



## Current Affairs Supplement

January 2021

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### CONTENT

National.....	2
International.....	17
Defence.....	21
Appointments or Resign/Retired.....	25
Honours/ Awards.....	30
Sports.....	35
Obituaries.....	37
Important Days with theme.....	41

## National

### 96th Edition of Tansen Sangeet Samaroh, Annual Music Festival Hosted in Gwalior, MP; Pt Satish Vyas won Tansen Samman 2020

The **5 day Tansen Sangeet Samaroh 2020, 96th edition** of the annual music festival organized to pay tribute to the Great Indian Musical **Maestro Tansen** was held in Behat Village, **Gwalior**, Madhya Pradesh(MP) from **26th December to 30th December 2020**. The festival was organised near the tomb of Tansen.

The event was jointly organised by **Ustad Alauddin Khan Kala Evam Sangeet Academy** and Department of Culture, Government of Madhya Pradesh.



#### 2020 Awards :

i. **Pt Satish Vyas** conferred with prestigious **Tansen Samman 2020**. Tansen award is provided, which carries sum Rs. 1,00,000. The award is given for Hindustani Music.

ii. Bhopal-based institution **Abhinav Kala Parishad** was honoured with **Raja Mansingh Tomar award 2020**

### Tripura – Bangladesh ‘Maitre Setu’ will be Open Soon

i. The Rs 128.69 crores **Maitre Setu**, which connects South Tripura with Ramgarh of Bangladesh and provides access to the Chittagong seaport, is all set to be opened in a few months. Its construction was started in 2017 but it got delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic. **1.9 Km long Feni Bridge** is also known as Maitree Setu was built over **River Feni**.

ii. The bridge has been taken over by the **National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited** (NHIDCL), the project execution authority which will recheck the safety standard of the work.

iii. The bridge will be dedicated to the nation after the confirmation of schedule from the Prime Ministers (PM) of India and Bangladesh, Narendra Modi and Sheikh Hassina respectively.

### Karnataka's Hubballi railway station to get World Longest Railway Platform

Karnataka's Hubballi Railway station officially Shree Siddharoodha Swamiji railway station is set to get the "world's longest railway platform" of 1500 plus meters' length and 10 meters width. The platform will be inaugurated in March 2021.

#### Features:

i. Earlier the existing 440-meter-long platform number 1 was planned to be expanded to a length of **1400 meters**. The South-Western Railway (SWR) has later decided to expand the length to **1,505 meters**. – **Increasing the length of the platform is a part of Rs.80 Lakh Project.**

ii. As a part of this project in addition to the existing 5 platforms, **3 new platforms** are being constructed.

#### Note:

The 1366-meter-long platform of Gorakhpur railway station, Uttar Pradesh, the headquarters of the North-Eastern Railway (NER), is the longest railway platform in the world, it was renovated in 2013.



### India's April-November Fiscal Deficit is 135.1% of full-year target

In accordance with the data released by the Controller General of Accounts(CGA), India's April-November

fiscal deficit stood at Rs 10.75 lakh crore at the end of November 2020 which is 135.1% of the Budget Estimate (BE) for FY21, The fiscal deficit at the end of November 2019 had stood at 114.8% of 2019-20 BE.

**Key Points:**

- i. As per CGA data the total expenditure incurred by the government up to November rose 4.7% to Rs 19.06 lakh crore or 63% of BE. (i.e. Rs. 16.6 lakh crore was on revenue account, ₹2.41 lakh crore was on Capital Account).
- ii. As per BE the government had pegged the fiscal deficit at ₹7.96 lakh crore or 3.5% of the GDP in the Union Budget.
- iii. The tax revenue collection was 42.1% of BE of 2020-21, compared with 45.5% of BE (2019-20). Non-tax revenue was 32.3% of BE compared with 74.3% of BE 2019-20.
- iv. Fiscal deficit means the gap between the expenditure and revenue, Fiscal deficit had breached the annual target or BE in July this year.

**Dharmendra Pradhan Inaugurates India's 1st of its kind Migrant Worker Cell at Surat, Gujarat**

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Inaugurated **India's 1st of its kind Migrant Worker Cell at Surat, Gujarat**. An initiative of Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) it aims to help Migrants from Odia & other parts of the country working in different industries of Surat.



The cell will be based at iLab, Udhna, Surat and has been created under the 'National Urban Livelihood Mission Scheme'.

**Objective:**

To create a **database of migrant workers** in Surat City, which will be useful during natural calamities and other situations like Pandemic.

**2020 is 8th Warmest Year in India Since 1901: IMD**

- i. The 'Statement on Climate of India during 2020' issued by Climate Research and Services (CRS) of India Meteorological Department (IMD), Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India mentioned that **2020** was the **8th warmest year** in India since nation-wide records commenced in 1901.
- ii. But, this is substantially low than the highest warming observed over India during 2016 (+0.71°C)
- iii. Past decade (2001-2010/ 2011-2020) was also the warmest decade on record with exception of 0.23°C / 0.34°C.

**About India Meteorological Department (IMD):**

**Director General of Metrology (DGM)**- Dr. Mrutyunjay Mohapatra

**Headquarters**- New Delhi, Delhi

**PM Inaugurates Rewari-Madar Freight Corridor Section of WDFC; flags off World's 1st Double Stack Container Train**

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the **306-Km long New Rewari in Haryana-New Madar in Rajasthan** section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) & flagged off the **World's 1st Double Stack Long Haul 1.5 Km Container Train** hauled by electric traction from **Atela in Haryana – Kishangarh in Rajasthan**.



**New Rewari-New Madar Section of WDFC:**

- i. It will ensure **interruption free connectivity** with the **western ports** of Kandla, Pipavav, Mundhra, and Dahej in Gujarat.
- ii. The section will also ensure the **successful connectivity between the WDFC & EDFC** (Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor).
- iii. Japan International Cooperation Agency is funding WDFC.

**Double Stack Long Haul Container Train Operation:**

- i. It has been designed by the Research Design & Standards Organisation (**RDSO**) wagon department for the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India (**DFCCIL**).
- ii. In terms of container units, the wagons will carry **4 times more weight compared to the current capacity**.

**World's Largest Floating Solar Energy Project at MP set to begin Power Generation by 2022-23**

The **World's Largest Floating 600 Megawatt (MW) Solar Energy Project** which is under construction at **Omkareshwar dam** on **Narmada river** in **Khandwa district** of **Madhya Pradesh** is set to **begin power generation** by the year **2022-23**.

**Gist of the Project:**

- i. The production of electricity will be in about **2000- hectare water areas** and the Floating panels will be installed in the **backwaters of Omkareshwar dam**.
- ii. Estimated Investment of the project stands at **INR 3, 000 Crore**.
- iii. **International Finance Corporation, World Bank & Power Grid** have granted consent to **provide funds** for the development of the project.
- iv. The **primary feasibility study** for the project has been completed by the **State Government** in collaboration with the **World Bank**.
- v. The project is expected to **provide cheap and good quality power** in about 2 years.

**CDSCO Gives Approval to Vaccines of M/s SII & M/s Bharat Biotech**

The Committee of Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (**CDSCO**) gave approval to **M/s Serum Institute of India (SII)**, Pune, Maharashtra for **Covishield**, a Recombinant Chimpanzee Adenovirus vector vaccine, it encoded the SARS-CoV-2 Spike (S) glycoprotein with technology transfer from AstraZeneca/Oxford University and to **M/s Bharat Biotech** for **COVAXIN**, Whole Virion Inactivated Coronavirus Vaccine for restricted use in India in emergency situations. M/s Cadila Healthcare has also been granted approval to conduct Phase III clinical trial of Novel Corona Virus-2019-nCoV-Vaccine. These approvals are given by CDSCO on recommendations of the Subject Expert CDSCO. SII partners with AstraZeneca to manufacture Covishield, while Covaxin has been indigenously developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

**Ravi Shastri Released a Book , 'India's 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia' Penned by R Kaushik'**

**Ravi Shastri**, Former Indian all-rounder and current head coach of Indian Cricket team **released** a book titled, **'India's 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia'** at the Sydney Cricket Ground,

Sydney, Australia. The book is a **Bradman Museum initiative** and is authored by **R Kaushik**, Senior Cricket Journalist. It is published by **Churchill Press**.

#### **Essence of the Book:**

- i. It describes the 1st 12 tours of India to Australia, i.e, from 1947/48, revealing the development of the rivalry between the two nations which was majorly dominated by the hosts.
- ii. It features over 200 pictures, many of these were purchased by former Australia Test opener Wally Edwards. He donated them to the Bradman Museum collection.

#### **About R Kaushik**

- i. He is regarded as one of the respected cricket writers with about 3 decades of experience..
- ii. He has covered all the ICC Cricket World Cups from 1996 and more than 100 Test matches involving India among others.
- iii. He is also the co-author of Indian batting star VVS Laxman's award-winning autobiography 281 and Beyond, which was released in November 2018.

### **Lt. Gen. Konsam Himalay Singh Authored a Book Titled 'Making of a General – A Himalayan Echo'**

**Dr Najma Heptulla, Governor of Manipur** released a book titled '**Making of a General – A Himalayan Echo**' through a virtual mode at Durbar Hall of Raj Bhavan, Imphal, Manipur. The book is authored by (Redt) **Lt. Gen. Konsam Himalay Singh** and is published by Konark Publishers Pvt Ltd.



#### **Essence of the Book:**

- i. It is a memoir of Lt Gen (Dr) Konsam Himalay Singh who discovered his journey from a small village in Manipur to becoming the 1st Lieutenant general (Three Star General of the Indian Army) from North East India.



- He is also the first military officer from Manipur to reach the ranks of Brigadier and Major General.
- ii. The book captures the history and beauty of Manipur and mentions the state as the "Land of Emeralds". On the other hand, this State is known as "Unexplored Paradise".
- iii. It also describes about the Kargil War (3 May – 26 July 1999) and the author's tour of duty in the Siachen Glacier, Himalayas, the highest battlefield in the world.
- iv. It also reveals many challenges faced by commanding officers while carrying out their duties.

#### **About Lt Gen (Dr) Konsam Himalay Singh:**

- i. He was commissioned in the 2nd battalion, Rajput Regiment in June 1978.
- ii. He commanded the 27th battalion, Rajput Regiment (between 1998 and 2000) on the Siachen Glacier and also commanded his battalion during the battle of Point 5770 in the Kargil War.
- iii. He was the Chairman of Manipur Public Service Commission.
- iv. He had earlier written a book titled 'Romancing the LOC'.

#### **Medals**

- i. He received many medals including the Yudh Seva Medal for commanding during the Kargil War.
- ii. He is also the recipient of Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Uttam Yudh Seva Medal and Ati Vishisht Seva Medal among others



### Book Titled 'Gazing Eastwards: Of Buddhist Monks and Revolutionaries in China, 1957' Authored by Romila Thapar

The book titled '**Gazing Eastwards: Of Buddhist Monks and Revolutionaries in China, 1957**' was authored by **Romila Thapar**, an Indian historian. The book is published by Seagull Books London Ltd.

- She declined the Padma Bhushan award in 1992 and 2005.

#### Essence of the Book:

i. The book accounts a few months that Romila Thapar spent in China in 1957 along with Sri Lankan art historian Anil de Silva, where she worked at two cave sites, namely Maijishan in north China and Dunhuang on the edge of the Gobi desert in Northwest China

ii. These cave sites were the locations of Buddhist monasteries and shrines from the first millennium CE.

#### About Romila Thapar:

Currently she is Professor Emerita at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi.

#### Books

She has authored many books including the A History of India: Volume 1 (1966) published by Penguin; Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations (1978) published by Orient Blackswan among others.

#### Honours

i. She is the co-winner of the US\$1 million Kluge Prize for the Study of Humanity for 2008 with Peter Brown.

ii. She is an Honorary Fellow at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, and at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. She was awarded the Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship in 1976.

iii. It is to be noted that she declined the Padma Bhushan award in 1992 and 2005 as she mentioned that she will only accept awards from academic institutions or those associated with her professional work, and not state awards.

### India becomes 2nd Largest Manufacturer of PPE Kits & Suits

Union Minister for Textiles, Smriti Irani has stated that India has become the 2nd Largest Manufacturer of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Kits & Suits, China is the leading manufacturer. India has achieved the feat in a record 3 months' time during the lockdown caused by Pandemic in March 2020.

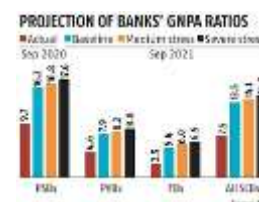
### RBI's 22<sup>nd</sup> FSR 2021 Released: Banks gross NPA may rise to 13.5% by Sep 2021

i. On January 11, 2021, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the 22<sup>nd</sup> issue of its bi-annual Financial Stability Report (FSR) 2021. It stated that **gross non-performing assets (GNPAs)** may rise to **13.5%** by September 2021, from 7.5% in September 2020 under the baseline scenario.

ii. In case of severe stress scenario, it is projected that the GNPA ratio will rise to 14.8% which would be **24-year high**. It was 15.7% in March 1997.

iii. Banks GNPA and net NPA (NNPA) declined and stood at 7.5% and 2.1%, respectively, in September 2020.

iv. The above mentioned information is based upon the RBI's **macro stress tests** covering the first six months (April-September) of the FY20-21.



#### Static points about Reserve Bank of India (RBI):

- It was established on the recommendation of the Hilton Young Commission.
- RBI is responsible only for printing the currency notes. Minting of coins is done by the Government of India.
- Dr. Manmohan Singh is the only Prime Minister to have also served as the Governor of RBI.

### India set to head 3 Important Committees of UNSC

**Permanent Representative** of India to United Nations (UN) **TS Tirumurti** announced that India will head **3 Important Committees** of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) – **Counter-Terrorism Committee** (for 2022), **Taliban Sanctions Committee** (also called the 1988 Sanctions Committee) & **Libya Sanctions Committee**.

i. On January 4, 2021, India began its **8th Term** as a **non-permanent member** of the UNSC for 2 years (2021-2022). Mexico, Kenya, Norway & Ireland also joined India as non-permanent members.

#### Counterterrorism Committee:

- i. India will **chair the Committee in 2022** which will coincide with the **75th Anniversary** of India's Independence.
- ii. The main function of the committee is to **prevent terrorist acts** within their borders & across the regions.

#### Taliban Sanctions Committee:

Also known as **1988 Sanctions Committee** focuses on the presence of **terrorists & their sponsors in the region of Afghanistan**.

#### Libya Sanctions Committee:

This committee focuses on **implementation of sanctions regime, two-way arms embargo on Libya**, Asset freeze, travel ban, measures on **illicit export of Petroleum**

### Book Titled 'Unscripted: Conversations on Life and Cinema' Authored by Vidhu Vinod Chopra and Abhijat Joshi

The book titled '**Unscripted: Conversations on Life and Cinema**' is authored by **Vidhu Vinod Chopra**, Indian film director, screenwriter and producer and **Abhijat Joshi**, Indian screenwriter. '**Penguin eBury Press**' is the publisher of the book.

The book is scheduled to be released on January 25.

#### Essence of the Book

- i. The book gives a glance into the mind, method and madness of Vidhu Vinod Chopra, one of contemporary Hindi cinema's best filmmakers.
- ii. In this book, Vidhu Vinod Chopra speaks to his long-time collaborator and scriptwriter Abhijat Joshi about his journey.

#### About Vidhu Vinod Chopra:

- i. He is the founder of Vinod Chopra Films and Vinod Chopra Productions.
- ii. His well known films include, Parinda, 1942: A Love Story, Munna Bhai film series (Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. and Lage Raho Munna Bhai), 3 Idiots (2009) among others

#### About Abhijat Joshi:

- i. He is well known for his work with Vinod Chopra Productions, as the screenwriter for, 3 Idiots, PK (2014) and Sanju (2018)





- ii. He is a professor of English at Otterbein University in Westerville, Ohio, US, since 2003
- iii. He won many awards including, National Film Award 2006 in the category Best Screenplay for the film Lage Raho Munna Bhai, Filmfare Awards among others.

### Tesla Inc Registers India subsidiary in Bengaluru, Karnataka

Tesla Inc, United States based Electric car maker has incorporated a fully owned subsidiary in Bengaluru, Karnataka as a first step to establish a Research & Development (R&D) unit in India. It has registered with the Registrar of Companies in Bengaluru, Karnataka as 'Tesla India Motors and Energy Private Limited'. It is also in the process of setting up a manufacturing plant at Dharwad, Karnataka for producing electric vehicles in India. It has registered itself as a private company with an authorised capital of Rs 15 lakh.

### Cabinet Approves Procurement of 83 LCA Tejas from HAL for IAF worth Rs. 45,696 Cr; India-UAE MoU Approved

i. On January 13, 2021, as a part of Atmanirbhar programme, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi approved the procurement of 83 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) at the cost of Rs. 45,696 Crore for Indian Air Force (IAF). These include **73 LCA Tejas Mk-1A** fighter aircrafts and **10 LCA Tejas Mk-1** Trainer aircrafts.



ii. LCAs are manufactured by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**.

iii. The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on scientific and technical cooperation between the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** and the **National Centre of Meteorology (NCM)** of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

### Rajnath Singh unveils India's 1st indigenous driverless metro car developed by BEML

i. Rajnath Singh, Minister of Defence (MoD) unveiled India's first indigenously designed and developed 'Driverless Metro Car' during a function held at the BEML (previously Bharat Earth Movers Limited) manufacturing facility in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

ii. The 'Driverless Metro Car' are being manufactured by BEML for **Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA)** MRS1 project. The project needs 576 cars which will be supplied by January 2024.

### About BEML Limited:

It is a Schedule 'A' Company under the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

**Establishment**– 1964

**Chairman and Managing Director (CMD)**– Deepak Kumar Hota

**Headquarter**– Bengaluru, Karnataka

### PM Modi launches 8 Trains to Statue of Unity, Kevadiya to Boost Connectivity

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi virtually flagged off 8 trains from various parts of India to the Statue of Unity in Kevadiya, Gujarat to boost connectivity and Tourism. The trains **will connect Kevadiya to Varanasi** (Uttar Pradesh), Dadar



(Maharashtra), Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Hazrat Nizamuddin (New Delhi), Rewa (Madhya Pradesh), Chennai (Tamil Nadu) & Pratapnagar (Gujarat).

PM Modi stated that this is the 1st in the history of Railways that trains have been flagged off for the same destinations from different parts of the country.

i. He also Inaugurated the

- Dabhoi-Chandod Gauge converted Broad Gauge railway line
- Chandod-Kevadiya new Broad Gauge railway line
- Newly electrified Pratapnagar-Kevadiya section, electrified as per Ministry of Railways Mission of **100% Railway Electrification policy**
- New Station buildings of Dabhoi, Chandod & Kevadiya.

ii. Kevadiya Railway Station is **India's First Railway Station** to be certified as a Green Building.

### India's First Labour Movement Museum to come up at Alappuzha, Kerala

India's First Labour Movement Museum which showcases the **history of the World Labour Movement** is set to be launched in Kerala's houseboat tourism hub, Alappuzha, Kerala. The New Model Cooperative Society Limited building has been converted into the Labour Movement Museum.

i. The museum has been constructed with a **budget of INR 9.95 crores** & 97% of renovations works in the museum have been completed.



- It will portray pictures, documents & other exhibits which shaped the growth of the labour movement across the world & Alappuzha, which is the cradle of the Labour movement in India.
- It is being launched as part of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) Government's second 100-day programme.
- The museum will be an integral part of Alappuzha Heritage Tourism Project

### NITI Aayog releases 2nd Edition of Indian Innovation Index 2020; Karnataka tops the Index

NITI Aayog virtually released the 2nd Edition of Indian Innovation Index 2020. Karnataka topped the Index in the Major States Category, **Delhi** topped among the Union Territories (UT) and **Himachal Pradesh** among North-Eastern and Hilly States. Overall, Indian States have achieved an average score of 23.4 in the Index.

i. The Main objective of the index is to

- Create a **Framework for evaluation of India's Innovation Environment**

ii. For effective comparison of performances, the States & UTs have been divided into 17 Major States, 10 North-East (NE) & Hill States & 9 UTs and City States.



Rank	Major States	Score
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1	Karnataka	42.50
2	Maharashtra	38.03
3	Tamil Nadu	37.91
Rank	UT and City States	Score
1	Delhi	46.60
2	Chandigarh	38.57
3	Daman & Diu	26.76
Rank	NE & Hill States	Score
1	Himachal Pradesh	25.06
2	Uttarakhand	23.50
3	Manipur	22.78

**FSSM Report:**

On January 19, 2021, NITI Aayog released the report 'Faecal Sludge and Septage Management in Urban Areas – Service & Business Models'. The report has been jointly developed by NITI Aayog with **National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (NFSSM) Alliance**.

**MeitY, Amazon collaborate to set up Quantum Computing Applications Lab in India; World's 1st to support a Country's Mission**

The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) has partnered with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to set up a Quantum Computing Applications Lab in the Country. The lab will be the World's 1st Quantum Computing Applications Lab to support a National Government's Mission.

- India announced **National Mission on Quantum Technologies & Applications (NM-QTA)** in the Union Budget 2020-21 with a budget of INR 8000 Crore for a period of 5 years to be implemented by the Department of Science & Technology (**DST**).

i. The Main Objective of the Lab will be

- To accelerate Research & Development in Quantum Computing
- Enable new discoveries in Quantum Computing

ii. The experiments will be essential towards **technological advancements** in the fields of Manufacturing, Healthcare, Agriculture & Aerospace Engineering.

#### **Amazon partners with Startup India to boost e-commerce exports from India:**

Amazon has partnered with Startup India, Sequoia Capital India & Fireside Ventures to launch an Accelerator programme namely '**Amazon Global Selling Propel (AGSP)**' to help early-stage startups to take their products to Global Audiences.

#### **Indian Railways Renamed Howrah-Kalka Mail, One of the Oldest Running Train in India as "Netaji Express"**

As a tribute to Freedom fighter 'Netaji' Subhas Chandra Bose, the Indian Railways has renamed the **Howrah-Kalka Mail**, one of the oldest running trains in India, as "**Netaji Express**" with effect on 23rd January 2021, the 125th Birth Anniversary of Subhas Chandra Bose.

The ministry of Railways approved the renaming of Train No. 12311/12312 Howrah-Kalka Mail on 20th January 2021.



#### **About Howrah-Kalka Mail:**

- The Howrah-Kalka Mail which connects Howrah (Eastern Railway) and Kalka (Northern Railway) through Delhi is one of the early commercial passenger train services in India.
- The train was first operated on 1st January 1866 as **Howrah-Peshawar Express**.
- This train was also used by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose to escape from the British Administration in 1940's.

#### **Note:**

The order to rename Howrah-Kalka Mail as Netaji Express was issued on 19th January 2021, when the Government of India has decided to annually observe the Birth Anniversary of Netaji as Parakram Diwas from 2021.

#### **SEBI Gives Approval to Future Group and Reliance Retail Deal**

i. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has given approval to the deal between **Future Group** and Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL), where Future group will sell its retail, wholesale, logistics and warehouse businesses to Reliance Retail for **Rs 24,713 crore**.



ii. As a part of the same Scheme:

- The **retail & wholesale** undertaking will be transferred to Reliance Retail and the Fashion Lifestyle Limited (RRFL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of RRVL.
- The **logistics & warehousing** undertaking will be transferred to **RRVL**.

#### **About Reliance Industries Limited (RIL):**

Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL) is the subsidiary of RIL  
**Chairman & Managing Director (CMD)** – Mukesh Ambani  
**Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra

**About Future Group:**

**Founder & Group CEO**– Kishore Biyani

**Headquarters**– Mumbai, Maharashtra

**Goa CM Pramod Sawant Released a Book ‘Manohar Parrikar- Off the Record’, Authored by Waman Subha Prabhu**

On January 15, 2021 Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister of Goa released a book titled ‘**Manohar Parrikar- Off the Record**’. It is authored by senior journalist **Waman Subha Prabhu**.

**Essence of the Book**

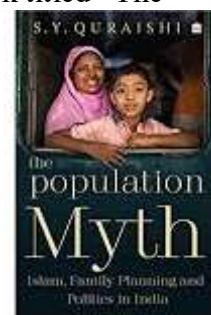
i. The book is a collection of memories of the author who was with late Manohar Gopalkrishna Prabhu Parrikar, former CM of Goa during the journey of his life.

ii. It portrays the multi-faceted personality of the former CM.

**Note**– Manohar Gopalkrishna Prabhu Parrikar served as the CM of Goa from 2017 until his death in 2019.

**‘The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India’ Authored By S Y Quraishi**

**Dr. S Y Quraishi**, former Chief Election Commissioner(CEC) is set to release his new book titled “The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India”. This book looks into the questions about the politicisation of demographics in India based on the standard research of SY Quraishi. The book is published by **HarperCollins India**.

**About the Book:**

i. The book aims to clear the misconceptions about Islam and break the two myths,

- Muslim rate of growth
- Muslims are against family planning on religious grounds

ii. The book provides a detailed analysis of the Muslim rate of growth in consideration with the population data and national and international reports.

**About SY Quraishi:**

i. Dr. SY Quraishi, a 1971-batch IAS from Haryana cadre served as the **17th CEC** from 30th July 2010 to 10th June 2012.

ii. He has served as the Director General of Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (**NYKS**), India’s largest rural youth development agency.

iii. He was the founder and director of the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development.

**Books:**

i. He has authored numerous books and articles related to democracy, elections, HIV AIDS and family planning, social marketing, women and child development and Youth.

ii. His book “Social Marketing for Social Change” has contributed to the advancement in the field of Development Communication.

**IAMAI organized 15th India Digital Summit 2021 Virtually; Inaugurated by Ravi Shankar Prasad**

The 15th Edition of India Digital Summit 2021 (IDS 2021) organized by Internet & Mobile Association of India (**IAMAI**) took place virtually from January





19-20, 2021. It was inaugurated by Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister of Electronics & Information Technology.

**i.Theme** – ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat – Start of New Decade’

- **Objective** – To provide a platform for discussion to create a new digital ecosystem
- Discussions were held on the **digital initiatives** in the fields of Policies, Business, Investment, Advertising, Digital Commerce, Start-ups Ecosystem, Emerging tech and other digital trends.

**iv.** During the event, the **11th India Digital Awards 2021** were also announced.

- Digital Person of the year – **Sanjeev Bikhchandani**, Info Edge
- Digital Startup of the year – Khatabook
- Digital Agency of the Year: Gold – Wunderman Thompson, Silver – Kinnect, Bronze – WATConsult
- Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Limited (**AMUL**) bagged 4 awards in the event.

#### **About Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI):**

**President** – Dr Subho Ray

**Headquarters** – Mumbai, Maharashtra

#### **Fareed Zakaria's Book titled "Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World"**

**Fareed Zakaria**, a CNN host and one of the “top 10 global thinkers of the last decade” (Foreign Policy), authored the book titled “Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World”.

The book published by **Penguin book** speaks about the nature of the post pandemic world and the social, political, technological and economical effects that may take years to develop. The book with 10 lessons includes the acceleration of natural and biological risk, datedness of the political categories, the rise of digital life, globalization and the developing world order split between US and China.



#### **AP Became the First State to Launch Door Delivery of Rations Under PDS**

Andhra Pradesh(**AP**) became the **first state** to launch door-delivery of rations under the Public Distribution System(**PDS**). The scheme will benefit **26,39,363** cardholders throughout the state. The scheme will cost an additional **Rs. 830 crore per annum**.

To deliver the ration, at a cost of Rs.539 crore, the AP government has distributed 9260 subsidised vehicles with GPS tracking facilities, to the eligible unemployed youths. Each vehicle cost Rs.5.81 lakh, of which, Rs.3.48 lakh is government subsidy.



#### **51st International Film Festival of India 2021 held in Goa from Jan 16 – Jan 24, 2021**

**i.** The 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) was held from 16 to 24 January 2021 at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium in Panaji, Goa. Due to COVID-19, it was conducted in hybrid mode i.e. 50 films out of 224 films across various categories are scheduled to be screened online. This hybrid mode format of IFFI was first in India and in Asia too.





- ii. It was jointly organized by the **Directorate of Film Festivals** (under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and the state **Government of Goa** along with **Entertainment Society of Goa**.
- iii. The epic World War II Danish film *Into the Darkness* (De forbandede år) won Golden Peacock Awards. Veteran actor, director and producer **Biswajit Chatterjee** has been presented with the Indian Personality of the Year Award on the occasion.
- iv. This year the 'country of focus section' was **Bangladesh** marking its 50th anniversary of liberation. Its 4 films were screened under this category.

### Justice, N.V. Ramana released the book, "The Law of Emergency Powers: Comparative Common Law Perspectives"

On 23rd January, 2021, one of the Senior Judges of the Supreme Court of India, Justice N. V. Ramana, along with 3 other supreme court judges, Surya Kant, Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Justice D. Y. Chandrachud launched a book titled, "The Law of Emergency Powers: Comparative Common Law Perspectives".

- The book was jointly authored by Dr. Abhishek Singhvi and Prof. Khagesh Gautam & Published by Springer Publications.

#### About the book:

- It presents a detailed study on legal and constitutional provisions of Emergency powers under Article 356.
- It also includes detailed discussions on Martial law, wartime & peacetime invocations, Constitutional & statutory law.
- The book also compares the emergency powers of India, USA & UK.
- In Depth analysis on S.R. Bommai Case that turned India's Emergency powers.

#### About the Authors:

##### Abhishek Manu Singhvi

- He became the youngest designated Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court of India at the age of 34.
- Youngest Additional Solicitor General of India at 37.
- Vice President, Supreme Court Bar Association at 39.

### Maharashtra regains Top Spot in Justice Delivery among states in India: IJR report 2020

According to the 2nd Edition of India Justice Report (IJR) 2020, Maharashtra (5.77 points) regained the Top spot for Better Justice Delivery among 18 Large and mid-sized states (Population over one crore each), it was followed by Tamil Nadu (5.73) & Telangana (5.64). In the Category of 7 small states (Population less than one crore each), Tripura topped the list followed by Sikkim & Goa.

- The report was released by Tata Trusts with the support of Centre for Social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, DAKSH,

TOP 10 AMONG 18 STATES WITH POPN OVER 1 CRORE		
(Score Out of 10)		
1	Maharashtra	(5.77)
2	Tamil Nadu	(5.73)
3	Telangana	(5.64)
4	Punjab	(5.41)
5	Kerala	(5.36)
6	Gujarat	(5.17)
7	Chhattisgarh	(5.13)
8	Jharkhand	(5.12)
9	Haryana	(4.94)
10	Rajasthan	(4.93)

Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) – Prayas & Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy.

- It is India's only ranking of states based on delivery of Justice to people.
- The Justice Delivery is based on 4 pillars – Police, Judiciary, Prisons & Legal Aid.

### **India Slipped to 86th in CPI 2020; New Zealand & Denmark Tops with Minimum Corruption**

i. The Transparency International released the 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) where India's rank slipped to 86th with a score of **40** from 80th rank with score of 41 in 2019 stating a low position as CPI uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.



ii. The list has been topped by **New Zealand** and **Denmark** rank at the first position with scores of 88 stating minimum corruption levels.

iii. Contrarily, Somalia and South Sudan rank lowest at 179th position with scores of 12.

iv. CPI ranked 180 countries and territories on the basis of levels of public sector corruption, 13 expert assessments and surveys of business executives.

#### **About Transparency International:**

**Interim Managing Director**– Daniel

**Headquarter**– Berlin, Germany

### **“Soumitra Chatterjee: A Life in Cinema, Theatre, Poetry & Painting”, Authorised Biography of Soumitra Chatterjee Released**

On 19th January 2021, the 86th birth anniversary of Soumitra Chatterjee, “Soumitra Chatterjee: A Life in Cinema, Theatre, Poetry & Painting”, the authorized biography of Soumitra Chatterjee was released. The book authored by Arjun Sengupta and co-authored by Partha Mukherjee was published by **Niyogi Books Private Limited**.

#### **About the book:**

i. The book contains the legacy of Dadasaheb Phalke Awardee Soumitra Chatterjee, who passed away on 15th November 2020 at the age of 85.

ii. He has starred in more than 250 films out of which 14 were directed by Satyajit Ray, he has also authored 5 books and 4 poetry collections and 3 dramas.

iii. The book reveals his admiration towards craft and carpentry, which would be useful to many people.

iv. The book features 70 unique photographs that highlights the diverse facets of Soumitra Chatterjee.

#### **About the Authors:**

##### **Arjun Sengupta:**

i. Arjun Sengupta teaches English Literature in St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.

ii. Previously he has worked in Scottish Church College and Presidency College.

##### **Partha Mukherjee:**

i. Partha Mukherjee is a kolkata-based freelance writer and documentary filmmaker.

ii. He has contributed to more than 600 articles, features and interviews on various newspapers and periodicals across India.

**Indian billionaires Increased their Wealth by 35% during the lockdown: Oxfam report**

- i. In accordance with the Indian supplement of Oxfam report “The Inequality Virus”, the top 100 Indian billionaires increased their wealth by 35% during the lockdown to Rs 12,97,822 crore.
- ii. With this amount, a cheque of Rs 94,045 can be provided to 138 million poorest Indians.
- iii. The report was released on the opening day of the World Economic Forum’s ‘Davos Dialogues’.
- iv. Notably, the wealth of Indian billionaires increased by 90% since 2009 to **\$422.9 billion**.
- v. India ranked **6<sup>th</sup>** in the world after the **United States** (US), China, Germany, Russia, and France where billionaires increased their wealth in COVID times

**About Oxfam India:**

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**– Amitabh Behar

**Headquarter**– New Delhi

**CCEA approves closure of Scooters India Limited**

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the closure of state-owned Scooters India Limited (SIL). The company is being closed as it has been only accumulating losses.

- SIL was founded in 1972 and is known for its scooters like Lambretta, Lamby, Vijay, Vikram & Lambro. It has manufactured both Two-wheelers and three-wheelers, however since 1997 it discontinued its 2-wheeler manufacturing process.
  - It is based out of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (UP).
- ii. In the past, Government’s search for finding buyers for SIL were unsuccessful
- In 2018, Government invited Expression of Interest (EoI) for selling its entire stake with transfer of management control in Scooters India.

**About Scooters India Limited (SIL):**

**Chairman & Managing Director (CMD)** – Sreenivasulu

**Headquarters** – Lucknow, UP

**GDP growth for FY20 revised downwards to 4% from 4.2%: NSO Estimates**

- i. On January 29, 2021, the National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the **First Revised Estimates** (FRE) which stated that the growth rate of Indian economy was 4% in FY2019-20. This growth estimate is lower than the **provisional estimates** (PE) of FY20 growth at 4.2% released in May 2020.
- ii. The estimates cover National Income, Consumption Expenditure, Saving and Capital Formation.
- iii. **Reminder:** As per the first advanced estimates (AE) of national income by MoSPI, India’s GDP (Gross Domestic Product) will shrink 7.7% (-7.7%). It will see recession after 41 years in FY21. Almost all sectors, except agriculture will see contraction.

Year	GDP
FY19	6.5%
FY20 (PE)	4.2%
FY20 (FRE)	4
FY21 (AE)	-7.7%

### About Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI):

Minister of State (MoS)– Rao Inderjit Singh

Statistics Day– June 29

## International

### 4th One Planet Summit (OPS) 2021 held Virtually to Protect Biodiversity; Key Initiatives Launched

i. 4th edition of One Planet Summit (OPS) 2021 was virtually organized by France, the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank from Paris (France) to prepare negotiations for setting global biodiversity targets in order to protect nature in next decade. The theme of the summit is “**Let’s act together for nature!**”.

ii. These negotiations will be utilized at a UN conference on biodiversity to be held in **China** in October 2021. It was postponed in 2020 due to COVID-19.

iii. The event was opened by Secretary-General of the UN **Antonio Manuel de Oliveira Guterres**, French President **Emmanuel Macron**, and President of the World Bank Group **David Malpass**.

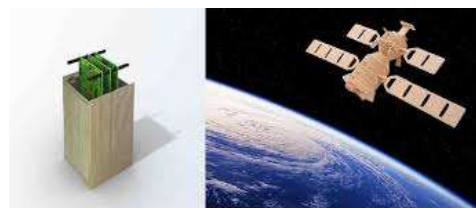
iv. The summit was **not attended by India**, Brazil, Russia, and the United States (US).

v. Notably, the US President-elect Joe Biden is a strong proponent of climate issues as he pledged to preserve 30% of American lands and waters by 2030. But the leader behind the absence of US leaders is that he does not take office until January 20, 2021.



### World’s first wooden satellite to be launched by Japan in 2023 to reduce space Junk

Japan’s Sumitomo Forestry company and Kyoto University of Japan is all set to launch the world’s first **wood-based space satellite by 2023** to combat the problem of space junk. In this regard, several wooden materials are being tested by the research team to find a suitable one for space missions.



- According to the **European Space Agency (ESA)** statistical model, there are more than 130 million pieces of anthropogenic space debris due to human activities. ESA is also planning to launch a mission to collect space debris in 2025.

- The debris can travel at a speed of more than 22,300 mph and can impact other satellites.

**Need for Launching Wood-based Satellite:**

- All the satellites which re-enter the atmosphere of Earth burn and create tiny alumina particles. They will then float in the upper atmosphere for many years and eventually will affect the Earth's environment and has the capacity to cause considerable damage to any objects that it will hit.

There are nearly 6,000 satellites circling Earth, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF). About 60% of them are defunct (space junk). Research firm Euroconsult estimates that 990 satellites will be launched every year this decade, which means that by 2028, there could be 15,000 satellites in orbit.

**World's Most Powerful Passports 2021: India ranks 85th in Henley Passport Index**

i. On January 2021, a “**Henley Passport Index: Q1 2021 Global Ranking**” released where India was ranked 85th with visa-free score 58. The visa-free score states that Indian passport holders get to visit 58 countries without a prior visa. India shared its rank with Tajikistan.

ii. In 2020, India held 84th position.

iii. The index was topped by **Japan** with visa-free score of 191. It has been holding the position for three consecutive years.

**At 18 Million, India has the World's Largest Transnational Community: UN DESA report**

According to the ‘**International Migration 2020-Highlights**’ report released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), In 2020, 18 Million persons from India were living outside of their country of birth thus making it the World's Largest Transnational Community. India is followed by Mexico & Russia (11 Million each), China (10 Million) & the Syrian Arab Republic (8 Million).

i. The United Arab Emirates (3.5 Million), the United States of America (2.7 Million) and Saudi Arabia (2.5 Million) host the largest numbers of migrants from India.

ii. At the Global level, the number of International Migrants living outside their country of birth reached **281 Million in 2020**. International Migrants represent about 3.6% of the World's population.

iii. The Growth of International Migration has slowed by 27% or 2 Million due to COVID-19.

iv. Europe hosted the largest number of International Migrants in 2020 : ~ 87 Million.

**Canadian Olympian Sprinter Andre De Grasse & Robert Budd Authors a Picture Book Titled, ‘Race With Me!’**

Canadian Olympian Sprinter Andre De Grasse & Robert Budd authored a motivational picture book titled ‘**Race With Me!**’ for children aged 6-10 years. The book is illustrated by Joseph Osei Bonsu and will be published by Scholastic Canada in English and French.

**Note**– The book is expected to be released in July 2021.

**Essence of the Book**

i. The book describes how he overcame the hardships and stays motivated.

ii. It features images of Andre De Grasse, including the one where he raced with legendary sprinter Usain Bolt.

**About Andre De Grasse:**

[www.studycampus.in](http://www.studycampus.in)



- i. He completed the 100 m run in 9.97 seconds and won the Pac-12 championship in May 2015. With this, he became the 1st Canadian after Bruny Surin to run under 10 seconds.
- ii. He was the 1st Canadian to win 3 medals in 1 Olympic game, (i.e. He won a silver medal in the 200 m and bronze medals in both the 100 m and 4×100 m relay at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil).
- iii. He also won bronze in 100 m and the 4 × 100 m relay at the 2015 World Athletics Championships in Beijing, China and bronze in the 100 m and the silver in the 200 m at the 2019 World Athletics Championships in Doha, Qatar.

### India Ranked 4th in Global Firepower Nations Index 2021- 'Military Strength Ranking', USA Tops

- i. According to the defence analytics website, **Global Firepower's Global Firepower Nations Index 2021 - 'Military Strength Ranking'** an annually updated list of 138 modern military nations, **India is ranked 4th** with PwrIndx (Power Index) rating of 0.1214 where 0.0000 rating is considered as 'perfect'. The ranking has been topped by the **United States of America (USA)**.
- ii. The ranking has been topped by the United States of America (USA).
- iii. Among region the index is topped by **Asia** and followed by Asia-Pacific, Middle East and European Union (EU) at 2nd, 3rd, and 4th respectively.



### About Military Strength Ranking:

Since 2006, Global Firepower is providing military strength ranking on the basis of over 50 individual factors to determine a nation's PowerIndex ('PwrIndx') score.

### 1st Ever Treaty for Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted by UN comes into Force

'Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)' adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly came into force from **January 22, 2021**, it is the First ever International agreement which prohibits Nuclear Weapons. The Treaty was Adopted in 2017 by the United Nations General Assembly



- i. The signatories of the agreement are prohibited from
  - Development, Testing, Production, Stocking, Transferring, using & threat of using Nuclear weapons.
  - If any Nuclear armed states are joining the treaty, a time-bound framework which leads to verified and irreversible elimination of its nuclear weapons programme is provided.
- ii. Until now **86 Nations have signed TPNW & 52 have ratified it.**
  - However, Nuclear-capable countries – United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea & Israel (Undeclared Nuclear Power) did not support the Treaty nor have signed it.
  - Countries which rely on Nuclear weapons of other countries such as 27 members of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), Australia, Japan, & South Korea have not signed the treaty.

### About United Nations General Assembly:

**President** – Volkan Bozkir

**Headquarters** – New York, USA



**NSE Retains World's Largest Derivatives Exchange Title for 2nd consecutive year in 2020: FIA**

i. In accordance with the **Futures Industry Association (FIA)**, National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) remained the world's largest derivatives exchange for the second consecutive year in 2020 in terms of number of contracts traded.

ii. On the other hand, **World Federation of Exchanges (WFE)** has ranked it 4th in terms of cash equities by number of trades for calendar year 2020.

**About National Stock Exchange:**

**Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**– Vikram Limaye

**Headquarter**– Mumbai, Maharashtra

**About Futures Industry Association (FIA):**

**Chairman**– Nicholas Rustad

**Headquarter**– Washington D.C., United States (US)

**Bengaluru Emerges as World's Fastest Growing Mature Tech Ecosystem: Report**

Dealroom.co data analysed by London & Partners (the Mayor of London's international trade and investment agency) has revealed that **Bengaluru**, Karnataka has emerged as the **world's fastest growing mature tech ecosystem**, with investment in it increased 5.4 times from USD 1.3 billion in 2016 to USD 7.2 billion in 2020. The list is followed by London, Munich, Berlin, Paris. Mumbai, Maharashtra secures 6th place with investment in it growing 1.7 times from USD 0.7 billion in 2016 to USD 1.2 billion in 2020. Bengaluru secures 6th place in global top 10 for VentureCapital (VC) investment. This list is topped by Beijing and San Francisco, New York, Shanghai and London.

**SpaceX creates New World Record by Launching 143 satellites in Single Launch by Falcon 9**

On January 24, 2021, SpaceX successfully created a New World Record by launching 143 Satellites in a single mission. The satellites were launched using the **Falcon 9 Reusable rockets** from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in **Florida, United States of America**. With this, SpaceX bettered Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) record of deploying 104 satellites in a single mission in February 2017. The Launch is also the first dedicated mission for SpaceX under SmallSat 'Rideshare' program called **Transporter-1**.



i. **Objective** – With the launch of the satellites, SpaceX is planning to provide Global broadband internet coverage by 2021.

- Out of 143 satellites – 133 were Commercial & Government CubeSats, microstats and 10 were Starlink satellites.
- The 'Rideshare' programme aims to offer **cheap access to space** for small satellite companies (i.e. \$15,000 per kilogram for each satellite to be delivered to the polar sun-synchronous orbit ).

ii. **Falcon-9 Rocket** is the **World's 1st Orbital-class reusable rocket**.

- Reusable rockets will help in reduction of costs for space programs.
- India has listed the building of reusable rocket as one of its targets of the Decade (2021-30)

**About SpaceX:**

**Chief Executive Officer** – Elon Musk

**Headquarters** – California, USA

**Highlights of WEF's Virtual 'The Davos Agenda 2021'**

The 51st Edition of 2021 World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting called 'The Davos Agenda 2021' took place virtually from January 25-29, 2021.

- Theme of Davos Agenda – '**A Crucial Year to Rebuild Trust**'
- Heads of State & Government like Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India; Xi Jinping, President of China & others participated in the meeting.
- Several leaders from International Organizations, Government agencies & Central banks participated in the Davos Agenda 2021.

i. WEF launched the Global AI (Artificial Intelligence) Action Alliance (**GAIA**).

ii. WEF launched the **first-of-its-kind platform** called 'Essential Digital Infrastructure and Services' – EDISON Alliance to reduce **digital inequalities** & ensure equitable access to digital opportunities for everyone by **2025**.

ii. Indian Information Technology Companies Infosys & TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) joined an International Coalition launched by WEF for tackling racism in workplaces.

iv. During the event, WEF's President Schwab released a book titled '**Stakeholder Capitalism**'. It has been co-authored with Peter Vanham and published by Wiley.

**Defence****DRDO, Indian Navy Conduct Maiden Trial of 1st Indigenous Air-Droppable Container 'SAHAYAK-NG'**

Defence Research & Development Organisation (**DRDO**) & **Indian Navy** successfully conducted the **maiden trial of 'SAHAYAK-NG'** which is **India's 1st** indigenously designed and developed **Air Droppable Container**. It was dropped from IL 38SD aircraft of the Indian Navy at Goa.



i.2 **DRDO Laboratories** – Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh & Aerial Delivery Research & Development Establishment (**ARDE**), Agra, Uttar Pradesh **developed SAHAYAK-NG**, Private company **Avantel** was also involved in the project for **GPS** (Global Positioning System) Integration.

ii. **SAHAYAK-NG** is an advanced version of **SAHAYAK-Mk I** and is aided by **GPS**.

iii. It is capable of carrying payloads of upto 50 Kgs

iv. It will provide **critical engineering stores** to ships which are **deployed more than 2000 kms** from the Indian coast.

**Indian Army receives Bridges developed by DRDO and L&T:**

On December 30, 2020 Indian Army received **3 sets of 10-metre short span** bridges developed & manufactured by DRDO in partnership with Larsen & Toubro Ltd (**L&T**).

### Skyroot Aerospace becomes 1st Indian Company to Successfully Test Fire Solid-Fueled Rocket Engine 'Kalam-5'

Skyroot Aerospace, an Indian Space Startup successfully test-fired a solid propulsion rocket engine named 'Kalam-5' from a Private Test Facility at **Nagpur, Maharashtra**. It is the **1st Private company** in India to successfully design, develop & test a **full solid-fueled rocket stage**.



i. It will now be used for propulsion of their maiden rocket '**Vikram-1**' which is expected to be launched in **December, 2021** with the help of Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

ii. '**Kalam-5**' is the **1st of 5 Kalam series** of solid rocket motors, the other four rocket motors are expected to be tested in 2021.

#### **Kalam-5:**

i. They have a thrust ranging from 5 kN (kilonewton) – 1000 kN (approximately 100 Tons).

ii. They have been using advanced **Carbon Composite Structure** which are five-times lighter than steel & will help in improving the efficiency of the rocket.

iii. Kalam-5 is the **smaller version** of Vikram-1 Launch Vehicle's 3rd stage – '**Kalam-100**'.

### Pakistan Test Fires 'Shaheen-III' Nuclear Capable Ballistic Missile

Pakistan successfully Test Fired a Nuclear-Capable Surface-to-Surface 'Shaheen-III' Ballistic Missile. The Missile has a range of 2, 750 Kms and is the Longest-range missile developed in Pakistan.



- The test was carried out to revalidate several design & technical parameters of the weapon system.
- This is the 2nd Test of the Missile, the First Test was carried out in March, 2015.

i. The Initial developments of the Missile began in the early 2000s in response to India's Agni-III (Intermediate Ballistic Missile)

ii. On January 7, 2021 Pakistan successfully test fired the Indigenous 'Fatah-1' – Guided Multi Launch Rocket System (MLRS)

#### **About Pakistan:**

**Prime Minister** – Imran Khan

**Currency** – Pakistani Rupee

**Capital** – Islamabad

### DRDO & Indian Army Developed India's 1<sup>st</sup> Indigenous Machine Pistol ASMI; RLG systems handed over to Indian Navy

i. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune (Maharashtra) in collaboration with the Indian Army's Infantry School, Mhow has developed India's first indigenous 9mm machine pistol ASMI. It will replace the **9mm pistols** used by defence forces.

ii. Notably it has been developed by a young officer '**Lt Col Prasad Bansod**' from Infantry School, Mhow in a record time of four months.

**About Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO):**

**Establishment** – 1958

**Chairman**– G Satheesh Reddy

**Headquarter**– New Delhi

**Parent Ministry** – Ministry of Defence

**Indian Air Force & FASF hold 1st edition of Bilateral Air Exercise ‘Desert Knight-21’**

Indian Air Force (IAF) and French Air and Space Force (FASF) participated in the **1st Edition** of Bilateral Air Exercise ‘Exercise Desert Knight-21 (Ex DK-21)’ held at Air Force Station, **Jodhpur** for 5 days from January 20-24, 2021. The Bilateral exercise involved the participation of **Rafale fighter jets** from both sides.



**i.** Missions undertaken during the exercise:

- The Exercises were conducted in realistic settings to enhance operational capabilities & interoperability between the two sides
- Sharing of best practices & development of operational concepts between the two sides focussing on **effective combat employment of Rafale fighter jets**.

**ii.** India & France are also jointly set to conduct **wargames** codenamed Exercise **SKYROS** in January at Jodhpur.

- SKYROS is a war game which will involve Rafael Fighter Jets from both Countries
- It will be the **1st Major Wargame of IAF** involving the participation of IAF

**Indian Navy conducts Joint Tri-Service Military Exercise ‘AMPHEX-21’ in Andaman & Nicobar Islands**

The Indian Navy conducted an Joint Tri-Service **Amphibious** Military Exercise ‘AMPHEX-21’ in Andaman & Nicobar group of Islands from January 21-25, 2021. Defence Exercise ‘**KAVACH**’ for defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands was also a part of AMPHEX-21 exercise,



- KAVACH took place in Andaman Sea & Bay of Bengal under the command of Andaman & Nicobar Command (ANC), which is the sole Joint Services Command of the Country.
- Both exercises witnessed participation from all service components of Indian Armed Forces – Indian Army, Air Force, Navy & Coast Guard.

**Objective:**

- To safeguard the Territorial integrity of India’s Islands.
- Demonstrating Air Dominance and maritime strike capability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

**Participants:**

- Corvettes, submarine & amphibious landing ships of **Eastern Naval Command (ENC)** and Amphibious Brigade of **Army's Southern Command**.
- Special Forces – Marine Commandos, Para Commandos.
- Jaguar Aircraft & Transport Aircraft from Indian Air Force.

**Key Points:**

- The forces demonstrated joint capabilities of Intelligence gathering from space, air, land & sea based assets, analyzing & sharing them on a real-time basis to **enable quick decision making** during battle times.
- The exercises also focused on **joint warfighting capabilities & Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** for increasing operational cooperation.

**India to Procure 21 MiG-29 Fighter Jets and 12 Sukhoi-30 MKI Aircrafts from Russia**

**Indian** Government is set to **procure 21 MiG**(Mikoyan-Gurevich)-**29** fighter jets and **12 Sukhoi(Su)-30 MKI**(Modernizirovannyi, Kommercheskiy, Indiski) aircrafts from **Russia**. In addition to this, existing **59 MiG-29 aircrafts** will also be **upgraded**.

- The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the 21 MiG-29 will shortly be issued to Russian state-run defence export arm Rosoboronexport

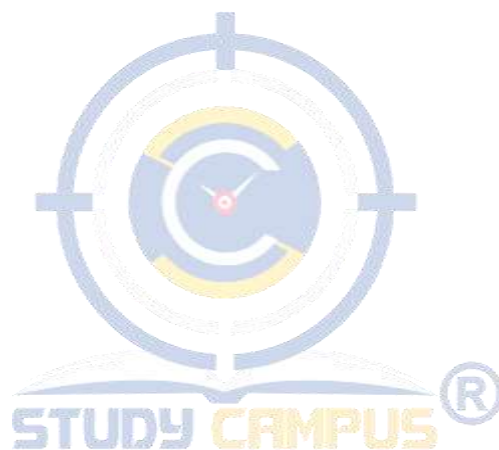
**About the New Jets & Aircrafts:**

- i. The new 21 MiG-29 is an addition to the existing 59 such jets with the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- ii. The new 12 Sukhoi-30MKIs is an addition to the existing fleet of 272 such fighter aircraft, that were contracted from Russia for around \$15 billion, with the majority of them licensed to be produced by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (**HAL**), India .

**Note**– Till now, IAF has inducted 268 of 272 Sukhoi jets.

**Points to Recall:**

- i. The Defence Ministry, in July 2020 gave approval to IAF to procure 21 MiG-29 fighter jets and 12 Sukhoi MK1 from Russia, besides upgradation of 59 MiG-29.
- ii. The MIG 29 procurement and upgradation from Russia is estimated to cost Rs 7,418 crore.
- iii. The Su-30 MKI will be procured at an estimated cost of Rs 10,730 crore.



## Appointments or Resign/Retired

### ACC Approves 1 year extension of ISRO Chairman K Sivan As Space Secretary and Space Commission Chairman

i. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet(ACC) approved a **1 year extension** of Kailasavadivoo(**K**) **Sivan, Secretary of Department of Space, Govt of India and Chairman of space commission** from January 14, 2021, i.e. upto January 14, 2022 or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

ii. He is currently the chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation(ISRO).

#### About Indian Space Research Organisation(ISRO):

**Chairman**– Kailasavadivoo (K) Sivan

**Department of Space and ISRO Headquarters**– Bengaluru, Karnataka



### Suneet Sharma Appointed as the New Chairman & CEO of Railway Board; Succeeds VK Yadav

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of **Suneet Sharma** as the New



Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Railway Board under the Ministry of Railways. He takes over the charge from the incumbent **VK Yadav** upon the completion of his term as the Chairman and CEO of the board on 31st December 2020.

- Previously Suneet Sharma served as the General Manager of the Eastern Railway.
- He is also appointed as the ex-officio Principal Secretary to the Government of India.

#### **About Suneet Sharma:**

i. During his stint as the General Manager of Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli, he set a record by doubling the output of the modern passenger coach in 1 year. The factory also won the **best production unit award** during his stint.

ii. Suneet Sharma has more than 40 years of experience in serving the Indian Railways at various capacities.

iii. He joined the Indian Railways in 1979 as a Special Class Apprentice.

#### **Soma Mondal Becomes 1st Woman Chairman of SAIL; Succeeds Anil Kumar Chaudhary**

**Soma Mondal** took charge as the **chairman** of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL). She becomes the **1st woman chairperson** of SAIL. She succeeds Anil Kumar Chaudhary who superannuated on December 31, 2020.



- Prior to this appointment Soma Mondal was serving as the Director (Commercial) of SAIL.

#### **About Soma Mondal**

i. She started her career as the Graduate Engineer Trainee at National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) and was later elevated as the Director (Commercial).

ii. After her service with NALCO, she later joined SAIL in 2017 as the Director (Commercial)

#### **About Anil Kumar Chaudhary:**

i. He assumed the position as the Chairman of SAIL on 22nd September, 2018. Besides being a chairman he also held the additional charge as director (Personnel).

ii. He has over 34 years of experience in the Iron & Steel Sector while working with SAIL.

#### **About Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL):**

i. It is one of the largest steel-making companies in India. It is the Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE).

ii. Indian govt owns about 75% of SAIL's equity and retains voting control of the Company

#### **Indian Army Creates a New Human Rights cell; Major General Gautam Chauhan Becomes 1st ADG, Human Rights**

**Indian Army** has created a new **human right cell** at its headquarters (New Delhi). **Major General Gautam Chauhan** has been appointed as the **1st Additional Director General-ADG (Human Rights-HR)**. He will function under the Indian Army Vice Chief Lieutenant General SK Saini.



- This is the **1st time**, Indian army has appointed a major general rank officer to examine the human rights issue and suggest means to better the track record of the force.

- This appointment is part of the ongoing restructuring of Indian Army headquarters.

**Key Info**

- The ADG (HR) will have an Indian Police Service(IPS) officer of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP/Superintendent of Police(SP) rank on deputation in his branch to offer investigative expertise and facilitate necessary coordination with the home ministry and other organizations.
- As part of the current restructuring of headquarters of the Indian Army, ADG (Vigilance) will shortly be appointed.

**About Human Rights cell**

- The nodal body will look into any rights violations.
- It helps Indian army to have a greater transparency and integrity in its functioning

**About Major General Chauhan:**

i. Major General Chauhan, an infantry officer from Gorkha Rifles, was serving as the brigadier Operations Logistics at Headquarters of the Integrated Defence Staff (IDS)-New Delhi, before his appointment as ADG(human rights).

**Sanjay Kapoor Elected as President of All India Chess Federation**

**Sanjay Kapoor**(45 years old), representing Uttar Pradesh Chess Sports Association, was **elected** as the **president** of the All India Chess Federation (AICF) and became the youngest president of the federation. He succeeds **PR Venketrama Raja** of Tamil Nadu. Along with him a secretary, Treasurer, Vice Presidents, joint secretaries and treasurer also was elected



- The new office-bearers will hold posts till 2023.
- This is the first time after 2005 that there was a contest, as the candidates were chosen unanimously in the last 15 years.

**Note**– Sanjay Kapoor took 33 votes as against 31 votes of PR Venketrama Raja.

**GoI Appoints RS Sharma as Head of 10 Member Committee for Administration of COVID-19 Vaccine**

- Government of India appointed **RS Sharma**, former chief of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India(TRAI)as head of a 10 member empowered **committee** for **administration** of **COVID-19 vaccine**.
- The members of the committee comprises senior officials from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) and the Unique Identification Authority of India(UIDAI).
- India will start its mega vaccination drive against coronavirus, the world's largest inoculation programme on January 16, 2021.

**AK Goswami Sworn in as Chief Justice of AP High Court;Succeeds JK Maheshwari**

**Arup Kumar(A.K.) Goswami** was sworn in as the **Chief Justice (CJ) of Andhra Pradesh(AP) High Court(HC)** administered by AP Governor Biswab Bushan Harichandan in Tummalapalli Kalakshetram, Vijayawada, AP. He succeeds Jitendra Kumar(JK) Maheshwari who is now appointed as the CJ of Sikkim HC.



- Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and other dignitaries were present during the sworn in function.

**Note**

Prior to his appointment as CJ of Andhra Pradesh HC, he was the CJ of Sikkim HC.

**About Arup Kumar(A.K.) Goswami:**

- i. He started his career in 1985 as an advocate with the Bar Council of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.
- ii. In 2004, he was designated as a senior advocate and in the same year became the standing counsel of Gauhati High Court.
- iii. He was elevated as Judge of Guwahati HC in 2011 and was appointed as the CJ of Sikkim High Court in 2019.

**Joe Biden Takes Over as the 46th President of the USA; Kamala Harris as Vice President**

**Joseph R. Biden Jr.** (Joe Biden) took oath as the **46th President** of the United States of America(USA) at a ceremony organised at the West Front of the US Capitol building, Washington, USA. 78-year-old Joe Biden became the oldest President in the history of the USA. He was sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts. He belong to Democratic Political Party.

**Kamala Harris** took oath as the 49th Vice President. She is the first woman and first person with south Asian origin to take the office of Vice President of the USA.

She was sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina in the US Supreme Court. She belong to Democratic Political Party.

**Key People:**

Former Presidents, Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton along with their spouses, the outgoing Vice President Mike Pence were present during the event.

**United States Congress:**

- i. The United States Congress is the bicameral legislature of the federal government of the USA. the congress meets at the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.
- ii. The legislative branch, established by the Article I of the Constitution consist of 2 houses:

- The Senate
- The House of Representatives

**The Senate:**

The Senate, the upper chamber of the US Congress has 100 senators, 2 senators representing each State (50).

**President of the Senate**– Kamala Harris

**The House of Representatives:**

- i. The House of Representatives has 435 elected representatives from the 50 states in proportion to the total population.

**Justice Geeta Mittal Becomes 1st Woman Chairperson of BCCC**

**Justice Geeta Mittal** has been appointed as the new chairperson of Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) and becomes the **1st woman chairperson** of this council. She succeeds Justice Vikramajit Sen. She served as the 1st woman Chief Justice(CJ) of Jammu & Kashmir High Court. BCCC is the independent self-regulatory body set up by the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) in June 2011 to examine content related complaints of all non-news general entertainment channels in India.



**About Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF):**

**President** – K. Madhavan( He is the MD of Star and Disney India)

**Headquarters**– New Delhi, Delhi

**Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa Re- Elected as President of Portugal for 2nd Term**

**Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa**(72 years old) has been **re-elected** as the president of **Portugal** for the **2nd term** after securing over 60% of the votes in the election held on January 24, 2021. He belongs to Social Democratic Party(Partido Social Democrata-PSD)

**Note**– Ana Gomes came second in the election with 13% of the votes

**About Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa:**

i.He was elected as the president for 1st term in 2016.

ii.He was one of the founders of the People's Democratic Party, later the Social Democratic Party, and was party leader from 31 March 1996 to 27 May 1999.

iii.He was the co-founder, Director and Administrator of the Expresso newspaper, owned by Pinto Balsemão.

iv.He received many honours including Grand Cross of the Order of Prince Henry, Commander of the Order of Saint James of the Sword, Grand Cordon of the Order of Leopold among others.

**About Portugal( officially- Portuguese Republic):**

**Capital**- Lisbon(largest city of Portugal)

**Currency**– Euro(EUR)

**Justice RS Chauhan Sworn in as CJ of Uttarakhand HC & Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia Appointed as CJ of Gauhati HC**

i. **Justice Raghvendra Singh(R S) Chauhan** was sworn in as the Chief Justice(CJ) of **Uttarakhand High Court(HC)** administered by Uttarakhand Governor Baby Rani Maurya in Raj Bhawan in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

- He succeeds Justice Ramesh Ranganathan who retired in July, 2020. After his retirement, Justice Ravi Vijaykumar(R.V.) Malimath was appointed as acting CJ of Uttarakhand HC.



ii.The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind appointed **Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia**, as **CJ of Gauhati HC** with effect from the date he assumed charge of his office.

- He takes over the charge from Justice Nongmeikapam(N) Kotiswar Singh, who was appointed as the acting CJ of the Gauhati HC after the retirement of Justice Ajai Lamba in September 2020.

**Note** – The Chief Justice and Judges of the High Courts are appointed by the President under clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution & The President of India in exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 222 of the Constitution of India transfer the CJ of HC to another.

**Gauhati High Court(HC):**

i.Gauhati HC was originally known as the High Court of Assam and Nagaland, but renamed as Gauhati High Court in 1971 by the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.

ii. It has the largest jurisdiction in terms of states, with its area covering the states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram.

### **PM Narendra Modi Appointed as Chairman of Somnath Temple Trust**

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** was appointed as the **chairman** of **Somnath Trust**. He succeeds former Gujarat Chief Minister late Keshubhai Patel. The trust manages the world famous Somnath Temple at Prabhas Patan town in Gujarat's Gir-Somnath district. Narendra Modi is the second Prime Minister who has been appointed the chairman of the temple trust after former PM Morarji Desai.

### **Kaja Kallas Becomes 1st Female PM of Estonia**

On January 26, 2021 **Estonia** President Kersti Kaljulaid appointed **Kaja Kallas** as the Prime Minister (PM) of the country. With this appointment she becomes the **1st female PM** of the country since the nation regained independence in 1991. She succeeds Jüri Ratas. She is the leader of the Reform party.

The 15-member Cabinet of Prime Minister Kaja Kallas is a coalition of 2 parties namely, Reform Party & Centre Party.



#### **About Kaja Kallas:**

i. Kaja Kallas, a lawyer was a member of the 12th & 14th Riigikogu (All important state-related questions pass through the Riigikogu)

ii. She was a member of the European Parliament from 2014-2018, representing the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe.

iii. She served as the Chairman of the Economic Affairs Committee.

#### **About Estonia( Officially- Republic of Estonia):**

**Capital**– Tallinn

**Currency**– Euro-EUR (Before Euro, Estonian kroon (EEK) was the currency till January 1, 2011)

STUDY CAMPUS

## **Honours/ Awards**

### **Vinod Kumar Yadav, Chairman & CEO, Railway Board Received the “Eminent Engineer Award” 2020 from IET**

**Vinod Kumar Yadav**, Chairman & CEO of the Railway Board, Ministry of Railways received





the “**Eminent Engineer Award** for the year **2020**” for his contribution towards modernisation and reforms in Indian Railways. The award was presented by The Institution of Engineering and Technology (**IET**).

**About “Eminent Engineer Award”:**

- i. The Eminent Engineer Award is presented to the distinguished engineering personalities recognising their service in the field of Engineering and technology.
- ii. The award is annually presented by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) on the occasion of **Engineers Day – 15th September**, which is celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Bharat Ratna Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya**

**About Vinod Kumar Yadav:**

- i. Vinod Kumar Yadav (V.K Yadav), of 1980 Batch Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineer was appointed as the Chairman of the Railway Board in December 2018.
- ii. He became the **first ever CEO** of the **Railway board** which was formally constituted by the Central Government in September 2020.
- iii. Previously he has served as the General Manager of the South Central Railway (SCR).

**About Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET):**

IET is formally known as The Institution of Electrical Engineers (**IEE**). This is one of the world’s largest engineering institutions with more than 168,000 members in 150 countries.

**India’s Dr. Raghu Ram Pillarisetti in Queen Elizabeth II’s 2021 New Year’s Honours list**

India’s **Dr. Raghu Ram Pillarisetti** (54 years old), Director and Consultant Breast Surgeon, KIMS-USHALAKSHMI Centre for Breast Diseases has been honoured with ‘**OBE-Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire**’ in **Queen Elizabeth II’s 2021 New year’s Honours list**. This second highest ranking Order of the British Empire award (excluding a knighthood/damehood) conferred to him in recognition of his outstanding services to Breast Cancer care and Surgical Education in India and to UK/India relations. He is one of the youngest Surgeons of Indian origin in over 100 years to be honoured by the Queen with an OBE. He is also the Founder/CEO of Ushalakshmi Breast Cancer Foundation. He is also a recipient of Padma Shri award and Dr BC Roy National award. **The award was instituted in 1917 by King George**

**2020 Hurun Global 500 List Features 11 Indian Firms; India Ranks 10<sup>th</sup>**

**2020 Hurun Global 500** list – a list of 500 most valuable companies across the globe, of Hurun Research features a total of **11 Indian companies**. According to the report India secured the **10th rank** with 11 companies whose total values grew 14% and reached 805 billion USD (around one third of Indian GDP). Topped by **United States** with 242 companies.



**Apple** tops the list with a value of 2.1 Trillion USD followed by **Microsoft** with a value of 1.640 Trillion and **Amazon** with a value of 1.610 Trillion and **Alphabet** with 1.2 trillion USD.

**Released By:** Hurun in association with China luxury tea brand Empereur.

**Key Points:**

- i. 7 of the 11 Indian companies have their headquarters in Mumbai followed by Pune, Bengaluru, Kolkata and New Delhi with one each.
- ii. The report stated that the local stock market grew by 12% despite the pandemic.



- iii. 239 of the non-India Hurun Global 500 have a regional presence in India, spread across ten cities, led by **Mumbai** with 64, and followed by Bengaluru with 39, Gurugram 27, New Delhi 23 and Pune with 11.
- iv. State Bank of India ranked 45th in the Most valuable listed state-controlled companies in the world in 2020.

### Highlights of Hurun Global 500:

- i. United State of America has accounted for around 242 entities of the total 500 & topped the Hurun Global 500 2020 list followed by China with 51 and Japan with 30 companies.
- ii. In the perspective of valuation gains, China tops the list with 73% increase by its top companies during 2020.

### Nazhat Shameem Khan of Fiji Won the Presidency of the UN Human Rights Council

Fijian Ambassador **Nazhat Shameem Khan**, the chief diplomat of Fiji in Geneva won the Presidency Election of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) with 29 out of 47 votes. **Fiji** became the **first Pacific Island nations** to win the presidency election of the UNHRC. She succeeds Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberge of Austria.



The **Bureau of the Council** which includes the President and 4 vice Presidents from the 5 regional groups serve for a period of a year, in accordance to the annual cycle of the UNHRC.

### About UNHRC:

**Headquarters**– Geneva, Switzerland.

**Members**– 47

### IKEA India Pvt Ltd Wins 1st UN Women 2020 Asia-Pacific WEPs Regional Awards under Gender-inclusive Workplace Category

- i. The 1st United Nations (UN) Women 2020 Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Regional award winners were announced in a ceremony on December 15, 2020 in Bangkok, Thailand.
- ii. **IKEA India Pvt Ltd** won this award in **Gender-inclusive Workplace category**. It is the only winner from India.

- In total there are 6 categories in the awards, where each category will have one winner and 2 runner ups.

iii. On December 1, 2020 UN Women presented India's awards in a virtual ceremony on December 1 through the UN Women India Facebook page.

iv. Tata Power- Delhi Distribution Ltd (DDL) became the 1st Runner Up in the Community & Industry Engagement category of the award.

### About United Nations (UN) Women:

**Executive Director** – Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (United Nations Under-Secretary-General)

**Headquarters**- New York, United States

### Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' Honoured with Sahitya Gaurav Samman 2021 by Hindi Writers Guild of Canada

Hindi Writers Guild of Canada honoured Union Education Minister **Ramesh**



**Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** with the **Sahitya Gaurav Samman 2021** for his writings and literature through a virtual programme.

- The award ceremony was organised by Hindi Writers Guild, Canada.

### Key People

The award was given in presence of Uttarakhand Governor Baby Rani Maurya. India's High Commissioner in Canada Ajay Bisaria was also present in the ceremony.

### About Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank':

#### Books

- He has authored over 75 books that have been translated into many national and foreign languages.
- His books include *Dreams that Don't Let You Sleep: Based on the Life Skills Management of Dr. Kalam*, *sakaratomak soch Swami Vivekananda*, *Life Trials* among others.
- The German version 'nureinWunsch' of his story collection 'Just a Desire', is published in Afro Asian Institute.

### Philanthropist Ravi Gaikwad awarded "Nelson Mandela" World Humanitarian Award

Ravi Gaikwad, a Philanthropist & Chief of Regional Transport Office, Thane & Konkan Region has been awarded the "Nelson Mandela" World Humanitarian Award for his dedication & service to humanity.

### Dr. Rajendra Kumar Bhandari & SEEDS Wins Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2021

i. On January 23, 2021 the **Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2021** was awarded to **Dr. Rajendra Kumar Bhandari** under Individual category, while Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (**SEEDS**) received the award under Institutional category for their contribution in disaster management.



ii. The award is annually announced on January 23 on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

### About National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA):

It was created by the Ministry of Home Affairs under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

### Mukesh Ambani moves to 11th spot in world's richest billionaires list: Bloomberg Billionaires Index

In accordance with the latest data by Bloomberg Billionaire Index, as of January 22, 2021, Mukesh Ambani has now moved up to 11th spot from 13th spot with a total net worth of \$79.2 billion (5.78 lakh crore).

- The jump comes as the profit of Reliance Industries soared 12.5% to Rs 131 billion during the Q3(October-December)FY21.
- He surpassed Larry Ellison of Oracle Corporation and world's richest woman Francoise Bettencourt Meyers, with a net worth at \$78.4 billion and \$72.2 billion, respectively.

The top 3 billionaires of the world, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index are:

1. Elon R Musk \$202 billion
2. Jeff Bezos \$192 billion
3. Bill Gates \$133 billion

**Asia's Richest person:**

- i. **Zhong Shanshan**, referred to as “**Lone Wolf**”, has replaced Ambani as **Asia's richest person**, he is one of the fastest in history to achieve the feat.
- ii. Zhong Shanshan is Chinese billionaire whose net worth is 78.2 billion USD, which is attributed to the listing of Beijing Wantai Biological Pharmacy Enterprises Co and Nongu Spring Co, a bottled water firm.

**Ministry of Home Affairs Announced Padma Awards 2021: Former Japan PM Shinzo Abe & Ram Vilas Paswan Honoured**

i. **Ministry of Home Affairs**, Government of India announced the **Padma Awards 2021**. The Padma Awards, one of the highest civilian Awards of the country are conferred under 3 categories namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

ii. This year (2021) total 119 Padma awards including 1 duo case (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one) were awarded.



iii. This year (2021) the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind has approved conferment of the awards.

**Key Persons who Received the Award:**

- i. **Padma Vibhushan** – Former Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, S P Balasubramaniam (Posthumously) and Eminent sculptor Sudarshan Sahoo, **Father of Fiber Optics Narinder Singh Kapany** (posthumously).
- ii. **Padma Bhushan** – **Ram Vilas Paswan** (Posthumous), who was the Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (elected from the Hajipur constituency of Bihar) and **Tarun Gogoi**, former Assam CM who was the longest serving CM of the state
- iii. **Padma Shri** – Famous illustrator of children's magazine **KC Sivasankar** (posthumously), **Sridhar Vembu**, Founder & CEO of Zoho and **Rajini Bector**, promoter of FMCG company, Mrs Bectors Food Specialities.

**Tamil translation of French novel, 'Le mariage de plaisir' wins Romain Rolland Book Prize 2021 at Kolkata**

On January 24, 2021, The Tamil translation of a French novel, '**Le mariage de plaisir**' titled "**Ullasa Thirumanam**" won the Romain Rolland Book Prize 2021 at the **Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2021**. The Festival was conducted on January 22 – 24, 2021.

- '**Le mariage de plaisir**', the French Novel was authored by **Tahar Ben Jelloun**. And it was translated by **Dr Vengada Soupraya Nayagar** in Tamil.

**Key Points:**

- i. The book was published by Amutharasan Paulraj of Thadagam Publishers. The award is given for the best translation of any French novel into any Indian language.
- ii. The winning publisher and translator will be invited by the French Institute in India to the Paris Book Fair 2021, where India will be the guest of honour & Focus Country in Paris Book Fair 2021.

**About Romain Rolland Book Prize:**

Started in 2017, Romain Rolland Book Prize aims at awarding the best translation of a French title into any Indian language, including English.

**National Best Electoral Practices Awards 2020: Delhi won under Accessible election category**

On 25th January 2021, at the 11th National Voters Day(NVD) event organised by the Election Commission of India, **Delhi** won the National Best Electoral Practices Award 2020 under the **Accessible Election category** for ensuring greater accessibility during the assembly polls in Delhi during February 2020.



- Delhi has also achieved error free electoral roll and increased its number of 3rd gender electors.

**Other Awards:**

- i. The Office of Chief Electoral Office(CEO), **Meghalaya** received the special award for its Information Technology(IT) applications in Elections. Meghalaya CEO F.R. Kharkongor received the award at the event held in New Delhi.
- ii. This award recognised its sustained and consistent IT application efforts of the Office of CEO in Enrolment to Election (E2E) Process and for using the technology to benefit all the voters (general and person with disabilities).
- iii. Bihar has won the award under the Electoral management category and CEO HR Srinivasan received the award at the NVD event.
- iv. Pratyaya Amrit, Principal Secretary (Health) has won the special award for ensuring a smooth election amid pandemic.
- vii. **Jeevika**, a Bihar-based NGO, a poverty alleviation programme of Bihar supported by World Bank has received the award for creating voter awareness.

**Shyam Srinivasan awarded the Business Standard Banker of the Year (2019-20)**

Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Federal Bank, Shyam Srinivasan, was awarded with the Business Standard Banker of the year for 2019-20. The high level 5-member Jury panel of Business Standard's chaired by former Reserve Bank of India deputy governor S S Mundra, unanimously selected Shyam Srinivasan for the award. He received this award for maintaining the steady growth of the Federal Bank, when all other financial institutions witnessed large stress on asset quality, received regulatory actions & losses. He became the CEO of Federal Bank in September 2010.



## Sports

### Goa's 14-year old Leon Mendonca becomes India's 67th Chess Grandmaster

14-year old **Leon Mendonca** from Goa became India's **67th Chess Grandmaster (GM)** after winning his **third & Final norm** at the Vergani Cup, Italy. Mendonca is only the 2nd GM from Goa.

i. He became the 29th Youngest GM in the world. **Sergey Karjakin** of Russia holds the record for the World's Youngest ever GM having qualified for the title at the age of 12 years and 7 months (achieved the title in 2003).

ii. The 1st GM from Goa is **Ivana Maria Furtado**, she achieved it in 2011.

iii. **GM** is a title awarded by FIDE (**International Chess Federation**), It is the highest title a chess player can obtain apart from World Champion.



### Cricket-India retains Border-Gavaskar Trophy by Defeating Australia in 2020-21 Test Series

India won by defeating Australia in 2020-21 Test Series(4 Match) by 2-1 and retained the **Border-Gavaskar Trophy in 2020-21 Edition**. **Ajinkya Rahane** led the Indian Team in the absence of Virat Kohli who played only the First Test Match. India created history by defeating **Australia for the 1st time** at the Gabba, Brisbane in **32 years**.



- The Border-Gavaskar Trophy was already with the Indian Team as it had won the series held in India in 2016-17 & its Maiden series win in Australia in 2018-19.
- **Pat Cummins** was adjudged as the Player of the Series.
- India's series win in Australia has propelled it to top of the ICC World Test Championship Standings.

### Other Records & Highlights:

- India's Stand-in Captain Ajinkya Rahane became the 1st Recipient of Mullagh Medal
- Ravichandran Ashwin set a new World Record for dismissing the most number of Left-handed batsmen in Tests: 192
- Australia's Claire Polosak became the 1st Female Match Official in a Men's Test Match.
- Mayank Agarwal became the 3rd Fastest Indian Player to score 1000 runs
- Cheteshwar Pujara became the 11th Indian to cross 6000 runs in Test Cricket
- Ravindra Jadeja became only the 3rd Player to play at least 50 games for India in all 3 formats of Cricket.
- Natarajan became the 1st Indian Cricketer to make International Debut across all 3 formats of the Game during the same tour

**Important** – New Zealand became World No.1 Test Team for the 1st Time in history.

### India to host 2022 AFC Women's Football Asia Cup

India has got the hosting rights from Asian Football Confederation (b) to host **2022's Women's Football**





**Asia Cup.** The event is planned to start **from 20th January, 2022 to 6th February, 2022.** For the first time the event will feature **12 teams** from across Asia. Ahmedabad and Navi Mumbai are the two possible venues to hold 2022 AFC's Women's Football Asia Cup.

**Note-** Till 2018's Women's Asia Cup, which was hosted by Jordan, only 8 teams participated.

**About 2022 Women's Asia Cup:**

**i.** This event will act as a qualifier to the **2023 FIFA Women's World Cup** that is to be held in **Australia and New Zealand.**

**ii.** India will host the AFC Women's Asia Cup in 2022, for the second time only after it was hosted in 1980. In 1980 India hosted the Women's Football Asia Cup in Calicut (now Kozhikode), Kerala.

**iii.** India was the runner up in the 1980 event, Chinese Taipei won the 1980 Women's Football Asia Cup.

**iv.** The best four teams from the 2022 Women's Asian Cup, along with Australia, will take part in the 2023 Women's World Cup.

## Obituaries

### **Buta Singh, Senior Congress Leader, Former Home Minister & Governor of Bihar Passed Away at 86**

**Buta Singh**, Senior leader of Indian National Congress and former **Home Minister** passed away at the age of 86 in Delhi. He was an 8-time Lok Sabha MP and also served as the governor of Bihar. He was in public service for a long time and served under 4 prime ministers. He was born on March 21, 1934 in Jalandhar district, Punjab, British India.



- The 4 Prime Ministers for whom he served include, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, P.V. Narasimha Rao, Manmohan Singh.

#### **About Buta Singh:**

##### **Party**

Before joining the congress, he was in the Shiromani Akali Dal party, earlier to which was a Communist.

##### **Constituency**

i. He was first elected to the 3rd Lok Sabha in 1962, from the Moga constituency (Punjab).

#### **Key Positions held**

- i. He has held many key positions including, Union Deputy Minister, Railways. Union Deputy Minister, Commerce.
- ii. He also served as the national president of the Scheduled Caste Commission, Union Minister of State, Supply and Sports (Independent Charge) and Union Cabinet Minister, Parliamentary Affairs, Sports and Works and Housing among others.

### **Col Narendra 'Bull' Kumar, Ace Mountaineer Who Helped India to Secure Siachen Glacier Passed Away at 87**

Padma Shri awardee, Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar, an iconic mountaineer who played a vital role in securing the Siachen Glacier for India passed away at the age of 87 in Delhi due to age related ailments. He was born on 8th December 1933 in Rawalpindi, now in Pakistan.



- In 1964, he was the **first Indian to climb Mount Nanda Devi**. He climbed Mount Everest in 1965, Mount Blanc (highest peak in the Alps), and later Mount Kangchenchanga.

#### **About Col Narendra 'Bull' Kumar:**

- i. Col Narendra 'Bull' Kumar was one of the first officers to land the Siachen glacier as a part of a mountaineering expedition.
- ii. He contributed in convincing the military and political leaders of India about the strategic importance of the Siachen glacier.
- iii. His observations during his expeditions were published in "The Illustrated Weekly of India" in 1983. This

was the first public acknowledgement of the situations in the Siachen glaciers.

**Note:**

The Indian Army launched the “**Operation Meghdoot**” in 1984 based on the maps and videos of Col Narendra ‘Bull’ Kumar and secured the Siachen Glacier.

**Awards and Honours:**

- i. The government of India honoured Col Narendra ‘Bull’ Kumar with the **Padma Shri** in **1965**
- ii. The Indian Army honoured him with **Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM)** distinction in all three services, an honour at the rank of a colonel.
- iii. He also received the **Kirti Chakra** and **Ati Vishisht Seva Medal**.

**Neil Sheehan, an American Journalist and Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author Passed Away at 84**

Cornelius Mahoney ‘**Neil**’ **Sheehan**, an American journalist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author **passed away** at the age of 84 in Washington D.C., United States(US) due to complications from Parkinson’s disease. He was born on October 27, 1936 in Massachusetts, US.

i. He gained popularity when he obtained Pentagon Papers for New York Times and became the first to do so.

ii. Military analyst Daniel Ellsberg granted Sheehan the access to the critical documents in 1971.

**About Neil Sheehan:**

- i. He served in the U.S. Army from 1959 to 1962.
- ii. He worked as a war correspondent in Vietnam for United Press International (UPI) and The New York Times.

**Books Authored**

i. He authored many books including ‘A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam’(1988) an account of the Vietnam War. It was edited by Robert Loomis and published by Random House. It took him 15 years to write this book.

ii. His last book was ‘A Fiery Peace in a Cold War: Bernard Schriever and the Ultimate Weapon’.

**Awards**

He received many awards including National Book Award for Nonfiction in 1988 and the Pulitzer Prize for Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction in 1989 for his book ‘A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam’.

**About Pentagon Papers:**

It is officially titled as, ‘Report of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Vietnam Task Force’, is a United States Department of Defense history of the United States’ political and military involvement in Vietnam from 1945 to 1967.

**What is Parkinson’s disease?**

It is a condition in which parts of the brain become progressively damaged over many years.

**Madhavsinh Solanki, Former Union Minister & 3 time CM of Gujarat Passed Away at 94**

**Madhavsinh Solanki**, a **former** Chief Minister(CM) of **Gujarat** who served for **3 terms** passed away at the age of 94 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. He held portfolios as **union minister of Planning (1988-89) and external affairs (1991-92)**, while being a



member of Rajya Sabha from 1988 to 1994. He belongs to Indian National Congress(INC) party. He was born on 30 July 1927 in Gujarat.

- He was the longest-serving Chief Minister of Gujarat before Narendra Modi, who is the current PM of India.

#### **About Madhavsinh Solanki:**

- i.He was known for KHAM(Kshatriya, Harijan, Adivasi, Muslim) theory.
- ii.He served as the CM of Gujarat from 24 December 1976 to 10 April 1977 later from 7 June 1980 to 6 July 1985 and 10 December 1989 – 4 March 1990.
- iii.He played a vital role in Gujarat politics for decades.
- iv.He led Congress to its greatest victory in the legislative assembly in 1985, by winning 149 of 182 seats. The record remains till date.

#### **Padma Bhushan Awardee Prof Shashikumar M. Chitre, Renowned Astrophysicist & Mathematician Passed Away at 84**

On January 11, 2021 **Prof Shashikumar Madhusudan(M.) Chitre**, globally renowned **astrophysicist** and **mathematician** passed away at the age of 84 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He is the recipient of **Padma Bhushan**. He was born on May 7, 1936 in India.

#### **About Prof Shashikumar M. Chitre:**

##### **Professor**

He retired as a senior professor from the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, in 2001. He served as the visiting professor of many universities across the world namely, University of Columbia, University of Virginia among others.

##### **Pivotal Role**

He was instrumental to establish the University of Mumbai – Department of Atomic Energy Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences (UM-DAE CEBS) in the Kalina campus of the university.

##### **Research Works**

- i.His scientific research was focused on solar physics, astrophysics and gravitational lensing.
- ii.He performed extensive research on the Sun's magnetic activity cycle, the solar dynamo theory, and the role of neutrals in the solar atmosphere.

##### **Key Position**

Among other posts, he served as the president of Astronomical Society of India & chairman of Indian National Committee for Astronomy and of Bombay Association for Science Education.

##### **Honours**

- i.He received many awards including Padma Bhushan in 2012 for Science and Engineering & Indian National Science Academy(INSA) Vainu Bappu Memorial Medal – 1995 among others.

#### **Padma Awardee Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan, Legendary Indian Classical Vocalist & Musician, Passed Away at 89**

On January 17, 2021 **Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan**, Legendary Indian classical vocalist and musician



passed away at the age of 89 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He was a renowned vocalist and musician of Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana of **Hindustani classical** music. He was born on March 3, 1931 in Badaun in Uttar Pradesh.

- He is a recipient of Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibushan.

#### **About Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan:**

##### **Career**

- i. He made his debut in the music industry with his song, 'Chand Pretticha' in Marathi.
- ii. From 1957, he became a playback singer for Marathi and Gujarati films.
- iii. He sang for films 'Umr-ao Jaan', 'Bhuvan Shome' and 'Badnaam Basti' among others.

##### **Mentored**

He has mentored leading singers of the Hindi film industry namely Lata Mangeshkar, Geeta Dutt, Asha Bhosle, Hariharan, A.R. Rahman and Sonu Nigam among others.

##### **Biography**

He along with Namrata Gupta Khan authored his autobiography titled 'A Dream I Lived Alone'

##### **Awards**

He is a recipient of many awards including, Padma Shri in 1991, Padma Bhushan in 2006 and Padma Vibushan in 2018 for arts among others.

He also received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2003.

#### **Padma Awardee Dr V Shanta, Renowned Indian Oncologist & Chairman of Cancer Institute (WIA)**

##### **Passed Away at 93**

On January 19, 2021 **Dr V Shanta**, a renowned **Indian oncologist** and **chairman** of **Cancer Institute (WIA)**, Adyar, Chennai, TamilNadu passed away at the age of 93 in Chennai. She is the recipient of Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibushan.

She was born on 11th March 1927, at Mylapore, Chennai.

- She is well known for her endeavors to provide accessibility to good quality and affordable cancer treatment to all patients in India.

#### **About Dr V Shanta:**

##### **Association with Adyar Cancer Institute**

Since 1955, she has been associated with Adyar Cancer Institute and played a pivotal role in the development of the institute.

##### **Member of Committees**

She was a member of many national and international committees on health and medicine, including the Advisory committee on health of the World Health Organization(WHO).

##### **Awards & Honours**

- i. She received many national and international awards including Padma Shri in 1986, Padma Bhushan in 2006 and Padma Vibhushan in 2016 for Medicine.
- ii. She also received the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2005.
- iii. She was elected as the fellow of National Academy of Medical Sciences, Delhi.



**About Cancer Institute (WIA):**

It was founded by DR Muthulakshmi Reddy, the 1st woman in India to graduate in medicine.

**Narendra Chanchal, Popular Indian Bhajan Singer Passed Away at 80**

**Narendra Chanchal, Indian singer** who is popular for his devotional songs(**bhajan**) passed away at the age of 80 in New Delhi, Delhi. He also sang songs in Hindi films.

He was born on October 16, 1940 in Amritsar, Punjab.

**About Narendra Chanchal:**

- i. His popular bollywood songs include 'Chalo Bulava Aaya Hai' for the film Avtaar(1983) and 'Beshak Mandir Masjid Todo' for the film Bobby(1973).
- ii. He released his biography titled 'Midnight Singer Narendra Chanchal' that describes his life, struggles and hardships leading to achievements. The book was authored by Georgy Bhaala
- iii. He won a Filmfare Award for Best Male Playback Singer for the song sung in Bobby.
- iv. He has earned honorary citizenship of the US state of Georgia.



## Important Days with theme

**3rd World Braille Day – 4th January 2021**

- i. The United Nations(UN) **World Braille Day** is annually observed on **4th January**, to promote and create awareness about the importance of **Braille** as a means of communication in the complete realization of the human rights of the visually impaired and partially sighted people.
- ii. This year (2021) marks the **3rd edition** of the World Braille Day.
- iii. The day marks the birth anniversary of **Louis Braille**, the French educator and the inventor of **Braille language**, a system of reading and writing for the visually impaired.
- iv. The **first Word Braille Day** was observed on 4th January 2019.

**Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2021 & 16th PBD Convention 2021 held on January 9, 2021**

- i. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (**PBD**) **2021** was celebrated on January 9, 2021.
- ii. The Day is celebrated once in every two years to strengthen the participation of the overseas Indian community with the government of India and reconnect them with their roots.
- iii. During this day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated **PBD Convention 2021** virtually in New Delhi, a flagship event of the Ministry of External Affairs.
- iv. This year(2021) marks the **16th PBD convention**. Earlier PBD was celebrated in the year 2019. **Theme of the 16th PBD Convention 2021**– “Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat”.
- v. President Santokhi of Suriname was the chief guest of the PBD Convention 2021.
- vi. In the valedictory session of the PBD celebrations, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA) 2021 was conferred by President of India, Ram Nath Kovind.



**World Hindi day 2021: January 10**

**i. World Hindi Day** (Vishwa Hindi Divas) is annually celebrated on **January 10** across the world to promote Hindi language worldwide and to present Hindi as an international language.

**ii.** The then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared January 10 as World Hindi Day in 2006.

**Why January 10?**

On this day, the 1st World Hindi Conference was held in Nagpur, Maharashtra in 1975.

**National Youth Day 2021: January 12**

**i. National Youth Day** (Yuva Diwas) is celebrated annually on **January 12** across India to recognise and honour the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.

**ii.** The day also aims to encourage youth in India to become a better person and achieve an honourable life that contributed to the development of the country.

**iii.** This year (2021) marks the **158th birth anniversary** of Swami Vivekananda.

**Why January 12?**

On this day, Swami Vivekananda was born in 1863 in Calcutta, Bengal Presidency, British India (currently- Kolkata, West Bengal, India)

**India Celebrates 73rd Army Day – 15th January 2021**

**i.** Indian Army annually celebrates the **Army Day** on **15th January** to honour the contribution and sacrifices of the Indian Soldiers who lost their lives in the line of duty towards the nation.

**ii.** The **15th January 2021** marks the celebration of the **73rd Army Day** by the Indian Army.

**iii.** On 15th January **1949**, Lieutenant General **KM Cariappa** was appointed as the first Indian Commander in Chief of the Indian Army who took over from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India.

**iv.** The soldiers of the Indian Army showcased the drone swarming capabilities using 75 indigenously designed and developed drones and executed an array of Artificial Intelligence (AI) enabled simulated offensive missions.

**First Parakram Diwas – 23rd January 2021**

**i.** On 23rd January 2021, **First Parakram Diwas or Courage Day** was observed. Ministry of Culture and Tourism published the gazette notification to annually observe the 23rd January as Parakram Diwas starting from 2021. The day honours and remembers the contributions of Netaji towards the nation.

**ii.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi, addressed the inaugural ceremony of Parakram Diwas at the event organised at Victoria Memorial in Kolkata, West Bengal.

**iii.** A high level panel of 85 members, headed by PM Modi, has been formed to plan the year-round programmes to celebrate the 125th birth anniversary of Subhash Chandra Bose.



iv. PM Modi released the **commemorative coin** and **postage stamp** to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji.

### International Day of Education 2021 – 24th January

- i. The United Nations (UN)'s **International Day of Education** is annually observed on **24th January** to celebrate the role of education for peace and development.
- ii. The annual celebration of this day is organised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in partnership with partners like Global Partnership for Education and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies (CRI).
- iii. The theme of the 3rd International day of Education is “**Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation**”.
- iv. The events to celebrate the **3rd International day of Education** by UNESCO on **25th January 2021** at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris and New York.

### 13th National Girl Child Day – January 24 2021; National Girl Child Week – January 21 to 26, 2021

- i. **National Girl Child Day** is observed annually on **January 24** to raise awareness about the rights of the girl child and importance of their education, health and nutrition. The year 2021 marks **13th National Girl Child Day**.
  - ii. The initiative was started by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2008.
  - iii. **National Girl Child Week** is being celebrated from **January 21 to 26, 2021**.
  - iv. The Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) in India has improved by **16 points** from 918 (2014-15) to 934 (2019-20).
- Initiatives Launched**

- Rajasthan Govt has initiated a new scheme called Ek Paudha Suposhit Beti Ke Naam or A plant on the name of well nourished daughter' under BBBP scheme.
- Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched a scheme namely, ‘**PANKH**(Protection Awareness Nutrition Knowledge Health) **Abhiyan**’ under the BBBP scheme to support the girl child's empowerment and their growth.

### 11th National Voters Day – 25th January 2021

- i. The **National Voters Day** is annually celebrated across India on **25th January** to spread awareness among the voters and to promote informed participation in the electoral process. 25th January 2021, marks the celebration of the 11th National Voters Day by Election Commission of India (ECI).
- ii. The theme of the National Voters Day 2021 is “**Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed**”.
- iii. President Ram Nath Kovind awarded the **2020-2021 National Awards** for the Best Electoral Practices.
- iv. Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, launched the **e-EPIC**(Elector Photo Identity Card) programme and distributed e-EPCI and he also felicitated and handed over the **EPIC** to 5 new voters.



### About Election Commission of India:

Chief Election Commissioner– Sunil Arora

**Election Commissioner**– Sushil Chandra & Rajiv Kumar

**Headquarters**– New Delhi

### National Tourism Day 2021 – 25th January

i. National Tourism Day is annually observed across India on 25th January to encourage tourism in India and to highlight the role of tourism in the economic development of the nation.

ii. The theme of National Tourism Day 2021 is “**Dekho Apna Desh**”.

iii. In India the Tourism Department was established under the Ministry of Tourism and Communication in 1958.

iv. Union Minister of Tourism, Prahlad Singh Patel announced a branch of Indian Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering (IISM) in Kargil, Ladakh to encourage the local talent to achieve their dreams.

### Ministry of Tourism:

**Minister of State (IC)**– Prahlad Singh Patel

### Overview of 72nd Republic Day of India – 26 January, 2021

On January 26, 2021 India celebrated its 72nd Republic Day. On this date, in 1950 the Constitution of India came into effect by replacing the Government of India Act (1935).

- The Constitution was adopted by the Indian Constituent Assembly on 26 November, 1949 and came into effect on 26th January, 1950 making India a fully democratic republic.
- For the 1st time, a 122-member **Bangladeshi Triservice force** Contingent participated in the Republic Day Parade.
- On the eve of 72nd Republic Day Celebration i.e 26th January, 2021, President Ram Nath Kovind approved 455 Gallantry awards & other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel.
- **UT of Ladakh** presented its First-ever Tableau at the Republic Day Parade, since its formation in 2019.

### Chief Guest of 72nd Republic Day Celebrations:

This is the 1st time in 55 years that the Republic Day Celebrations took place without a Chief Guest.

- The last time a Republic Day Celebration was held without a Chief Guest was in 1966.

### 73rd Martyrs' Day – 30th January 2021

i. The Martyrs' Day which is also known as “Shaheed Diwas” is annually observed across India on 30th January to pay respect to the martyrs who lost their lives during India's freedom struggle. The day also to mark the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

ii. The 30th January 2021 marks the 73rd Martyrs Day or Shaheed Diwas.

iii. As a tribute to the Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi, the film divisions streamed “**Gandhi Rediscovered**”, a 27 minutes documentary in Both Hindi and English, which discuss the scope of Swadeshi.

