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# MANTHAN

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**A General Awareness Weekly**

**13<sup>th</sup> December to 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2021**

# PREFACE

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**Dear Students,**

The 'Current Affairs' section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the Week. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfill aspirations.

**Happy Reading**

**Team CL**



Career  
Launcher

## National



### Haiderpur Wetland added to Ramsar site; total tally goes up to 47

- **Haiderpur Wetland of Western Uttar Pradesh has been recognized as 47<sup>th</sup> Ramsar site in the country and 10<sup>th</sup> in Uttar Pradesh and 2463<sup>rd</sup> in the world, which has been confirmed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.**
- **India's efforts to improve its wetlands and preserve its ecology is bearing fruits as India is now a land of 47 Ramsar sites. The latest on the list is Uttar Pradesh's Haiderpur wetland. It has been added to the list of Indian wetlands of international importance.**
- **The human-made Haiderpur wetland spreads over an area of 6,908 hectares in Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh. Formed in 1984 on a floodplain of the River Ganga on the Madhya Ganga Barrage, the wetland is located within the boundaries of Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary.**
- **In terms of supporting life, the wetland is a habitat for numerous animals and plant species. It homes more than 30 species of plants, over 300 species of birds including 102 waterbirds, more than 40 fish, and more than ten mammal species. Further, it is home to more than 15 globally threatened species such as the critically endangered gharial, endangered hog deer, black-bellied tern, steppe eagle, Indian skimmer, and gold mahseer.**

**The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. It is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It came into force for India on February 1, 1982. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites. The aim of the Ramsar list is to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.**

### Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurates Digital Platform for Management of complaints- 'LokpalOnline'

- **Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurated' a digital Platform for Management of Complaints called 'LokpalOnline' that can be accessed by all citizens of the country and complaints can be filed from anywhere, anytime at <http://lokpalonline.gov.in>.**
- **LokpalOnline is an end-to-end digital solution for the management of complaints against public servants filed under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013. Justice Ghose said that the LokpalOnline is a web-based facility, which will quicken the disposal of complaints in an accountable, transparent and efficient manner with benefits to all stakeholders.**

**A Lokpal ("defender of people" or "People's Friend") is an anti-corruption authority or body of ombudsman who represents the public interest in the Republic of India. The current and the first Chairperson of Lokpal is Pinaki Chandra Ghose. The Lokpal has jurisdiction over central government to inquire into allegations of corruption against its public functionaries and for matters connected to corruption. The Lokpal and Lokayuktas**

Act was passed in 2013 with amendments in parliament, following the Jan Lokpal movement led by Anna Hazare in 2011. The Lokpal is responsible for enquiring into corruption charges at the national level while the Lokayukta performs the same function at the state level. The age of Lokpal (chairperson or member) on the date of assuming office as the chairperson or a member should not be less than 45 years.

### Centre accepts plea, grants Mithila Makhana GI tag

- The Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Central ministry of commerce has accepted the plea to rename Bihar Makhana as Mithila Makhana and also suggested further amendments in the brand logo to better reflect its origins apart from identifying and protecting the product's Geographical Indications (GI) rights. The development has put an end to the controversy over the branding of the mithila region's one of the most famous produce in makhana or fox nut.
- The war over Makhana's GI tagging started after the Sabour based Bihar Agriculture University (BAU) filed an application on behalf of Purnia based fox nut growers' association – also known as the Mithilanchal Makhana Utpadak Sangh (MMUS) – arguing for naming their produce as Bihar Makhana for the welfare of fox nut growers from the state.

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country). India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003. GIs have been defined under Article 22 (1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: "Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin." The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorised users (or at least those residing inside the geographic territory) are allowed to use the popular product name. Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004–2005. The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years. It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each.

### India's Harnaaz Sandhu wins Miss Universe 2021 crown

- India's Harnaaz Sandhu has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000. 21-year-old Harnaaz has won the Miss Universe crown at the contest held in Eilat, Israel. Harnaaz edged out contestants from Paraguay and South Africa to bag the crown.
- India had earlier won the coveted crown twice with Sushmita Sen bagging the title in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000. The 21-year-old Harnaaz, hailing from Chandigarh, has now joined the league of these incredible women.
- Ms Sandhu, who started her journey in pageantry at the age of 17, has previously been crowned Miss Diva 2021, Femina Miss India Punjab 2019 and was even placed in the Top 12 at Femina Miss India 2019. She has also worked in Punjabi films like "Yaara Diyan Poo Baran" and "Bai Ji Kuttange".

Miss Universe is an annual international beauty pageant that is run by the United States-based Miss Universe Organization. It is one of the most watched pageants in the world with an estimated audience of over 500 million viewers in over 190 territories. Along with Miss World, Miss International, and Miss Earth, Miss Universe is one of the Big Four international beauty pageants. The title "Miss Universe" was first used by the International Pageant of Pulchritude in 1926. This contest was held annually until 1935, when the Great Depression and other events preceding World War II led to its demise.

### India re-elected to International Maritime Organisation Council

- India has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for the 2022-23 biennium. India's election falls under the Category of 10 states with "the largest interest in international seaborne trade", alongside Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The 32<sup>nd</sup> Assembly of IMO is currently meeting at the IMO headquarters in London.

- The newly elected Council will meet formally at the conclusion of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Assembly for the IMO's 126<sup>th</sup> session, when it will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair for the next biennium. India is re-elected to International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council, the High Commission of India in London said in a Twitter statement following the election.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating shipping. The IMO's primary purpose is to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for shipping and its remit today includes maritime safety, environmental concerns, legal matters, technical co-operation, maritime security and the efficiency of shipping. The IMO was established following agreement at a UN conference held in Geneva in 1948 and the IMO came into existence ten years later, meeting for the first time in 1959. Headquartered in London, United Kingdom, the IMO currently has 174 member states and three associate members. Kitack Lim is the current South Korean secretary general of the IMO.

## PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Kashi Vishwanath corridor in Varanasi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in March 2019 and the project is ready for inauguration in a record 33 months.
- The idea behind the Corridor was to decongest the route to the historic Shiva temple and make pathways for the comfort of pilgrims coming for darshan along with giving the temple a grand look. The Corridor connects the ancient Kashi Vishwanath Temple with the two ghats on river Ganga.
- The corridor has been built over an area of 5,000 hectares and the estimated cost of this project is close to 800 crore rupees. The inauguration ceremony is named Divya Kashi, Bhavya Kashi i.e. Divine Kashi, Grand Kashi. The inauguration was on a grand level with Diwali-like celebrations.

The Kashi Vishwanath Temple is one of the most famous Hindu temples dedicated to Lord Shiva. It is located in Vishwanath Gali of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh in India. The Temple stands on the western bank of the holy river Ganga, and is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas, or Jyotirlingams, the holiest of Shiva Temples. The main deity is known by the names Shri Vishwanath and Vishweshwara (IAST: Vishveshvara or Vishveshvur) literally meaning Lord of the Universe. Varanasi was called Kashi ("shining") in ancient times, and hence the temple is popularly called Kashi Vishwanath Temple. The etymology of the name Vishveshvara is Vishva: Universe, Ishvara: lord, one who has dominion. The current structure was built on an adjacent site by the Maratha ruler, Ahilya Bai Holkar of Indore in the year 1780.

## Climate Change in New Syllabus for Maharashtra Schools

- The Maharashtra government has announced a new syllabus for classes 1-8 to teach the students about climate change and make them conscious about tackling the issues emanating from it.
- Under the Majhi Vasundhara Abhiyan, which aims to inculcate climate-conscious and green values in the young minds of Maharashtra, the Department of Environment and Climate Change and UNICEF have developed the 'Majhi Vasundhara' curriculum on environment for the school students. The new syllabus also aims at involving the students in the efforts for climate disaster mitigation.
- Speaking at an event to hand over the syllabus to the school education department, State Environment Minister Aditya Thackeray said, "In this hour of climate emergency, the survival of the human race on Earth entirely depends on our actions. Introducing this curriculum is our attempt at getting the next generation to start with a green thumb and be proactively involved in a pro-earth lifestyle." This initiative focuses on all the five elements of nature known as "Panchmahabhutas", which includes bhumi (land), jal (water), vayu (air), agni (fire), akash (sky).

Maharashtra is India's second-most populous state and third-largest state by area. Nagpur is Maharashtra's second capital and hosts the winter session of the state legislature. Pune is its cultural capital. Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray takes oath as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Uddhav Thackeray is the first of his family to be the chief minister of Maharashtra. His father Bal Thackeray founded the Shiv Sena over five decades ago. Bhagat Singh Koshiyari is serving as the current Governor of Maharashtra.



## IRCTC's Shri Ramayan Yatra' becomes world first train to get vegetarian certification

- The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)'s 'Shri Ramayana Yatra' train on the Ramayana circuit commenced from Delhi's Safdarjung railway station.
- In order to encourage vegetarian friendly railway services, the Sattvik Council of India in association with Bureau Veritas (global audit partner) provided 'vegetarian certification' to 'Shri Ramayan Yatra' at Safdarjung railway station, New Delhi. 'Shri Ramayana Yatra' theme based pilgrimage tour by Dekho Apna Desh Deluxe AC Tourist train become the first vegetarian friendly train.

Indian Railways (IR) is a government-owned-railway system under the ownership of Ministry of Railways, Government of India that operates India's national railway system. It manages the Fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. 45,881 km (28,509 mi) or 71% of all the broad-gauge routes are electrified with 25 kV 50 Hz AC electric traction as of 1 April 2021. The government has committed to electrifying India's entire rail network by 2023–24, and become a "net zero (carbon emissions) railway" by 2030. Ashwini Vaishnaw is the former Indian Administrative Service officer currently serving as the Minister of Railways, Communications and Electronics & Information Technology of India, since 8 July 2021. In June 2019, he became a member of the Parliament of India representing Odisha State in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house.

## Durga Puja in UNESCO's Intangible Heritage list

- Durga Puja is a classic fusion of religion and culture, regarded with a lot of pride and celebrated predominantly by the Bengali community. Many regard it as an emotion more than a festival. While it is celebrated in many parts of the world, too, an official global recognition was impending. But now, the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage has inscribed 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on the Representative List of the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during its 16<sup>th</sup> session being held in Paris, France. The Committee commended Durga Puja for its initiatives to involve marginalized groups, and individuals as well as women in their participation in safeguarding the element.
- Durga Puja is a five-day festival which begins on the fifth night of the nine-day Navratri festival and ends on the tenth day, which is Dashami. During this time, people collectively worship and invoke Goddess Durga, who is regarded as the feminine energy of the cosmos, also known as 'Shakti'. Though originating in West Bengal, which has the largest Bengali community in the country, the festival — as mentioned earlier — is celebrated in many other parts of India, and also the world. During this time, intricately-designed clay models of the Goddess are worshipped in 'pandals' and pavilions where people get together. Folk music, culinary, craft, and performing arts traditions are a part of the celebration.
- Thus Durga Puja, an ancient festival celebrated in the country for many centuries, has found a place on this list. In total, 14 Intangible Cultural Heritage elements from the country have now been inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List.
- The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has 492 elements currently. According to a press release, it includes "forms of expression that testify to the diversity of intangible heritage and raises awareness of its importance". UNESCO intends to enhance the "visibility of communities' cultural practices and know-how", aiming to "safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of communities globally".

UNESCO established its Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage with the aim of ensuring better protection of important intangible cultural heritages worldwide and the awareness of their significance. The list was established in 2008 when the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage took effect. UNESCO says, Intangible Cultural Heritage includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, the arts, the sciences, and culture. It has 193 member states and 11 associate members, as well as partners in the non-governmental, intergovernmental, and private sector. Headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France, UNESCO has 53 regional field offices and 199 national commissions that facilitate its

global mandate. UNESCO was founded in 1945 as the successor to the League of Nations' International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. Its constitution establishes the agency's goals, governing structure, and operating framework. UNESCO's founding mission, which was shaped by the Second World War, is to advance peace, sustainable development and human rights by facilitating collaboration and dialogue among nations. **Audrey Azoulay has been serving as the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) since 2017, becoming the second female leader of the organization.** She previously served as France's Minister of Culture in the government of Prime Minister Manuel Valls from 2016 to 2017.

### Centre approves implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26

- **Union Cabinet has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26.** The scheme will **benefit about 22 lakh farmers**, including 2.5 lakh Schedule Caste and two lakh Schedule Tribe farmers.
- **Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** said, this decision will bring positive change to lakhs of families. **Central funding of 90 percent of water component for two national projects** has been **provisioned**.
- **These are Renuka Ji Dam Project in Himachal Pradesh and Lakhwar Multipurpose Project in Uttarakhand.** Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, **Har Khet ko Paani** and **Watershed Development components** have been **approved for continuation during 2021-26**.
- Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme a flagship programme of the government, **aims for financial support to irrigation projects.** Total additional irrigation potential creation targeted during 2021-26 under AIBP is 13.88 lakh hectares. Apart from **focused completion of 60 ongoing projects including their 30.23 lakh hectare command area development**, additional projects can also be taken up. The inclusion criteria have been relaxed for projects under tribal and drought-prone areas.

### Karnataka to get its first Greenfield highway

- **The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has **floats tenders for the development of a six-lane access controlled Greenfield highway from Badal village in Kalaburagi district, to Singanodi in Raichur district, a total distance of 177 km.** This will be the **first access controlled highway in the state, and first six-lane highway in North Karnataka.**

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, set up in 1995 (Act 1988) and is responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,32,499 km in India. It is a nodal agency of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. NHAI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation for satellite mapping of highways.

### Chitkara University organizes world's first AI-technology based 'HACKDAY 2021'

- Giving a boost to technological innovation, **Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, organised "HACKDAY 2021" under its Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) 'JAZBA',** which has been formed under the aegis of Chitkara University Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development (CEED).
- **The event provided the students a platform to explore their potential** as 17 teams of potential start-ups from CSE first year took part in the **world's first AI-technology based hackathon.**
- **The first prize of HACKDAY was secured by the team "Pirates of Fire" founded by Harsh Srivastava.** The team's idea revolved around an AI-based fire extinguisher robot which will know the occurrence of fire and will be able to extinguish it with sound. The team won soft commitment of Rs. 1 crore from the jury and investor Akhilesh Jain and a confirmed commitment of Rs. 1 Lakh towards prototype development.
- **The second prize was won by team "Goal diggers" founded by Aditya Sharma.** This team worked on a project which will help people suffering from Alzheimer's disease and also help in curing depression.
- **Team "The weaponries" founded by Abhinav Sehgal won the third prize.** Their idea was to introduce AI holographic projection into the optical sight of a soldier by a new product – 'HARA' that is based on hologram, to match the requirements of future warfare.

## Bill likely on increasing legal marriage age of women from 18 to 21 years

- According to sources the **government of India has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years, bringing it at par with that of men.** The Union Cabinet had cleared a proposal to bring in uniformity in the marriageable age of men and women.
- The government is likely to bring a bill in the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament to **amend the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.** The proposed bill may also seek to make consequential changes to various personal laws relating to marriage of various communities to ensure a uniform marriage age.
- **For Hindus, The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 sets 18 years as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom. In Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid. The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 also prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men, respectively. For the new age of marriage to be implemented, these laws are expected to be amended.**
- **As of now, the legal age of women to get married is 18 while that for men is 21 years.** The decision came a year after Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that the government was deliberating on what should be the minimum age for marriage of women. **The decision is based on the recommendation of a four-member task force led by former Samata Party chief Jaya Jaitly.**

**The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, passed on 28 September 1929, in the Imperial Legislative Council of India, fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 years and boys at 18 years. In 1949, after India's independence, it was amended to 15 for girls, and in 1978 to 18 for girls and 21 for boys. It is popularly known as the Sharda Act, after its sponsor Harbilas Sharda. Har Bilas Sardha (1867–1955) was an Indian academic, judge and politician. He is best known for having introduced the Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929). It came into effect six months later on 1 April 1930 and applied to all of British India. It was a result of social reform movement in India. Despite strong opposition from the British authorities, the legislation was passed by the British Indian Government which had a majority of Indians. However, it lacked implementation from the British Indian government, largely due to the fear of British authorities losing support from their loyal Hindu and Muslim communalist groups.**

## Jharkhand: Hemant Soren launches sports scheme for Maoist-hit areas

- Launching the **Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY)** scheme, Chief Minister Hemant Soren said the state has been “portrayed in a poor light by some”, who are not aware of Jharkhand's rich tribal culture.
- The scheme, which was **launched in Saraikela-Kharsawan, West Singhbhum, Khunti, Gumla and Simdega districts**, will be replicated in other districts as well. **Nineteen of the state's 24 districts are affected by Left Wing Extremism.** According to the scheme, **boys and girls in the 14-19 age group from villages to ward level will be registered under the scheme**, and given opportunities to display their skills in basketball, volleyball, hockey and athletics.

**Jharkhand (meaning ‘the land of forests’)** is a state in eastern India. The state shares its border with the states of Bihar to the north, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Chhattisgarh to the west, Odisha to the south and West Bengal to the east. **The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub-capital. Hemant Soren is the current Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Ramesh Bais is serving as the current Governor of Jharkhand. The state was formed on 15 November 2000, from the territory that had previously been part of Bihar.**

## Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Index: West Bengal, Kerala top respective categories

- **West Bengal and Kerala were toppers in the large and small states categories respectively, in the ‘Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy,’ released.** The index is an **indicator of literacy among children below 10 years.** There are four categories in which regions have been divided – large states, small states, Union Territories and North East.
- **The report on the ‘Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy’ was prepared by ‘Institute for Competitiveness’ and released by Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) chairman**



**Bibek Debroy.** It said the challenge of ensuring quality Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for all is daunting, yet not impossible to achieve. “The top-scoring regions are Kerala (67.95) and West Bengal (58.95) in small and large states, respectively,” the EAC-PM said in a statement.

- **Lakshadweep (52.69) and Mizoram (51.64) are top-scoring regions in the Union Territory and Northeast state category, respectively.** As far as worst performers are concerned, **Ladakh has featured at the bottom in the list of UTs, while Arunachal Pradesh came last in the North East category.**
- According to the statement, **the ‘Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy’ is the first step in this direction,** establishing an understanding of the overall state of Foundational Learning across children aged below ten years in Indian states and Union territories.
- **The Index includes five pillars comprising 41 indicators. The five pillars are – educational infrastructure, access to education, learning outcomes and governance.** The statement said out of the five pillars, it has been observed that states have performed particularly worse in governance.

### India’s first food museum

- **Thanjavur now has a new site in town, India’s first food museum. Established by the Food Corporation of India,** this museum gives visitors a tour of agriculture, cuisines and food distribution systems in India.
- Using touch screens, virtual reality sets, projector screens and other interactables, visitors can journey through the **process of food cultivation in the country and better understand what goes on our plates.**

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) is a statutory corporation created and run by the Government of India. It is under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India formed by the enactment of Food Corporation Act, 1964 by the Parliament of India. Its top official is designated as Chairman who is a central government civil servant of the IAS cadre. It was set up in 1965 with its initial headquarters at Chennai. Later this was moved to New Delhi. It also has regional centers in the capitals of the states. Important regions of the state also serve as district centers.

### Union Cabinet approves Rs.76,000-crore push for semiconductor makers

- **The Union Cabinet approved a Rs.76,000 crore scheme to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country,** taking the total amount of incentives announced for the electronics sector to Rs.2.30 lakh crore.
- The comprehensive programme for the “development of sustainable semiconductor and display ecosystem in the country” was **aimed at making India a global hub of electronic system design and manufacturing, the statement noted.**

### UP government to launch ‘happiness curriculum’ in primary schools from next session

- On the lines of Chhattisgarh and Delhi, **preparations are underway to implement the ‘happiness curriculum’ in primary schools of Uttar Pradesh** under a pilot project to make the students more sensitive towards nature, society and the country.
- The course is being developed keeping in mind the geographical and cultural conditions of Uttar Pradesh. **The happiness curriculum will be introduced to the students of classes 1 to 8. It will enable them to connect with themselves, family, society, nature and the country.**

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state’s Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.



### Tesla's Elon Musk Named Time Magazine's Person Of The Year

- Time magazine named Tesla founder and space entrepreneur Elon Musk as its person of the year, capping a roller-coaster 2021 for the technology magnate. Time first presented its Person of the Year award in 1927.
- The brash South African-born 50-year-old Elon Musk, who is also the founder and CEO space exploration company SpaceX, recently passed Amazon founder Jeff Bezos as the world's wealthiest person as the rising price of Tesla pushed his net worth to around \$300 billion. He owns about 17% of Elon Musk's stock, which sold for almost \$1,000 each.

Person of the Year (called Man of the Year or Woman of the Year until 1999) is an annual issue of the United States news magazine and website *Time* featuring a person, a group, an idea, or an object that “for better or for worse... has done the most to influence the events of the year”. Time also runs an annual reader's poll that has no effect on the selection, which is made solely by the magazine's editors. The tradition of selecting a “Man of the Year” began in 1927, with *Time* editors contemplating the news makers of the year. Mahatma Gandhi is the only Indian to be named as Time magazine “Person of the Year” for the year 1930. In 1949, Winston Churchill was named “Man of the Half-Century”, and the last issue of 1989 named Mikhail Gorbachev as “Man of the Decade”. The December 31, 1999 issue of Time named Albert Einstein the “Person of the Century”. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mahatma Gandhi were chosen as runners-up.

### US approves Indigenous name change for Colorado Mountain

- A federal panel has approved renaming a Colorado peak after a Cheyenne woman who facilitated relations between white settlers and Native American tribes in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, part of a broader campaign to replace derogatory place names across the United States.
- Mestaa'ehehe Mountain, which is pronounced “mess-taw-HAY,” bears the name of and honors an influential translator also known as Owl Woman who mediated between Native Americans and white traders and soldiers in what is now southern Colorado.
- The renaming of what was known as Squaw Mountain, 48 kilometers west of Denver, comes after US Interior Secretary Deb Haaland formally declared “squaw” a derogatory term in November and said she is taking steps to remove it from federal government use and to rename other derogatory place names. Haaland is the nation's first Native American Cabinet official.

United States of America (USA) is a federal republic composed of 50 states and capital is Washington, D.C., Donald John Trump served as 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. He became the oldest and wealthiest person ever to assume the presidency, the first without prior military or government service, and the fifth to have won the election while losing the popular vote. Joseph Robinette Biden served as the 47<sup>th</sup> vice president of the United States from 2009 to 2017. In January 2017, Barak Obama awarded Biden the Presidential Medal of Freedom with distinction. He is current and 46 the President of the United States and he is the oldest President of America.

### New Caledonia rejects independence from France in third referendum

- An independence referendum was held in New Caledonia, a French territory in the South Pacific, on 12 December 2021. The poll was the third and final to be held under the terms of the Noumea Accord, following

votes in 2018 and 2020, in which independence was rejected by 56.7% and 53.3% respectively. Voters overwhelmingly rejected independence, with 96.50% voting against independence and 3.50% for independence.

- The archipelago of about 185,000 voters, 2,000 kilometres east of Australia, was granted three independence referendums under a 1988 deal aimed at easing tensions on the islands. At stake in the vote was one of France's biggest overseas territories which is home to about 10 percent of the world's reserves of nickel, which is used to make stainless steel, batteries and mobile phones.
- The territory is also a key part of France's claim of being a Pacific power, with New Caledonia granting France rights to the surrounding ocean, as well as a military staging post. Experts suspect that an independent New Caledonia would move closer to Beijing, which has built up close economic links and political influence on other Pacific islands.

New Caledonia is a sui generis collectivity of overseas France in the southwest Pacific Ocean. Noumea is the capital and largest city of the French special collectivity of New Caledonia. Emmanuel Macron has been serving as the President of France since 14 May 2017. The CFP franc is the currency used in the French overseas collectivities of French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna.

### US, Australia, Japan to fund undersea cable in Pacific

- The United States, Australia and Japan have said they will jointly fund the construction of an undersea cable to boost internet access in three tiny Pacific countries, as the Western allies seek to counter rising Chinese influence in the region.
- The three Western allies would develop the cable to provide faster internet to Nauru, Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia. The development of the undersea cable is the latest funding commitment from the Western allies in the telecommunications sector of the Pacific.
- In 2017, Australia have spent around 137 million Australian dollars for developing better internet access in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Development of undersea cable is the latest funding commitment of Western allies in telecommunications sector of the Pacific.
- Western allies have launched this project as the US and its Indo-Pacific allies are of the views that cables laid by China might compromise regional security. Though, China has denied any intention to use commercial fibre-optic cables for spying. These fibre-optic cables have more data capacity than satellites.

A submarine communications cable is laid on sea bed in between land-based stations in a bid to carry telecommunication signals across ocean & sea stretches. First ever submarine communications cables were laid in 1850s to carry telegraphy traffic. It had established the first instant telecommunications ties between continents. Subsequent generations of cables carried telephone traffic, followed by data communications traffic. Modern cables use optical fibre technology in a bid to carry digital data, including internet, telephone and private data traffic.

### Russia blocks UN Move to treat climate as security threat

- Russia blocked a United Nations Security Council draft resolution, under negotiation for many months that for the first time would have defined climate change as a threat to peace. The resolution, which enjoyed wide-ranging support, would have significantly expanded the criteria used by the most powerful U.N. agency to justify intervening in armed conflicts around the world.
- Despite progress made to counter greenhouse gas emissions with an agreement reached at the U.N.-sponsored climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland that accord fell far short of what many scientists say will be required to curb rising temperatures and disastrous changes in weather patterns from a warming planet. Among other weaknesses, the agreement left unclear how the most vulnerable nations will be able to afford the enormous investments needed to adapt.
- The draft resolution was first proposed by Germany in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 2020. It was co-sponsored this year by Ireland and Niger, was blocked by Russia December 13, 2021, when India voted 'no' as well and China abstained from voting.



## India, Iran and Uzbekistan to develop transport corridor centred round Chabahar port

- **India, Iran and Uzbekistan discussed the further development of the transit and transportation corridor centred around the Iranian port of Chabahar** during a trilateral meeting on the **joint use of the port on the Gulf of Oman**. “The participants underlined the **important role played by Chabahar Port** during humanitarian crises as well as in enhancing regional connectivity”.
- “They also took note of the increase in **transit traffic between Central Asia and South Asia through the Shahid Beheshti Terminal, Chabahar Port** and discussed further development of transportation corridor,” the statement added, **referring to the terminal at the port operated by the Indian company, India Ports Global Limited**. The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan had triggered speculation about the viability of Chabahar port, but **external affairs minister S Jaishankar told the Lok Sabha that the port had emerged as a commercial transit hub for the region and was a “more economical and stable route” for landlocked countries to reach India and the global market.**
- **India developed the Shahid Beheshti terminal of Chabahar as part of its efforts to access Afghanistan while bypassing the territory of Pakistan.** The US granted the port a special waiver from sanctions imposed on Iran in view of its strategic importance in shipping supplies to Afghanistan.

**Chabahar Port** is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the Gulf of Oman. It serves as Iran's only oceanic port, and consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti, each of which has five berths. It is only about 170 kilometres west of the Pakistani port of Gwadar which is developed by China. Afghanistan, Iran and India signed a tripartite agreement on developing Chabahar port and setting up a trilateral transport and transit corridor in 2016. It is a key part of India's plans to enhance connectivity to Afghanistan and the Central Asian states.

## Haitian Soup Finds a Place on UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List

- The United Nations cultural agency (UNESCO) has added **Joumou Soup – Haiti's national symbol of freedom from slavery** – to its intangible heritage list, saying the soup is “so much more than just a dish”.
- UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee decided to put **Joumou on its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**. The dish, also known as giraumon soup, is made of pumpkin, vegetables, plantains, meat, pasta and spices.
- **Soup joumou is a mildly spicy soup native to Haitian cuisine. The soup is traditionally cooked with pumpkin winter squash.**

## Australia, Britain sign free trade agreement

- **Australia and Britain signed a free trade agreement that will eliminate almost all taxes on exports between the countries.** The FTA was signed at a virtual ceremony by Australian Trade Minister Dan Tehan in Adelaide and Britain's Secretary of State for International Trade Anne-Marie Trevelyan in London.
- **The deal abolishes 99 per cent of taxes on exports, saving Australia about USD 10 billion on exports including lamb, beef, sugar and dairy.** It is expected to save Britain 200 million Australian dollars (USD 144 million) a year on items such as cars, whisky and cosmetics.
- **Australian agricultural exporters also will have better access to the British market and 40 million Australian dollars (USD 29 million) a year of tariffs** will be removed from Australian wines entering the United Kingdom. Australians and Britons will find it easier to live and work in the other country.

**Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Australia's capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. Scott Morrison is the current Prime Minister of Australia. The Australian dollar is the currency of Australia.**





## RBI allows LIC to hold 9.99% stake in IndusInd Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India has approved the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to raise its stake in IndusInd Bank by up to 9.99 per cent. “The bank has received an intimation from the RBI on December 9 that it has granted its approval to Life Insurance Corporation, shareholder of the bank, who holds 4.95 per cent of the capital of the bank, to acquire up to 9.99 per cent of the total issued capital,”.
- It further mentioned this approval is in compliance with the Master Direction on ‘Prior Approval for Acquisition of Shares or Voting Rights in Private Sector Banks’ dated November 19, 2015, Master Direction on ‘Ownership in Private Sector Banks’ dated May 12, 2016, regulations of the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 and other guidelines/regulations and applicable laws.
- Meanwhile, RBI also granted approval to LIC for increasing its holding in Kotak Mahindra Bank up to 9.99 per cent and it is valid for one year. Prior to this, LIC’s holding in Kotak Mahindra Bank stood at 4.96 per cent as of September 30 and the insurance giant had also raised its stake in the private lender by 0.73 percent 3.18 percent in 2020.

**Life Insurance Corporation of India (abbreviated as LIC)** is an **Indian government owned insurance and investment corporation under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India.** The Life insurance Corporation of India was **established on September 1, 1956**, when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalized the insurance industry in India. **Over 245 insurance companies and provident societies were merged to create the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India. It is based in Mumbai.**

## North India’s first Centre of Entrepreneurship in Medi Electronics and Health Informatics to start operations in Lucknow

- Union Minister of State, Ministry of Electronics and IT, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar arrived at Lucknow and **inaugurated North India’s maiden Centre of Entrepreneurship – “MedTech” at the SG - PGI, Lucknow.**
- The centre of entrepreneurship shall **provide state of the art facilities to Startups in the field of Medi electronics and health informatics providing impetus to the startup culture in the state.** The Centre of Excellence shall provide plug and play facilities, co-working/incubation space, High Speed Internet (500MBPS), Medi electronics & Health informatics &IoT Labs, Support on Intellectual Property Rights, Assistance for Marketing and Network Outreach amongst other facilities.
- The newly built facility, in partnership with Software technology Park of India, Ministry of Electronics and IT and Government of Uttar Pradesh is strategically housed at the PGI Medical facility, providing suitable environment for the Medi electronics Startups to thrive.

## Bank of Baroda launches bob World Wave, a wearable payment solution

- **Bank of Baroda (BOB) has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) launched bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.**

- A bob World Wave wearable device will allow customers to monitor their SpO2, body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure. With bob World Wave, BOB is providing an exclusive 3-months free wellness package along with a personal health coach, doctor tele-consultation and interactive video coaching.
- The device will provide contactless payments of up to ₹5,000 in all NFC enabled PoS devices. Customers can do contactless payment above ₹5,000 using a PIN.

**Bank of Baroda (BOB) is an Indian nationalised banking and financial services company. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance. It is the fourth largest nationalised bank in India. The government of India announced the merger of Bank of Baroda, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank on September 17, 2018, to create the country's second largest lender.**

## 20-digit LEI must for cross-border transactions soon

- Starting October next year, companies will have to quote the legal entity identifier (LEI) number so as to undertaking cross-border transactions of Rs 50 crore or more.
- The LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions globally to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.
- The identifier has been introduced by the central bank in a phased manner for participants in the over-the-counter (OTC) derivative, non-derivative markets, large corporate borrowers and large value transactions in centralised payment systems.
- "In order to further harness the benefits of LEI, it has been decided that AD Category I banks, with effect from October 1, 2022, shall obtain the LEI number from the resident entities (non-individuals) undertaking capital or current account transactions of Rs 50 crore and above (per transaction) under FEMA, 1999,".

## Pune district ranks first in export of engineering goods

- Pune has ranked first in export of engineering goods in a new listing issued by the Government of India. Between April and September 2021-22, the district reported export of \$3,528.83 million worth of engineering goods, which is the highest in the country.
- The district has also been identified as a possible export hub for Purandhar figs, grapes, pharmaceutical products, etc. This initiative has seen export action plans regularly prepared for districts for such identified products and overseas markets. This would include support to local exporters and manufacturers for reaching potential buyers outside India.

## Two ITC properties become first hotels in the world to achieve net-zero carbon status

- Two of ITC's signature hotels in South India have been bestowed with a rare distinction. The hospitality group's flagship ITC Grand Chola in Chennai, and ITC Windsor in Bengaluru, have been certified with the US Green Building Council (USGBC)'s LEED Zero Carbon Certification.
- The recognition makes both hotels the only ones in the world to have a net-zero carbon status, while the 600-room ITC Grand Chola — the group's largest property — becomes the largest commercial building on the planet to be accorded the distinction. The acronym LEED stands for 'Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design'.
- Simply put, the certification implies that both hotels leave no carbon footprint on the environment on account of their eco-friendly operations and sustainable practices. The ITC Grand Chola for instance has risen to prominence for powering its electric boilers through a wind farm while using the steam emitted from the boilers in laundry services.

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

- India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up at Simhadri near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, NTPC said, the projects will be a precursor to large-scale hydrogen energy storage projects and would be useful for studying and deploying multiple microgrids in various off-grid and strategic locations of the country.

- NTPC added the hydrogen produced during sunshine hours will be stored at high pressure and electrified using a 50 Kilo Watt Solid Oxide Fuel Cell.

### MG Motors first carmaker in India to launch NFT

- MG Motor India announced its foray into the non-fungible token (NFT), making it the first carmaker in the country to launch a collection of NFTs. The carmaker said that its NFTs will be categorised into 4 “C” segments – Collectables, Community & diversity, Collaborative art, and CaaP (Car-as-a-Platform).

A non-fungible token (NFT) is a unit of data stored on a digital ledger, called a blockchain, that certifies a digital asset to be unique and therefore not interchangeable. NFTs can be used to represent items such as photos, videos, audio, and other types of digital files. Access to any copy of the original file, however, is not restricted to the buyer of the NFT. While copies of these digital items are available for anyone to obtain, NFTs are tracked on blockchains to provide the owner with a proof of ownership that is separate from copyright.

### Paytm introduces Paytm Wealth Academy for traders and investors

- The leading digital payment solution provider, Paytm has launched its first AI-powered educational platform called Paytm Wealth Academy. The company has launched the service on its trading app – Paytm Money. The Paytm Wealth Academy allows users to learn trading and financial concepts at their own pace at their level of comfort.
- The platform offers a wide catalog of courses and webinars along with personalized recommendations for users, curated to complement their existing knowledge. Paytm Wealth Academy is an educational platform designed to make financial learning intuitive and self-driven. The platform will also enable new traders to establish a ground-up understanding of financial concepts and also encourage experienced traders to stay updated with advanced trading strategies.

### Home First Finance enters into strategic co-lending partnership with Union Bank of India

- Home First Finance Company India announced that it has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with Union Bank of India for providing home loans to customers at competitive interest rates.
- The partnership aims at leveraging the strengths of both entities to provide a seamless experience to retail home loan customers in the priority sector. The tie will also enable HomeFirst to expand its product offerings to customers in the geographies it operates, while continuing to leverage its technology led customer-first approach.
- Under this partnership, Home First will originate loans as per the agreed credit policy of Union Bank of India in line with the provisions of RBI’s co-lending model. Home First will retain minimum 20% of the loan on its book while 80% will be on Union Bank’s book. Home First will act as a servicing agent for the loan accounts sourced under this partnership throughout the life cycle of the loan.

### Apple is about to become the world’s first \$3 trillion company

- Apple is on the verge of yet another major milestone. The iPhone maker is close to topping a market value of more than \$3 trillion — the first publicly traded company ever to be worth that much. Apple’s market value first crossed the \$1 trillion threshold in August 2018 and passed \$2 trillion in August 2020.

Apple Inc. is an American multinational technology company that specializes in consumer electronics, computer software and online services. Apple is the largest information technology company by revenue (totaling \$274.5 billion in 2020) and, since January 2021, the world’s most valuable company. As of 2021, Apple is the fourth-largest PC vendor by unit sales and fourth-largest smartphone manufacturer. It is one of the Big Five American information technology companies, alongside Amazon, Alphabet (Google), Meta (Facebook), and Microsoft. Apple was founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne to develop and sell Wozniak’s Apple I personal computer. It was incorporated by Jobs and Wozniak as Apple Computer, Inc. It is headquartered in Silicon Valley, California.





## Inventions/Discoveries

### Nasa launches first-of-a-kind mission to kick an asteroid off course

- American space agency Nasa launched a mission to deliberately smash a spacecraft into an asteroid from California. “Asteroid Dimorphos: we’re coming for you!” Nasa tweeted after the launch. This may sound like science fiction, but the DART (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) is a real proof-of-concept experiment, should humanity ever need to stop a giant space rock from wiping out life on Earth. The DART lifted off aboard a SpaceX rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base.
- The goal is to slightly alter the trajectory of Dimorphos, a “moonlet” around 525 feet (160 meters, or two Statues of Liberty) wide that circles a much larger asteroid called Didymos (2,500 feet in diameter). The pair orbit the Sun together.
- It will be the same time when the binary asteroid system will be 6.8 million miles (11 million kilometers) from Earth, the nearest they ever get. To be clear, the asteroids in question pose no threat to our planet. But they belong to a class of bodies known as Near-Earth Objects (NEOs), which approach within 30 million miles.
- NASA’s Planetary Defense Coordination Office is most interested in those larger than 460 feet in size, which have the potential to level entire cities or regions with many times the energy of average nuclear bombs. There are 10,000 known near-Earth asteroids 460 feet in size or greater, but none has a significant chance to hit in the next 100 years. One major caveat: scientists think there are still 15,000 more such objects waiting to be discovered.

The Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) is a NASA space mission aimed at testing a method of planetary defense against near-Earth objects (NEOs). In September 2022, a space probe is set to deliberately crash into the minor-planet moon Dimorphos of the double asteroid Didymos to assess the future potential of a spacecraft impact to deflect an asteroid on a collision course with Earth through a transference of momentum. DART is a joint project between NASA and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL). It is being administered by NASA’s Planetary Defense Coordination Office, and several NASA laboratories and offices are providing technical support. International partners, such as the space agencies of European Space Agency (ESA), Italian Space Agency (ASI), and JAXA Japan, are contributing to related or subsequent projects.

### India successfully test fires long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART)

- India successfully tested a long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART) system developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO). The missile aimed at enhancing the country’s anti-submarine warfare capability was launched from Balasore in Odisha.
- The missile is launched from a ground mobile launcher and it can cover a range of distances “This canister-based missile system consists of advanced technologies like two-stage solid propulsion, electro-mechanical actuators and precision inertial navigation.”



**Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** is an agency of the Republic of India, **charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India.** It was **formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production** with the Defence Science Organisation. **Dr G. Satheesh Reddy** is the **current Chairman of DRDO.**

### **Gaganyaan to be launched in 2023, India's first space station by 2030**

- Clearing the air on the **launch year of India's much-delayed maiden human spaceflight mission to space,** Union space minister Jitendra Singh said the **final crewed Gaganyaan mission will be launched in 2023.**
- He also said the **Venus mission is planned for launch in 2023, L-1 Aditya solar and Chandrayaan-3 missions due for launch in 2022-23** and the country's first space station is likely to come up by 2030.
- Gaganyaan's major missions, like the **test vehicle flight for the validation of crew escape system performance and first uncrewed mission of Gaganyaan (G1),** are scheduled during the beginning of second half of 2022.
- **This will be followed by the second uncrewed mission at the end of 2022 carrying 'Vyommitra', a spacefaring human robot developed by Isro, and finally the first crewed Gaganyaan mission in 2023,** "which would, undoubtedly, place India in the elite club of nations (America, China and Soviet Union now Russia)".

Gaganyaan ("Sky Craft") is an Indian crewed orbital spacecraft intended to be the formative spacecraft of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme. The spacecraft is being designed to carry three people, and a planned upgraded version will be equipped with rendezvous and docking capability. In its maiden crewed mission, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s largely autonomous 5.3 t (12,000 lb) capsule will orbit the Earth at 400 km (250 mi) altitude for up to seven days with a two or three-person crew on board. The first crewed mission was originally planned to be launched on ISRO's GSLV Mk III in December 2021, but this has since been delayed to no earlier than 2023. This Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) manufactured crew module had its first un-crewed experimental flight on 18 December 2014. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will provide support for critical human-centric systems and technologies like space grade food, crew healthcare, radiation measurement and protection, parachutes for the safe recovery of the crew module and fire suppression system.

### **IIT Guwahati establishes advanced facilities at first-of-its kind nanotechnology centre in Northeast**

- **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati** has established advanced micro electronics and nano energy facilities at its Centre for Nanotechnology which is the **first-of-its-kind in the Northeast.**
- The centre, aimed at meeting future challenges and augmenting academic partnerships with industry in nanotechnology, will **carry out multidisciplinary translational research in the fields of health care, nano biomaterials, micro and nano electronics, nano-energy devices and sensors.**
- "This centre has **established state-of-the-art facilities for nanofabrication, with class 100 cleanroom facilities being one of the major attraction,** and is poised to make major contributions in the areas of nanodevices development for healthcare, renewable energy-photovoltaics, light-emitting diodes, thin-film transistors, sensors, and other allied areas.

### **Centre sets Price Stabilization Fund to moderate prices of agro commodities**

- The Centre has set up the Price Stabilization Fund to tackle price volatility of agro commodities such as onion, potato, and pulses to protect the interests of consumers.
- The Minister said, **buffer stocks of pulses and onion are maintained under price stabilization fund to moderate the prices.** A buffer stock of more than two lakh metric tonnes of onion has been maintained in this fiscal year.

### **Askot wildlife sanctuary declared eco-sensitive zone**

- Established to protect the endangered flagship species Musk Deer and its habitat, the picturesque **Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh** has been **finally declared as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).**

- In the sanctuary there are 2600 plants, 250 birds and 37 mammal species like snow leopard, Himalayan black bear, Himalayan tahr, blue sheep, serow besides musk deer. **Among the fauna are species like loong, monal, kalij pheasant and cheer pheasant.**

### IIT-D develops test to detect Omicron in 90 min

- **Researchers at IIT Delhi's Kusuma School of Biological Sciences have developed an RT-PCR based assay for the specific detection of the Omicron (B.1.1.529.1) variant of SARS-CoV-2.** The assay is based on detecting specific mutations, which are present in the Omicron variant and absent in other currently circulating variants of SARS-CoV-2.
- **Primer sets targeting these unique mutations in the S gene were designed for the specific amplification of either the Omicron variant or other currently circulating variants of SARS-CoV-2** and tested using real time PCR. Using synthetic DNA fragments, the assays were optimised to distinguish the wild-type from the Omicron variant in a dynamic range from 107 to less than 100 copies per reaction.
- **Currently, the identification or screening for Omicron** is done world-wide using next-generation sequencing based methods, which require over 3 days. By using this RT-PCR based assay, it will be possible to test for the presence of the Omicron variant within 90 minutes.

**Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. WHO first learned of this new virus on 31 December 2019, following a report of a cluster of cases of 'viral pneumonia' in Wuhan, People's Republic of China. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are, Fever, Dry cough and Fatigue. The standard diagnosis method is by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) from a nasopharyngeal swab. In India, the first case was reported in Kerala.**

### New study gives evidence for dark-matter free galaxies

- A few years ago, when Pavel Mancera Piña—a PhD scholar at the University of Groningen—along with his colleagues discovered galaxies with little to no dark matter, they were told: “measure again, you’ll see that there will be dark matter around your galaxy.” Dark matter is a form of matter that makes up about 27 per cent of the universe’s mass.
- **The team used a sophisticated radio telescope called Very Large Array in New Mexico for their study and spent days re-analysing their observations.** Their results recently published in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* which confirms that there is no trace of dark matter in the galaxy AGC 114905, located about 250 million light-years away.
- The researchers show that there is **no trace of dark matter in the galaxy AGC 114905, located about 250 million light-years away.** The researchers list two possible explanations for this lack of dark matter. One is that the AGC 114905 galaxy could have lost or been stripped of its dark matter by nearby larger galaxies.

### NASA spacecraft ‘touches’ the Sun

- **A spacecraft launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) has achieved a feat once thought impossible. For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that’s roughly 2 million degrees Fahrenheit – in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.**
- **The rocketship, called the Parker Solar Probe, successfully entered and flew through the Sun’s upper atmosphere – the corona – on April 28 and sampled particles and magnetic fields situated on the surface of the red-hot star.**
- **The \$1.6 billion mission also aims to improve forecasts of major space weather events that impact life on Earth, as well as astronauts in space,** NASA said. Space weather can change the orbits of satellites, shorten their lifetimes or interfere with onboard electronics.
- As it circles closer to the solar surface, **Parker Solar Probe is making new discoveries that other spacecraft were too far away to see, including from within the solar wind – the flow of particles from the sun that can influence us here on Earth.**

- **Parker Solar Probe** will keep drawing ever closer to the sun and diving deeper into the corona until its grand finale orbit in 2025. The mission was named after Eugene Newman Parker, a physicist who proposed a number of concepts about how stars give off energy.

**Aditya-L1** is the India's first spacecraft to study solar atmosphere developed by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and various other Indian research institutes. In celestial mechanics, the Lagrange points (also Lagrangian points, L-points, or libration points) are points near two large orbiting bodies. Normally, the two objects exert an unbalanced gravitational force at a point, altering the orbit of whatever is at that point. At the Lagrange points, the gravitational forces of the two large bodies and the centrifugal force balance each other. **Aditya-L1** will be able to provide observations of Sun's photosphere, chromosphere and corona. In addition, an instrument will study the solar energetic particles' flux reaching the L1 orbit, while a magnetometer payload will measure the variation in magnetic field strength at the halo orbit around L1.

## India successfully test fires new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' off Odisha

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- Agni P is a two-stage canisterised solid-propellant ballistic missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system. **Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of Agni class of missiles.** It is a two-stage canisterised missile with range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 km.
- **The ballistic missile weighs 50 per cent less than Agni 3 and can be launched from rail and road** and stored for a longer period and transported all across the country as per operational requirements. On December 7, the country successfully test-fired the air version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile that the ministry of defence described as a 'major milestone' in BrahMos development.
- The ministry had said the missile was successfully test-fired from Indian Air Force's (IAF) Sukhoi 30 MKI supersonic fighter aircraft from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), based in Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha. Around the same time, the Vertically Launched Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM) was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur.

## 6G technology

- **While 5G is still at its nascent stage, 6G will build on top of 5G.** It is touted to drive the adoption of 5G use cases at scale through optimisations and cost-reduction, especially at the enterprise level. At the same time, it will enable new use cases. **Moreover, 6G will bring together the human, physical, and virtual environments.**
- **Take the concept of 'Metaverse', for example.** It is one of the 5G use cases, which promises to disrupt both traditional and digital spaces. With 6G, the 'Metaverse' would not just evolve into a final model but is also likely to unify with the physical world with the help of artificial intelligence and machine learning.
- **This is because the most notable aspect of 6G would be its ability to sense the environment,** people and objects – according to telecom gear maker Nokia Bell Labs. The network's sensing ability combined with artificial intelligence and machine learning will make the network more cognitive.

The government of India has asked the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) to begin developing 6G and other futuristic technologies to catch up with the global market in time. The next generation telecom technology (6G) is said to be **50 times faster than 5G** and is expected to be commercially launched between **2028-2030**. **6G (sixth-generation wireless) is the successor to 5G cellular technology.** It will be able to use higher frequencies than 5G networks and provide substantially higher capacity and much lower latency (delay). One of the goals of 6G internet will be to support one microsecond-latency communication (delay of one-microsecond in communication). This is **1,000 times faster - or 1/1000<sup>th</sup> the latency - than one millisecond throughput.**

# SPORTS



## Sports Personalities in News

### Simone Biles named Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year

- **Simone Biles was named Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year.** The world's most decorated gymnast was hailed for putting her mental health first when she withdrew from four event finals at the Tokyo Olympics.
- **Biles, a four-time Olympic medalist,** later revealed that she suffered from what gymnasts called "the twisties – when you lose the sense of space and dimension in the air. **Despite the setback, the 24-year-old managed to earn a team all-around silver and a bronze in balance beam at the Tokyo Games.**

### F1 Abu Dhabi GP: Verstappen wins maiden F1 title

- **Red Bull's Max Verstappen seals his maiden F1 title by beating title rival Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes** in a last-lap thriller. The Red Bull team expected Hamilton to give back the position but race director Michael Masi, along with the stewards, decided against investigating the incident and applying any penalty.

### Ajay Singh wins 3<sup>rd</sup> gold for India in Commonwealth Weightlifting C'ships, qualifies for 2022 CWG

- **Ajay Singh clinched India's third gold of the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships** by winning the men's 81 kg category. Singh lifted a total of 322 kg and also set a national record in snatch (147 kg).

### SJFI to honour Sunil Gavaskar with medal

- **The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) decided to confer the prestigious 'SJFI Medal' to legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.** The body took the decision at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Guwahati.
- **Neeraj Chopra, who won India's lone gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics, was adjudged the SJFI Sportsman of the Year** while weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, who won a silver at the quadrennial extravaganza, was voted as the Sportswoman of the Year.

### Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launches first edition of Khelo India Women's U-21 Hockey League in New Delhi

- **Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launched first edition of Khelo India Women's Hockey League U-21 at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi.** A total of 14 teams across different States will participate in the league from 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of this month.

### Jamshedpur FC creates history, becomes first Indian club to join Global Football Alliance

- In a major boost to the Jharkhand soccer fraternity, **Jamshedpur FC became the first Indian football club to receive a membership of Global Football Alliance (GFA).**
- **The Tata Steel-owned club became the 20<sup>th</sup> member to be accepted in the association,** with the achievement being regarded as a milestone in Indian Football.



## Seven-time Formula One Champion Lewis Hamilton Receives Knighthood

- Britain's seven-times Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton received a knighthood for services to motorsport, days after losing out on what would have been a record eighth title in the last lap of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.
- Hamilton is the fourth Formula One driver to receive the honorary title of "Sir" in Britain after the Australian Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss and Jackie Stewart, and the only one to have received the award while still racing.

## India's Hansini Mathan Rajan beats Tokyo Olympics' youngest athlete, Hend Zaza to win ITTF title

- India's Hansini Mathan Rajan defeated Syria's Hend Zaza, the youngest athlete of this year's Tokyo Olympics, to win the girls singles event at the 2021 ITTF Hopes and Challenge table tennis tournament in Amman.
- The Chennai-based Hansini had also secured her second ITTF World Youth Series title with a win the U-13 girls category in Muscat in October. She had won her maiden Youth Series title in Tunisia.

## India to host Women's U-18, U-19 SAFF Championships

- India will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year. While SAFF Under-18 Women's Championship will be held from March 3 to 14, the SAFF Under-19 Championship will take place from July 25 to August 3. This was announced by All India Football Federation.
- Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and hosts India will compete in the SAFF U-18 Women's Championship. The five teams will face each other once in a round-robin format before the top two sides square off in the final.
- The SAFF U-19 Championship will be a six-team affair. Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka will be the other teams apart from hosts India. The six teams will be divided into two groups of three each. The group stage will be played in a round-robin format with each team facing each other once.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launches National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi

- **Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi. The Helpline is now available round the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country.** The service is available in Hindi, English, and the regional language of the State and Union Territories. It will ensure proper implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.
- It can be accessed by making a voice call either from a mobile or landline number of any Telecom Operator across the country. The Prevention of Atrocities Act was enacted with a prime objective view of preventing atrocities on members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. **The objective of the helpline is to build informed awareness about the provisions of the Law that are aimed at ending discrimination and providing protection to all.**

### PM Modi addresses at foundation stone laying of Maa Umiya Dham Development Project in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said, the **Maa Umiya Dham Development Project in Gujarat** is a perfect example of the notion of ‘Sabka Prayas’ as this auspicious project will be fulfilled with the efforts of all.
- The foundation stone laying of Maa Umiya Dham Development Project involving Umiya Mata Dham temple and temple premises in Gujarat via video conferencing.

### Police’s e-learning platform ‘Unnati’

- The Delhi Police Commissioner, Rakesh Asthana launched an e-learning program “Unnati” in Delhi’s Southwest district. Police said that under the flagship scheme YUVA, the Unnati initiative will help the youth, specifically from weaker sections of the society and school dropouts, to get education, skills and realise their dreams to secure their future.

### NCC, NHAI sign Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes

- **National Cadet Corps, NCC, and National Highways Authority of India, NHAI** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes collected by NCC Cadets during Puneet Sagar Abhiyan and other Swachhta activities.
- **Plastic wastes collected is planned to be handed over to NHAI** which can use in road construction across the country. A total of three lakh forty thousand cadets from 127 coastal area NCC Units are participating in the month-long activity. So far, cadets at different locations of these areas have collected plastic wastes amounting to almost six tons. **The aim of Puneet Sagar Abhiyan is to propagate the message of the Importance of clean seashores and beaches amongst the local population.**

### The Monk Who transformed UP: Book on Yogi Adityanath’s journey released

- A new book chronicles how Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath transformed the state in various aspects like law and order, connectivity, education, health infrastructure, and overall growth.
- Written by author Shantanu Gupta, “The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP Waala Bhaiya’ abuse to a Badge of Honour”, is published by Garuda Prakashan.

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## PERSONS IN NEWS

### U.N. appoints President Joe Biden advisor Catherine Russell to head UNICEF

- **UNSC Secretary-General Antonio Guterres** announced the **appointment of Catherine Russell**, an assistant to U.S. President Joe Biden, as the next head of the U.N. children's agency UNICEF.
- **Ms. Russell** also heads the **White House Office of Presidential Personnel** and served as the State Department's Ambassador-at-large for global women's issues from 2013 to 2017.

### US' Victor Vescovo Becomes first person to touch All Four World's Deepest Ocean Trenches

- **Victor Vescovo**, a former US Navy commander touched the bottom of the **Kermadec Trench** in the South Pacific Ocean, which is the **fourth deepest ocean trench**. Vescovo reached a depth of **10,012 meters** in an expedition that lasted for **nine hours**. With this achievement, the ex-officer is **officially the first person to have touched all four deepest points in the ocean**.
- With the Kermadec Trench being his newest achievement, **Vescovo has also visited the Earth's deepest point-Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench (10,925 metres), Horizon Deep in the Pacific's Tonga Trench (10,817 metres), and the Emden Deep in the Philippine Trench (10,045 metres), the third deepest point.**

### 'Baahubali' star Prabhas tops UK newspaper's 2021 South Asian celebrity list, Priyanka Chopra takes 3<sup>rd</sup> place

- **"Baahubali" star Prabhas** has been named the **number one South Asian celebrity in the world for 2021** by **UK-based Eastern Eye weekly newspaper**. The 42-year-old actor, known for Telugu blockbusters "Bujjigadu", "Billa", "Darling" and two "Baahubali" movies, was chosen for his ability to draw attention to **regional language films in India** for the annual **'50 Asian Celebrities In The World' list**, to be published in Eastern Eye.
- **Prabhas ranked ahead of many global stars from the world of film, television, literature, music and social media** and stood out for changing the face of the world's largest film industry. **The top 50 list celebrating South Asian stars who shone the brightest in 2021** is based on those who did incredible work, made a positive impact, broke boundaries, shattered glass ceilings, generated fan attention or were just inspiring in their own unique way.

### Shashi Tharoor's latest book "The Battle of Belonging" launched by Prabha Khaitan Foundation

- **Author Shashi Tharoor** shared details of his inspiration for writing **"The Battle of Belonging"** and made a passionate plea to read this deeply-researched work. This book is the culmination of a lifetime's thoughts, readings and arguments on issues of nationalism and patriotism which are not just theoretical or academic but intensely personal too. The book was prompted by the rise of a fundamental challenge to the very essence of Indian nationalism.
- **The book offers one observer's note towards an understanding of nationalism** in the world against specificity in India. India's own anti-colonial nationalism converted itself into a 'civic nationalism' encoded in a democratic Constitution and then the conflict over contemporary attempts to convert that into a religious-cultural nationalism.

### Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan named in the list of Most Admired Men of 2021

- **The first name in the list is former US President Barack Obama** followed by **Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates**. As for popular Indian celebrities, the honorable Prime Minister of India **Shri Narendra Modi** took the **8<sup>th</sup> position** with **Master Blaster, Sachin Tendulkar** at **12<sup>th</sup> Spot**.
- **Bollywood superstars Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan** stood at **14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> positions** respectively while the **18<sup>th</sup> spot was taken by Virat Kohli**. Not just this, in the list of 'most admired women of 2021' first spot was bagged by **Michelle Obama**, who has been securing the first spot for the last 3 years. **Popular Bollywood-cum-Hollywood actress Priyanka Chopra** was in the **10<sup>th</sup> spot** with **Aishwarya Rai Bachchan** bagging the **13<sup>th</sup> place**.

## AWARDS

### Balkrishna Doshi honoured with the Royal Gold Medal 2022, the world's highest honour for architecture

- Ahmedabad-based **Balkrishna Doshi** will receive the **Royal Gold Medal 2022** by the **Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)**, the world's highest honour for architecture. At 94, Doshi is being recognised for his career spanning seven decades, with over 100 built projects, across India.
- The Royal Gold Medal is “approved personally by Her Majesty The Queen and is given to a person or group of people who have had a significant influence on the advancement of architecture”. The award will be presented to Doshi at a special ceremony in 2022.

### IIT Roorkee bags first position among most innovative institutions as selected by CII

- For the second year in a row, **IIT Roorkee** has been selected by the prestigious **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** for the **Industrial Innovation Awards**. IIT Roorkee bagged the first position under the **Most Innovative Research Institutions** category this year.
- The second and third positions have gone to **IIT Madras** and the **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad (INCOIS)**, respectively. Last year, IIT Roorkee was adjudged as ‘The Most Innovative Institute of the Year’ for its innovation quotient.
- **CII Industrial Innovation Awards** were instituted in 2014 to identify and celebrate innovative Indian enterprises across industry segments and sectors. The awards provide an opportunity for enterprises to shine and be known nationally and internationally for their innovative products and services.
- The special category of research institutions under the **CII Industrial Innovation Awards 2021** acknowledges all those significant contributions of innovative solutions, which are crucial to practice innovation in a sustained manner and develop effective solutions for the industry, government and society at large.

### Singer P Jayachandran honoured with J C Daniel award

- **Kerala State Chalachitra Academy** honoured singer **P Jayachandran** with the **J C Daniel award for 2020** for his life-long contributions to the Malayalam film industry. He will receive a statuette, a citation, and a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh.

### Indian Teen Avani Prashanth to receive Global Child Prodigy Award 2022

- The ‘**Global Child Prodigy Award 2022**’ will be presented in **Dubai** in **February 2022** by noted personalities. Avani will be among the **100 children** to receive the award.
- A 15-year-old student, **Avani Prashanth** has been selected for the ‘**Global Child Prodigy Award 2022**’ for excellence in golf. Avani has won the **Hero Women’s Professional Golf Tour** twice. She recently represented India at the **Asia Pacific Women’s Amateur Golf Championship** and the **Asia Pacific Golf Council** in **Abu Dhabi**, finishing in the top 16. According to the school, she has achieved the best Indian finish at the time of her debut.
- The **Global Child Prodigy Awards 2022** will be awarded by celebrities in **Dubai** in **February 2022**. The top 100 child prodigies were selected from 48 different categories from thousands of applications received from 68 countries.

### Padma Bhushan Anil Prakash Joshi, 2 others win Mother Teresa Memorial Award

- Environmentalist **Dr Anil Prakash Joshi**, who was conferred upon the **Padma Bhushan** this year, has been awarded the **Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021**.
- **Vidyut Mohan**, the winner of the **Earthshot Prize**, and **Ridhima Pandey**, a young environmental activist from **Uttarakhand**, were also the recipients of the award.
- The **Harmony Foundation** identifies a theme each year for the **Mother Teresa Memorial Awards** and felicitates individuals and organisations who work in the realm of augmenting environmental sustainability.



- The awardees were felicitated by Dr Abraham Mathai, the founder chairman of the foundation. While Dr Joshi was given the award for his efforts as a changemaker in environmental sustainability sector by impacting over 10,000 villages in the Himalayan region through his Himalayan Environmental Studies & Conservation Organisation, Vidyut was acknowledged for his seminal and ingenious efforts in combating air pollution through his social enterprise Takachar.

### **Bhutan confers its highest civilian award on PM Narendra Modi**

- PM Narendra Modi conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo. Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering shared on social media that he was overjoyed to hear His Majesty pronounce Prime Minister Modi's name for the highest civilian decoration of the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- He also wished his countrymen as they celebrate the 114<sup>th</sup> National Day of Bhutan which commemorates the Coronation of His Majesty the First King of Bhutan, Druk Gyalpo Ugyen Wangchuck on December 17, 1907.
- According to the ministry of external affairs, mutually beneficial economic inter-linkages between India and Bhutan have been an important element in bilateral relations. India continues to be the largest trade and development partner of Bhutan and has extended its assistance to several developmental projects in the country – such as the 1020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project, Paro Airport, and the Bhutan Broadcasting Station.
- In addition, India is also a leading trade partner of Bhutan, with a free trade regime existing between the two countries. Bhutan was, in fact, the first country to receive the Narendra Modi regime's gift of Covid-19 vaccines, manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII). Earlier this year in January, the country received the first consignment of 1.5 lakh doses of the Covishield vaccine from India as a gift.

### **Kumar Mangalam Birla receives Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award from TiE**

- Aditya Birla Group's chairman, Kumar Mangalam Birla received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley.
- Birla is the first Indian Industrialist to receive the award for global entrepreneurship along with top global business leaders Satya Nadella, Elon Musk, and Jeff Bezos.
- He was given this award at a ceremony in Dubai for his leadership of the conglomerate during the Covid-19 pandemic. The awardees were selected by an independent jury chaired by Tim Draper, venture capital investor and founder of US-based Draper University. Birla said the group stands out for its pace of activity, range of businesses and breadth of its geographical presence.

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# IMPORTANT DAYS

## Human Rights Day

- **Human Rights Day** is celebrated annually around the world on **10 December** every year. The date was chosen to honor the United Nations General Assembly's adoption and proclamation, on **10 December 1948**, of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, the first global enunciation of human rights and one of the first major achievements of the new United Nations.
- The United Nations has announced that the **theme of Human Rights Day this year will be "equality"**. It has taken the theme from **Article 1 of the UDHR**, which says: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

## National Energy Conservation Day observed

- **National Energy Conservation Day** is observed on **December 14**, every year. The day focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promotes efforts towards saving energy resources.
- The Government of India has set up **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** on **1<sup>st</sup> March 2002** under the provision of the **Energy Conservation Act, 2001**. The BEE is a constitutional body that works under the Indian Government and helps in the development of policies and strategies to reduce the use of energy. **World Energy Conservation Day** is also observed. It focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promoting efforts towards saving energy resources.

## International Day of Neutrality 12 December

- On **2 February 2017**, the UN General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution **introduced by Turkmenistan**, recognized by the UN as a **permanently neutral state since 12 December 1995** — which noted the link between the **preservation of peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, and declared **12 December** as the **International Day of Neutrality**. Neutrality is defined as a legal status which arises when the state decides not to take part in any armed conflict.

## Vijay Diwas 2021

- **Vijay Diwas** is celebrated on **December 16** every year to honour the victory of Indian armed forces over Pakistan in the **1971 war**. On **December 16, 1971**, India had won the war against Pakistan after fighting for **13 days**. The chief of the Pakistani forces, **General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi** surrendered to the joint forces of Indian Army and Bangladesh's **Mukti Bahini**, along with **93,000 Pakistani troops**. It was also the **biggest-ever military surrender after World War II**. The **1971 India-Pakistan War** culminated on this day **50 years** ago as **East Pakistan** ceased to exist. This day is remembered for the bravery of Indian and Bangladeshi troops.

## Arabic Language Day 18 December

- **UN Arabic Language Day** is observed annually on **December 18**. The event was established by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in **2010** seeking "to celebrate **multilingualism and cultural diversity** as well as to promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization".
- **December 18** was chosen as the date for the Arabic language as it is "the day in **1973** when the General Assembly approved Arabic as an official UN language". This year, the theme of the **World Arabic Language Day** is "Arabic Language, a bridge between civilisations".

## International Migrants Day 18 December

- **International Migrants Day (18 December)** this year falls almost exactly **70 years** after the **Brussels conference** that led to the establishment of the organization that, in **1989**, was renamed the **International Organization for Migration**. A broad range of factors continue to determine the movement of people. **2021 theme:** "Harnessing the potential of human mobility"

# QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of the Indian wetland recently added as Ramsar site?  
(a) Haiderpur wetland (b) Keshopur-Miani Community Reserve  
(c) Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary (d) Vembanad Kol Wetland
2. Recently, UNSC Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of \_\_\_\_\_ as the next head of the U.N. children's agency UNICEF.  
(a) Rosaline Fredrick (b) Gerty Hiser (c) Alice Thorat (d) Catherine Russell
3. Recently, Reserve Bank of India has approved the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to raise its stake in IndusInd Bank by up to \_\_\_\_\_ per cent.  
(a) 5.55 (b) 6.66 (c) 8.88 (d) 9.99
4. Companies will have to quote the legal entity identifier (LEI) number so as to undertaking cross-border transactions of Rs 50 crore or more. The LEI is a \_\_\_\_\_ number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions globally to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.  
(a) 10-digit (b) 15-digit (c) 20-digit (d) 25-digit
5. Which of the following Indian Institutes has established advanced micro electronics and nano energy facilities at its Centre for Nanotechnology which is the first-of-its-kind in the Northeast?  
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati (b) Sikkim Manipal University  
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), BHU (d) Jadhavpur University
6. The final crewed Gaganyaan mission will be launched in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 2021 (b) 2022 (c) 2023 (d) 2025
7. Who among the following Indian celebrities has been named the number one South Asian celebrity in the world for 2021 by UK-based Eastern Eye weekly newspaper recently?  
(a) Mahesh Babu (b) Ayushmaan Khurana (c) Prabhas Raju (d) Ajay Devgan
8. Who among the following won the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Formula One race?  
(a) Max Verstappen (b) Lewis Hamilton (c) Valtteri Bottas (d) Alex Tsipiras
9. Who among the following will receive the Royal Gold Medal 2022 by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the world's highest honour for architecture?  
(a) Balkrishna Doshi (b) Mahesh Gurunani (c) Deepak Kulshrestha (d) Amit Ranjan
10. The Human Rights Day is celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_ every year since 1950.  
(a) 7<sup>th</sup> December (b) 10<sup>th</sup> December (c) 12<sup>th</sup> December (d) 17<sup>th</sup> December
11. Name the Indian who has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000.  
(a) Harleen Singh (b) Anita Dhawan (c) Pooja Mehendiratta (d) Harnaaz Sandhu
12. Recently, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi. The Helpline is now available round the clock on toll-free number \_\_\_\_\_ across the country.  
(a) 12345 (b) 23232 (c) 14566 (d) 56798
13. Recently, The Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Central ministry of commerce has accepted the plea to rename Bihar Makhana as \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Darbhanga Makhana (b) Siwan Makhana  
(c) Mithila Makhana (d) Son Makhana

14. Recently, Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurated' a digital Platform for Management of Complaints called \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 'Lokpal Online' (b) 'Lokpal at Dwar'  
(c) 'Lokpal On Demand' (d) 'Lokpal in Space'
15. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Maa Umiya Dham Development Project in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Haryana (b) Rajasthan (c) Gujarat (d) Uttarakhand
16. Who has been recently named as Time Magazine's Person of The Year?  
(a) Elon Musk (b) Angela Merkel (c) Carolina Marin (d) Warren Buffett
17. Recently, New Caledonia rejected independence from \_\_\_\_\_ in third referendum.  
(a) Germany (b) France (c) Sweden (d) Norway
18. Recently, US federal panel has approved renaming a \_\_\_\_\_ after a Cheyenne woman who facilitated relations between white settlers and Native American tribes in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.  
(a) Colorado peak (b) Mount Fairweather  
(c) Mount Chiginagak (d) Mount Saint Elias
19. Which of the following districts has been ranked first in export of engineering goods in a new listing issued by the Government of India recently?  
(a) Pune (b) Solan (c) Udaipur (d) Jabalpur
20. Who among the following recently clinched India's third gold of the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships by winning the men's 81 kg category?  
(a) Deepak Raheja (b) Ajay Singh (c) Vipul Kumar (d) Srikanth Mehta
21. Which of the following countries has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for the 2022-23 biennium?  
(a) China (b) India (c) Japan (d) South Korea
22. Which of the following became the world first vegetarian friendly train recently?  
(a) Shri Ramayana Yatra (b) Buddhist Circuit Yatra  
(c) Shri Krishna Yatra (d) Jain Circuit Yatra
23. Recently, The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) decided to confer the prestigious 'SJFI Medal' to legendary cricketer \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Kapil Dev (b) Sunil Gavaskar  
(c) Ajit Wadekar (d) Bishan Singh Bedi
24. Recently, The United States, Australia and Japan have said they will jointly fund the construction of an undersea cable to boost internet access in three tiny Pacific countries. Which of the following is not among the three countries?  
(a) Nauru (b) Federated States of Micronesia  
(c) San Marino (d) Kiribati
25. Which of the following states has announced a new syllabus for classes 1-8 to teach the students about climate change and make them conscious about tackling the issues emanating from it?  
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Haryana  
(c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
26. Name the Indian who has been selected for the 'Global Child Prodigy Award 2022' for excellence in golf.  
(a) Neha Lamba (b) Avani Prashanth  
(c) Anita Ranjan (d) Hina Khan



27. Recently, Which of the following two hotels have been certified with the US Green Building Council (USGBC)'s LEED Zero Carbon Certification?  
(a) Vivanta by Taj in New Delhi and ITC Windsor in Bengaluru  
(b) ITC Grand Chola in Chennai and ITC Windsor in Bengaluru  
(c) Hotel Leela in New Delhi and Taj Hotel in Jaipur  
(d) Hotel Taj in Lucknow and Taj Hotel in Mumbai
28. Who has been recently named as Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year?  
(a) Simone Biles (b) Neeraj Chopra (c) Chris Jordan (d) Cristiano Ronaldo
29. National Energy Conservation Day is observed on \_\_\_\_\_ every year.  
(a) December 9 (b) December 12  
(c) December 14 (d) December 17
30. Recently, Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in \_\_\_\_\_ has been finally declared as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).  
(a) Uttarakhand's Nainital (b) Uttarakhand's Dehradun  
(c) Himachal Pradesh's Manali (d) Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit
31. Which of the following has just been inscribed on the Intangible Heritage list by UNESCO?  
(a) Durga Puja in Kolkata  
(b) Ganesha Puja in Mumbai  
(c) Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj  
(d) Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur
32. Recently, Union Cabinet has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26. The scheme will benefit about \_\_\_\_\_ farmers.  
(a) 19 lakh (b) 22 lakh (c) 25 lakh (d) 29 lakh
33. Recently, Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, organised \_\_\_\_\_ under its Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) 'JAZBA', which has been formed under the aegis of Chitkara University Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development (CEED).  
(a) "HACKDAY 2021" (b) "UNIDAY 2021"  
(c) "SMACKDAY 2021" (d) "TRACKDAY 2021"
34. Which of the following banks has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) to launch bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem?  
(a) Union Bank of India (b) State Bank of India (c) Bank of Baroda (d) Punjab National Bank
35. India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects is to be set up in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
36. Which of the following countries recently blocked a United Nations Security Council draft resolution, that for the first time would have defined climate change as a threat to peace?  
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Russia (d) South Korea
37. Recently, Researchers at IIT Delhi's Kusuma School of Biological Sciences have developed an RT-PCR based assay for the specific detection of the \_\_\_\_\_ variant of SARS-CoV-2.  
(a) Umicron (B.1.2.325.1) (b) Omicron (B.1.1.725.1)  
(c) Omicron (B.1.1.529.1) (d) Desric (N.2.343.6)
38. Recently, Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launched first edition of Khelo India Women's Hockey League U-21 in \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Kolkata (b) New Delhi  
(c) Mumbai (d) Bengaluru

39. Which of the following became the first Indian football club to receive a membership of Global Football Alliance (GFA) recently?  
(a) Bengaluru FC (b) Mohun Bagan A.C (c) Jamshedpur FC (d) Kerala Blasters FC
40. What is the name of the author of book “The Battle of Belonging: On Nationalism, Patriotism, And What It Means to Be Indian”?  
(a) Amish Tripathi (b) Shashi Tharoor (c) Raghuram Rajan (d) Arundhati Roy
41. Recently, the government of India has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to \_\_\_\_\_ bringing it at par with that of men.  
(a) 19 Years (b) 20 Years (c) 21 Years (d) 24 Years
42. Which of the following states launched the Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme?  
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Haryana (c) Rajasthan (d) Jharkhand
43. The Centre has set up the Price Stabilization Fund to tackle price volatility of agro commodities to protect the interests of consumers. Which of the following is not among the three?  
(a) Onion (b) Tomato (c) Potato (d) Pulses
44. In a survey carried out by data analytics company YouGov, who is the most admired men 2021?  
(a) Bill Gates (b) Xi Jinping (c) Cristiano Ronaldo (d) Barack Obama
45. Recently, The researchers show that there is no trace of dark matter in the galaxy \_\_\_\_\_ located about 250 million light-years away.  
(a) AGC 114905 (b) BHC 123456  
(c) MKJ 987654 (d) ZKL 898988
46. Recently, Vijay Diwas 2021 was observed on:  
(a) December 10 (b) December 12 (c) December 14 (d) December 16
47. For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that’s roughly \_\_\_\_\_ in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.  
(a) 1 million degrees Fahrenheit (b) 2 million degrees Fahrenheit  
(c) 4 million degrees Fahrenheit (d) 6 million degrees Fahrenheit
48. Which of the following companies has recently launched its first AI-powered educational platform?  
(a) Google Wealth Academy (b) Paytm Wealth Academy  
(c) BHIM Wealth Academy (d) PhonePe Wealth Academy
49. Recently who received a knighthood for services to motorsport?  
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Maxx Verstappen  
(c) Valtteri Bottas (d) Michael Schumacher
50. Which of the following motor companies has announced its foray into the non-fungible token (NFT), making it the first carmaker in the country to launch a collection of NFTs?  
(a) MG Motor (b) Maruti Suzuki  
(c) Hyundai (d) Kia Motors
51. Which of the following states were toppers in the large and small states categories respectively in the ‘Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy,’ released recently?  
(a) Karnataka and Goa (b) Uttar Pradesh and Goa  
(c) West Bengal and Kerala (d) Madhya Pradesh and Sikkim

52. Recently, The United Nations cultural agency (UNESCO) has added Joumou Soup of \_\_\_\_\_ to its intangible heritage list.  
 (a) Haiti (b) Peru (c) Jamaica (d) Chile
53. Recently, Home First Finance Company India announced that it has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with \_\_\_\_\_ for providing home loans to customers at competitive interest rates.  
 (a) Canara Bank (b) Union Bank of India  
 (c) Punjab National Bank (d) Bank of Baroda
54. Who has been recently conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo?  
 (a) Narendra Modi (b) Ramnath Kovind  
 (c) Nitish Kumar (d) Baichung Bhatia
55. Recently, who became the first person to touch all four world's deepest ocean trenches?  
 (a) Victor Vescovo (b) Alexander Trec  
 (c) Johnson Destri (d) Alex Ghistry
56. Recently, For the second year in a row which of the following institutions has been selected by the prestigious Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for the Industrial Innovation Awards?  
 (a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Bombay  
 (c) IIT Roorkee (d) IIT Madras
57. Who won the girls singles event at the 2021 ITTF Hopes and Challenge table tennis tournament in Amman?  
 (a) Aditi Rao (b) Meenakshi Gupta  
 (c) Hansini Mathan Rajan (d) Anamika Luthra
58. Who among the following recently received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley?  
 (a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Azim Premji  
 (c) Kumar Mangalam Birla (d) Naveen Jindal
59. UN Arabic Language Day is observed annually on \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) December 15 (b) December 17 (c) December 18 (d) December 21
60. Who has been recently awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021?  
 (a) Dr Anil Prakash Joshi (b) Dr Atul Rawat  
 (c) Dr Hitesh Sindhwani (d) Dr Ritesh Jindhwani
61. On the lines of Chhattisgarh and Delhi, preparations are underway to implement the 'happiness curriculum' in primary schools of \_\_\_\_\_ under a pilot project to make the students more sensitive towards nature, society and the country.  
 (a) Bihar (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Jharkhand
62. The North India's first Centre of Entrepreneurship in Medi Electronics and Health Informatics to start operations in \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) Varanasi (b) Lucknow (c) Shimla (d) Chandigarh
63. India's first food museum established by the Food Corporation of India in \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (a) Kochi (b) Bhopal (c) Thanjavur (d) Indore
64. Recently, The Union Cabinet approved a \_\_\_\_\_ scheme to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country, taking the total amount of incentives announced for the electronics sector to ₹2.30 lakh crore.  
 (a) ₹33,000 crore (b) ₹49,000 crore  
 (c) ₹65,000 crore (d) ₹76,000 crore

65. Recently, National Cadet Corps, NCC, and National Highways Authority of India, NHAI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes collected by NCC Cadets during \_\_\_\_\_ and other Swachhta activities.  
(a) Nirmal Sagar Abhiyan (b) Unnati Sagar Abhiyan  
(c) Puneet Sagar Abhiyan (d) Rastriya Sagar Abhiyan
66. Which of the following companies is about to become the world's first \$3 trillion company?  
(a) Esson Mobil (b) Microsoft (c) Apple (d) Alibaba
67. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile \_\_\_\_\_ from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.  
(a) 'Agni C' (b) 'Agni D' (c) 'Agni P' (d) 'Agni X'
68. Which of the following countries will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year?  
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Bangladesh (d) India
69. Each year, International Migrants Day is celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 14 December (b) 16 December (c) 18 December (d) 20 December
70. Who is the writer of "The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh"?  
(a) Aditya Singh (b) Shantanu Gupta (c) Mukesh Jain (d) Mrigank Luthra





## ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a India's efforts to improve its wetlands and preserve its ecology is bearing fruits as India is now a land of 47 Ramsar sites. The latest on the list is Uttar Pradesh's Haiderpur wetland. It has been added to the list of Indian wetlands of international importance.
2. d UNSC Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment of Catherine Russell, an assistant to U.S. President Joe Biden, as the next head of the U.N. children's agency UNICEF.
3. d The Reserve Bank of India has approved the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to raise its stake in IndusInd Bank by up to 9.99 per cent.
4. c The LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions globally to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems.
5. a Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati has established advanced micro electronics and nano energy facilities at its Centre for Nanotechnology which is the first-of-its-kind in the Northeast.
6. c Clearing the air on the launch year of India's much-delayed maiden human spaceflight mission to space, Union space minister Jitendra Singh said the final crewed Gaganyaan mission will be launched in 2023.
7. c "Baahubali" star Prabhas Raju has been named the number one South Asian celebrity in the world for 2021 by UK-based Eastern Eye weekly newspaper.
8. a Red Bull's Max Verstappen seals his maiden F1 title by beating title rival Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes in a last-lap thriller.
9. a Ahmedabad-based Balkrishna Doshi will receive the Royal Gold Medal 2022 by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the world's highest honour for architecture.
10. b The Day is celebrated on 10<sup>th</sup> December every year since 1950 in commemoration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by the United Nations in 1948.
11. d India's Harnaaz Sandhu has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000.
12. c Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi. The Helpline is now available round the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country.
13. c The Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Central ministry of commerce has accepted the plea to rename Bihar Makhana as Mithila Makhana and also suggested further amendments in the brand logo to better reflect its origins apart from identifying and protecting the product's Geographical Indications (GI) rights.
14. a Chairperson, Lokpal of India, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose inaugurated a digital Platform for Management of Complaints called 'LokpalOnline' that can be accessed by all citizens of the country and complaints can be filed from anywhere, anytime at <http://lokpalonline.gov.in>.
15. c Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said, the Maa Umiya Dham Development Project in Gujarat is a perfect example of the notion of 'Sabka Prayas' as this auspicious project will be fulfilled with the efforts of all.
16. a Time magazine named Tesla founder and space entrepreneur Elon Musk as its person of the year, capping a roller-coaster 2021 for the technology magnate.
17. b New Caledonia rejects independence from France in third referendum.

- 18. a** A federal panel has approved renaming a Colorado peak after a Cheyenne woman who facilitated relations between white settlers and Native American tribes in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, part of a broader campaign to replace derogatory place names across the United States.
- 19. a** Pune has ranked first in export of engineering goods in a new listing issued by the Government of India.
- 20. b** Ajay Singh clinched India's third gold of the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships by winning the men's 81 kg category.
- 21. b** India has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for the 2022-23 biennium.
- 22. a** 'Shri Ramayana Yatra' theme based pilgrimage tour by Dekho Apna Desh Deluxe AC Tourist train become the first vegetarian friendly train.
- 23. b** The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) decided to confer the prestigious 'SJFI Medal' to legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.
- 24. c** The three Western allies would develop the cable to provide faster internet to Nauru, Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia.
- 25. d** The Maharashtra government has announced a new syllabus for classes 1-8 to teach the students about climate change and make them conscious about tackling the issues emanating from it.
- 26. b** A 15-year-old student, Avani Prashanth has been selected for the 'Global Child Prodigy Award 2022' for excellence in golf.
- 27. b** Two of ITC's signature hotels in South India have been bestowed with a rare distinction. The hospitality group's flagship ITC Grand Chola in Chennai, and ITC Windsor in Bengaluru, have been certified with the US Green Building Council (USGBC)'s LEED Zero Carbon Certification.
- 28. a** Simone Biles was named Time's 2021 Athlete of the Year.
- 29. c** National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 14, every year.
- 30. b** Established to protect the endangered flagship species Musk Deer and its habitat, the picturesque Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh has been finally declared as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).
- 31. a** Durga Puja in Kolkata has just been inscribed on the Intangible Heritage list by UNESCO.
- 32. b** Union Cabinet has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana for 2021-26. The scheme will benefit about 22 lakh farmers, including 2.5 lakh Schedule Caste and two lakh Schedule Tribe farmers.
- 33. a** Giving a boost to technological innovation, Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh, organised "HACKDAY 2021" under its Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell) 'JAZBA', which has been formed under the aegis of Chitkara University Centre for Entrepreneurship Education & Development (CEED).
- 34. c** Bank of Baroda (BOB) has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) to launch bob World Wave, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.
- 35. c** India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up at Simhadri near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.
- 36. c** Russia blocked a United Nations Security Council draft resolution, under negotiation for many months that for the first time would have defined climate change as a threat to peace.

- 37. c** Researchers at IIT Delhi's Kusuma School of Biological Sciences have developed an RT-PCR based assay for the specific detection of the Omicron (B.1.1.529.1) variant of SARS-CoV-2.
- 38. b** Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur launched first edition of Khelo India Women's Hockey League U-21 at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi.
- 39. c** In a major boost to the Jharkhand soccer fraternity, Jamshedpur FC became the first Indian football club to receive a membership of Global Football Alliance (GFA).
- 40. b** Author Shashi Tharoor shared details of his inspiration for writing "The Battle of Belonging" and made a passionate plea to read this deeply-researched work.
- 41. c** The government of India has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years, bringing it at par with that of men.
- 42. d** Launching the Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme, Chief Minister Hemant Soren said the state has been "portrayed in a poor light by some", who are not aware of Jharkhand's rich tribal culture.
- 43. b** The Centre has set up the Price Stabilization Fund to tackle price volatility of agro commodities such as onion, potato, and pulses to protect the interests of consumers.
- 44. d** World's Most Admired Men 2021 are:  
1. Barack Obama  
2. Bill Gates  
3. Xi Jinping  
4. Cristiano Ronaldo  
5. Jackie Chan
- 45. a** The researchers show that there is no trace of dark matter in the galaxy AGC 114905, located about 250 million light-years away.
- 46. d** In India, Vijay Diwas (also called Victory Day) is celebrated every year on December 16.
- 47. b** For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that's roughly 2 million degrees Fahrenheit – in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.
- 48. b** The leading digital payment solution provider, Paytm has launched its first AI-powered educational platform called Paytm Wealth Academy.
- 49. a** Britain's seven-times Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton received a knighthood for services to motorsport, days after losing out on what would have been a record eighth title in the last lap of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.
- 50. a** MG Motor India announced its foray into the non-fungible token (NFT), making it the first carmaker in the country to launch a collection of NFTs.
- 51. c** West Bengal and Kerala were toppers in the large and small states categories respectively, in the 'Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy,' released.
- 52. a** The United Nations cultural agency (UNESCO) has added Joumou Soup – Haiti's national symbol of freedom from slavery – to its intangible heritage list, saying the soup is "so much more than just a dish".
- 53. b** Home First Finance Company India announced that it has entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with Union Bank of India for providing home loans to customers at competitive interest rates.

- 54. a** PM Modi conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo.
- 55. a** US' Victor Vescovo Becomes First Person To Touch All Four World's Deepest Ocean Trenches.
- 56. c** For the second year in a row, IIT Roorkee has been selected by the prestigious Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for the Industrial Innovation Awards.
- 57. c** India's Hansini Mathan Rajan defeated Syria's Hend Zaza, the youngest athlete of this year's Tokyo Olympics, to win the girls singles event at the 2021 ITTF Hopes and Challenge table tennis tournament in Amman.
- 58. c** Aditya Birla Group's chairman, Kumar Mangalam Birla received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award-Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley.
- 59. c** UN Arabic Language Day is observed annually on December 18.
- 60. a** Environmentalist Dr Anil Prakash Joshi, who was conferred upon the Padma Bhushan this year, has been awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice 2021.
- 61. b** On the lines of Chhattisgarh and Delhi, preparations are underway to implement the 'happiness curriculum' in primary schools of Uttar Pradesh under a pilot project to make the students more sensitive towards nature, society and the country.
- 62. b** North India's first Centre of Entrepreneurship in Medi Electronics and Health Informatics to start operations in Lucknow.
- 63. c** Thanjavur now has a new site in town, India's first food museum. Established by the Food Corporation of India, this museum gives visitors a tour of agriculture, cuisines and food distribution systems in India.
- 64. d** The Union Cabinet approved a ₹76,000 crore scheme to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country, taking the total amount of incentives announced for the electronics sector to ₹2.30 lakh crore.
- 65. c** National Cadet Corps, NCC, and National Highways Authority of India, NHAI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to reuse plastic wastes collected by NCC Cadets during Puneet Sagar Abhiyan and other Swachhta activities.
- 66. c** Apple is about to become the world's first \$3 trillion company.
- 67. c** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- 68. d** India will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year.
- 69. c** On 18 December 1990, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
- 70. b** Written by author Shantanu Gupta, "The Monk Who Transformed Uttar Pradesh: How Yogi Adityanath Changed UP Waala Bhaiya' abuse to a Badge of Honour", is published by Garuda Prakashan.