
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

20th December to 26th December, 2021

PREFACE

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



Delimitation Commission proposes six additional seats for Jammu, one for Kashmir valley

- The draft paper of the Delimitation Commission has proposed seven additional Assembly seats for Jammu and Kashmir — six in Jammu division and one in Kashmir valley. For the first time, the commission proposed reserving nine seats for Scheduled Tribes (STs) on the basis of population. Seven seats are proposed for the Scheduled Caste (SC) community.
- With the proposed addition, the total Assembly constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir has risen to 90 — in Jammu, the number of seats has gone up to 43 from 37, and in Kashmir, by one seat to 47. An additional 24 seats are proposed to be reserved for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). It said that the 2011 census was the basis for carving out the new seats. According to the census, the population of the Kashmir division was 68.8 lakh and Jammu 53.5 lakh.
- Jammu and Kashmir will now have a 90-member Legislative Assembly, up from the 87 prior to the Centre's decision to end the special constitutional position of the erstwhile State. This has triggered sharp reactions from the regional parties. There is already a Supreme Court ruling granting a status quo regarding delimitation, if the commission prepares the draft based on 2011 census. It will be unconstitutional.
- After the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019, the government set up the Delimitation Commission headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai. The Delimitation Commission chaired by Justice (Retd.) Ranjana Prakash Desai met with a detailed presentation on the work done so far by Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Chandra Bhushan Kumar. Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra and J&K Election Commissioner KK Sharma are the two ex-officio members in the panel.

Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies to represent changes in population and is done on the basis of the preceding Census. This exercise is carried out by a Delimitation Commission, whose orders have the force of law and cannot be questioned before any court. Article 82 provides the Parliament with the authority to enact a Delimitation Act after every Census. Article 170 provides for the States to get divided into territorial constituencies as per the Delimitation Act after every Census. The Union government sets up a Delimitation Commission once the Act is in force. Delimitation Commission of India has been set up for four times till now-1952, 1963, 1971 and 2002. Delimitation exercises in J&K in the past have been slightly different from those in the rest of the country because of the region's special status — which was scrapped by the Centre in August 2019. Until then, the delimitation of Lok Sabha seats in J&K was governed by the Constitution of India. But the delimitation of the state's Assembly seats was governed by the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution and Jammu and Kashmir Representation of the People Act, 1957. Assembly seats in J&K were delimited in 1963, 1973 and 1995. The last exercise was conducted by the Justice (retired) KK Gupta Commission when the state was under President's Rule and was based on the 1981 census, which formed the basis of the state elections in 1996. There was no census in the state in 1991 and no Delimitation Commission was set up by the state government after the 2001 census as the J&K Assembly passed a law putting a freeze on the fresh delimitation of seats until 2026. This freeze was upheld by the Supreme Court. The freeze, some political parties argue, has created inequity for the Jammu region.

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

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

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. Anandiben Mafatbhai Patel is serving as the current Governor of Uttar Pradesh. She also served as Governor of Madhya Pradesh. She has served as the first female Chief Minister of Gujarat. Yogi Adityanath is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre opened in Hyderabad

- **India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad.**
- **The IAMC has come up with 25,000 sq ft temporary accommodation at VK Towers in Gachibowli, an information technology hub, Hyderabad. The state government has announced that land for a permanent building will be allotted at Puppalaguda in Hyderabad.**
- **Those who empanel the centre include internationally acclaimed arbitrators and mediators from countries such as Singapore and the UK. The Telangana Chief Minister thanked the CJI for choosing Hyderabad to set up the prestigious facility. IAMC has been established to quickly resolve the issues that arise due to the Lack of sufficient judges. IAMC will settle commercial disputes and it will also look into the disputes of ordinary people.**
- **Speaking on the occasion, Justice Ramana said he is confident that this centre will lead the way for arbitration and mediation in the country and will become the premier centre not only in India, but across Asia and the world.**
- **Ramana said that he is all for ADR (Alternate Dispute Resolution) as such methods are beneficial to the parties to a dispute due to various reasons such as low cost, speed, more control over timelines and process, autonomy of parties, more comfortable environment and non-adversarial nature. The CJI termed the creation of the centre as a tribute to former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, who saw ADR as the way forward.**

Telangana is a state in India situated on the south-central stretch of the Indian peninsula on the high Deccan Plateau. On 2 June 2014, the area was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital. It is a land locked state in India. Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhara Rao has been serving as the first and current Chief Minister of Telangana since 2014. Tamilisai Soundararajan is an Indian medical doctor serving as current Governor of Telangana.

Centre introduces Bill to link voter ID, Aadhaar cards amid protests by Opposition

- **The Centre introduced the Election Laws (Amendment Bill) 2021 to link voter identity and Aadhaar cards, despite objections by the Opposition parties over the move. Law Minister Kiren Rijiju clarified that the Amendment was only meant to stop bogus and fraudulent voting.**

- According to the statement of objects and reasons, **the Bill aims to “curb the menace of multiple enrolment of the same person in different places”**. The qualifying dates in relation to the preparation or revision of electoral rolls will be **first days of January, April, July and October once the Bill becomes an act**.
- **“The Amendment of the Section 20 of the Representation of the People’s Act 1950 and Section 60 of the RP Act 1951 for substitution of the word “wide” with the word “spouse” making the statues gender neutral,”** it added. It provides for amendment of section 23 of the Representation of People’s Act, 1950, enabling the linking of electoral roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem.
- **The Opposition claimed that it would be a violation of the Constitutional rights of citizens and would violate their right to privacy if Aadhaar is connected to the electoral rolls.** The Opposition demanded the rollback of the Bill. The Union Cabinet had earlier cleared the bill on electoral reforms. These reforms included the bill seeking to **link the electoral roll with Aadhaar on a voluntary basis to root out multiple enrolments**.

In 2015, the move to link voter ID to Aadhaar was put on the backburner after the Supreme Court Judgment. When it held that **“the Aadhaar card Scheme is purely voluntary”**. Besides this, Aadhaar was only meant to be **proof of residence**. It is not proof of citizenship. Electoral data at present is held by the Election Commission of India (ECI) in its own database, has its own verification process, and is separate from other government databases. **The proposed linkage between the Aadhaar and election database will make data available to the ECI and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).** This could lead to infringement of the privacy of citizens. On 24th August, 2017 a **9 Judge Bench of the Supreme Court delivered a unanimous verdict in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs. Union of India** and other connected matters, affirming that the **Constitution of India guarantees to each individual a fundamental right to privacy**.

Jharkhand launches initiative to enable systemic registration of migrant workers

- **The Jharkhand government launched the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) to enable systemic registration of migrant workers** for monitoring and analysis in the source as well as the destination districts. To begin with, the government will have two help desks—which will be **known as ‘labour consulates’—in Ladakh Union Territory as well as in Kerala**.
- The launch was followed by two panel discussions which **focussed on tracking women labourers who remain the most vulnerable, putting an end to the exploitative means, predicting distress migration and increased social security and welfare coverage for migrant workers**.

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.**

Tamil Nadu: CM Stalin declares ‘Tamil Thaa Vazhthu’ as state song

- **The Tamil Nadu government announced ‘Tamil Thaa Vazhthu,’ an invocation sung in praise of Mother Tamil, as the state anthem and directed that all present during its rendition should remain standing.** The decision comes in the wake of the Madras High Court recently ruling that **‘Tamil Thai Vazhthu’ is a prayer song and not an anthem**.
- **The ‘Tamil Thai Vazhthu,’ the invocation to mother Tamil enjoys official status since 1970 and the then Chief Minister, late M Karunanidhi-led DMK government had issued a Government Order as well in this regard.** For over 50 years, it is sung ahead of the start of all official events including those held in state-run and aided educational institutions.

Tamil Nadu lies in the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent and is bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Its capital and largest city is Chennai. Its official language is Tamil, which is one of the longest-surviving classical languages in the world. **Ravindra Narayana Ravi is the current Governor of Tamil Nadu. M.K. Stalin is the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.**

AIM, NITI Aayog & UNCDF announce first AgriTech cohort under South-South Innovation platform

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) rolled out their first AgriTech Challenge cohort** for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program that aims to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.
- **AIM, NITI Aayog in partnership with UNCDF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rabo Foundation launched a South-South innovation platform** to enable cross-border exchange of innovations, insights and investments in July this year 2021. Through this platform, cross-border collaborations among emerging markets across India, Indonesia, Malawi, Malaysia, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia would be enabled.
- **For its first platform AgriTech Challenge Cohort and Agri-Fintech innovators**, applications were invited to facilitate their expansion to **the international markets through two tracks- Main track and AIM track**. A total of 10 high-growth innovators have been selected in the Main track, out of a total 100 applications. **The key objective of the main track applications was ‘Expansion – Support solution pilot in the chosen international market.’**
- Speaking during the virtual announcement of the cohort, **VC, NITI Aayog Dr. Rajiv Kumar**, said **“In India, more than 50% of the population is dependent on agriculture and it contributes to about 15-18% of the GDP. As agriculture is a sector that emotionally appeals the masses, Indian agencies are prompted to undertake policy measures to stimulate industry landscape. We at NITI Aayog are leaving no stone unturned to improve the agriculture sectoral landscape and we will continue till the milestones are achieved and beyond.”**

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog is Government of India’s flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and was setup in 2016. Towards this end AIM has taken a holistic approach to ensure creation of a problem-solving innovative mindset in schools and creating an ecosystem of entrepreneurship in universities, research institutions, private and MSME sector. **All the initiatives of AIM are currently monitored and managed systematically using real-time MIS systems and dynamic dashboards.** AIM is also currently having its programs reviewed by third party agencies for ensuring continuous improvements. **With a vision to ‘Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators’, Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India.** The objective of this scheme is to foster curiosity, creativity, and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.

KAPILA Campaign

- The government of India has **launched a campaign namely Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Campaign (KAPILA) to increase awareness regarding protection and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP) and also to provide funding support in order to promote filing of the Intellectual Property (IP) in Higher Education Institutions.**
- **A KAPILA portal has also been launched for this purpose. Under the initiative, activities like IP Clinic, Case Studies/ Articles regarding Innovation and Intellectual Property** and online awareness programs and National Intellectual Property Literacy Week (NIPLW) have been conducted. More than 46,000 users have registered for KAPILA awareness programs.
- **KAPILA Awareness Program aims to provide funding support in order to promote the filing of Intellectual Property (IP) in Higher Education Institutions.** KAPILA Portal has been launched for the same. To create awareness regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), To enable IP protection of inventions originating from faculty and students of HEIs, Development of Credit Course on IPR, Training program on IPR for faculty and students of HEIs and Sensitization and development of vibrant IP filing system.

GIS based ‘Automatic Water Supply System’, first of its kind in the country launched

- **The GIS based ‘Automatic Water Supply System’ for citizens of Cantonment Boards was recently launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on the occasion of Defence Estates Day 2021.**

- The module of GIS based Water Supply system for Cantonment Boards has been developed by Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo informatics (BISAG) under the guidance of Defence Secretary and Director General of Defence Estates, Delhi.
- It is completely automated which provides facility to its citizen to identify the location of water supply connection. It automatically determines nearest water pipeline. This GIS system is first of its kind in the country. It is based on 'minimum government'. It supports the concept of 'maximum governance' as there is no manual intervention for clearance or sanction of the water connection. BISAG has successfully implemented the GIS module and its integration with the e-Chhawani portal is done by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

HADR exercise PANEX-21 in Pune

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh witnessed a Multi-Agency Exercise (MAE) and inaugurated an equipment display on the second day of PANEX-21, a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise for BIMSTEC member nations, organised at College of Military Engineering in Pune, Maharashtra.
- The exercise is being attended by delegates and subject matter experts from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- Shri Rajnath Singh termed BIMSTEC as one of the most important and closely-knit group of countries which has the potential to build a symbiotic partnership amongst like-minded nations by strengthening existing civilisational bonds. Lauding the member nations for standing by each other during natural calamities, he said, the PANEX-21 provides a fresh impetus for creating a more cohesive mechanism to respond to the HADR challenges in the region.
- The main aim of the exercise is to build regional cooperation in responding to natural disasters. The equipment display, organized in association with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), is aimed to showcase the niche industrial capabilities and capacities of the Indian industry on disaster relief operations.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian nations, housing 1.73 billion people and having a combined gross domestic product of \$3.8 trillion (2021). The BIMSTEC member states – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand– are among the countries dependent on the Bay of Bengal. Fourteen priority sectors of cooperation have been identified and several BIMSTEC centres have been established to focus on those sectors. A BIMSTEC free trade agreement is under negotiation (c. 2018), also referred to as the mini SAARC. Leadership is rotated in alphabetical order of country names. The permanent secretariat is in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

NITI Aayog enters into agreement with UN WFP to diversify food basket in programmes

- Aiming at a more diversified food basket under its free food distribution programme with focus on coarse grains and millets, NITI Aayog has entered into an agreement with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) to address issues related to inclusion of millets in government programmes.
- Under the statement of intent signed between the Aayog and the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), the focus will be on mainstreaming millets and strengthening of climate resilient agriculture for enhanced food and nutrition security in India.
- The government of India had observed 2018 as a year of millets to encourage and promote millet production in India and declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets, in line with the United Nations General Assembly resolution.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization, the largest one focused on hunger and food security, and the largest provider of school meals. Founded in 1961, it is headquartered in Rome and has offices in 80 countries. The World Food Programme was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 for its efforts to provide food assistance in areas of conflict, and to prevent the use of food as a weapon of war and conflict.

Odisha CM inaugurates State's longest bridge 'T-Setu' over Mahanadi

- **Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated T-Setu, the State's longest bridge over Mahanadi in Cuttack district.** The 3.4 km long bridge, connecting Gopinathpur in Badamba, Baideswar in Banki to Singhanath Pitha located in the middle of the river, has been **built in the shape of English alphabet 'T' at a cost of Rs 111 crore.**
- The bridge, which has a footpath of 1.5 metre width on its both sides, will **benefit people of Cuttack and Khurda and reduce the distance between Badamba and Baideswar in Banki by 45 km.** The 7.5 metre wide bridge will facilitate communication for around five lakh people of the nearby localities besides improving agriculture, business and tourism activities in and around the area. It will also benefit devotees visiting Baba Singhanath's Bali Makar Jatra in Badamba block. Every year, the State government builds a 3-km long fair weather road (pedestrian track) on the Mahanadi river bed at a cost of Rs 14- Rs15 lakh to facilitate communication for devotees.

The **modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India.** The **ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War,** coincides with the borders of **modern-day Odisha.** **Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India.** The **temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE.** **Ganeshi Lal is current Governor of Odisha.** **Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.**

PM Narendra Modi launched multiple development initiatives in Varanasi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Varanasi and kickstart multiple development initiatives.** During his visit, the Prime Minister **laid the foundation stone of 'Banas Dairy Sankul' at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park at Karkhiyaon in Varanasi.**
- **He also laid the foundation stone for the Bio-gas based Electricity generation plant for the Milk Producers Cooperative Union Plant at Ramnagar in Varanasi.** It will be a key step towards making Milk Producers Cooperative Union Plant energy self-sufficient.
- The Prime Minister also **launched a Portal and a logo dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme of milk products, developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards with the help of National Dairy Development Board.** **To reduce the land ownership issues at grass root level, the Prime Minister virtually distributed the rural residential rights record 'Gharauni' under the Swamitva scheme to over 20 Lakh residents of the state.**
- **The Prime Minister inaugurated multiple urban development projects in Varanasi and projects in the education sector.** These include the **Union Education Ministry's Inter-University Centre for Teachers Education, built at a cost of around 107 crore rupees and a Teachers Education Centre at Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies.**
- A hostel for doctors, one for nurses and a shelter home amounting to **130 crore rupees at the Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Cancer Centre was inaugurated by the Prime Minister among other projects.**
- **PM Modi also laid the foundation stone of two 4 to 6 lane road widening projects for Prayagraj and Bhadohi roads, which will improve the connectivity of Varanasi.** To give fillip to tourism potential of the holy city, the Prime Minister will also inaugurate the Phase-1 of Tourism Development project related to Shri Guru Ravidas Ji Temple, Seer Govardhan, Varanasi.
- Other projects being inaugurated by the Prime Minister **include a Speed Breeding Facility at International Rice Research Institute, South Asia Regional Centre Varanasi, a Regional Reference Standards Laboratory at village Payakpur and an Advocate building at Tehsil Pindra**

Varanasi also known as Kashi or Benares, or Banaras is a city on the banks of the river Ganges in Uttar Pradesh. A major religious hub in India, it is the holiest of the seven sacred cities in Hinduism and Jainism, and played an important role in the development of Buddhism and Ravidassia. Varanasi lies along National Highway 2, and is served by Varanasi Junction railway station and Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport. The city is represented in the Parliament of India by the current Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, who won the Lok Sabha elections in 2014 and 2019 by a huge margin.

Indian Army launches contemporary messaging app 'ASIGMA'

- **Indian Army launched a contemporary messaging application named ASIGMA. ASIGMA stands for Army Secure Indigenous Messaging Application.** It is a new generation, state-of-the-art, web based application developed entirely in-house by team of officers of the Corps of Signals of the Army.
- The application is being **deployed on the Army's internal network as a replacement of Army Wide Area Network messaging application which has been in service for past the 15 years.** The application has been fielded on Army owned hardware. It meets all futuristic user requirements and provides enhanced user experience. It has a variety of contemporary features including multi-level security, message prioritisation and tracking.
- This future ready messaging application will meet real time data transfer and messaging requirements of the Army, especially in the backdrop of current geo political security environment. **It is in line with the Government's Make in India initiative.**

The Indian Army is the land-based branch and the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Army, and its professional head is the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Two officers have been conferred with the rank of field marshal, a five-star rank, which is a ceremonial position of great honour. The Indian Army originated from the armies of the East India Company, which eventually became the British Indian Army, and the armies of the princely states, which were merged into the national army after independence. General Bipin Rawat is the first and current Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of India. General Manoj Mukund Naravane is the current and 28th Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) as well as the temporary Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee since 15 December 2021.

Niti Aayog launches Vernacular Innovation Program for innovators, entrepreneurs to access innovative ecosystem in 22 languages

- **Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog launched the first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program** which enables innovators and entrepreneurs to **have access to the innovative ecosystem in 22 mother tongue languages.**
- By providing access to learning in one's language and culture, Atal Innovation Mission aims to create equal opportunity for the vernacular innovators. **To build the necessary capacity for the Vernacular Innovation Program, VIP Atal Innovation Mission has identified and will be training a Vernacular Task Force in each of the 22 scheduled languages.** Each task force comprises vernacular language teachers, subject experts, technical writers, and the leadership of regional Atal Incubation Centres.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. It was established to replace the Planning Commission which followed a top-down model. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.

Govt notifies new semiconductor policy

- **The Government notified the semiconductor policy** which was cleared by the Cabinet. According to the gazette notification, the government will **provide up to 50% of Project cost for two semiconductor and two display fabs in the country.**
- The Application window starts January 1 and will be open for 45 days. **Support under the scheme shall be provided on pari-passu basis for a period of six years.**
- **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme shall offer financial incentives as well as design infrastructure support across various stages of development and deployment of semiconductor design for Integrated Circuits (ICs), Chipsets, System on Chips (SoCs), over a period of 5 years and will nurture close to 100 domestic companies of semiconductor design and facilitate growth of not less than 20 such companies to achieve turnover of more than Rs.1500 Crore in the next 5 years.**

Semiconductors possess specific electrical properties. A substance that conducts electricity is called a conductor, and a substance that does not conduct electricity is called an insulator. Semiconductors are substances with properties somewhere between them. ICs (integrated circuits) and electronic discrete components such as diodes and transistors are made of semiconductors. Common elemental semiconductors are silicon and germanium. Silicon is well-known of these. **Silicon forms most of ICs.** Common semiconductor compounds are such as gallium arsenide or indium antimonide. Semiconductors became essential for many electronic appliances as well as for social infrastructure that support our everyday life.

First in country, ECI to increase voting time by 1 hr in Uttarakhand due to terrain

- Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said the polling time will be enhanced by an hour for assembly elections in Uttarakhand considering the state's difficult terrain. He said it will be the first such move in the country as the terrain in many areas of the state makes it difficult for the voters to reach polling booths. Chandra said the polling will be held from 8 am to 6 pm in Uttarakhand, where elections are due early next year.
- The Supreme Court in February 2020 mandated political parties to have the criminal history of their candidates published along with the reasons for fielding people facing serious charges. The information has to be published within 48 hours of the candidate selection or under a fortnight before the beginning of the filing of nominations.

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the Devbhumi, due to many Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh. Trivendra Singh Rawat served as the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand till March 10, 2021. Mr Pushkar Singh Dhami is serving as the current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand since March 10, 2021. Baby Rani Maurya is serving as the current governor of Uttarakhand since 26 August 2018. The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital.

Maharashtra clears Shakti law unanimously

- The Maharashtra Assembly unanimously cleared the Shakti Criminal Laws (Maharashtra Amendment) Bill, 2020 on crimes against women and children. The legislation recommends capital punishment in rape cases, a time limit of 30 days to complete the probe from the day of registering the complaint, and places the onus on social media platforms and Internet data providing companies to share data for the police investigation.

NMCG and TERI launch Centre of Excellence on Water Reuse

- Director General of National Mission for Clean Ganga, NMCG and Director General of The Energy and Resources Institute, TERI launched Centre of Excellence, CoE on Water Reuse in New Delhi. The CoE on Water Reuse is the first of its kind to be established in the country through a collaboration between NMCG and TERI.
- The Centre is a quadripartite alliance between NMCG, TERI, industry partners and industry representative bodies, to come up at the TERI campus in Gwal Pahari, Gurugram, will be meeting the objectives of the Ganga Knowledge Centre (GKC) to design and foster research and innovation, including identification of knowledge gaps for research and need for new ideas, supporting targeted research and spurring and nurturing needed innovation e.g. for low-cost, effective and integrated treatment technologies, which could bridge the current treatment gaps, augment capacities and provide safe treated water for reuse.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a research institute in New Delhi that specializes in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable development. Established in 1974, it was formerly known as the Tata Energy Research Institute. As the scope of its activities widened, it was renamed The Energy and Resources Institute in 2003.



Reporters Without Borders release damning report on Chinese regime's repression against journalism; India ranks 142 out of 180 countries

- Since President Xi Jinping came to power in early 2013, a wave of arrests unprecedented since the end of the Maoist era has hit journalists and political commentators across China, abruptly ending a decade of experimentation with pluralism and debate in Chinese media, said a major report released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF).
- The 2021 RSF World Press Freedom Index ranks the People's Republic of China 177 out of 180 countries, only two spots above North Korea, with at least 127 journalists and press defenders under detention. India ranks 142 and Pakistan 145 while North Korea and Eritrea are ranked 179 and 180.
- "Two years after China's Pursuit of a New World Media Order, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) publishes The Great Leap Backwards of Journalism in China, a report revealing the extent of the regime's campaign of repression against the right to information," the media watchdog said.
- According to the RSF, "published a year before the Chinese Communist Party's 20th National Congress, which will take place at the end of December 2022, The Great Leap Backwards of Journalism in China is a damning 82-page document that demonstrates the acceleration of China's violations against its own international commitments to freedom of opinion and expression. The report, released on December 7, reveals the unprecedented campaign of repression led by the Chinese regime in recent years against journalism and the right to information worldwide."
- RSF's secretary general, Christophe Deloire, in the forward to the media watchdog's report, said before Xi came to power in 2013, there was an emerging trend of improvements in press freedom, but he had "put a brutal end to this partial opening and restored a media culture worthy of the Maoist era".

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is an international non-profit and non-governmental organization with the stated aim of safeguarding the right to freedom of information. It describes its advocacy as founded on the belief that everyone requires access to the news and information, in line with Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that recognizes the right to receive and share information regardless of frontiers, along with other international rights charters. It is headquartered in Paris.

Austria ruling party picks Nehammer for chancellor

- After 24 hours of political turmoil, Austria's ruling People's Party has chosen Interior Minister Karl Nehammer to take over as leader of both party and country. Mr Nehammer will be the party's third choice of chancellor in weeks, after Sebastian Kurz stood down in October. Mr Kurz is under investigation after he was implicated in a corruption scandal. The change at the top marks an end to the whirlwind career of Sebastian Kurz, who was just 31 when he became Austrian chancellor in 2017.

Austria is a landlocked East Alpine country in the southern part of Central Europe. It is composed of nine federated states, one of which is Vienna, Austria's capital and largest city. Alexander Van der Bellen is the current President of Austria. Karl Nehammer is serving as Chancellor of Austria since 6 December 2021. Euro is the official currency of it.

Gabriel Boric, a former student activist, is elected Chile's youngest president

- **Chileans elected Gabriel Boric as their next president, entrusting the young leftist lawmaker with helping to shape the future of a nation that has been roiled by protests and is now drafting a new constitution.**
- **At 35, Boric will be the nation's youngest leader** and by far its most liberal since President Salvador Allende, who died by suicide during the 1973 military coup that ushered in a brutal 17-year dictatorship.
- **The President-elect defeated José Antonio Kast**, a far-right former lawmaker who sought to portray Boric as a radical communist who would put Chile on a ruinous path, by destroying one of the region's most solid economies. **Boric's coalition includes the Communist Party.**

Chile is a country in western South America. It occupies a long, narrow strip of land between the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. **The country's capital and largest city is Santiago, and its national language is Spanish. The peso is the currency of Chile.**

Israel approves plan to double settlers in occupied Golan Heights

- **Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's cabinet voted in favour of the plan that aims to build 7,300 settler homes** in the region over a five-year period, during a meeting held at the Mevo Hama community in the Golan.
- **Israel's government approved a \$317 million plan to double the Jewish settler population in the Golan Heights**, 40 years after it annexed the territory captured from Syria.

The sugarloaf pineapple: GIs as a development tool in action

- **The West African nation of Benin has registered its first protected geographical indication at the African Intellectual Property Organisation. The honour goes to the sugarloaf pineapple from the Allada Plateau**, which has juicy and sweet white flesh, and the distinction of remaining green when fully ripe.
- **Benin formerly known as Dahomey is a country in West Africa. The capital of Benin is Porto-Novo.**

Britain, Norway, seal first post-Brexit fishing deal

- **Britain and Norway have signed their first post-Brexit fishing deal, allowing each country access to the other's waters and reciprocal quotas**, the government in Oslo announced.
- **Under the agreement, which covers 2022, both countries can fish up to 30,000 tonnes of demersal, or deep-water stocks, and 17,000 tonnes of herring in the waters** of the other. Britain will also be allowed to fish up to 6,550 tonnes of cod around Svalbard, in the Barents Sea, the scene of past fishing disputes between the two countries.

Johnson appoints foreign secretary Liz Truss as Brexit negotiator

- **British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the appointment of Britain's foreign secretary to become the country's lead negotiator with the European Union**, after long-time ally David Frost resigned after a week political upheaval in the Conservative Party.
- **Liz Truss will have ministerial responsibility with the EU and will lead negotiations to resolve problems arising from provisions of the Brexit agreement covering trade with Northern Ireland.**

Brexit ("British exit") was the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU) at 23:00 GMT on 31 January 2020. The UK is the first and so far only member state to have left the EU, after 47 years of having been a part of the union — the EU and its predecessor the European Communities (EC), which included the European Economic Community — since 1 January 1973. Following Brexit, EU law and the Court of Justice of the European Union no longer have primacy over British laws, except in select areas in relation to Northern Ireland. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 retains relevant EU law as domestic law, which the UK can now amend or repeal. **Under the terms of the Brexit withdrawal agreement, Northern Ireland continues to participate in the European Single Market in relation to goods, and to be a *de facto* member of the EU Customs Union.**



Oil India plans first hydrogen plant in Assam

- State-run Oil India Ltd has become the latest entity to join the green hydrogen rush by initiating the process of setting up a 100 kw green hydrogen plant at its pumping station No. 3 in Jorhat district of Assam.
- Though a small pilot as compared to more ambitious projects planned by its oil sector siblings, OIL's proposed plant is significant as it will deploy AEM technology for the first time in the country and will be first such project in the northeast.
- Electrolysers based on AEM technology provide a compact and affordable solution for producing high-quality hydrogen for running backups etc. These electrolysers are compact and can be stacked for higher capacity needed for running pumping stations, petrol pumps or blending with natural gas to make the fuel cleaner.

Oil India Limited (OIL) is the second largest government owned hydrocarbon exploration and production corporation. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, with its operational headquarters in Duliajan, Assam. The government corporation is a Navratna with its offices in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, Guwahati and Jodhpur.

Billionaires Index: Gautam Adani slips by a spot, is 14th richest in world

- Billionaire Gautam Adani was surpassed by China's Zhong Shanshan as the 13th wealthiest person in the world, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- The latest Bloomberg Index also shows that US-South African business magnate Elon Musk remains the world's wealthiest person, followed by Jeff Bezos, Bernard Arnault, Bill Gates and Larry Page, in that order. Mark Zuckerberg (6), Sergey Brin (7), Steve Balmer (8), Larry Ellison (9) and Warren Buffett round off the top 10.
- The list is dominated by Americans, with 13 out of top 20, including 9 out of top 10 (Arnault is French) being from the United States. Besides Arnault, Ambani, Shanshan and Adani, the other non-Americans in the top 20 are France's Françoise Meyers (11), Mexican Carlos Slim (15) and Amancio Ortega (17) from Spain.
- Azim Premji, ranked 33, is the third Indian on the rankings. Shiv Nadar is next at 49, while Radhakishan Damani (64) and Laxmi Mittal (91) are also featured. Serum Institute of India (SII) founder-MD Cyrus Poonawalla, ranked 133, is also among 20 Indians on the Index.

IFSCA sets up panel for creating framework for transfer of stressed loan

- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) sets up a committee for creating a framework for transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions in IFSC. Former executive director of RBI G Padmanabhan would be chairing the committee which will also include representative from law firm and other market participants possessing expertise in banking and legal issues.
- "The committee has been mandated to examine the provisions of the RBI directions pertaining to transfer of stressed loans by lending institutions to entities in IFSCA, identify areas/issues of the directions which require further clarification from RBI, suggest both the contents of the framework to be put in place by IFSCA to enable such transfers and amendments to the RBI directions to make it easier to effect such transfers,"

The central government has established International Financial Services Centres Authority to regulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) with headquarters in Gandhinagar (Gujarat).

Davos World Economic Forum called off due to Covid

- The planned World Economic Forum in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos has been called off due to surging cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19, citing communication from organisers to delegates.

The World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny, Geneva Canton, Switzerland, is an international NGO, founded on 24 January 1971 by Klaus Schwab. The foundation, which is mostly funded by its 1,000 member companies as well as public subsidies, views its own mission as “improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas”. The WEF is mostly known for its annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in Graubünden, in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.

Vodafone sells world’s first SMS ‘Merry Christmas’ for 107,000 euros

- Vodafone announced that it is auctioning the world’s first SMS as a non-fungible token (NFT). Now, the company has announced that a bidder has paid 107,000 euros for the replica of the first communication protocol of a short message, perpetuated as a NFT.
- The proceeds from the auction will go to a good cause this Christmas season. Vodafone will donate them to UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, to support the 82.4 million people who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict and persecution.

Vodafone Group Plc is a British multinational telecommunications company. Its registered office and global headquarters are in Newbury, Berkshire, England. The name Vodafone comes from VOice DATA FONE (the latter a sensational spelling of “phone”), chosen by the company to “reflect the provision of voice and data services over mobile phones”.

Bank of Baroda achieves top position in digital payments for 2020-21

- Bank of Baroda announced that it has won the number one position in overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21.
- The bank showed the exceptional growth of digital payment transactions achievement and was felicitated by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Govt. of India at the Digital Payments Utsav.

India’s newest carrier Akasa Air unveils brand logo

- Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Akasa Air unveiled its brand logo which it said has been inspired by the element of the sky.
- “The Rising A symbolises the warmth of the sun, the effortless flight of a bird, and the dependability of an aircraft wing. Always moving upwards. Always inspiring to rise. The logo of the new budget carrier is A, and the brand slogan of the company is ‘it’s your sky’.

RBL Bank MD and CEO Vishwavir Ahuja steps down, Rajeev Ahuja takes over

- The Board of Directors of the Bank at its meeting accepted the request of Mr Vishwavir Ahuja to proceed on leave with immediate effect.
- The Board appointed Rajeev Ahuja (currently the Executive Director) as interim Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of the Bank with immediate effect, subject to the regulatory and other approvals.

RBL Bank, formerly known as Ratnakar Bank, is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Mumbai and founded in 1943. It offers services across six verticals: corporate and institutional banking, commercial banking, branch and business banking, retail assets, development banking and financial inclusion, treasury and financial market operations.



Inventions/Discoveries

World's most powerful space telescope launched on quest to behold 1st stars

- The world's most powerful space telescope blasted off into orbit, headed to an outpost 1.5 million kilometres (930,000 miles) from Earth, after several delays caused by technical hitches. The James Webb Space Telescope, some three decades and billions of dollars in the making, left Earth enclosed in its Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou Space Centre in French Guiana.
- The \$10 billion observatory hurtled toward its destination 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) away, or more than four times beyond the moon. It will take a month to get there and another five months before its infrared eyes are ready to start scanning the cosmos.
- The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) considered a successor of the Hubble Telescope and will extend and complement its discoveries. Launched into low Earth orbit in 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope has made more than 1.4 million observations, including tracking interstellar objects, capturing a comet colliding with Jupiter, and discovering moons around Pluto. Hubble has captured galaxies merging, probed supermassive black holes and has helped us understand the history of our universe.
- The JWST will observe primarily in the infrared range and provide coverage from 0.6 to 28 microns. The instruments on Hubble see mainly in the ultraviolet and visible part of the spectrum. It could observe only a small range in the infrared from 0.8 to 2.5 microns. Goals of JWST: 1. To search for the first galaxies that formed after the Big Bang. 2. To determine how galaxies evolved from their earlier formation until now. 3. To observe the formation of stars from the first stages to the formation of planetary systems. 4. To measure the physical and chemical properties of planetary systems and investigate the potential for life in such systems.

The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) is a space telescope developed by NASA with the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). The telescope is named after James E. Webb, who was the administrator of NASA from 1961 to 1968 and played an integral role in the Apollo program. It is intended to succeed the Hubble Space Telescope as NASA's flagship mission in astrophysics. JWST was launched on 25 December 2021 on Ariane flight VA256. It is designed to provide improved infrared resolution and sensitivity over Hubble, and will enable a broad range of investigations across the fields of astronomy and cosmology, including observations of some of the most distant events and objects in the Universe such as the formation of the first galaxies, and allowing detailed atmospheric characterization of potentially habitable exoplanets.

INS Khukri, first of the India Built Missile Corvettes, Decommissioned After 32 Years

- INS Khukri, the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, was decommissioned "after 32 years of glorious service". The corvette was built by the Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders on August 23, 1989 and had the distinction of being part of both the Western and Eastern Fleets. The ship was commissioned in Mumbai by Shri Krishna Chandra Pant, the then Raksha Mantri and Mrs Sudha Mulla, wife of late Capt Mahendra Nath Mulla. Commander (now Retired Vice Admiral) Sanjeev Bhasin was the first Commanding Officer.

IIT Madras researchers develop motion planning algorithms that can think like humans

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras have developed a class of fast and efficient “motion planning” algorithms which can think like human beings and enable autonomous aerial, ground or surface vehicles to navigate obstacle-cluttered environments.
- According to the team, the algorithms have been developed on a novel notion of ‘Generalised Shape Expansion’ (GSE) that enables planning for a safe and dynamically feasible trajectory for autonomous vehicles. These approaches have been found to yield superior results compared to many of the existing seminal and state-of-the-art motion planning algorithms.

China is Home to World’s First Small Modular Nuclear Reactor

- China Huaneng Group Co.’s 200-megawatt unit 1 reactor at Shidao Bay is now feeding power to the grid in Shandong province. A second reactor is undergoing tests before being connected and putting the plant into full commercial operations in the middle of next year.
- The plant is the world’s first pebble-bed modular high-temperature gas-cooled reactor, heating up helium instead of water to produce power. It’s a so-called fourth generation reactor, designed to shut down passively if something goes wrong – in contrast to active systems that may not be able to trigger safety measures if power fails, which is what happened at the Fukushima Daiichi accident in Japan a decade ago.

World’s first Science-Sanskrit film to depict ‘Mangalyaan’ saga

- A science documentary in the classical language, considered to be the first such initiative in the world cinema, will soon enthral movie buffs with the success story of India’s historic ‘Mars Orbiter Mission’ (MOM) alias ‘Mangalyaan’.
- Titled “Yaanam”, the proposed 45-minute movie is based on “My Odyssey: Memoirs of the Man Behind the Mangalyaan Mission” penned by former ISRO chief K Radhakrishnan.

IIT Guwahati team develops efficient perovskite solar cells to produce electricity from sunlight

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed hybrid perovskite solar or photovoltaic devices to produce electricity from sunlight, which are highly efficient, cost effective, easy to manufacture and easily recyclable.
- These devices were developed achieving power conversion efficiencies beyond 21 per cent by utilising economical solution-based photovoltaic device processing techniques at mild room temperature and realising high ambient, thermal and optical stability, they said.
- A Perovskite Solar Cell (PSC) is a type of solar cell which includes a perovskite-structured compound, most commonly a hybrid organic-inorganic lead or tin halide-based material, as the light-harvesting active layer.

India successfully tests ‘Pralay’ missile off Odisha coast

- India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile ‘Pralay’ off the Odisha coast. The solid-fuel, battlefield missile developed by Defence Research Development Organisation is based on Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian ballistic missile programme. ‘Pralay’ is a 350-500 km short-range, surface-to-surface missile with a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg.

Rajnath lays foundation stone for two DRDO centres in Lucknow

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for a Defence Technology & Test Centre (DTTC) and a BrahMos manufacturing centre to be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Lucknow.
- “A first-of-its-kind Defence Technologies & Test Centre (DTTC), over approximately 22 acres is being set up to accelerate the growth of the defence and aerospace manufacturing clusters in Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UP DIC).” It will consist of six sub-centres — Deep-Tech Innovation & Startup Incubation Centre, Design & Simulation Centre, Testing & Evaluation Centre, Centre for Industry 4.0/Digital Manufacturing, Skill Development Centre and Business Development Centre.

Delhi to Publish First 'State Of Environment' Report Next Year

- **Delhi will publish its first 'State of Environment Report' next year** that will have data on all key areas, including sewage, water quality, waste collection and segregation etc., put together succinctly. The city government is also likely to give funds to municipal corporations for the first time for the management of road dust and potholes and to prevent open waste burning.
- The Environment Department will also give some of the funds received from the Centre under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) to MCDs for the management of road dust and potholes, and to prevent open waste burning.

DRDO successfully conducts flight test of indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target - Abhyas

- **DRDO has successfully conducted the flight test of Indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'Abhyas' from Integrated Test Range at Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.**
- **Two boosters provided initial acceleration during launch and a small turbojet engine was used to sustain high subsonic speed with long endurance.** The indigenous data link designed by Bengaluru based Industry partner has been successfully flown and tested during the flight.

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.

KUFOS chosen as partner in NASA-ISRO research programme

- **The Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) has been chosen to join a research project backed by the Space Application Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under a NASA-ISRO collaborative programme.**
- **NASA and ISRO are jointly developing a space-borne synthetic aperture radar (NISAR), to be launched in January 2023.** NISAR will produce high resolution data for large areas with the capability for systematic observation of earth resources. It will provide time-series data for eco-systems applications benefiting several operational activities related to agriculture, forestry, wetlands, and soil moisture estimation.

India's first rural 5G trial begins at Gujarat's Ajol

- **India's first 5G technology trials for rural broadband began at Ajol village, with a base transceiver station (BTS) installed 17 km away at Unava town in Gandhinagar district.**
- A team including representatives of the department of telecom (DoT) and two private mobile service providers visited Ajol village to measure speeds. Officials recorded a 105.47 Mbps download speed and a 58.77 Mbps upload speed.
- **Another area that is being tested is 5G immersive gaming and artificial intelligence assisted 360 degrees cameras with real-time video streams.** Another potential use of 5G technology that the DoT plans to test is where end users can get a 360 degree experience, where the user can also identify objects and people in a given environment.

5G or fifth generation is the latest upgrade in the long-term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks. 5G is the next generation of mobile broadband that will eventually replace, or at least augment 4G LTE connection. Operate in the millimeter wave spectrum (30-300 GHz) which have the advantage of sending large amounts of data at very high speeds. Operate in 3 bands, namely low, mid and high frequency spectrum. Reduced latency will support new applications that leverage the power of 5G, the Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence. Increased capacity on 5G networks can minimize the impact of load spikes, like those that take place during sporting events and news events.



Sports Personalities in News

Kidambi Srikanth bags historic silver in BWF World Championships in Spain

- In Badminton, Kidambi Srikanth bagged a historic silver medal after losing to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore 15-21, 20-22 in the Men's singles final of BWF World Championships at Huelva in Spain.
- Srikanth is the first Indian to finish runners-up. Lakshya finished with the bronze medal. This is the first time that India got two medals in the men's singles in the same edition of the Badminton World Championships. Before this, India got two bronze medals in the Men's singles at the Badminton world championships with Prakash Padukone in 1983 and B Sai Praneeth in 2019.

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.
- 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. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semifinals.

Rishabh Pant appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador

- Swashbuckling India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth.
- In February 2021, Pant was named the Men's Player of the Month in the first edition of the ICC Player of the Month Awards.

PV Sindhu appointed BWF's Athletes' Commission member

- India's two-time Olympic medallist shuttler PV Sindhu was appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission. The former world champion was named alongside five others who will serve as members till 2025.
- The Chair and Deputy Chair will be decided among the six members. "The new Commission will meet soon and decide the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Commission amongst the six members.

Pankaj Advani wins his 11th National Billiards title

- Ace cueist Pankaj Advani defended his national billiards title his 11th in the tournament after he defeated his PSPB teammate Dhruv Sitwala.

Bangladesh lifts U-19 SAFF Championship trophy beating India by solitary goal

- Bangladesh has lifted SAFF U-19 Women's Championship defeating India by a solitary goal in Dhaka.

'Neeraj' to be mascot for first Kerala Olympic Games

- A rabbit mascot named Neeraj, in honour of Neeraj Chopra, the first Indian athlete to win an Olympic gold medal, will be the symbol for the first ever 'Kerala Olympic Games', slated to be held in February 2022.
- "The meet will be conducted on 24 disciplines which includes athletics, aquatics, archery, basketball, boxing, badminton, cycling, football, wrestling, hockey, judo, karate, kambadi (Kabadi), KHO- KHO, netball, rugby, rifles (shooting), wushu, tennis, table tennis, Taekwondo, volleyball and weight lifting," the KOA said in a release. Ahead of the Games, district games will be held in all 14 districts and athletes and teams selected from this level will participate in the Kerala Olympics Games, KOA said.

Jhulan Goswami first Woman Cricketer to launch rare NFT Cricket Memorabilia

- Jhulan Goswami sets to storm the exciting new world of non-fungible token (NFT) with the Dubai based CricFlix, in association with RevSportz and Fanatic Sports, launching its first-ever cricket non-fungible token (NFT) auction in Dubai.
- Sports NFTs have proven to be game-changing digital assets in recent times and the launch of CricFlix's rare NFTs will offer fans unique ownership rights alongside opportunities to make revenue by accumulating treasured moments from their digital sporting collection.

FIS Alpine Skiing Competition: Ace Indian skier Aanchal Thakur wins Bronze medal in Montenegro

- Ace Indian skier Aanchal Thakur has bagged Bronze medal at the FIS Alpine Skiing Competition in Montenegro. She finished 3rd with an overall timing of 1:54:30.
- Georgia Epiphaniou, who won Silver medal was just 2 seconds ahead of Aanchal. With this, Aanchal has become the first Indian Ski athlete to win two medals at international level. She has previously won a bronze medal in the 2018 FIS Alpine 3200 Cup held in Turkey.

U.P. clinches National junior hockey crown

- Uttar Pradesh rode on Arun Sahani's brace to script a 3-1 win over Chandigarh in the final of the 11th Hockey India junior National men's championship.
- It was a complete domination by Uttar Pradesh, which was clinical in all departments. Nipping the Chandigarh attack in the bud and attacking from both flanks, Uttar Pradesh, with three World Cuppers in its team, proved why it is the best side of the tournament. World Cupper Uttam Singh was the fulcrum of the team. He was not only the midfield general but also worked hard on both flanks.

MISCELLANEOUS

Jharkhand to get eastern India's first State-run tribal research university

- **The Jharkhand Assembly gave its nod to Pandit Raghunath Murmu Tribal University Bill 2021**, paving the way for the state's first tribal university. The state already has a dedicated tribal research institute in Ranchi, the Ram Dayal Munda Tribal Research Institute, which offers courses on tribal research under Ranchi University.
- **Members of the tribal community form at least 26% of Jharkhand's total population of 3.29 crore, as per the 2011 Census.** There are a total of 32 tribe groups in the state with each one of them having different customs, history, traditions and dialects. Many researchers have divided tribal groups in Jharkhand on the basis of their traditions and practices. Some tribe groups are formed by hunters and gatherers, some by farmers and some even by artisans.

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.

Agriculture minister releases book titled "Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021"

- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has released the book titled Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021.** The book is a compendium of all the spices statistics like area, production, productivity, export, import, price and value of output of various spices produced in the country.
- **The book has been published by the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development,** the nodal agency for collection and compilation of area and production estimates of spices at the National level.

Northeast's first tea museum to come up at Dibrugarh in 2023

- **The first tea museum in the northeast region will come up in the "Tea City of India", Dibrugarh,** and will be officially opened to public in early 2023. 90% of work in the first phase of the project has been completed. An amount of Rs 3.14 crore has been sanctioned by the North East Council (NEC) and Assam government for the first phase of the project.

Kerala delivers India's first great superhero film

- **Kerala has delivered India's first great superhero movie.** With Basil Joseph's new Malayalam film **Minnal Murali**, streaming on Netflix, India has finally cracked the superhero formula.
- **Set in a semi-rural Kerala town, Minnal Murali follows Jaison (Tovino Thomas) who develops superpowers after getting struck by lightning.** All is well until Jaison finds his nemesis in Selvan (Govind Somasundaram), another man in the town who was struck by lightning on the same night.

Delhi Cabinet approves setting up of Delhi Teachers' University

- **Delhi Cabinet approved setting up of Delhi Teachers' University, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced.** The university will offer a four-year integrated teacher education programme after Class 12, in which BA and BEd, BSc and Bed, and BCom and BEd courses will be incorporated.

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, **Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai.** Anil Baijal is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislature, and it came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA of the Constitution inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Pradeep Kumar Rawat appointed as India's new envoy to China

- Senior Indian diplomat Pradeep Kumar Rawat, who is well-versed in negotiating with Chinese diplomats, was appointed as India's next Ambassador to China. Rawat will succeed Vikram Misri.

Guru Randhawa becomes first Indian male singer to cross 30 million followers on Instagram

- Singer-songwriter Guru Randhawa has crossed 30 million followers on his Instagram, making him the first Indian male singer to have amassed such following. Guru is known for chartbuster tracks like 'Lahore', 'High Rated Gabru', 'Ishare Tere' and the most recent 'Dance Meri Rani'.

Ravinder Bhakar assumes charge of NFDC, Films Division and CFSI

- Ravinder Bhakar, CEO of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has assumed charge of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Films Division, and Children Films Society of India (CFSI).
- Mr. Bhakar, a 1999-batch officer of Indian Railway Stores Service (IRSS), has been assigned these charges in addition to his present duties as CEO of the film certification body.

Biden picks Caroline Kennedy, Michelle Kwan for ambassadors

- Mr. Biden appointed another member of the Kennedy clan, Victoria Kennedy, an attorney and the widow of Sen. Ted Kennedy, to serve as his ambassador to Austria.
- President Joe Biden announced he's nominating Caroline Kennedy, the daughter of President John F. Kennedy who served as ambassador to Japan during the Obama administration, to serve as ambassador to Australia and Michelle Kwan, the renowned U.S. Olympic figure skater, to serve as his chief envoy to Belize.

Biden announces intent to appoint four Indian-Americans to AANHPI Advisory Commission

- U.S. President Joe Biden announced intent to appoint four Indian Americans Ajay Jain Bhutoria, Sonal Shah, Kamal Kalsi and Smita Shah as members of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.
- The Commission will advise the President on ways the public, private, and non-profit sectors can work together to advance equity and opportunity for every Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community, the White House said.

Shalina Kumar is first Indian American to become federal judge in Michigan

- Indian American Shalina D Kumar has become the first person of South Asian descent to be selected as a federal judge in Michigan. Kumar, who was Oakland County's Chief Circuit Court Judge, was nominated by US President Joe Biden on 30 June to serve as the US District Court judge for the Eastern District.

OBITUARIES

Ex-SC judge Nanavati, who probed Godhra and anti-Sikh riots, passes away at 86

- **Former Supreme Court judge Justice Girish Thakorlal Nanavati, who investigated the 1984 anti-Sikh and the 2002 Godhra riots, passed away.**
- **The commission was appointed in 2002 by the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi to probe the riots, that took place after the burning of two coaches of the Sabarmati Express train near the Godhra railway station, in which 59 ‘karsevaks’ died. It was to probe both the train burning incident and the subsequent communal violence in which over 1,000 people, mostly from the minority community, died.**
- **The commission gave a clean chit to the then Modi-led state government with regard to the riots. The riots were “not a pre-planned conspiracy or orchestrated violence,” and there was no substance in the allegation that state authorities turned a blind eye to the violence, the commission said.**
- **Earlier, Justice Nanavati was appointed to a one-man commission to investigate the 1984 anti-Sikh riots by the BJP-led NDA government in May 2000. The commission said in its report, submitted in 2005, that there was “credible evidence” against then Union Minister and Congress leader Jagdish Tytler, and also pointed to probable roles of various other Congress leaders. The riots had broken out following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984.**

Greece’s former President Karolos Papoulias dies at 92

- **Veteran Greek politician Karolos Papoulias, who served as President of Greece at the height of the economic crisis of the 2010s, died at the age of 92.**

Anti-apartheid icon Desmond Tutu dies at 90

- **South African anti-apartheid icon Archbishop Desmond Tutu, described as the country’s moral compass, died aged 90, sparking an outpouring of tributes for the outspoken Nobel Peace Prize winner. Tutu, who had largely faded from public life in recent years, was remembered for his easy humour and characteristic smile – and above all his tireless fight against injustices of all colours.**



AWARDS

Indian climate action entrepreneur wins United Nations Women's Award for Leadership Commitment to Gender Equality

- Divya Hegde from Udupi, coastal Karnataka, has won the UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony. She has been recognised for her sustained efforts in advancing gender equality through climate action efforts.
- Her organisation, Baeru Environmental Services, works in the areas of waste management, creation of livelihoods for rural women, and developing a circular economy in the region.

Urvashi Rautela becomes First Indian to be awarded 'Symbol Of The Armour' By Israel's Army

- Actor and model Urvashi Rautela recently bagged a prestigious honour from the Israeli army. The 27-year-old received the 'Symbol of The Armour' award from the Israeli army Moshe Levy and became the first Indian to do so.

Avani Lekhara won 'Best Female Debut' honour at 2021 Paralympic Sport Awards

- Indian shooter Avani Lekhara, who has created history by winning India's first Gold medal in Shooting at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics, won the "Best Female Debut" honour at the 2021 Paralympic Sport Awards. The Awards were announced by the International Paralympic Committee. She became the 1st Indian woman to win 2 Paralympic medals in a single edition of the Paralympic Games. India won an unprecedented 19 medals at the Paralympic Games including 5 Gold, 8 Silver & 6 Bronze.

SAIL honoured Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021

- Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL), under the Ministry of Steel, has been awarded with the prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2021 for successive three years. The Award is given to organizations for significant achievements in Environment Management by Environment Foundation (WEF) since 1998.



IMPORTANT DAYS

Minorities Rights Day

- **December 18 was declared as the Minorities Rights Day back in 1992 by the United Nations.** The UN had adopted the statement on the individual's Rights belonging to religious or Linguistic National or Ethnic Minorities.
- In India, it is the responsibility of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) to carry out the events on this day. **The NCM was established by the Union Government under the National Commission for Minorities Act, in 1992.**

International Human Solidarity Day 20 December

- The General Assembly, on 22 December 2005, by resolution identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underlie relations between peoples in the twenty-first century, and in that regard decided to **proclaim 20 December of each year International Human Solidarity Day.**
- **The theme is centered around promoting cultural equality, social justice that is directed towards human and social development (specifically in developing countries).** The theme remains the same every year.

National Mathematics Day

- **India celebrates National Mathematics Day on December 22 every year. The day marks the birth anniversary of famous mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan.** In 2012, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Declared the date as National Mathematics Day to honor the great man.
- **The 2015 movie 'The Man Who Knew Infinity' was released based on Srinivasa Ramanujan's biography.** It describes the mathematician's life and journey towards establishing the famed mathematical theories.
- **As mentioned in Ramanujan's biography 'The Man Who Knew Infinity' by Robert Knaigel, GH Hardy once went to visit Ramanujan at a hospital. Mr Hardy told him that he came in a taxi with the number '1729' which seemed to be an ordinary number. Ramanujan said that it was not. 1729, later termed the Hardy-Ramanujan Number, is the smallest number which can be expressed as the sum of two different cubes in two different ways, he said.**

National Farmers' Day

- **Kisan Diwas or National Farmers' Day is observed every year in India on December 23 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, a prominent farmers' leader and the fifth Prime Minister of India.** Chaudhary Charan Singh held the post of the PM between 1979 and 1980. **Kisan Diwas 2021 is celebrated to honor the contributions of the Indian farmers as well as to glorify their significance in building the country.**

National Consumer Rights Day

- **National Consumer Rights Day is observed on 24 December annually** with a particular theme across the country. The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had received the assent of the president on this day.
- No doubt it is considered a historic milestone in the consumer movement in the country. This day also provides awareness about consumer rights and responsibilities. Every year, **a theme is allocated to the celebrations and this year the theme is 'tackling plastic pollution'.**

QUESTIONS

1. Recently, India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) was inaugurated in _____.
(a) Lucknow (b) Hyderabad (c) Ranchi (d) Bengaluru
2. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh Ganga Expressway in _____.
(a) Meerut district (b) Pilibhit district
(c) Shahjahanpur district (d) Ghaziabad district
3. Which of the following state governments launched the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) to enable systemic registration of migrant workers for monitoring and analysis in the source as well as the destination districts recently?
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Jharkhand (c) Odisha (d) Madhya Pradesh
4. Which of the following state governments recently announced the state anthem and directed that all present during its rendition should remain standing?
(a) Goa (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Sikkim
5. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, which of the following billionaires remains the world's wealthiest person?
(a) Jeff Bezos (b) Sergey Brin (c) Elon Musk (d) Bernard Arnault
6. Which of the following dates was declared as the Minorities Rights Day back in 1992 by the United Nations?
(a) December 14 (b) December 16 (c) December 18 (d) December 20
7. Recently, Researchers at _____ has developed a class of fast and efficient "motion planning" algorithms which can think like human beings and enable autonomous aerial, ground or surface vehicles to navigate obstacle-cluttered environments?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras
8. Which of the following countries will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year?
(a) South Korea (b) India (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
9. In Badminton, who among the following bagged a historic silver medal in the Men's singles final of BWF World Championships at Huelva in Spain?
(a) Kidambi Srikanth (b) P Kashyap (c) Lakshya sen (d) Amit Mishra
10. Name the Former Supreme Court judge who investigated the 1984 anti-Sikh and the 2002 Godhra riots who passed away.
(a) Justice Harish Trivedi (b) Justice Girish Thakorlal Nanavati
(c) Justice Anupam Mahara (d) Justice Anuj Lakhers
11. Recently, Gabriel Boric has been elected as the new President of _____.
(a) Peru (b) Chile (c) Argentina (d) Brazil
12. After the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019, the government set up the Delimitation Commission headed by retired Supreme Court judge _____.
(a) Ranjana Prakash Desai (b) Gyan Sudha Mishra
(c) Ajay Kumar Mishra (d) J Chamaleshwar

13. Recently, The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) sets up a committee for creating a framework for transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions in IFSC. Who will chair this committee?
 (a) Anuj Kumar Jain (b) S Sudhakar Reddy
 (c) A Murugan (d) G Padmanabhan
14. The 2021 RSF World Press Freedom Index ranks India at _____ rank.
 (a) 111 (b) 127 (c) 134 (d) 142
15. Recently, The Centre introduced the Election Laws (Amendment Bill) 2021 to link _____ and Aadhaar card, despite objections by the Opposition parties over the move.
 (a) Ration Cards (b) Voter Identity Card
 (c) Pan Card (d) Driving License
16. The government of India has launched a campaign namely _____ to increase awareness regarding protection and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP).
 (a) KAPILA (b) SAMPLA (c) JITHILA (d) PRATHAM
17. Who has been recently appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth?
 (a) Rahul Dravid (b) Rishabh Pant (c) Unmukt Chand (d) Jay Bista
18. Who has been recently chosen to be the new chancellor of Austria?
 (a) Sebastian Kurz (b) Werner Kogler (c) Karl Nehammer (d) Alexander Van der Bellen
19. Who among the following Indian shuttler was appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission recently?
 (a) Saina Nehwal (b) Kidambi Srikanth (c) Lakshya Sen (d) PV Sindhu
20. International Human Solidarity Day is celebrated every year on _____.
 (a) 18 December (b) 20 December (c) 22 December (d) 24 December
21. Recently, NITI Aayog has entered into an agreement with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) to address issues related to inclusion of _____ in government programmes.
 (a) Millets (b) Bajra (c) Pulses (d) Rice
22. NASA and ISRO are jointly developing space-borne synthetic aperture radar (NISAR), to be launched in _____.
 (a) 2022 (b) 2023 (c) 2025 (d) 2027
23. Which of the following countries is home to world's first small modular nuclear reactor?
 (a) Japan (b) India (c) China (d) Malaysia
24. PANEX-21, a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise for _____ member nations has been organised at College of Military Engineering in Pune, Maharashtra.
 (a) SAARC (b) ASEAN (c) BIMSTEC (d) G-20
25. In India, the Indian government declared National Mathematics Day on _____.
 (a) 17 December (b) 20 December
 (c) 22 December (d) 24 December
26. Recently, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), _____ and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) rolled out their first AgriTech Challenge cohort for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program.
 (a) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (b) NITI Aayog
 (c) NABARD (d) SIDBI

27. Recently, The planned World Economic Forum in _____ has been called off due to surging cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19, citing communication from organisers to delegates.
(a) Munich (b) Davos (c) Madrid (d) Lisbon
28. Who has recently assumed charge of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Films Division, and Children Films Society of India (CFSI)?
(a) Deepak Madaan (b) Achyut Ranjan (c) Ravinder Bhakar (d) Mahesh Jain
29. Recently, U.S. President Joe Biden announced intent to appoint four Indian Americans as members of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander. Who is not among the four?
(a) Ajay Jain Bhutoria (b) Anubhav Rakheja (c) Kamal Kalsi (d) Sonal Shah
30. Who won the National Billiards Title recently?
(a) Pankaj Advani (b) Dhruv Sitwala (c) Aditya Mahtab (d) Dheeraj Kumar
31. Recently, Odisha's Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated _____ the State's longest bridge over Mahanadi in Cuttack district.
(a) V-Setu (b) B-Setu, (c) P-Setu (d) T-Setu
32. Recently, who among the following has released the book titled 'Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021'?
(a) Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar
(b) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(c) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
(d) Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav
33. Recently, Researchers at the _____ have developed hybrid pervoskite solar or photovoltaic devices to produce electricity from sunlight, which are highly efficient, cost effective, easy to manufacture and easily recyclable.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
34. The first tea museum in the northeast region will come up in _____ and will be officially opened to public in early 2023.
(a) Guwahati (b) Gangtok (c) Kolkata (d) Dibrugarh
35. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of 'Banas Dairy Sankul' at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park in _____.
(a) Prayagraj (b) Varanasi (c) Kanpur (d) Noida
36. In India, National Farmers' Day is celebrated on _____.
(a) December 19 (b) December 21 (c) December 23 (d) December 25
37. Recently, Britain and _____ have signed their first post-Brexit fishing deal, allowing each country access to the other's waters and reciprocal quotas?
(a) Finland (b) Sweden (c) Norway (d) Iceland
38. Which of the following banks recently announced that it has won the number one position in overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21?
(a) Punjab National Bank (b) Union Bank of India (c) Bank of Baroda (d) State Bank of India
39. Which of the following companies recently announced that it is auctioning the world's first SMS as a non-fungible token (NFT)?
(a) Vodafone (b) Reliance Jio (c) Airtel (d) BSNL

40. Which of the following teams has lifted SAFF U-19 Women's Championship recently?
 (a) India (b) Japan (c) Bangladesh (d) Maldives
41. Recently, Indian Army launched a contemporary messaging application named _____.
 (a) MAGMA (b) KISNA (c) ASIGMA (d) STIGMA
42. Recently, India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile _____ off the Odisha coast.
 (a) Ajeya (b) Pralay (c) Unique (d) Input
43. Recently, Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog launched the first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program which enables innovators and entrepreneurs to have access to the innovative ecosystem in _____ mother tongue languages.
 (a) 13 (b) 17 (c) 20 (d) 22
44. Recently, Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed Akasa Air unveiled its brand logo. The logo of the new budget carrier is _____.
 (a) A (b) AK (c) RJ (d) akasha
45. What will be the symbol for the first ever 'Kerala Olympic Games', slated to be held in February 2022?
 (a) Rabbit mascot named Neeraj (b) Deer mascot named Raja
 (c) Bear mascot named Knotty (d) Lion mascot named Sheru
46. Recently, The Government of India notified the semiconductor policy which was cleared by the Cabinet. The government will provide up to _____ of Project cost for two semiconductor and two display fabs in the country.
 (a) 20% (b) 30% (c) 40% (d) 50%
47. Name the Indian woman cricketer who sets to storm the exciting new world of non-fungible token (NFT) with the Dubai based CricFlix with RevSportz and Fanatic Sports, launching its first-ever cricket non-fungible token (NFT)?
 (a) Mithali Raj (b) Harmanpreet Kaur (c) Smriti Mandhana (d) Jhulan Goswami
48. Every Year, National Consumer Rights Day is observed on _____ with a particular theme across the country.
 (a) 18 December (b) 20 December (c) 22 December (d) 24 December
49. Name the Indian American who has become the first person of South Asian descent to be selected as a federal judge in Michigan.
 (a) Meenakshi J Luthra (b) Shalina D Kumar (c) Aditi N Ranjan (d) Kritika L Desai
50. Who won the UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony?
 (a) Anupama Singh (b) Manorama Sharma (c) Divya Hegde (d) Rashmi Devgowda
51. Which of the following state Assemblies unanimously cleared the Shakti Criminal Laws Bill, 2020 on crimes against women and children?
 (a) Gujarat (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
52. India's first 5G technology trials for rural broadband began at Ajol village, with a base transceiver station (BTS) installed in _____ district.
 (a) Satara (b) Nagpur (c) Gandhinagar (d) Kolkata
53. Which of the following companies has become the latest entity to join the green hydrogen rush by initiating the process of setting up a 100 kw green hydrogen plant?
 (a) HPCL (b) Oil India Ltd (c) BPCL (d) IOCL

54. Which of the following state assemblies gave its nod to Pandit Raghunath Murmu Tribal University Bill 2021, paving the way for the state's first tribal university?
 (a) Uttarakhand (b) Jharkhand (c) Odisha (d) West Bengal
55. Which of the following countries approves plan to double settlers in occupied Golan Heights?
 (a) Israel (b) Jordan (c) Syria (d) Iraq
56. Vishwavir Ahuja stepped down as the MD and CEO of _____.
 (a) RBL Bank (b) IDFC First (c) Bandhan Bank (d) ICICI Bank
57. Recently, BrahMos manufacturing centre to be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in _____.
 (a) Lucknow (b) Varanasi (c) Kanpur (d) Indore
58. Which of the following state/ union territories will publish its first 'State of Environment Report' next year that will have data on all key areas, including sewage, water quality, waste collection and segregation etc., put together succinctly?
 (a) Puducherry (b) Lakshadweep (c) Delhi (d) Sikkim
59. Who won the Bronze medal at the FIS Alpine Skiing Competition in Montenegro?
 (a) Aanchal Thakur (b) Anita Gupta
 (c) Abhilasha Jha (d) Sukirti Kandpal
60. Recently, Karolos Papoulias, who served as president at the height of the economic crisis of the 2010s, died. He was the President of _____.
 (a) Poland (b) Portugal (c) Ireland (d) Greece
61. The CoE on Water Reuse is the first of its kind to be established in the country through a collaboration between NMCG and _____.
 (a) Namami Gange
 (b) TERI
 (c) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
 (d) NITI Aayog
62. Recently, Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said the polling time will be enhanced by an hour for assembly elections in _____ considering the state's difficult terrain.
 (a) Uttarakhand (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Sikkim
63. Who among the following became first Indian to be awarded 'Symbol Of The Armour' by Israel's Army?
 (a) Madhuri Dixit Nene (b) Urvashi Rautela (c) Amitabh Bachchan (d) Sushmita Sen
64. Recently, The world's largest and most powerful space telescope 'James Webb Space Telescope' rocketed away on a high-stakes quest to behold light from the first stars and galaxies and scour the universe for hints of life. It is developed by _____.
 (a) CERN (b) JAXA (c) NASA (d) CERN
65. Name the African nation which has registered its first protected geographical indication "sugarloaf pineapple" from the Allada Plateau.
 (a) The Gambia (b) Benin (c) Algeria (d) Liberia
66. Name the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, which was decommissioned "after 32 years of glorious service".
 (a) INS Khukri (b) INS Vikrant (c) INS Kushal (d) INS Vikramiditya

67. Which of the following has successfully conducted the flight test of Indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'Abhyas'?
- (a) ISRO (b) BARC (c) DRDO (d) HAL
68. Which of the following states won the 11th Hockey India junior National men's championship recently?
- (a) Jharkhand (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Chhattisgarh
69. Recently, Anti-apartheid icon Archbishop Desmond Tutu died aged 90. He belonged to _____.
- (a) Spain (b) Portugal (c) South Africa (d) Zimbabwe
70. Which of the following states has delivered India's first great superhero movie "Minnal Murali"?
- (a) Karnataka (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Kerala (d) Andhra Pradesh



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. b India's first International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) was jointly inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, and Telangana Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao.
2. c Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur district. The 594 Km long six-lane Expressway will be built at a cost of over Rs 36,200 crore. Starting near the Bijauli village in Meerut, the Expressway will extend till near the Judapur Dandu village in Prayagraj.
3. b The Jharkhand government launched the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) to enable systemic registration of migrant workers for monitoring and analysis in the source as well as the destination districts.
4. b The Tamil Nadu government announced 'Tamil Thaaai Vaazhthu,' an invocation sung in praise of Mother Tamil, as the state anthem and directed that all present during its rendition should remain standing.
5. c The latest Bloomberg Index also shows that US-South African business magnate Elon Musk remains the world's wealthiest person, followed by Jeff Bezos, Bernard Arnault, Bill Gates and Larry Page, in that order. Mark Zuckerberg (6), Sergey Brin (7), Steve Balmer (8), Larry Ellison (9) and Warren Buffett round off the top 10.
6. c December 18 was declared as the Minorities Rights Day back in 1992 by the United Nations.
7. d Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras have developed a class of fast and efficient "motion planning" algorithms which can think like human beings and enable autonomous aerial, ground or surface vehicles to navigate obstacle-cluttered environments.
8. b India will host Women's Under-18 and Under-19 SAFF championships next year.
9. a In Badminton, Kidambi Srikanth bagged a historic silver medal after losing to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore 15-21, 20-22 in the Men's singles final of BWF World Championships at Huelva in Spain.
10. b Former Supreme Court judge Justice Girish Thakorlal Nanavati, who investigated the 1984 anti-Sikh and the 2002 Godhra riots, passed away.
11. b Chileans elected Gabriel Boric as their next president, entrusting the young leftist lawmaker with helping to shape the future of a nation that has been roiled by protests and is now drafting a new constitution.
12. a After the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019, the government set up the Delimitation Commission headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai.
13. d The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) sets up a committee for creating a framework for transfer of stressed loans from domestic lenders to financial institutions in IFSC. Former executive director of RBI G Padmanabhan would be chairing the committee.
14. d India ranks 142 and Pakistan 145 while North Korea and Eritrea are ranked 179 and 180.
15. b The Centre introduced the Election Laws (Amendment Bill) 2021 to link voter identity and Aadhaar cards, despite objections by the Opposition parties over the move.
16. a The government has launched a campaign namely Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Campaign (KAPILA) to increase awareness regarding protection and exploitation of Intellectual Property (IP) and also to provide funding support in order to promote filing of the Intellectual Property (IP) in Higher Education Institutions.

- 17. b** Swashbuckling India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth.
- 18. c** After 24 hours of political turmoil, Austria's ruling People's Party has chosen Interior Minister Karl Nehammer to take over as leader of both party and country.
- 19. d** India's two-time Olympic medalist shuttler PV Sindhu was appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission.
- 20. b** The General Assembly, on 22 December 2005, by resolution identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underlie relations between peoples in the twenty-first century, and in that regard decided to proclaim 20 December of each year International Human Solidarity Day.
- 21. a** NITI Aayog has entered into an agreement with United Nations World Food Program (WFP) to address issues related to inclusion of millets in government programmes.
- 22. b** NASA and ISRO are jointly developing a space-borne synthetic aperture radar (NISAR), to be launched in January 2023.
- 23. c** China Huaneng Group Co.'s 200-megawatt unit 1 reactor at Shidao Bay is now feeding power to the grid in Shandong province.
- 24. c** Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh witnessed a Multi-Agency Exercise (MAE) and inaugurated an equipment display on the second day of PANEX-21, a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise for BIMSTEC member nations, organised at College of Military Engineering in Pune, Maharashtra.
- 25. c** The Indian government declared 22 December to be National Mathematics Day.
- 26. b** Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) rolled out their first AgriTech Challenge cohort for its ambitious innovative Agri-tech program that aims to help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.
- 27. b** The planned World Economic Forum in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos has been called off due to surging cases of the Omicron variant of Covid-19, citing communication from organisers to delegates.
- 28. c** Ravinder Bhakar, CEO of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has assumed charge of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Films Division, and Children Films Society of India (CFSI).
- 29. b** U.S. President Joe Biden announced intent to appoint four Indian Americans Ajay Jain Bhutoria, Sonal Shah, Kamal Kalsi and Smita Shah as members of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.
- 30. a** Ace cueist Pankaj Advani defended his national billiards title his 11th in the tournament after he defeated his PSPB teammate Dhruv Sitwala.
- 31. d** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated T-Setu, the State's longest bridge over Mahanadi in Cuttack district.
- 32. a** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has released the book titled Spices Statistics at a Glance 2021'.
- 33. a** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed hybrid perovskite solar or photovoltaic devices to produce electricity from sunlight, which are highly efficient, cost effective, easy to manufacture and easily recyclable.

- 34. d** The first tea museum in the northeast region will come up in the “Tea City of India”, Dibrugarh, and will be officially opened to public in early 2023.
- 35. b** The Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of ‘Banas Dairy Sankul’ at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park at Karkhiyaon in Varanasi.
- 36. c** In 2001, the government decided to recognise Choudhary Charan Singh’s contribution to the agriculture sector and welfare of farmers by celebrating his birth anniversary as Kisan Diwas. Since then, December 23 has been observed as National Farmers’ Day.
- 37. c** Britain and Norway have signed their first post-Brexit fishing deal, allowing each country access to the other’s waters and reciprocal quotas, the government in Oslo announced.
- 38. c** Bank of Baroda announced that it has won the number one position in overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21.
- 39. a** Vodafone announced that it is auctioning the world’s first SMS as a non-fungible token (NFT).
- 40. c** Bangladesh has lifted SAFF U-19 Women’s Championship defeating India by a solitary goal in Dhaka.
- 41. c** Indian Army launched a contemporary messaging application named ASIGMA. ASIGMA stands for Army Secure Indigenous Messaging Application.
- 42. b** India successfully test fired short-range, surface to surface-guided ballistic missile ‘Pralay’ off the Odisha coast.
- 43. d** Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog launched the first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program which enables innovators and entrepreneurs to have access to the innovative ecosystem in 22 mother tongue languages.
- 44. a** The logo of the new budget carrier is A, and the brand slogan of the company is ‘it’s your sky’.
- 45. a** A rabbit mascot named Neeraj, in honour of Neeraj Chopra, the first Indian athlete to win an Olympic gold medal, will be the symbol for the first ever ‘Kerala Olympic Games’, slated to be held in February 2022.
- 46. d** The Government notified the semiconductor policy which was cleared by the Cabinet. According to the gazette notification, the government will provide up to 50% of Project cost for two semiconductor and two display fabs in the country.
- 47. d** Jhulan Goswami sets to storm the exciting new world of non-fungible token (NFT) with the Dubai based CricFlix, in association with RevSportz and Fanatic Sports, launching its first-ever cricket non-fungible token (NFT) auction in Dubai.
- 48. d** National Consumer Rights Day is observed on 24 December annually with a particular theme across the country.
- 49. b** Indian American Shalina D Kumar has become the first person of South Asian descent to be selected as a federal judge in Michigan.
- 50. c** Divya Hegde from Udupi, coastal Karnataka, has won the UN Women’s Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women’s Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony.
- 51. d** The Maharashtra Assembly unanimously cleared the Shakti Criminal Laws (Maharashtra Amendment) Bill, 2020 on crimes against women and children.
- 52. c** India’s first 5G technology trials for rural broadband began at Ajol village, with a base transceiver station (BTS) installed 17 km away at Unava town in Gandhinagar district.

- 53. b** State-run Oil India Ltd has become the latest entity to join the green hydrogen rush by initiating the process of setting up a 100 kw green hydrogen plant at its pumping station No. 3 in Jorhat district of Assam.
- 54. b** The Jharkhand Assembly gave its nod to Pandit Raghunath Murmu Tribal University Bill 2021, paving the way for the state's first tribal university.
- 55. a** Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's cabinet voted in favour of the plan that aims to build 7,300 settler homes in the region over a five-year period, during a meeting held at the Mevo Hama community in the Golan.
- 56. a** RBL Bank MD and CEO Vishwavir Ahuja steps down, Rajeev Ahuja takes over.
- 57. a** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for a Defence Technology & Test Centre (DTTC) and a BrahMos manufacturing centre to be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Lucknow.
- 58. c** Delhi will publish its first 'State of Environment Report' next year that will have data on all key areas, including sewage, water quality, waste collection and segregation etc., put together succinctly.
- 59. a** Ace Indian skier Aanchal Thakur has bagged Bronze medal at the FIS Alpine Skiing Competition in Montenegro.
- 60. d** Veteran Greek politician Karolos Papoulias, who served as president at the height of the economic crisis of the 2010s, died at the age of 92.
- 61. b** The CoE on Water Reuse is the first of its kind to be established in the country through a collaboration between NMCG and TERI.
- 62. a** Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said the polling time will be enhanced by an hour for assembly elections in Uttarakhand considering the state's difficult terrain.
- 63. b** Urvashi Rautela Becomes First Indian To Be Awarded 'Symbol Of The Armour' By Israel's Army.
- 64. c** The world's largest and most powerful space telescope rocketed away on a high-stakes quest to behold light from the first stars and galaxies and scour the universe for hints of life. NASA's James Webb Space Telescope soared from French Guiana on South America's northeastern coast, riding a European Ariane rocket into the sky.
- 65. b** The west African nation of Benin has registered its first protected geographical indication at the African Intellectual Property Organisation. The honour goes to the sugarloaf pineapple from the Allada Plateau, which has juicy and sweet white flesh, and the distinction of remaining green when fully ripe.
- 66. a** INS Khukri, the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, was decommissioned "after 32 years of glorious service".
- 67. c** DRDO has successfully conducted the flight test of Indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) 'Abhyas' from Integrated Test Range at Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- 68. b** Uttar Pradesh rode on Arun Sahani's brace to script a 3-1 win over Chandigarh in the final of the 11th Hockey India junior National men's championship.
- 69. c** South African anti-apartheid icon Archbishop Desmond Tutu, described as the country's moral compass, died aged 90, sparking an outpouring of tributes for the outspoken Nobel Peace Prize winner.
- 70. c** Kerala has delivered India's first great superhero movie. With Basil Joseph's new Malayalam film Minnal Murali, streaming on Netflix, India has finally cracked the superhero formula.'