters in **Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UP DIC)**.

- The **BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre**, announced by BrahMos Aerospace, is a modern, state-of-art facility in the Lucknow node of UP DIC.
- It will cover over 200 acres and produce the new **BRAHMOS-NG (Next Generation)** variant, which carries forward the lineage of the BRAHMOS weapons system.
- India has undertaken jointly in partnership with its closest strategic ally Russia.
- Designed and developed by **India-Russia JV entity BrahMos Aerospace**, supersonic cruise missile BRAHMOS has continued to evolve as the most versatile weapon in its genre.

Source: PIB

NASA launches world's most powerful space telescope 'James Webb Space Telescope'

Why in News

- World's largest and most powerful space telescope '**James Webb Space Telescope**' has been launched successfully into orbit to make breakthrough discoveries on the origins of the Universe and Earth-like planets beyond our solar system.

Key Points

- The **James Webb Space Telescope**, NASA's premier space observatory of the next decade, launched in an Ariane rocket from the European Space Agency's base in French Guiana.
- Webb, named after one of the architects of the Apollo Moon landings, is the successor to the Hubble telescope. Jointly built by NASA, the European Space Agency, and the Canadian Space Agency, the new observatory is, however, 100 times more powerful.

Source: newsonair

DRDO successfully conducts flight test of indigenous Aerial Target 'Abhyas'

Why in News

- **DRDO** successfully conducted the flight test of indigenously developed **High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas** from Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast, Odisha.

Key Points

- Two boosters provided initial acceleration during launch and a small turbo jet engine is used to sustain high subsonic speed with long endurance.
- The indigenous data link designed by Bengaluru based Industry partner has been successfully flown and tested during the flight.
- Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), bengaluru based DRDO laboratory along with other DRDO laboratories has developed this indigenous unmanned aerial target system to meet the requirement of aerial targets of Indian Armed Forces.

Source: PIB

INS Khukri decommissioned after 32 years of service to the nation

Why in News

- **INS Khukri**, the first of the indigenously built Missile Corvettes, was decommissioned after 32 years of glorious service.

Key Points

- The corvette was built by the Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders on 23 August 1989 and had the distinction of being part of both the Western and Eastern Fleets.
- During her service, the ship was commanded by 28 Commanding Officers and traversed a distance of over 6,44,897 nautical miles.

Source: PIB

NMCG & TERI launch Centre of Excellence on Water Reuse

Why in News

- The Director General of **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** and the Director General of the **Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)** launched the **NMCG-TERI's Centre of Excellence (CoE)** on Water Reuse at the TERI Headquarters in New Delhi.
- The CoE on Water Reuse is the **first of its kind** to be established in the country through collaboration between NMCG and TERI.

Key Points

- The Centre is a quadripartite alliance between NMCG, TERI, industry partners and industry representative bodies, to come up at the TERI campus in Gwal Pahari, Gurugram, will be meeting the objectives of the Ganga Knowledge Centre (GKC) to design and foster research and innovation.
- TERI has developed the **TERI Advanced Oxidation Technology (TADOX®)** for wastewater treatment.

Source: PIB

India International Science Festival (IISF) 2021

Why in News

- The **7th edition of the India International Science festival (IISF) 2021** was held from December 10 to 13, 2021 at Panaji, Goa.
- It was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh.

Key Points

- The **theme** of IISF 2021 was 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' – celebrating Creativity, Science, Technology and Innovation for a prosperous India.
- IISF 2021 provided a platform to young students, scientists and technocrats from across India for exchange of knowledge and ideas and also supported flagship programmes like 'Swach Bharat Abhiyan', 'Swasth Bharat Abhiyan', 'Make in India', 'Digital India', 'Smart Villages', 'Smart Cities', 'NamamiGange', 'Unnath Bharat Abhiyan' initiated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last seven years.

About India International Science festival (IISF):

- It is a joint program of the Ministry of Science & Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA) a swadeshi movement of Bharat.
- The first program of IISF was held in 2015 and the sixth edition of this annual event was organised in 2020.

- The main purpose of IISF is to celebrate science along with people in India and across the globe.

Source: PIB

India successfully test-fires air version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

Why in News

- India successfully test-fired the air version of the **BrahMos** supersonic cruise missile from the supersonic fighter aircraft Sukhoi 30 MK-I from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.

Key Points

- In this copy book flight, the missile launched from the aircraft followed the pre-planned trajectory meeting all mission objectives.
- **BrahMos** is a Joint Venture between India (DRDO) and Russia (NPOM) for the development, production and marketing of the supersonic cruise missile.
- BrahMos is the potent offensive missile weapon system already inducted into the Armed Forces.

Note: Earlier, Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM) was successfully flight tested by Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha.

Source: HT

“President’s Standard” presented to 22nd Missile Vessels Squadron of the Indian Navy

Why in News

- President Ramnath Kovind presented the ‘**President’s Standard**’ to the **22nd Missile Vessels Squadron of the Indian Navy** at a ceremonial event in Mumbai.

Key Points

- The President’s Standard is the highest honour bestowed by the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces to a military unit in recognition of the service rendered to the nation.

About 22nd Missile Vessels Squadron:

- The 22nd Missile Vessel Squadron was formally established at Mumbai in October 1991 with ten Veer Class and three Prabal Class missile boats.

Source: PIB

‘Sandhayak’, first of the four Survey Vessels (Large) project for Indian Navy launched

Why in News

- ‘**Sandhayak**’, the first of the four Survey Vessels (Large) projects being built for the Indian Navy, was launched in **Kolkata**.

Key Points

- These survey ships are capable of full scale coastal & deep-water hydrographic survey of Ports & Harbour approaches and determination of navigational channels & routes.
- These ships are also capable of undertaking surveys of maritime limits and collection of Oceanographic & Geographical data for Defence applications, thus boosting the maritime capabilities of the country.

- These Vessels have been designed and developed by Defence Public Sector Undertaking, **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Limited**, which is among the leading warship building companies in India.
- It has over 80 percent indigenous content by cost.
- As per build strategy adopted by GRSE, the first ship is being built at GRSE Ltd and construction of balance three ships is envisaged at M/s L&T Shipbuilding, Kattupalli.

Note: The ship has taken its name from the first ship of the erstwhile Sandhayak-class survey ships. The erstwhile Sandhayak, incidentally, was also launched in Kolkata 44 years ago, on April 6, 1977.

Source: PIB

Skyroot test fires India's first privately built cryogenic rocket engine 'Dhawan-1'

Why in News

- **Skyroot Aerospace**, a space technology startup, has test fired India's first privately developed fully cryogenic rocket engine 'Dhawan-1'.
- It will power the upper stages of its upcoming Vikram-2 orbital launch vehicle.

Key Points

- The rocket engine, named Dhawan-1 in honour of Indian rocket scientist Satish Dhawan, has been developed using 3D printing technology and is fuelled by liquefied natural gas and liquid oxygen—a high-performance, low-cost and clean rocket fuel.
- This is a completely 'Made-in-India' cryogenic engine.

About Skyroot Aerospace:

- It is backed by the promoters of renewable energy firm Greenko Group, explosives manufacturer and ISRO supplier Solar Industries and Curefit founder Mukesh Bansal.
- **Founded:** 12 June 2018
- **Headquarters:** Hyderabad, Telangana

Note: In September, 2021, the company became the first space tech firm to formally enter into an agreement with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to utilise its facilities and get access to its expertise for testing and qualification of its small satellite launch vehicles.

Source: ET

Puneet Sagar' Abhiyan by NCC

Why in News

- **National Cadet Corps (NCC)** is carrying out a nationwide campaign, '**Puneet Sagar' Abhiyan** to free seashores/beaches from plastic & other waste materials and increase awareness about the importance of keeping these clean.

Key Points

- The aim of the month-long Campaign is to propagate the message of 'Importance of Clean Seashores/Beaches' amongst the local population and future generation beginning December 01, 2021.
- A total of 3.40 lakh cadets from 127 coastal Area NCC Units will participate in the month-long activity.

Source: PIB

Flex Fuel Vehicles (FFV) and Flex Fuel Strong Hybrid Electric Vehicles (FFV-SHEV)

Why in News

- Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari called for manufacturing of **Flex Fuel Vehicles (FFV)** and **Flex Fuel Strong Hybrid Electric Vehicles (FFV-SHEV)** complying with **BS-6 Norms** in a time bound manner within a period of six months

Key Points

- **Flex Fuel Vehicles** are capable to run on a combination of 100% Petrol or 100% bio-ethanol and their blends, along with strong Hybrid Electric technology in case of FFV-SHEVs.
- This move will drastically reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions from vehicles on a Well-to-Wheel basis, helping India to comply with its commitment made at COP26 to reduce the total projected carbon emissions by One Billion Tonnes by 2030.
- In order to accelerate the introduction of Flex Fuel vehicles, the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme** has included automobile & auto components and auto components of flex fuel engines.
- **NITI Aayog**, after acknowledging the strong foundation for the **Ethanol blending programme (EBP)**, has formulated the road map for Ethanol blending for the period 2020-2025.

Related Government Initiatives:

- **GOBAR (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources) DHAN Scheme, 2018**
- **National Policy on Biofuels-2018**
- **E100 Project**

Source: TOI

DRDO hands over technology of extreme cold weather clothing system (ECWCS) to five Indian companies

Why in News

- Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** Dr G Satheesh Reddy handed over technology for indigenous **extreme cold weather clothing system (ECWCS)** to 5 Indian companies.

Key Points

- The DRDO designed ECWCS is ergonomically designed modular technical clothing with improved thermal insulation and physiological comfort based on the insulation required at various ambient climatic conditions in Himalayan regions during different levels of physical activity.

- The three layered ECWCS is designed to suitably provide thermal insulation over a temperature range of +15 to -50° Celsius with different combinations of the layers and intensity of physical work.

Source: PIB

Important News: Appointment

Vikram Misri appointed new Deputy NSA

Why in News

- **Vikram Misri**, who served as envoy in China amid the border dispute, has been appointed as **Deputy NSA (National Security Advisor)** in the National Security Council secretariat.

Key Points

- Misri is a 1989 batch Indian Foreign Service officer. He is a seasoned diplomat and an expert on India-China matters.
- At present, Rajinder Khanna, Pankaj Saran and Dattatray Padsalgikar are serving as deputy NSAs.

Note:

- Pradeep Kumar Rawat, a 1990 batch IFS officer, has been appointed as India's new envoy to China.
- NSA (National Security Adviser)-Ajit Doval.

Source: TOI

Petr Fiala appointed as new Prime Minister of Czech Republic

Why in News

- The President of Czech Republic, Milos Zeman appointed **Petr Fiala** as the new Prime Minister of the country.

Key Points

- The 57-year-old Fiala, who has led the conservative Civic Democratic Party since 2014, served as country's education minister between 2012-13.
- Fiala leads a bloc of five centre and centre-right opposition parties that won an election in October, 2021.

Source: TOI

PV Sindhu appointed BWF's Athletes' Commission member

Why in News

- India's two-time Olympic medallist shuttler **PV Sindhu** has been appointed as a member of the **Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission**.

Key Points

- The-26-year-old former world champion was named alongside five others who will serve as members till 2025.
- Iris Wang (USA), Robin Tabeling (Netherlands), Greysia Polii (Indonesia), Kim Soyeong (South Korea), Pusarla V Sindhu (India) and Zheng Si Wei (China) are the ones appointed as members of the BWF Athletes' Commission.
- The Chair and Deputy Chair will be decided among the six members.

Note:

- **Sindhu**, who won the silver medal at the Rio Olympics in 2016, created history by bagging the bronze medal in the Tokyo Games earlier this year.

Source: TOI

Gabriel Boric to become Chile's youngest ever president

Why in News

- Leftist former student leader, 35-year-old **Gabriel Boric**, will become Chile's youngest president and one of the youngest political leaders in the world.

Key Points

- Boric won with 56% of the votes, while his opponent 55-year-old José Antonio Kast trailed with 44% of the votes.
- Boric will take office in March 2022.

Facts about Chile:

- **President:** Sebastian Pinera (Current President)
- **Capital:** Santiago
- **Currency:** Chilean peso
- **Continent:** South America

Source: Indian Express

Rishabh Pant appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador

Why in News

- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami** appointed Indian wicket-keeper batsman **Rishabh Pant** as the **state brand ambassador**.

Key Points

- Rishabh Pant has been appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth.
- Pant, 24, was born in the state's Roorkee town in Haridwar district.

Source: Indian Express

Alka Upadhyaya appointed Chairperson of NHAI

Why in News

- The Centre has appointed **Alka Upadhyaya** as **Chairperson of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**.

Key Points

- A 1990-batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, Alka Upadhyaya is currently Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development.

Other appointments:

- **Sanjay Bandopadhyay**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, has been named Chairman **Inland Waterways Authority of India**.
- **G Asok Kumar**, Mission Director, National Water Mission, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, will be Director General, **National Mission for Clean Ganga**.

Source: Indian Express

Gita Gopinath to become IMF's first deputy Managing Director

Why in News

- **Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, Indian-American **Gita Gopinath**, is set to become the organisation's first deputy Managing Director early next year.

Key Points

- Gopinath will succeed Geoffrey Okamoto as first deputy managing director, serving under IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva.

Facts about International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- **Formation:** 27 December 1945
- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C., U.S.
- **Membership:** 190 countries
- **Managing Director:** Kristalina Georgieva

Source: India Today

Sambit Patra appointed chairman of India Tourism Development Corporation

Why in News

- BJP spokesperson **Sambit Patra** has been appointed as the chairman of **India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)** by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

Key Points

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has recently approved the proposals of the Ministry of Tourism of splitting the post of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD), India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) into two posts of Chairman, ITDC and Managing Director (MD) ITDC.
- The Appointment of Dr Sambit Patra as Part-Time Non-Executive Director and Chairman of ITDC for a period of three years from the date of assumption of charge, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- It also continued the tenure of 1990 batch IAS officer Ganji Kamala V. Rao to the post of MD, ITDC, till further orders.
- Earlier, Patra had served as an independent Director of ONGC.

Source: Business Standard

Awards and Honours

Alia Bhatt named PETA India's 2021 Person of the Year

Why in News

- Bollywood actress **Alia Bhatt** has been named **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India's 2021 Person of the Year** for her work in support of an animal-friendly fashion industry.

Key Points

- In addition, **Alia Bhatt's** vegan kidswear line, Ed-a-Mamma, also won a **2021 PETA India fashion award** for helping to nurture kids' love for animals and nature.

Note: PETA India has also named the celebrities who won the title of '**Most Beautiful Vegetarians**'. This year, actors **Akshay Kumar** and **Bhumi Pednekar** have won the coveted title.

JGU wins "Digital Innovation of the Year" at the Times Higher Education Asia Awards 2021

Why in News

- **O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU)** has won the "Digital Innovation of the Year" award at the distinguished **Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Awards 2021**.

Key Points

- JGU was the Only Indian University to be Shortlisted for the "Digital Innovation of the Year".
- JGU's win at the THE Awards is a recognition of JGU's successful digital transformation and impact over the last two years.

Source: Business Standard

Viral Sudhirbhai Desai wins "Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award 2021"

Why in News

- **Viral Sudhirbhai Desai**, an industrialist from Surat, who is popularly known as the Greenman or green man of Gujarat has been honoured with the **Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award 2021**.

Key Points

- Among the 28 personalities from 11 countries (which include the UK, the US, New Zealand, France, and Malaysia,) who were honoured with this award, Viral Desai was the only Indian to win the honour for climate change.

PM Modi honoured with Bhutan's highest civilian award

Why in News

- The King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, conferred its highest civilian award, the **Order of the Druk Gyalpo**, on **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
- This was announced on the occasion of the 114th National Day of Bhutan.

Key Points

- PM Modi becomes the first foreigner to receive the coveted award.
- This is Mr. Modi's 10th international award given by various governments.

Note:

- Every year, on **December 17**, Bhutan marks the **national day** in memory of the birth of the Wangchuk dynasty in 1907.
- The **Order of the Dragon King (Druk Gyalpo)** is the highest award of the Kingdom of Bhutan, awarded in recognition of a lifetime of service to the people and Kingdom of Bhutan.

Source: The Hindu

Avani Lekhara wins 'Best Female Debut' honour at 2021 Paralympic Awards

Why in News

- **Indian shooter Avani Lekhara** won the "**Best Female Debut**" honour at the **2021 Paralympic Sport Awards** for her record-breaking gold medal at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.

Key Points

- The Awards were announced by the **International Paralympic Committee**.
- **Avani Lekhara** became the 1st Indian woman to win 2 Paralympic medals in a single edition of the Paralympic Games.

- She was awarded Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna, India's highest sporting honour, for the achievement.

Source: The Hindu

SAIL receives prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021

Why in News

- The **Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL)**, under the Ministry of Steel has been awarded with the prestigious **Golden Peacock Environment Management Award for the year 2021** in the Steel Sector by the Institute of Directors.

Key Points

- SAIL has been the winner of this award for successive three years.
- SAIL is sensitive to global concern for climate change. Carbon footprint reduction has become an integral part of the company's corporate policies and operations.

Facts about Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL):

- **Founded:** 19 January 1954
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **CEO:** Soma Mondal

Source: PIB

Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo conferred with 57th Gyanpeeth Award

Why in News

- Renowned Konkani writer **Damodar Mauzo** has been conferred with **57th Gyanpeeth Award** for the year 2022.
- Noted Assamese poet Nilmani Phookan has bagged 56th Gyanpeeth award for the year 2021.

Key Points

- Mauzo is the second Konkani writer to receive the highest literary award, earlier being given to Writer Ravindra Kelekar in 2006.
- Mauzo is a short story writer, novelist and screenplay writer. His novel Karmelin had bagged Sahitya Akademi award in 1983.

About Jnanpith Award:

- It is the oldest and the highest Indian literary award presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their "outstanding contribution towards literature".
- Instituted in 1961, the award is bestowed only on Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English, with no posthumous conferral.

Source: newsonair

Balkrishna Doshi honoured with the Royal Gold Medal 2022

Why in News

- Ahmedabad-based Balkrishna Doshi will receive the Royal Gold Medal 2022 by the UK's Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the world's highest honour for architecture.

Key Points

- At 94, Doshi is being recognised for his career spanning seven decades, with over 100 built projects, across India.

- The Royal Gold Medal is “approved personally by Her Majesty The Queen and is given to a person or group of people who have had a significant influence on the advancement of architecture”.
- The award will be presented to Doshi at a special ceremony in 2022.
- Many of his iconic buildings include Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore; Sangath, his studio in Ahmedabad; Ahmedabad School of Architecture – renamed CEPT University in 2002 – which promoted collaborative learning; and Aranya Low Cost Housing (1989), Indore, which won the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1995.

Source: Indian Express

2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize

Why in News

- Professor **Neena Gupta**, a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, has been awarded the **2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize** for Young Mathematicians from developing countries for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.

Key Points

- Professor Gupta is the third woman to receive the Ramanujan Prize, which was first awarded in 2005 and is administered by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) jointly with the Department of Science and Technology (DST) Government of India and the International Mathematical Union (IMU).
- **Ramanujan Prize** is given annually to an eminent Mathematician who is less than 45 years of age on 31 December of the year of the award and has conducted outstanding research in developing countries.

Source: PIB

Dinyar Patel's biography of Dadabhai Naoroji wins Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021

Why in News

- **Writer Dinyar Patel** won the **Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021** for his book '**Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism**' (Harvard University Press).

Key Points

- Instituted in 2018, the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize celebrates high-quality non-fiction literature on modern and contemporary India from writers of all nationalities, published in the previous calendar year.
- The prize carries a cash award of Rs 15 lakh and a citation.
- The book is a biography of Naoroji, the nineteenth-century activist who founded the Indian National Congress. He was the first British MP of Indian origin.

Source: Indian Express

Assam to confer state's top civilian award to Ratan Tata

Why in News

- The Assam government will confer the state's highest civilian awards to industrialist **Ratan Tata**, Olympian Lovlina Borgohain and an array of personalities from diverse fields.
- **Former Tata Sons chairman Ratan Tata** was named as the recipient of the **Assam Baibhav** award for his contribution towards **cancer care facilities** in the state.

Key Points

- The state government has decided to confer Assam Baibhav, Assam Saurav and Assam Gaurav Awards, 2021 to 19 personalities and the award ceremony will be held on January 24, 2022.
- The Assam Baibhav award will be worth Rs 5 lakh, the Assam Saurav award will be worth Rs 4 lakh, and the Assam Gaurav award will carry a cash component of Rs 3 lakh.

Source: India Today

Film director Naomi Kawase named UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador

Why in News

- **UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay** has appointed **Japanese film director Naomi Kawase** as **UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador** for Cultural and Creative Industries.

Key Points

- Ms Azoulay named Naomi Kawase in recognition of her commitment to culture and creativity at the service of the development of more just societies, especially for girls and women, and of her support for the Organization's objectives.
- In 2020, Naomi Kawase launched the UNESCO-Nara Residency with the Organization, opening up new creative and production opportunities for ten young African women filmmakers.

Source: unesco.org

Athlete Anju Bobby George wins World Athletics Women of Year Award 2021

Why in News

- The former international long jump star **Anju Bobby George** has been awarded the **Woman of the Year Award 2021 by World Athletics (WA)** for grooming talent in the country and advocating gender equality.

Key Points

- Senior Vice President of the Indian Athletics Federation, Anju Bobby George is also a constant voice for gender equality and mentors schoolgirls for future leadership positions within the sport producing a world U20 medalist.

Source: newsonair

Desmond Tutu, anti-apartheid icon who won the Nobel Prize, passes away

- **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**, who won the **Nobel Peace Prize** for his opposition to racial discrimination in South Africa, has passed away at 90.
- As South Africa's first Black Anglican archbishop, Tutu used his international profile to lobby for sanctions against the White-minority government.
- From 1996 to 1998, he led the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, aimed at exposing the injustices of the past.

Source: HT

Seven-term Rajya Sabha MP Mahendra Prasad passes away

- Rajya Sabha MP from the Janata Dal (United) and industrialist **Mahendra Prasad** passed away.
- Estimated to be one of the richest members of Parliament, the founder of Aristo Pharmaceuticals was a **seven-term Rajya Sabha MP** from Bihar and was also elected to the Lok Sabha once.
- Prasad was first elected to the Lok Sabha on a Congress ticket in 1980.

Source: Indian Express

Sarada Menon, India's first woman psychiatrist passes away

- **Sarada Menon**, considered India's first woman psychiatrist, passed away at the age of 98.
- She has been a recipient of several awards, including the Padma Bhusan in 1992 for her work in the field of mental health.
- She became the first woman psychiatrist in the country when she began working in 1959 at what is now the Institute of Mental Health (previously government Kilpauk mental hospital) in Chennai.
- Menon founded the Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF) in 1984. SCARF has been affiliated with the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Source: HT

Senior BJP leader Harbans Kapoor passes away

- Eight-time MLA and senior BJP leader of Uttarakhand, **Harbans Kapoor** passed away.
- A former Speaker of Uttarakhand assembly from 2007 to 2012, Kapoor has held a ministerial post in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Source: TOI

Ranks and Indices

ARIIA 2021 Ranking Results: Seven Institutes from Maharashtra secure positions in Top 10 in 5 categories

Why in News

- Union Minister of State for Education, Dr. Subhas Sarkar announced the **Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) 2021**.

Key Points

- A total of 1,438 Institutes and Universities from across the country participated.
- **Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)** has been recognized as the Most Innovative Educational Institute in India for the Third Consecutive Year. It has been Ranked 1 in the ARIIA.
- The **seven Institutions from Maharashtra** in the Top 10 positions in various categories are as follows:

I CFTIs/Central University/Institute of National Importance (Technical)

- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (2nd Rank)

II State University & Deemed University (Govt. & Govt. Aided) (Technical)

- Institute of Chemical Technology (Rank 6)
- Savitribai Phule Pune University (Rank 8)

III Govt. College/Institution (Govt. & Govt. Aided) (Technical)

- College of Engineering Pune ((1st Rank)
- Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute (Rank 5)

IV University & Deemed University (Self-Finance/Private) (Technical)

- Symbiosis International (Rank 10)

V Private College/Institute (Self-Finance/Private) (Technical)

- G H Rasoni College of Engineering (1st Rank)

About Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA):

- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India to systematically rank all major higher educational institutions in India on indicators related to Innovation, Start-up and Entrepreneurship Development amongst students and faculties.
- **ARIIA-2021 ranking is announced in various categories:** Centrally funded technical institutions (e.g. IITs, NITs, etc), State Universities, State Standalone Technical colleges, Private Universities, Private Standalone Technical Colleges, Non-Technical Government and Private Universities And Institutions.

Source: PIB

Good Governance Index 2021

Why in News

- **Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah** released the **Good Governance Index 2021** prepared by **DARPG (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances)** on Good Governance Day at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Key Points

- **Good Governance Index, GGI 2021 Framework** covered 10 sectors and 58 indicators.
- **The sectors of GGI 2020-21 are** 1) Agriculture and Allied Sectors, 2) Commerce & Industries, 3) Human Resource Development, 4) Public Health, 5) Public Infrastructure & Utilities, 6) Economic Governance, 7) Social Welfare & Development, 8) Judicial & Public Security, 9) Environment, and 10) Citizen-Centric Governance.
- The GGI 2020-21 categorises States and UTs into four categories, i.e., (i) Other States – Group A; (ii) Other States – Group B; (iii) North-East and Hill States; and (iv) Union Territories.
- **Gujarat** has topped the composite ranking in the 58 indicator index followed by Maharashtra and Goa.

- **Gujarat** registered 12.3 percent increase over GGI 2019 indicators.
- **Uttar Pradesh** has shown an incremental growth of 8.9 % over GGI 2019 performance.
- In the Union Territories category, **Delhi** tops the composite rank registering a 14 percent increase over the GGI 2019 indicators.
- **Top ranking States in the Sectors as well as in Composite Ranks is as follows:**

Sectors	Group A	Group B	NE & Hill States	UTs
Agriculture & Allied Sector	Andhra Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh	Mizoram	D & N Haveli
Commerce and Industry	Telangana	Uttar Pradesh	J & K	Daman & Diu
Human Resource Development	Punjab	Odisha	Himachal Pradesh	Chandigarh
Public Health	Kerala	West Bengal	Mizoram	A & N Island
Public Infrastructure and Utilities	Goa	Bihar	Himachal Pradesh	A & N Island
Economic Governance	Gujarat	Odisha	Tripura	Delhi
Social Welfare and Development	Telangana	Chhattisgarh	Sikkim	D & N Haveli
Judiciary and Public Safety	Tamil Nadu	Rajasthan	Nagaland	Chandigarh
Environment	Kerala	Rajasthan	Manipur	Daman & Diu
Citizen Centric Governance	Haryana	Rajasthan	Uttarakhand	Delhi
Composite	Gujarat	Madhya Pradesh	Himachal Pradesh	Delhi

Source: PIB

Hurun Global Unicorn Index 2021: With 54 unicorns, India overtakes UK to third spot

Why in News

- **India** has a total of **54 unicorns**, ranking it third in the world, and overtook the UK, according to **Hurun Global Unicorn Index 2021**.

Key Points

- The **USA and China** still continue to bag the top ranks in the list.
- India's list of unicorns is led by which is valued at \$21 billion, followed by mobile ad-tech platform InMobi valued at \$12 billion and hospitality major OYO Rooms with a valuation of \$9.5 billion.
- In the **global rankings**, **ByteDance** tops the list with a valuation of \$350 billion.

Note:

- Indians founded 119 Unicorns (65 are Outside of India and 54 are in India).
- The Hurun Research Institute's Global Unicorn Index 2021 is a ranking of the world's start-ups founded in the 2000s, are worth at least a billion dollars, and are not listed on a public exchange.

About Unicorns: A unicorn is a privately held startup company valued at over \$1 billion.

Source: Business Today

Books and Authors

Ban Ki-moon released his autobiography "Resolved: Uniting Nations in a Divided World"

Why in News

- A book titled '**Resolved: Uniting Nations in a Divided World**' is an autobiography of the **Former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon**.

Key Points

- The book consists of life experiences and challenges that the author faced in his life & elaborates his tenure in the United Nations (UN).
- Ban Ki-moon served as the 8th Secretary-General of the United Nations for a two 5-year term (2007-2016).
- The book has been published by HarperCollins India.

Source: Indian Express

Vice President launched book 'The Midway Battle: Modi's Roller-coaster Second Term'

Why in News

- Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu launched a book titled 'The Midway Battle: Modi's Roller-coaster Second Term'.

Key Points

- The book is authored by **Gautam Chintamani** and published by Bloomsbury India.
- The book mentioned the political scenario of India. It marks the second tenure of the current Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The Midway Battle shed light on the various legislations like the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, triple talaq, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as well as farming laws.

Source: outlookindia

Reports

New Appointments

Olaf Scholz sworn in as Germany's new Chancellor

Why in News

- **Olaf Scholz** has been sworn in as **Germany's new chancellor**, bringing to an end Angela Merkel's historic 16 years as leader.

Key Points

- Scholz's center-left Social Democrats (SPD) emerged as the largest party in September's general election and has since negotiated a coalition deal with the environmentalist Greens and the business-focused Free Democratic Party (FDP).
- He was formally appointed as the ninth federal chancellor by President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

Source: newsonair

UN appoints President Joe Biden advisor Catherine Russell to head UNICEF

Why in News

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of **Catherine Russell**, an assistant to U.S. President Joe Biden, as the next head of UNICEF.

Key Points

- Ms. Russell also heads the White House Office of Presidential Personnel and served as the State Department's Ambassador-at-large for global women's issues from 2013 to 2017.
- She will succeed Henrietta Fore, who resigned in July 2021 because of a family health issue.

About UNICEF:

- UNICEF, also known as the **United Nations Children's Fund**, is a United Nations agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide.
- The agency is among the most widespread and recognizable social welfare organizations in the world, with a presence in 192 countries and territories.
- **Headquarters:** New York, United States

- **Founded:** 11 December 1946

Source: The Hindu

HUL CMD Sanjiv Mehta to become FICCI presiden

Why in News

- **Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)** Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) **Sanjiv Mehta** will become the president of the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** after the association concludes its 94th annual general meeting on December 18, 2021.

Key Points

- Sanjiv Mehta, who is currently holding the position of senior vice president of FICCI, will succeed Uday Shankar, the current president of the association.

About Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI):

- FICCI is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group based in India.
- It was established in 1927, on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi by Indian businessman G.D. Birla and Purshottamdas Thakurdas.

Source: HT

Important Days

December 27, International Day of Epidemic Preparedness

Why in News

- **International Day of Epidemic Preparedness** is celebrated every year on 27th December.

Key Points

- The United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO) declared December 27 as International Day for Epidemic Preparedness in an effort to prepare for future outbreaks and raise public awareness about epidemics on all levels.
- The day was first commemorated on December 27, 2020, when the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) emphasised the significance of advocating for epidemic preparedness, prevention, and collaboration against epidemics.

Source: un.org

December 25, Good Governance Day

Why in News

- **Good Governance Day** is observed annually on December 25.

Key Points

- On this day, the country celebrates the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

History:

- On December 23, 2014, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (posthumously) were announced as recipients of India's highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna.

- After the announcement, the newly elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced to celebrate 25 December as Good Governance Day.

Source: India Today

December 24, National Consumer Day

Why in News

- **National Consumer Day** is celebrated on 24th December every year.

Key Points

- On this day the **Consumer Protection Act, 1986** had received the assent of the President. The enactment of this Act is considered as a historic milestone in the consumer movement in the country.

Note:

- On July 20th, 2020, the new **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** came into force in India, replacing the previous enactment of 1986.
- **World Consumer Rights Day** is celebrated on 15th March every year.

Source: HT

December 23, National Farmers Day

Why in News

- **National Farmers Day, or Kisan Diwas**, is celebrated across the country on **December 23** to honour India's farmers and mark the birth anniversary of the nation's **fifth Prime Minister, Choudhary Charan Singh**.

Key Points

History:

- Chaudhary Charan Singh had introduced several welfare schemes for the farmers and wrote several books on farmers and their problems depicting various solutions to improve the lives of the farmers of the nation.
- Therefore the government, in 2001, decided to mark Charan Singh's birth anniversary as Kisan Diwas.

December 18, International Migrants Day

Why in News

- Every year on December 18, the **International Migrant Day** is observed to tackle the problem and challenges of global migration.

Key Points

- The **theme** for the year 2021 is 'Harnessing the potential of human mobility'.

History:

- The United Nations General Assembly in the year 1999 created the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.
- But on December 04, 2000, keeping an account of the large and increasing migrants across the globe, December 18 was decided as International Migrants Day.
- International Migrants Day (18 December) this year falls almost exactly 70 years after the Brussels conference that led to the establishment of the organization that, in 1989, was renamed the International Organization for Migration.

Note: Approximately 281 million people were international migrants in 2020, representing 3.6 percent of the global population.

Source: un.org

December 01, World AIDS Day

Why in News

- December 1 is observed as **World AIDS Day** across the world.

Key Points

- The theme of World AIDS Day 2021 is '**End inequalities. End AIDS.**'
- With a special focus on reaching people left behind, WHO and its partners are highlighting the growing inequalities in access to essential HIV services.
- The day was first marked in 1988 and was also the first-ever international day for global health.

About Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS):

- AIDS is a chronic disease that is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- The immune system of the person who is suffering from the disease gets damaged and also reduces the disease fighting ability of the body.

Source: un.org

Sports

Spinner Harbhajan Singh announces retirement from all forms of cricket

Why in News

- Veteran Indian spinner **Harbhajan Singh** has announced retirement from all forms of cricket.

Key Points

- The 41-year-old spinner from Punjab, who made his Test debut against Australia in Bangalore back in 1998, took a total of 417 wickets in 103 Tests.
- He also scalped 269 wickets in 236 One Day International and 25 wickets in 28 T20 internationals during his over two-decades-long career.
- Harbhajan last played for the country in March 2016 during a T20I against the UAE at Dhaka.

Source: newsonair

Uttar Pradesh wins 11th Hockey India Junior Men National Championship 2021 title

- In **Hockey**, **Uttar Pradesh** won the **11th India Junior Men National Championship 2021 title** following a 3-1 victory over Chandigarh in the final at Kovilpatti, Tamil Nadu.

Source: newsonair

Mohammad Shami becomes fifth Indian pacer to take 200 Test wickets

Why in News

- **Mohammad Shami** has become the fifth Indian pacer to take 200 Test wickets.
- Shami achieved the feat on Day 3 of the first India-South Africa Test match in Centurion.

Key Points

- Shami has joined Kapil Dev, Javagal Srinath, Zaheer Khan, and Ishant Sharma in the list.
- Shami reached the milestone in 55 Test matches and is the third quickest Indian after Kapil Dev and Srinath to join the list.

Source: newsonair

Vijay Hazare Trophy 2021: Himachal Pradesh beat Tamil Nadu to win maiden title

- **Himachal Pradesh** beat Tamil Nadu by 11 runs in the final to win their maiden **Vijay Hazare Trophy 2021 title**, at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium, Jaipur.
- For the first time ever, Himachal Pradesh has won a domestic cricket title in Indian cricket.

Source: TOI

Nitesh Kumar wins double gold at 4th Para-Badminton National Championship 2021

Why in News

- World No. 7 **Nitesh Kumar** doubled his gold tally at the **4th Para-Badminton National Championship 2021**, which concluded in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Key Points

- Haryana's Nitesh along with his partner Tarun defeated World No. 1 Paralympic Games gold medallist Pramod Bhagat and Manoj Sarkar in straight sets 21-19, 21-11 in the Men's doubles finals to win the gold.
- Earlier, Nitesh also won the gold medal in the Men's singles category.
- World No 1 SL3 Para-Badminton player Parul Parmar from Gujarat also secured gold while Mandeep Kaur from Uttarakhand won Silver and Mansi won bronze.

Source: TOI

Bangladesh wins SAFF U-19 Women's Football Championship 2021

Why in News

- **Bangladesh Under-19 Women's team** defeated **India** to lift the **SAFF U-19 Women's Football Championship 2021** in Dhaka.

Key Points

- Shaheda Akter Ripa of Bangladesh scored the maximum number of goals in the tournament. She was given the 'most valuable player' of the game award.

Note: **India** will host **South Asian Football Federation's (SAFF) U-18 and U-19 Women's Championships** in 2022.

Source: newsonair

Hockey: India wins bronze, South Korea lift the 2021 Men's Asian Champions Trophy in Dhaka

Why in News

- In hockey, **South Korea** defeated Japan to lift the trophy in the **Hero Men's Asian Champions Trophy 2021** in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- **India** won the **bronze medal** beating Pakistan in the Asian Champions Trophy.

Key Points

- Kanta Tanaka of Japan was declared the best player of the tournament while Suraj Karkera of India was adjudged the best goalkeeper.
 - Jang Jonghyun of Korea was the top scorer with 10 goals in the tournament.
- Note:** The 2021 Trophy was the sixth edition of the Men's Asian Champions Trophy organized by the Asian Hockey Federation.

Source: newsonair

Kidambi Srikanth bags historic silver medal in BWF World Championships 2021

Why in News

- In Badminton, **Kidambi Srikanth** bagged a historic silver medal after losing to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in the Men's singles final of **BWF World Championships 2021** at Huelva in Spain.
- Lakshya Sen finished with the bronze medal.

Key Points

- Former World Number one, Srikanth etched his name in the history books after becoming the first Indian men's badminton player to reach the singles final of a World Championships.

Note: Before this, India got two bronze medals in the Men's singles at the Badminton world championships with Prakash Padukone in 1983 and B Sai Praneeth in 2019.

Source: newsonair

2021 Asia Youth Para Games: Indian badminton contingent finish with 16 medals

Why in News

- The Indian badminton contingent finished the campaign at the 2021 Asia Youth Para Games with 16 medals in Bahrain.
- The para-badminton contingent won 4 gold, 7 silver and 5 bronze medals in total.

Key Points

- For India, Tokyo Paralympian Palak Kohli, Sanjana Kumari, and Hardik Makkar clinched three medals each.
- Around 750 athletes under 23 years of age from around 30 countries participated across nine sports - Para athletics, Para badminton, boccia, goalball, Para powerlifting, Para swimming, Para table tennis, Para taekwondo, and wheelchair basketball.

Source: newsonair

Ashleigh Barty wins WTA Player of the Year award

Why in News

- The World No. 1 **Ashleigh Barty** won the **Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Player of the Year Award 2021**.

Key Points

- Australian Ashleigh Barty won the award for the second time.
- Barty, who won the title in 2019, won a tour-leading five tournaments this year including the second Grand Slam trophy of her career at Wimbledon where she beat Czech Karolina Pliskova in the final.
- British player Emma Raducanu won WTA Newcomer of the Year 2021.

Source: The Hindu

Davis Cup: Russia beats Croatia to win title after 15 year

Why in News

- **Russia** defeated Croatia in the final at Madrid to win the **Davis Cup** title after 15 years.

Key Points

- It is Russia's third Davis Cup title.

About Davis Cup: It is the premier international team event in men's tennis. It is run by the International Tennis Federation and is contested annually between teams from competing countries in a knock-out format.

Source: Indian Express

Argentina wins Men's Junior Hockey World Cup 2021 Title in Bhubaneswar

Why in News

- **Argentina junior hockey team** defeated six time winner Germany in the **FIH Men's Junior Hockey World Cup 2021** final at the Kalinga Stadium in Odisha.

Key Points

- With this win, Argentina became only the third team after Germany (six titles) and India (two titles) to win multiple Junior Hockey World Cup titles.
- Meanwhile, earlier, last editions' champion India lost 1-3 to France to finish fourth in the competition.

Source: newsonair



**Attempt This Monthly Current Affairs Quiz
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1.Which of the following air version of supersonic missile has been successfully test fired in Chandipur off the coast of Odisha?

- A. Prithvi
- B. Brahmos
- C. Agni
- D. Prahaar

2.Which of the following culture and art Scheme of Financial Assistance under "Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojna" has been started?

- A. Sikhism Culture
- B. Konyak Culture
- C. Buddhist/Tibetan
- D. None of the above

3.What is the theme of Human Rights Day 2021?

- A. Equal opportunities for youth
- B. A New Social Contract

- C. Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights.
- D. All are equal

4. Who has been elected as the President of National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)?

- A. Alka Upadhyaya
- B. Harjeet Singh
- C. Rajeev Saxena
- D. Giridhar Aramane

5. Which of the following team is the runner up in Davis Cup 2021?

- A. Russia
- B. Croatia
- C. Spain
- D. Austria

6. Nanda Prusty, popularly known as 'Nanda Master', passed away recently, for which field he was awarded the Padma Shri?

- A. Literature
- B. Education and social service
- C. Science
- D. Industry

7. Where is the Headquarters of BIMSTEC?

- A. Nepal
- B. Bhutan
- C. Bangladesh
- D. Sri Lanka

8. What is the name of 16th bird century recently added by ministry of environment forest and climate change?

- A. Kazhuveli Wetland
- B. Koothankulam Bird Sanctuary
- C. Kadalundi Bird Sanctuary
- D. Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary

9. In which of the following states Saryu Nahar National Project is started by the Prime Minister of India?

- A. Uttarakhand
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Haryana

D. None of the above

10.57th jnanpith award for the year 2022 won by?

- A. Damodar Mauzo
- B. Nilmani Phookan
- C. Krishna Sobti'
- D. Amitabh ghosh

11.The theme of International Mountain Day 2021 is

- A. Mountains Matter"
- B. Sustainable tourism
- C. Mountains matter for Youth
- D. Sustainable mountain tourism

12.Name of India's first female psychiatrist who passed away recently?

- A. Dr Meena Gnanasekharan
- B. Dr Sarika Manoli
- C. Dr. Sarada Menon
- D. Dr Suhasini Das

13.Who among the following has been chosen as the Miss Universe of 2021?

- A. Nadia Ferreira
- B. Lalela Mswane
- C. Harnaaz Sandhu
- D. Andrea Meza

14.Who has won the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Player of the Year 2021 award?

- A. Ashleigh Barty
- B. Sofia Kenin
- C. Simona Halep
- D. Serena Williams

15.Name the Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System which has been successfully test fired by DRDO from Pokhran range recently.

- A. Pinaka Mk-1
- B. Pinaka- ER
- C. Pinaka MK-2
- D. Agni -5

16. Who among the following personalities will be awarded the Royal Gold Medal in 2022?

- A. Sir Nicholas Grimshaw
- B. Neave Brown
- C. Dame Zaha Hadid
- D. Balkrishna Doshi

17. Consider the following statements about World Inequality Report 2022 in relation to India-

- i. Top 5% of population holds 22% of national income
- ii. The female labour income share is equal to 18%.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

18. Consider the following statements regarding the SAMPANN project-

- i. It is a seamless online pension processing and payment system for the Department of Telecommunications pensioners.
- ii. It was dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 29th December, 2020.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

19. Harbans Kapoor, who passed away recently, belonged to which profession??

- A. Writer
- B. Poet
- C. Politician
- D. Economist

20. Who has been conferred the 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Award?

- A. Dr. Carolina Araujo
- B. Manjul Bhargava
- C. Prof. Adam Harper

D. Neena Gupta

21.NITI Aayog and which foundation jointly announced the launch of 'Convoke 2021-22'?

- A. Bharti Foundation
- B. Tata Foundation
- C. Akshaya Patra Foundation
- D. Azim Premji Foundation

22.The book on springshed management in the Indian Himalayan region was released by which of the following?

- A. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change
- B. NITI Aayog
- C. Ministry of Tourism
- D. Ministry of culture

23.Consider the following statements regarding the International Solar Alliance-

- i. United Nations grants observer status to International Solar Alliance
- ii. The fourth general assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) was held in October 2021.
- iii. Its Headquarters is at Gurugram (Haryana) in India
- iv. The U.S. became the 100th country to sign the framework agreement of the ISA.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only i, ii and iii
- B. Only ii, iii and iv
- C. Only i, iii and iv
- D. All of the above

24.Consider the following statement regarding the Ken-Betwa Interlinking of Rivers Project-

- i.** The total cost of Ken-Betwa link project has been assessed at Rs.40565 crore at 2020-21 price levels.
- ii.** Ken and Betwa Rivers originate in Uttar Pradesh and are the tributaries of Yamuna.
- iii.** The Project is proposed to be implemented in 8 years with state-of-the-art technology.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

- A. Only ii
- B. Only iii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Both ii and iii

25. Where was the 7th edition of India International Science Festival (IISF) 2021 held?

- A. Delhi
- B. Mumbai
- C. Bengaluru
- D. Panaji

26. Who has been appointed by the United Nations as the head of UNICEF?

- A. Henrietta Fore
- B. Catherine Russell
- C. António Guterres
- D. Audrey Azoulay

27. Which of the following personality has been appointed FICCI president?

- A. Sunil Mehta
- B. Sanjiv Mehta
- C. Uday Shankar
- D. Rahul Bajaj

28. Atmanirbhar Hastshilpkar scheme for hand craftsmen has been announced for which part in India?

- A. Konkan Region
- B. North-Eastern Region
- C. Deccan Region
- D. Rajasthan Region

29. Consider the following statements regarding the Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo System-

- i.** The system has been designed to enhance anti-submarine warfare capability far beyond the conventional range of the torpedo.
- ii.** It is a three-stage torpedo system
- iii.** It is a next generation missile-based standoff torpedo delivery system.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. i and ii only
- B. ii and iii only
- C. i and iii only
- D. i,ii and iii

30.Consider the following statements regarding the India International Science Festival (IISF) 2021-

- i. It is the 8th edition of the India International Science festival (IISF) 2021
- ii. The theme of IISF 2021 was 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' – celebrating Creativity, Science, Technology and Innovation for a prosperous India.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

31.Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the 52nd International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2021?

- i. Hema Malini and Prasoon Joshi won the Indian Film Personality of the Year.
- ii. Ring Wandering won the Best Film under Golden Peacock Award.
- iii. Virendra Kumar won the Best Actor (Male).

- A. ii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. i and iii only
- D. i, ii and iii

32.Consider the following statements regarding the Barbados:

- i. Barbados has become the world's newest republic.
- ii. David Markon was named as president-elect of the nation.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

33.When is International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) observed?

- A. December 02
- B. December 01
- C. December 03
- D. December 04

34.The GALAH survey was recently used to find out what on Earth?

- A. Gold
- B. Lithium
- C. Lost ship
- D. Platinum

35.Who has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)?

- A. Shikha Sharma
- B. Pradeep Kumar Joshi
- C. Vivek Johri
- D. Shikha Sharma

36.Who has become the first Indian to be honoured with 'Knighthood of Parte Guelfa'?

- A. S K Sohan Roy
- B. Sachin Bansal
- C. Swami Nathan
- D. Ritesh Agarwal

37.Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the G20 'Troika'?

- i. India joined the G20 'Troika' on December 1, 2021.
- ii. India will assume the G20 presidency on December 1, 2022 from France.
- iii. Troika refers to the top grouping within the G20 that consists of the current, previous and the incoming presidencies.

- A. ii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. i and iii only
- D. i, ii and iii

38.Consider the following statements regarding the Report of National Health Account Estimates for India for 2017-18:

- i. The share of total health expenditure as part of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) was 1.35% in 2017-18

ii. As a share of total health expenditure, Out-Of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) was 48.8% in 2017-18

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

39. Which committee has recently recommended measures to adopt Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)?

- A. Justice SA Bobde committee
- B. Justice Dipak Mishra committee
- C. Justice AK Sikri committee
- D. Justice VK Mathur committee

40. Who won the men's Ballon d'Or Award 2021?

- A. Cristiano Ronaldo
- B. Lionel Messi
- C. Robert Lewandowski
- D. Neymar

41. When is World Soil Day (WSD) observed?

- A. December 06
- B. December 05
- C. December 03
- D. December 04

42. When is Navy Day (India) observed?

- A. December 06
- B. December 14
- C. December 03
- D. December 04

43. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2021?

- i. Tel Aviv has become the world's most expensive city to live in.
- ii. Syria's Damascus has been ranked as the world's cheapest city.
- iii. The Index has been released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

- A. ii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. i and iii only
- D. i, ii and iii

44. Consider the following statements:

- i. Recently, the Central government released the new series of Wage Rate Index (WRI) with base year 2006=100.
- ii. The Wage Rate Index (WRI) is compiled and maintained by the Labour Bureau.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

45. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)?

- A. Jay Shah
- B. Pradeep Joshi
- C. Vivek Johri
- D. Sambit Patra

46. Who has been awarded the Woman of the Year Award 2021 by World Athletics (WA)?

- A. Dutee Chand
- B. Hima Das
- C. Anju Bobby George
- D. PT Usha

47. When is International Civil Aviation Day observed?

- A. December 02
- B. December 07
- C. December 03
- D. December 04

48. Former Chief Minister Konijeti Rosaiah passed away; He was the Chief Minister of which state?

- A. Andhra Pradesh
- B. Sikkim
- C. Rajasthan

D. Madhya Pradesh

49. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2021?

- i. Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti conservation project won 2 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2021
- ii. 18 projects from 6 countries have been honoured by a jury of heritage experts.
- iii. The Nizamuddin Area comprises the World Heritage Site of Humayun's Tomb.

- A. ii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. i and iii only
- D. i, ii and iii

50. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Sandhayak':

- i. 'Sandhayak' is the first of the four Survey Vessels (Large) projects being built for the Indian Navy.
- ii. It was launched in Kolkata.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

51. Who will be appointed as the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s first Deputy Managing Director?

- A. Shikha Sharma
- B. Ruchita Agrawal
- C. Soumya Swaminathan
- D. Gita Gopinath

52. Assam's highest civilian award was conferred on industrialist Ratan Tata for his contribution to which of the following services?

- A. Education
- B. Software Technology
- C. Cancer Care
- D. Steel Project

53.Which organization carried out a nationwide campaign, 'Puneet Sagar' to free seashores/beaches from plastic & other waste materials?

- A. CISF
- B. ICG
- C. NCC
- D. NDRF

54.Who is the author of the book titled 'Indian Innings: The Journey of Indian Cricket from 1947'?

- A. Vikram Seth
- B. VVS Laxman
- C. Nitin Gokhale
- D. Ayaz Memon

55.How many agreements were signed between India and Russia in the 21st India and Russia summit held in India?

- A. 20
- B. 23
- C. 24
- D. 28

56.What is the name of the joint military exercise of India and Maldives?

- A. Yudh Abhyas
- B. Ajeya Warrior
- C. Ekuverin
- D. Hand in Hand

57.Maitri Diwas is observed between India and which of the following countries?

- A. Pakistan
- B. Bangladesh
- C. Shri lanka
- D. Nepal

58.Which of the following writer won the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021?

- A. Dinyar Patel
- B. **Ashutosh Bhardwaj**
- C. **Sumathi Ramaswamy**
- D. **Radhika Singha**

59.Which of the following team has won the Men's Junior Hockey World Cup 2021?

- A. Germany
- B. Argentina
- C. France
- D. India

60. In which of the following districts of Tamil Nadu CDS Bipin Rawat's helicopter crashed?

- A. Tiruvannamalai
- B. Nilgiri
- C. [Trichirappalli](#)
- D. None of the above

61. Recently, DRDO test-fired new generation ballistic missile 'Agni P'. What is range capability of this missile?

- A. Between 1,000 and 2,000 kms
- B. Between 2500 and 3500 kms
- C. Between 200 and 500 kms
- D. Above 5000 kms

62. The Union Cabinet took the decision to **raise the legal age of marriage for women** from 18 to 21 years. Who among the following was the head of the panel to make this recommendation?

- A. Rajnath Singh
- B. Amit Shah
- C. Jaya Jaitly
- D. None of these

63. The Central government has given "In-principle" approval for setting up of six nuclear power reactors at Jaitapur in Maharashtra. It will be setup with technical cooperation from which country?

- A. Canada
- B. France
- C. Germany
- D. Russia

64. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh. What will be the total length of this highway?

- A. 694 Km
- B. 394 Km
- C. 480 Km
- D. 594 Km

65.The Order of the Dragon King is the highest award of which country?

- A. Bhutan
- B. Nepal
- C. China
- D. Japan

66.Avani Lekhara won the "Best Female Debut" honour at the 2021 Paralympic Sport Awards. She is related to which sport?

- A. Swimming
- B. Shooting
- C. Long jump
- D. Badminton

67.Which Indian player won the historic silver medal in BWF World Championship 2021?

- A. Prannoy Kumar
- B. Kidambi Srikanth
- C. Chirag Shetty
- D. Lakshya Sen

68.Indian Desert Cat sighted in Panna Tiger Reserve In which state is this tiger reserve located?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Chhattisgarh
- C. Madhya Pradesh
- D. Tamil Nādu

69.How many villages have been declared as "Sampoorna Sukanya Gram" under the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana campaign?

- A. 19202
- B. 19435
- C. 19735
- D. 19535

70.Where has India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Center opened?

- A. Hyderabad
- B. Delhi
- C. Bengaluru
- D. Pune

71.Consider the following statements regarding India-Central Asia Dialogue

i. The 4th meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 19 December 2021

ii. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan took part in the meeting.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

72.Consider the following statements regarding the Election Laws (Amendment) Bill 2021-

i. The bill provides three opportunities to enroll in a calendar year as voter upon attaining 18 years of age.

ii. There is a provision for amendment in section 21 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

Which of the statements given above is /are incorrect?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

73.A meeting of foreign ministers from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) agreed to establish a humanitarian trust fund to address the growing economic crisis for which country?

- A. Afghanistan
- B. Pakistan
- C. Myanmar
- D. Bangladesh

74.Recently, in which state three new districts of Tseminyu, Niuland, and Chumukedima have been created?

- A. Manipur
- B. Mizoram
- C. Nagaland
- D. Meghalaya

75.Mukhyamantri Vayu Swasthya Seva scheme has been launched in which state?

- A. Assam
- B. Odisha
- C. Haryana
- D. Maharashtra

76. Who among the following will take Prime Minister's 'Meet the Champions' campaign ahead?

- A. Neeraj Chopra
- B. Bajrang Punia
- C. Geeta Phogat
- D. P V Sindhu

77. Gabriel Boric became the youngest ever president of which country?

- A. Peru
- B. Chile
- C. Mexico
- D. None of these

78. Which state recently, declared Sri Krishan Balram Rath Yatra as state festival?

- A. Punjab
- B. Haryana
- C. Uttar Pradesh
- D. Madhya Pradesh

79. DRDO successfully test fired surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay'. What is the range of this missile?

- A. 150-500 kilometre
- B. 500-1000 kilometre
- C. 50-100 kilometre
- D. 1000-1500 kilometre

80. How much amount has been released by the sports ministry under various sports development schemes in the last 5 years?

- A. ₹ 4,801.30 crore
- B. ₹ 5,801.30 crore
- C. ₹ 6,801.30 crore
- D. ₹ 7,801.30 crore

81. With which among the following did the NITI Aayog signed a Statement of Intent (SoI)?

- A. World Health Organization
- B. United Nations World Food Program
- C. World Trade Organization
- D. None of the above

82. Who among the following has been appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission?

- A. Saina Nehwal
- B. Pullela Gopichand
- C. Jwala Gutta
- D. P V Sindhu

83. Odisha CM inaugurates longest bridge 'T-Setu' over which River in Cuttack?

- A. Mahanadi River
- B. Subarnarekha River
- C. Baitarani River
- D. Brahmani River

84. National Farmers Day, or Kisan Diwas, is celebrated across the country on which day?

- A. December 23
- B. December 21
- C. December 19
- D. December 27

85. National Consumer Day is celebrated on which day?

- A. 22 December
- B. 20 July
- C. 24 December
- D. 15 March

86. Who has won the "Digital Innovation of the Year" award at the Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Awards 2021?

- A. National University of Singapore
- B. O. P. Jindal Global University (JGU)
- C. Hong Kong Baptist University
- D. University Utara (Malaysia)

87. Who has won the 2021 Men's Hockey Asian Champions Trophy?

- A. Japan
- B. India

- C. South Korea
- D. Malaysia

88. Who will host the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) U-18 and U-19 Women's Championship in 2022?

- A. India
- B. Bangladesh
- C. Sri Lanka
- D. Nepal

89. Consider the following statements regarding the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

- i. Ministry of Home Affairs has launched a first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program (VIP).
- ii. The programme will enable innovators and entrepreneurs in India to have access to the innovation ecosystem in 22 scheduled languages by the Government of India.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

90. Consider the following statements regarding the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL)-

- i. The NDTL has regained the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) accreditation.
- ii. NDTL's WADA accreditation was suspended on 20 August 2019

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

- A. Only i
- B. Only ii
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

91. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the World Bank's Remittance Prices Worldwide Database Report 2021?

- i. India has become the world's largest recipient of remittances.
- ii. China was the biggest source of remittances in India.
- iii. The report was published by the World Bank.

- A. ii only
- B. i and iii only
- C. i and ii only
- D. i, ii and iii

92.Consider the following statements regarding the India's first Food Museum:

- i. It was launched at Varanasi district in Uttar Pradesh.
- ii. It has been established by the Food Corporation of India (FCI).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

93.Where was the three day 'Rashtra Raksha Samparpan Parv' inaugurated in November 2021?

- A. Lucknow
- B. Kanpur
- C. Jhansi
- D. Varanasi

94.The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has received the Guinness World Records certificate for constructing the world's highest motorable road at.....

- A. Khardungla Pass
- B. Bara Lachala Pass
- C. Lachulungla Pass
- D. Umlingla Pass

95.When is World Children's Day observed?

- A. November 20
- B. November 24
- C. November 17
- D. November 19

96.India has been re-elected to the executive board of the UNESCO till which year?

- A. 2024
- B. 2025
- C. 2023
- D. 2022

97.Consider the following statements:

- i. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) gave its approval for continuation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-I and II (PMGSY-I, PMGSY-II) upto September, 2025 for completion of balance road and bridge works.
- ii. The CCEA approved continuation of Road Connectivity Project for Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (RCPLWEA) upto March, 2023.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

98.Consider the following statements:

- i. The International Cricket Council (ICC) has decided that India and Bangladesh will jointly host the 2031 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.
- ii. The USA and Namibia will host an ICC World Cup event for the first time.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

99.Who has won the prestigious JCB Prize for Literature 2021 for his novel 'Delhi: A Soliloquy'?

- A. R Dinkar
- B. Suresh Divakaran
- C. RB Nandan
- D. M Mukundan

100.Recently, which Union Ministry has launched the 41st Scientific Expedition to Antarctica?

- A. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- B. Ministry of Earth Sciences
- C. Ministry of Science and Technology
- D. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

101.Mannu Bhandari, who passed away recently, was associated with which field?

- A. Literature
- B. Politics
- C. Business
- D. Sports

102. Who has been elected to the International Law Commission for a five-year term?

- A. Mukul Rohatgi
- B. Bimal Patel
- C. Virendra Sharma
- D. Mohit Tyagi

103. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Swachh Survekshan 2021 Awards?

- i. Indore was awarded the title of India's Cleanest City in the 'more than 1 lakh population' category.
- ii. Varanasi emerged as the 'Best Ganga Town'.
- iii. Ahmedabad Cantonment won the title of 'India's Cleanest Cantonment'.

- A. ii only
- B. ii and iii only
- C. i and iii only
- D. i, ii and iii

104. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G):

- i. PMAY-G completed 5 years on 20th November, 2021
- ii. Its objective is to achieve "Housing for All" by 2025

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

105. Which is India's first P15B stealth-guided missile destroyer ship?

- A. INS Kochi
- B. INS Visakhapatnam
- C. INS Vela
- D. INS Mumbai

106. Who is the author of the book 'Shuttler's Flick: Making Every Match Count'?

- A. P V Sindhu
- B. Chetan Bhagat
- C. P Gopi Chand
- D. Saina Nehwal

107. When is World Fisheries Day observed?

- A. November 21
- B. November 24
- C. November 17
- D. November 19

108. Who has been appointed as the new chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket Committee.?

- A. Sachin Tendulkar
- B. Sourav Ganguly
- C. Virendra Sehwag
- D. MS Dhoni

109. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Smart Policing Index 2021?

- i. It is released by the Indian Police Foundation (IPF).
- ii. Bihar has scored the lowest in overall policing.
- iii. Uttar Pradesh has scored the highest in overall policing.

- A. ii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. ii and iii only
- D. i, ii and iii

110. Consider the following statements:

- i. In November 2021, the Union Cabinet gave its approval for provisioning of 4G based mobile services in Uncovered Villages of Aspirational Districts across 5 States.
- ii. The project would be funded by the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii

D. Neither i nor ii

111. Who has won the 2021 National Book Award for fiction for novel "Hell of a Book"?

- A. Jason Mott
- B. Martin Espada
- C. Tiya Miles
- D. Malinda Lo

112. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) survey 2021 has been released by which organisation?

- A. Smile Foundation
- B. Khushi Education Foundation
- C. Pratham Education Foundation
- D. NITI Aayog

113. When is International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women observed?

- A. November 22
- B. November 24
- C. November 25
- D. November 26

114. Which of the following has won the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy title 2021?

- A. Kolkata
- B. Tamil Nadu
- C. Chennai
- D. Karnataka

115. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the SDG Urban Index and Dashboard 2021-22?

- i. The index was released by the SIDBI.
- ii. Shimla topped the Index.
- iii. Dhanbad was at the bottom of the index.

- A. ii only
- B. i and ii only
- C. ii and iii only
- D. i, ii and iii

116. Consider the following statements:

i. The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2021 has been awarded to civil society organisation 'Pratham'.

ii. The prize was instituted in 2001

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. i only
- B. ii only
- C. Both i and ii
- D. Neither i nor ii

117. Which countries participated in the trilateral exercise 'Dosti 2021'?

- A. India, Maldives and Thailand
- B. India, Maldives and Sri Lanka
- C. India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka
- D. India, Maldives and Bangladesh

118. Which state will soon become the only state in India to have five international airports?

- A. Karnataka
- B. Gujarat
- C. Uttar Pradesh
- D. Maharashtra

119. When is Constitution Day (India) observed?

- A. November 29
- B. November 24
- C. November 25
- D. November 26

120. India's first 'Grass Conservatory' was inaugurated in which state?

- A. Uttarakhand
- B. Tamil Nadu
- C. Uttar Pradesh
- D. Madhya Pradesh

###ANSWERS###

1. Ans. B.	21. Ans. A.	41. Ans. B.	61. Ans. A.	81. Ans. B.	101. Ans. A.
2. Ans. C.	22. Ans. B.	42. Ans. D.	62. Ans. C.	82. Ans. D.	102. Ans. B.
3. Ans. C.	23. Ans. A.	43. Ans. D.	63. Ans. B.	83. Ans. A.	103. Ans. D.
4. Ans. A.	24. Ans. C.	44. Ans. B.	64. Ans. D.	84. Ans. A.	104. Ans. A.
5. Ans. B.	25. Ans. D.	45. Ans. D.	65. Ans. A.	85. Ans. C.	105. Ans. B.
6. Ans. B.	26. Ans. B.	46. Ans. C.	66. Ans. B.	86. Ans. B.	106. Ans. C.
7. Ans. C.	27. Ans. B.	47. Ans. B.	67. Ans. B.	87. Ans. C.	107. Ans. A.
8. Ans. A.	28. Ans. B.	48. Ans. A.	68. Ans. C.	88. Ans. A.	108. Ans. B.
9. Ans. B.	29. Ans. C.	49. Ans. C.	69. Ans. D.	89. Ans. B.	109. Ans. B.
10. Ans. A.	30. Ans. B.	50. Ans. C.	70. Ans. A.	90. Ans. C.	110. Ans. C.
11. Ans. D.	31. Ans. B.	51. Ans. D.	71. Ans. B.	91. Ans. B.	111. Ans. A.
12. Ans. C.	32. Ans. A.	52. Ans. C.	72. Ans. C.	92. Ans. B.	112. Ans. C.
13. Ans. C.	33. Ans. C.	53. Ans. C.	73. Ans. A.	93. Ans. C.	113. Ans. C.
14. Ans. A.	34. Ans. B.	54. Ans. D.	74. Ans. C.	94. Ans. D.	114. Ans. B.
15. Ans. B.	35. Ans. C.	55. Ans. D.	75. Ans. B.	95. Ans. A.	115. Ans. C.
16. Ans. D.	36. Ans. A.	56. Ans. C.	76. Ans. B.	96. Ans. B.	116. Ans. A.
17. Ans. B.	37. Ans. C.	57. Ans. B.	77. Ans. B.	97. Ans. B.	117. Ans. B.
18. Ans. C.	38. Ans. C.	58. Ans. A.	78. Ans. A.	98. Ans. C.	118. Ans. C.
19. Ans. C.	39. Ans. C.	59. Ans. B.	79. Ans. A.	99. Ans. D.	119. Ans. D.
20. Ans. D.	40. Ans. B.	60. Ans. B.	80. Ans. C.	100. Ans. B.	120. Ans. A.

