



Government of Tamil Nadu

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**Director,
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History



1.1 Important Days

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
6-01-2021	Journalist Day Observed in Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To observe in the memory of late journalist Balshastrri Jambhekar. ■ Balshastrri Jambhekar is also known as 'The Father of Marathi Journalism', for his efforts in starting journalism in Marathi language, in the form of first Marathi newspaper and first Marathi monthly. ■ The first newspaper in the Marathi language named 'Darpan', was published on January 6, 1832, the date which also marks the birth anniversary of Balshastrri Jambhekar.
09-01-2021	Pravasi Bharatiya Divas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NRI Day is celebrated every year on January 9 to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. The day is celebrated every year to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. ■ The theme of 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2021 is "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat".

10-01-2021	World Hindi Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The World Hindi Day is celebrated annually on January 10 since 2006 to promote the language at the global stage.■ The day marks the anniversary of first World Hindi Conference which was inaugurated on January 10, 1975 by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.■ However, the celebration of first World Hindi Day was commenced on 10 January 2006 by former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.■ It must be noted that the National Hindi Day is celebrated in India on September 14 every year.
12-01-2021	National Youth Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ National Youth Day is celebrated in India every year on 12 January to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.■ The day was declared by the Government of India in 1984 while the event was first celebrated in 1985.■ In 2021, we are observing 158th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand (12 January 1863).■ The theme for National Youth Day 2021 is 'Channelizing Youth Power for Nation Building'.

14-01-2021	Armed Forces Veterans Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In India, the Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14 January since 2017 to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation. ■ The day is observed as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 January 1953. ■ 2021 marks the 5th Armed Forces Veterans Day.
15-01-2021	Indian Army Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Army Day is observed on January 15 every year because it was this day in 1949 when General KM Cariappa took over the charge of Indian Army from British General Sir Francis Butcher.
15-01-2021	Tamil Nadu celebrates Thiruvalluvar Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tamil Nadu celebrates Thiruvalluvar Day on the 2nd day of the Thai month in honour of the Saint Poet Thiruvalluvar. ■ Valluvar's epic work, Thirukkural, which consists of 1330 kurals or couplets is translated into many international and Indian languages. Russian Writer Leo Tolstoy was greatly inspired by Thirukkural and so was Mahatma Gandhi.
18-01-2021 to 17-02-2021	National Road Safety Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways observes the National Road Safety Week every year in the second week of January. ■ In 2021, Government has decided to observe National Road Safety Month instead of National Road Safety Week.

18-1-2021	Centre to flag off National Road Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari will flag off National Road Safety Month. The initiative aims to build awareness about road safety and reduce road accidents in the country.
19-1-2021	16th NDRF Raising Day:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NDRF is an Indian specialized force under the National Disaster Management Authority, constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, to carry out special response in situation of threatening disaster.
24-1-2021	National Girl Child Day	
25-1-2021	National Voters' Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The theme of NVD 2021 is, 'Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed'.
25-1-2021	National Tourism Day of India	
26-1-2021	International Customs Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective: to recognise the role of customs officials and agencies and focus on the working conditions and challenges that customs officers face in their jobs. Theme 2021: "Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience". The day was instituted by the World Customs Organization (WCO) to commemorate the day in 1953 when the inaugural session of the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC) was held in Brussels, Belgium. In 1994 the CCC was renamed World Customs Organization (WCO). World Customs Organization (WCO) headquarter- Brussels, Belgium
30-1-2021	World Leprosy Day 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theme 2021: "Beat Leprosy, End Stigma and advocate for Mental Wellbeing."

1.2 Defence, National Security and Terrorism

Navy, DRDO conduct a maiden trial of air-dropped container 'SAHAYAK-NG'

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) along with the Indian Navy conducted the successful maiden test trial of 'SAHAYAK-NG' India's first indigenously designed and developed Air Dropped Container from IL 38SD aircraft (Indian Navy) off the coast of Goa.
- The trial was conducted by the Indian Navy to enhance its operational logistics capabilities and provide critical engineering stores to ships that are deployed more than 2000 kilometres from the coast.
- SAHAYAK-NG is an advanced version of SAHAYAK Mk I.

DRDO Celebrates 63rd Foundation Day on 1st January 2021

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) observed the 63rd Foundation Day of its establishment on January 01, 2021.
- DRDO was established in 1958 with just 10 laboratories to enhance the research work in Defence sector.

GRSE delivers 8th landing craft utility ship to Indian Navy

- Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) has delivered the Landing Craft Utility (LCU)

MK IV class vessel 'IN LCU L-58' (Yard 2099) to the Indian Navy.

- LCU L-58 is the final ship in the series of 8 LCUs being manufactured by GRSE for the Indian Navy.

DRDO Biodigester Mk II technology in metro rail

- Government of India's premier research agency Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will install its eco-friendly bio-digester units across the facilities operated by Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation (MAHA-METRO), which help conserve water and protect the environment.
- DRDO will provide technical support for the implementation of its advanced bio-digester Mk-II technology for the treatment of human waste (night soil) in the metro rail network.

Pan-India Coastal Defence exercise 'SEA VIGIL-21' from Jan 12

- The second edition of the biennial pan-India coastal defence exercise 'Sea Vigil-21' will be conducted between January 12 and 13.
- The exercise, inaugural edition of which was conducted in January 2019: will be undertaken along the entire 7516 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India and will involve all the 13 coastal States and Union Territories along with other maritime stakeholders, including the fishing and coastal communities.
- Exercise 'SEA VIGIL 21' which is being coordinated by the Indian Navy, will provide a realistic assessment of our

strengths and weaknesses and thus will held in further strengthening maritime and national security.

- The entire coastal security set up was reorganised after the 26/11 Terror attack at Mumbai which was launched via the sea route.

13th India-Vietnam Defence Security Dialogue

- The 13th India-Vietnam Defence Security Dialogue was held on 12 January 2021 in virtual format.
- The virtual event was co-chaired by Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar along with Vietnamese Sr Lt Gen Nguyen Chi Vinh, Deputy Defence Minister, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

DRDO develops India's first Indigenously-Developed 9mm Machine Pistol

- India's first indigenous 9mm Machine Pistol has been jointly developed by DRDO and Indian Army.
- Infantry School, Mhow and DRDO's Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune have designed and developed this weapon using their respective expertise in the complementary areas.
- The weapon has been developed in a record time of four months. The weapon is aptly named "Asmi" meaning "Pride", "Self-Respect" & "Hard Work".
- The Machine Pistol fires the in-service 9mm ammunition and sports an upper receiver made from aircraft-grade Aluminium and lower receiver from carbon fibre.

DRDO, CRPF launches bike ambulance 'RAKSHITA'

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on January 18, 2021 launched a specially developed bike ambulance 'RAKSHITA'.
- The bike ambulance has been launched to attend to urgent evacuation needs of the security force personnel in the event of a medical emergency or battle injury in Naxal affected areas.

Indian and French airforces to conduct Exercise Desert Knight-21

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) and French Air and Space Force are set to participate in Exercise Desert Knight-21.
- The bilateral air exercise will be held at Jodhpur Air Force station in Rajasthan, India, from 20 to 24 January.
- Exercise Desert Knight-21 aims to improve interoperability between the forces while exchanging 'ideas and best practices' gained from operational experience.
- Platforms such as Rafale, Airbus A-330 multi-role tanker transport (MRTT), A-400M tactical transport aircraft and about 175 personnel from the French Air and Space Force will take part in the military drill.

'Chintan Baithak' to be held at Dhordo, Kutch, Gujarat from 21st to 23rd January, 2021

- Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (I/C) will chair three-day Ports Review Meeting named 'Chintan Baithak' at Dhordo, Kutch, Gujarat.

India Ranked 4th in Global Firepower '2021 Military Strength Ranking', USA Tops

- In the '2021 Military Strength Ranking' an annually updated list of 138 modern military nations by a defence analytics website Global Firepower, India is ranked 4th with PwrIndx (Power Index) rating of 0.1214 where 0.0000 rating is considered as 'perfect'.
- The ranking has been topped by the United States of America (USA).

About Military Strength Ranking:

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

Exercise Kavach: To be held under Andaman and Nicobar Command

- The Indian Army is to conduct a large scale joint military exercise Kavach in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. The exercise is to be held under the aegis of Andaman and Nicobar Command.

About the Exercise

- The Joint Military Exercise Kavach will involve Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard.
- Kavach Exercise will also involve coordinated air and maritime strikes, synergized application of maritime surveillance assets, air defence and landing operations.

DRDO successfully conducts captive and release trial of SAAW

- DRDO successfully conducted captive and release trial of indigenously developed Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon SAAW from

Indian Hawk-Mk132 of HAL off the Odisha coast.

- This was the ninth successful mission of SAAW conducted by DRDO till now. The telemetry and tracking systems installed at Interim Test Range (ITR), Balasore captured all the mission events.
- SAAW is indigenously designed and developed by DRDO's Research Centre Imarat (RCI) Hyderabad. This is 125 Kg class smart weapon, capable of engaging ground enemy airfield assets such as radars, bunkers, taxi tracks, and runways etc. up to a range of 100 kilometres.

IAF Will Receive Light Combat Model from March 2024

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the decision will strengthen the movement to create an 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India).
- The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 13 approved the Rs 48,000-crore deal to procure 83 Tejas Mk-1A variants and 10 LCA Tejas Mk-1 trainer aircraft from the HAL to boost the Indian Air Force's combat prowess.

122 soldiers of Bangladesh armed forces depart for India to participate in Republic Day parade

- When the 122 personnel of the Bangladesh armed forces will be marching on Rajpath alongside their Indian counterparts on January 26, they will not only feel proud to be participating in India's 72nd Republic Day parade for the first time but will also be "expressing gratitude and respects to all those Indian military personnel who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of our country".

Joint Tri-service Exercise AMPHEX – 21 held in Andaman & Nicobar

- A large-scale tri-service joint amphibious exercise AMPHEX – 21 was held in Andaman & Nicobar group of islands from 21 – 25 Jan 2021.
- The exercise involved participation of troops of Army, Navy as well as the Indian Air Force.
- The joint force executed multi-domain, high intensity offensive and defensive manoeuvres in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
- The Ex KAVACH for defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands was also a part of AMPHEX – 21.
- The exercise AMPHEX – 21 was aimed at validating India's capabilities to safeguard the territorial integrity of its island territories, enhance operational synergy and joint warfighting capabilities amongst the three Services.

India successfully test-fires new-generation Akash missile

- India successfully test-fired the new-generation Akash missile from an integrated test range off the Odisha coast.
- The Akash Next Generation missile system testing was concluded successfully at a DRDO defence facility off the coast of Odisha.
- Akash-NG is a new generation Surface-to-Air Missile meant for use by IAF with an aim of intercepting high manoeuvring aerial threats.

1.3 World Organisations – Pacts and Summits

FSCA becomes Associate Member of IOSCO

- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has become an Associate Member of the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO). The Headquarter of IOSCO is at Madrid, Spain.
- The IOSCO is the international organization of the world's securities regulators, covering more than 95% of the world's securities markets, and is also the global standard setter for the securities sector.
- The body has its headquarter in Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

India set to begin tenure as non-permanent member of UN Security Council

- India is set to begin its two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The event will be marked by the installation of the Indian tricolour at the stakeout during a special ceremony.
- Apart from India, Norway, Kenya, Ireland and Mexico are also poised to join the UNSC as non-permanent members. Other non-permanent members of the key UN body include Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam. The UNSC has five permanent members, namely China, Russia, France, the UK and the US.

- Since the presidency of the UNSC is held by each of the members in turn for one month, India will preside over the council as UNSC President in August 2021 and again in 2022.

WHO designates 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife”

- World Health Organisation (WHO) selected the year 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife”.
- It was decided in the honor of 200th birthday of Florence Nightingale. WHO said that nurses and midwives are the people who devote their lives to caring for children and mothers, looking after senior citizens and giving lifesaving immunizations.
- World Health Organisation will also launch the world’s first State of the World’s Nursing report in 2020.

WTO members commend India for improving trade, economic policies

- The members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) have commended India for the steps it has taken to improve trade and economic policies to make more inclusive and sustainable.
- The members relayed the same during India’s seventh Trade Policy Review (TPR) that was conducted at the WTO’s headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The Indian delegation for the review was headed by Commerce Secretary, Dr Anup Wadhawan. India’s last TPR took place in 2015.

India to chair 3 important committees of UNSC

- India has been asked to chair three important committees of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
- India began its eighth term as a non-permanent member of the UNSC with the stated objective of raising its voice against terrorism, speaking for the developing world and bringing human-centric inclusive solutions to matters of global peace and security.
- India will also chair the Counterterrorism Committee in 2022, which coincides with the 75th Anniversary of India’s Independence. It was formed in September 2001 soon after the tragic terrorist attack of 9/11 in New York. India had chaired this committee in the Security Council in 2011-12.

India to get UN tag of international disaster response force for NDRF

- India could soon be a part of the United Nations (UN) mandated international disaster rescue operations as the country’s federal contingency force, NDRF, is expected to obtain a globally recognised standardisation later this year.
- The authorisation will be done by the Switzerland-headquartered INSARAG (or the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group) which is a network of more than 90 countries and organisations under the UN umbrella to deal with urban search and rescue related issues.
- The National Disaster Response Force was raised in 2006 to undertake specific tasks of relief and rescue during natural and

manmade disasters or life-threatening situations. It has 12 operational battalions comprising more than 15,000 personnel based across the country at present while four more battalions are taking shape.

UK PM Boris Johnson invites PM Narendra Modi to G7 summit

- UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has invited PM Narendra Modi to participate in-person for the G7 summit to be held in the Cornwall region from June 11 to 13.
- Johnson is expected to visit India ahead of the G7 summit, ANNOUNCED by the British High Commission.

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan chairs 148th session of WHO Executive Board

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare digitally chaired the 148th session of WHO Executive Board, through Video Conference.
- The 148th session of the Executive Board has been organised from 18-26 January 2021.
- The meeting provides a platform to bring together all member states to set the directions and agenda and continue striving for the objective of Health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- Also, the WHO has declared the Year 2021 as the Year of Global Solidarity and Survival.

PM Modi, Xi Jinping To Participate In 5-day Virtual 'Davos Agenda Summit 2021'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping will be

among the top world leaders to participate in a five-day online Davos Agenda Summit of the World Economic Forum (WEF). Union ministers including Narendra Singh Tomar, Nitin Gadkari, Smriti Irani, Piyush Goyal and Dharmendra Pradhan along with top business leaders such as Mukesh Ambani and Anand Mahindra will also be a part of this event.

- The Geneva-based organisation is hosting an online event, named 'Davos Agenda Summit' from January 25-29. WEF will host its physical annual meeting in May in Singapore as against the regular venue of Swiss ski resort town of Davos.

Padma Award winning Renowned Oncologist Dr V Shanta passes away at 93

- Renowned oncologist Dr V Shanta has passed away, following chest pain. She was 93.
- Dr Shanta was the chairperson of Adyar Cancer Institute in Chennai, which she joined in 1954. The institute is known for providing state-of-the-art healthcare to all patients.
- She was a recipient of the prestigious Padma Shri (1986) and Padma Bhushan (2006) for her efforts for making quality and affordable cancer treatment accessible to everyone.
- She was also awarded the Padma Vibhushan and the Ramon Magsaysay awards.

Virtual Davos summit 2021 to begin from today

- The six-day online Davos Agenda Summit of the World Economic Forum (WEF) is set to begin. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese premier Xi Jinping will

be among the top world leaders who will participate in the event.

- The WEF announced there would be 15 special addresses from G20 heads of state and government and international organisations during the summit from January 24-29.

India pledges \$150,000 for UN peace building as a token of engagement

- India has announced a pledge of \$150,000 to activities of the Peacebuilding Fund this year and announced that 2021 provides the international community with an opportunity to look at peacebuilding in a more focused manner, especially in the context of the Covid pandemic.
- India's Parliament Representative to the UN Ambassador.

PM Modi to address WEF's virtual Davos Dialogue today

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the World Economic Forum's online Davos Agenda Summit January 28, 2021 during which he will be speaking on a wide range of subjects, including India's reform trajectory and increased usage of technology. The Davos Dialogues agenda marks the launch of the World Economic Forum's great reset initiative in the post-Covid-19 world.

1.4 Eminent Persons

Veteran broadcaster Indira Joseph Venniyoor passes away at 94

- Renowned broadcaster, Indira Joseph Venniyoor, has passed away. She was 94.
- The Kerala-based veteran was the first English news announcer of Travancore Radio, when its English service started in 1949.
- She had a distinguished career with the All India Radio (AIR).

Data firm puts Narendra Modi's net approval at 55%

- A data firm tracking the approval ratings of world leaders has put the net approval for Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a high of 55%.
- The similar figure for German Chancellor Angela Merkel is 24% while it is in the negative for U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson as more people disapprove of his work than those who approve it.

Writer Ilavenil passed away

- Tamil director and writer Ilavenil passed away in Chennai. He was in his 70s.
- The director is known for his film Uliyin Osai, which was written by Karunanidhi, and produced by S.P.Murugesan. The film released on 4th July, 2008.

Ace mountaineer Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar passes away at 87

- Ace mountaineer Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar, who played iconic role to help India secure the Siachen Glacier, has

passed away due to age-related illness. He was 87.

- He is known as 'Siachen saviour' because it was he who first detected the cartographic aggression of Pakistan in the Siachen glacier area.
- He was the first Indian to climb Mount Nanda Devi.
- He was nickname 'Bull' for relentlessly charging into everything.
- Col Kumar was the recipient of various awards such as the Kirti Chakra, Padma Shri, Arjun award and the McGregor medal.

Tamil writer A Madhavan passes away

- Tamil writer and Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award recipient A Madhavan, 87, passed away due to age-related ailments. Born to Chellammal and Avudainayagam, who belonged to Kanyakumari district, Madhavan was brought up in Thiruvananthapuram.
- He was selected for the Kendra Sahitya Akademi award in 2015 for his collection of essays Ilakkiya Chuvadukal. He was also a recipient of Kalai Mamani Award in 2009, the highest recognition bestowed on writers and artists by the Tamil Nadu Government.

Oldest living first-class cricketer, Alan Burgess, of New Zealand and World War II veteran, passes away at 100

- Alan Burgess, the world's oldest living first-class cricketer, from New Zealand has passed away in his sleep.
- He was aged 100 years and 250 day.

- Burgess was a right-hand batsman and left-arm spinner. He played overall 14 first-class games between 1940-41 and 1951-52, of which 11 first-class matches were played for Canterbury.
- He was a tank driver in World War II.

Kamala Harris appoints Indian-American as her press secretary

- Senator Kamala Harris has roped in Indian-American Sabrina Singh, who previously was the spokeswoman of two Democratic presidential candidates, as press secretary for her Democratic vice-presidential campaign.
- Singh, 32, previously headed the press shop of two Democratic presidential candidates - New Jersey Senator Cory Booker and former New York mayor Mike Bloomberg.

Cholai Sundaraperumal passed away

- Writer from Lower Tanjore District Cholai Sundaraperumal passed away due to poor health. He was a left-wing creator who continued to write in order to establish the traditional genre of sedimentary literature in the area covering the districts of Tanjore, Thiruvarur and Nagai, as well as the famous Karisal literature in southern Tamil Nadu.

Ghulam Mustafa Khan passes away

- Indian classical musician Ghulam Mustafa Khan has passed away. He was 89. Khan received several awards in his lifetime, most notable being the Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan. Born in Badayun, Uttar Pradesh.

- Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1991, followed by Padma Bhushan in 2006 and Padma Vibhushan in 2018. In 2003 he was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi award, the highest Indian recognition given to practicing artistes.

Joe Biden's speechwriter Vinay Reddy makes his village in Telangana proud

- Indian-American Vinay Reddy, the speechwriter of US President-elect Joe Biden, has roots in a remote village of Karimnagar district of Telangana.
- The sleepy village of Pothireddypeta is joyous over the international success of their 'bidda' (son). Reddy's international fame has made the villagers very proud and they are fondly remembering the family of Cholleti Vinay Reddy.
- Narayana Reddy's family hails from Pothireddypeta village of Huzurabad.
- Vinay's father Narayana Reddy, a medical professional, migrated to the USA after commuting MBBS from the Osmania University of Hyderabad.

Child rights panel takes cue from Nayak, makes 19-year-old CM for a day

- Twenty-year-old Shrishti Goswami from Haridwar took charge as the chief minister of Uttarakhand for one day. She gave suggestions on three main points - safety of children and girls, checking drug usage among youngsters and stopping hill migration in the state.

Two IAF women pilots break glass ceiling, script history at R-Day parade

- Two IAF women officers broke the glass ceiling by becoming the first women pilots

to participate in the Republic Day parade – one at Rajpath and the other over Rajpath.

- While Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth, 28, became the first woman fighter pilot to take part in the R-Day parade as she was part of an IAF tableau that showcased mock-ups of an light combat aircraft, light combat helicopter and a Sukhoi-30 fighter plane, Flight Lieutenant Swati Rathore got the honour to be the first woman to be part of the flypast over Rajpath as she flew a Mi-17 V5 helicopter in a formation of four choppers.

Rajendra Kumar Bhandari wins Subhash Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2021

- The Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2021 has been conferred upon Dr Rajendra Kumar Bhandari in the Individual category and Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS) in Institutional category.

The award carries a cash prize of Rs 51 lakh and a certificate for an institution and Rs 5 lakh and a certificate in case of an individual.

- The Government of India announces the award every year on January 23, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, to recognise and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of disaster management.

1995 Nobel Chemistry Prize Winner Paul Crutzen passes away at 87

- The Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul J. Crutzen, has passed away. He was 87.
- Dr. Crutzen won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995, jointly with Mario J. Molina and F. Sherwood Rowland, for their work in atmospheric chemistry, particularly concerning the formation and decomposition of ozone
- He was known for his work on the ozone layer and climate change and for popularizing the term 'Anthropocene' to describe a proposed new era when human actions have a drastic effect on the Earth.

1.5 Sports and Games

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

- 14-year-old Leon Mendonca from Goa became India's 67th Chess Grandmaster (GM) after winning his third & Final norm at the Vergani Cup, Italy. Mendonca is only the 2nd GM from Goa.
- He became the 29th Youngest GM in the world. Sergey Karjakin of Russia holds the record for the World's Youngest ever GM having qualified for the title at the age of 12 years and 7 months (achieved the title in 2003).
- The 1st GM from Goa is Ivana Maria Furtado, she achieved it in 2011.
- GM is a title awarded by FIDE (International Chess Federation), it is the highest title a chess player can obtain apart from World Champion.

Sanjay Kapoor elected All India Chess Federation president

- Sanjay Kapoor was elected president of the All India Chess Federation (AICF) while Bharat Singh Chauhan retained the secretary's post.
- Kapoor, representing Uttar Pradesh Chess Association, defeated incumbent PR Venketrama Raja in a close contest.
- Kapoor received 33 votes as against 31 of Raja. Chauhan beat Ravindra Dongre 35-29. Apart from the president, secretary and treasurer, six vice-presidents and six joint secretaries were also elected.

World Cup winning hockey player Michael Kondo passes away at 73

- World Cup winner and Olympic medallist in Hockey, Michael Kondo has passed away due to age-related ailments. He was 73,
- Michael Kondo was the member of the Indian teams which won the 1975 hockey World Cup in Kuala Lumpur and 1972 Olympics bronze in Munich.

Khelo India Ice Hockey tournament begins in Chiktan, Kargil

- In Kargil Ladakh, Khelo India Ice Hockey Tournament is being organised at Chiktan by Zonal Physical Education Officer Chiktan.
- For the first time the women team of Chiktan also participated in the Khelo India Games in Kargil district. There are 13 teams from different villages of Chiktan participating in the tournament, which include 11 men's teams and 2 women's teams.

Oldest living Olympic champion Agnes Keleti turns 100

- The oldest surviving Olympic champion, Ágnes Keleti, celebrates her 100th birthday. She is one of her country's most successful Olympians, having won 10 medals for Hungary in gymnastics, at the Olympic Games Helsinki 1952 and Melbourne 1956.
- Her haul included five golds. Keleti won the floor event in Finland before producing an astonishing display in Australia, winning four golds - in the uneven bars, balance beam, floor, and team event. At 35, she became the oldest female gymnast to win an Olympic title.

Odisha to host memorable 2023 Hockey World Cup

- Hockey India and the Odisha government are gearing up to host the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup in 2023 for a record fourth time since the inception of the tournament in 1971.
- The 2023 FIH Men's Hockey World Cup is scheduled to be held in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela in Odisha from January 13-29, 2023.
- The hosting of the tournament in 2023 holds great significance, as India will be completing 75 years of independence in 2023.

13-day Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sport & Youth festival 2021 begins in Ladakh

- In Ladakh, the inaugural edition of the Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sport & Youth

Festival 2021 kicked off on 18th January 2021.

- The 13- Day Zaskar Winter Sports Festival aims to open new arena in Ladakh for adventure and Nature loving tourists and a boost for local Youth to hone up their skills in winter sports to represent India.

Women's Asian Cup 2022 to be held in India

- The 2022 Women's Asian Cup, to be hosted by India, will be held from January 20 to February 6, 2021. This was announced by the Asian Football Confederation on January 28, 2021.
- The eight teams will qualify for the newly-introduced quarterfinals. The event will also serve as a qualification tournament for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

BCCI cancels Ranji Trophy 2020-21 for first time in 87 years

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has decided not to conduct the Ranji Trophy in 2020-21 .
- This will be first time in 87 years since its inception in 1934-35, that India's premier first-class cricket national championship will not be held in 2020-21 domestic season.
- BCCI has decided to conduct the Vijay Hazare Trophy 50-over tournament and Senior Women's One Day tournament after the completion of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 tournament.

1.6 Books & Authors

Publication of the book 'Wetlands of Tamil Nadu '

- Chief Secretary K. Shanmugam released a book titled "Wetlands of Tamil Nadu" written by the Chief Forest Officer of the Tamil Nadu Forest Department P. Thurairasu.

Kerala Governor releases book on Sabarimala

- Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan released "Sabarimala Vijnanakosham," a book written by KS Vijayanath. The Governor also presented a Limca Book of World Records certificate to Swami Maheswaranandu for erecting a 111 feet Shiv Linga sthupa at the Shiva Paravathy temple premises at Chenkal in Thiruvananthapuram.

Pranab Mukherjee's Book

- In "The Presidential Years, 2012-2017", Pranab Mukherjee talks about seeing a lack of extraordinary leaders that reduced the establishment to a "government of averages".
- Pranab Mukherjee, who passed away in 2020 after a surgery and Covid-19 complications, wrote the last book before his death.

RBI officer R. Giridharan authors debut novel 'Right Under our Nose'

- R Giridharan, a general manager at RBI has come out with his debut novel titled "Right Under our Nose".

- The book revolves around murder and politics, wherein, a murderer eliminates scientists right under the nose of the police and leaves forensics baffled.

Book 'India's 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia' released

- Former Indian all-rounder and current head coach Ravi Shastri launched a new book by the Bradman Museum called 'India's 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia', at the Sydney Cricket Ground.
- The book, authored by cricket journalist R Kaushik, describes India's first 12 tours to Australia, uncovering the shaping up of the rivalry between the two nations which was majorly dominated by the hosts.

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

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

"Modi India Calling – 2021" Book Released

- A coffee table book named "Modi India Calling - 2021" has been released on the occasion of 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.
- The book contains various photographs

of Prime Minister Narendra Modi captured during his “107 overseas and bilateral visits”.

- The book is the idea of BJP leader Vijay Jolly and it was released by Adesh Gupta, the Delhi BJP president.
- The book has been published by Maneesh Media and has 450 pages containing thousands of photographs of the PM Modi.

Book titled “The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India”, authored by former CEC ‘S Y Quraishi’ to hit stands on February 15

- Former chief election commissioner (CEC) S Y Quraishi has come out with his book titled “The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India”.
- The book will hit the stands on February 15, 2021. It has been published by HarperCollins India.
- The book evaluates India’s demographics from a religious perspective and seeks to demolish two basic myths that ‘Islam is against family planning’ and “Muslim rate of growth” is linked to capture political power.

“Gazing Eastwards: Of Buddhist Monks and Revolutionaries in China” Book by Romila Thapar

- The book titled “Gazing Eastwards: Of Buddhist Monks and Revolutionaries in China” by renowned Indian historian Romila Thapar is set to be released soon.
- Gazing Eastwards is a lively and arresting account of Romila Thapar’s first visit to China in 1957. She went as a research

assistant to the Sri Lankan art historian Anil de Silva, and worked on two major Buddhist sites in Maijishan and Dunhuang. It was a period of deceptive calm in the country, just prior to traumatic events such as the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward that churned and transformed Chinese society.

Najma Heptulla Releases book titled Making of a General-A Himalayan Echo

- Manipur Governor Dr Najma Heptulla released a book titled “Making of a General-A Himalayan Echo” virtually on January 8, 2021.
- The book has been authored by (Retd) Lt General Konsam Himalay Singh, in which he has conveyed his dreams and views as well as also highlighted about Manipur, the “Land of Emeralds”.

‘Unscripted’: Filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra pens book on his life, role of cinema

- Filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra will come out with a book titled “Unscripted: Conversations on Life and Cinema”. The book is scheduled to be released on January 25.
- The book provides a “glimpse into the mind, method and madness of one of contemporary Hindi cinema’s best filmmakers”.

Vice President releases book Abdul Kalam- Ninaivugalukku Maranamillai

- The Vice President, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu releasing the book, “Abdul Kalam-

Ninaivugalukku Maranamillai” in Chennai.

- The book ‘Abdul Kalam-Ninaivugalukku Maranamillai’ (immortal memories) has been penned by A P J M Nazema Maraikayar, the niece of the late President and by noted space scientist Y S Rajan.

Goa CM Pramod Sawant releases book ‘Manohar Parrikar – Off The Record’, by author Shri Waman Subha Prabhu

- The Chief Minister Pramod Sawant recently released a book titled written by senior journalist Shri Waman Subha Prabhu.
- Through this book, the author narrates the multi-faceted personality of late Parrikar, based on the collection of memories held by Waman Prabhu who happened to be with late Parrikar during the journey of his life.

VP Venkaiah Naidu virtually released the Book “A textbook of Urban Planning and Geography” authored by Dr.Sameer Sharma

- Venkaiah Naidu, the Vice President of India virtually released the book “A textbook of Urban Planning and Geography” authored by Dr.Sammeer Sharma.
- The book is published by PHI Learning Private Limited.

“India 2030: Rise of a Rajasic Nation” by Gautam Chikermane

- The book titled “India 2030: The Rise of a Rajasic Nation” is a collection of essays by the likes of Bibek Debroy, Vikram Sood, Raghunath Anant Mashelkar, Ram Madhav and David Frawley, among others. The book has been authored by Gautam Chikermane.

Former V-P brings out autobiography

- Mr. Ansari wrote in his autobiography, By Many A Happy Accident, that this subversion was “compounded by the abdication or failure of other social and political forces to comprehend its true nature and the urgency to counter it”.

Tamil translation of French novel wins Romain Rolland Book Prize at Kolkata

- The Tamil translation of French novel ‘Le mariage de plaisir’ won the Romain Rolland Book Prize at the three-day Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival in Kolkata.
- The winners of the prize are translator Dr S A Vengada Soupraya Nayagar and publisher Amutharasan Paulraj of Thadagam Publishers for the Tamil translation of the book, authored by Tahar Ben Jelloun.
- The publisher and translator will be invited by the French Institute in India to the Paris Book Fair 2021 (Livre Paris 2021) where India will be the guest of honour.

Dominic Jeeva, the great writer of Eelam, has passed away

- Dominic Jeeva (age 94), the oldest writer and publisher in Eelam, has passed away.
- Avirampillai was born in Jaffna, Sri Lanka on June 27, 1927, the son of Joseph and Mariamma. His father was running a barber shop in Jaffna at that time.
- Dominic Jeeva entered the field of modern literature in Eelam in 1946.
- Dominic Jeeva started Jasmine Magazine in 1966. Dominic Jeeva successfully ran Jasmine Magazine as a modern Tamil literary magazine. Dominic Jeeva returned

to Moscow at the invitation of the Soviet Union. Dominic Jeeva has created countless Tamil texts for this community.

the country, three belonged to Jammu and Kashmir -- one each from Samba, Ramgarh, and Bhadarwah.

1.7 Awards & Honours

'Art Sculptor' Award for Painting and Sculpture Award

- The Government of Tamil Nadu has announced an increase of Rs. 1 lakh .
- The order also said that the number of awardees would be increased from 2 to 6.
- In this regard, the Government of Tamil Nadu on Thursday announced that the Department of Arts and Culture of the State of Tamil Nadu will present an annual award to an artist in the traditional category and an artist in the modern style category in recognition of the rare achievements of the renowned artists in the field of traditional and modern art in the fields of painting and sculpture in Tamil Nadu.

65-year-old bedridden man's house in Jammu and Kashmir wins 'best construction award' under PMAY

- A 65-year-old man from Bhadarwah in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district was among three residents of the Union Territory who recently received the 'best construction award' under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).
- Modi proclaimed about the scheme that started in June 2015 and the number of beneficiaries from poor and middle-class families.
- Out of total 88 beneficiaries selected for the best construction award from

MP's novel gets award from literary forum in Malaysia

- Noted author and Madurai MP's novel 'Veerayuga Nayagan Velpaari' has bagged the best international Tamil work award constituted by Malaysia-based Tan Sri K.R. Soma Language and Literary Foundation.
- The biennial award carries a citation and a purse of US\$ 10,000. The novel, based on Tamil Sangam literature, revolves around a tribal king, popularly known as 'Mullaikku Ther kodutha Paari.'

Suriname President, Curacao PM, NZ minister among 30 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman awardees

- The award is the highest honour conferred by the President of India as part of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Conventions on a Non-Resident Indian (NRI), Person of Indian Origin (PIO), and organisation or institution established and run by NRIs or PIOs.
- Suriname President Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Curacao Prime Minister Eugene Rhuggenaath and New Zealand minister Priyanca Radhakrishnan were among 30 NRIs, and Indian-origin people and organisations who were conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award.
- The first Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was observed in 2003 and Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award was given to those overseas Indians who were contributing

to the development of the country. Six years later, the concept of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) was launched to help which aims to allow people of Indian origin and their spouses to live and work in India indefinitely.

Indian Railways bags 13 prizes at National Energy Conservation Awards 2020

- The Indian Railways bagged 13 prizes at the National Energy Conservation Awards, 2020, which are given by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency to those organisations that put in special efforts to reduce energy consumption.
- The 13 prizes were awarded to multiple zones and workshops of the national transporter.
- In the 'transport category', the Western Railway got the first prize, the Eastern Railway received the second prize, and the North Eastern Railway and the South Central Railway received Certificate of Merit.

Lifetime Achievement Award for Southern Railway Basketball Player

- She received a Life Time Achievement Award Received From Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in January 12, 2021.
- Anitha Pauldurai (born 22 June 1985, Chennai, Tamil Nadu) is an Indian basketball player who has been the captain of the Indian Women's National basketball team. 18 years played for Indian Women National team (2000 to 2017). Anitha is the first only Indian woman to have played nine Asian Basketball

Confederation (ABC) championships continuously representing the national squad. Anitha has a record of 30 Medals in National Championship.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan felicitates Kayakalp award to Public and Private Health Facilities

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and family Welfare inaugurated the 5th National Kayakalp Awards along with Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey through a video conference.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan reminded "Swachh Bharat Mission's (SBM) foundation was laid down on 2nd October 2014. Swachh Bharat Mission in its eighth year of implementation has become a National Movement which has been able to evoke a sense of responsibility and pride in the citizens of country.

Si.Pa.Adithyanar gets Dhinamani Award

- The Government of Tamil Nadu has instituted various awards in the name of Tamil scholars and selfless leaders who have contributed to the development of the Tamil language and literature and the upliftment of the Tamil community. Chief Minister Edappadi Palanisamy has announced the winners of the Thiruvalluvar Thirunal Awards and the Chithirai Tamil New Year Awards.
- Annal Ambedkar Award - Varakur A. Arunachal Pradesh,
- Grandfather Anna Award - Mr. Amaran. Kadampur MR Janarthanan
- Chief Kamarasar Award - Dr. Ch. Devaraj

- Mahakavi Bharathiar Award - Poet Poovai Senkuttuvan
- Bavender Bharathidasan Award - Arivumathi (A) Mathiyalakan
- Thamizh Thendral Thiru .Vi.Ka Award - V.N. God
- Muthamilk Police K.A.P. Viswanathan Award -Dr. Chethuramalingam
- Best Translator Award: Cho. Sesachalam, Dr. Rama. Kurunathan, p. Gunasekar, Dr. Padmavathi Vivekanandan, Su. Jyotirlatha Kirija, Jr.; Ramki (A) Ramakirutttinan, Swami Vimurthanandar, Meera Ravishankar, Thilagavathi, Kiruttina Prasad.

Madurai, World Tamil Association Awards:

- Literary Award for 2020 - Dr. Alexis Thevarassenmark from France
- Grammar Award - Prof. Arunachalam Shanmugadasu from Sri Lanka
- Linguistics Award from Dr. Suba, Singapore.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar receives Kayakalp Award for 3rd time

- The All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Bhubaneswar has proved its mettle once again for promoting cleanliness, hygiene and creating sustainable practices in public health facilities by winning the Kayakalp Award Scheme.
- AIIMS Bhubaneswar will get an award of Rs 2 crore for the performance. The institute has been adjudged as the best central government hospital under B category for cleanliness for a third consecutive year.
- It had earlier received the award in 2018

as well as in 2019 for becoming second cleanest hospital in the country among category B hospitals (less than 1000 beds) and received Rs one crore as prize money.

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda to be honoured with SKOCH Challenger Award

- Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda will be honoured with the SKOCH Challenger Award in a virtual ceremony on January 16, 2021.
- The award has been conferred to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for e-Governance, for its IT-led initiatives and other transformational initiatives that are leading to outcome-based performance improvement.
- The Tribal Affairs Ministry has taken up several transformational initiatives recently.
- There is also great transparency with the tribal related data available in the public domain.

Biswajit Chatterjee conferred 'Indian Personality of the Year' award at IFFI

- Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar announced veteran actor, director and singer Biswajit Chatterjee as the recipient of the 'Indian Personality of the Year' award.
- The 84-year-old actor is known for featuring in films like "Bees Saal Baad", "Night In London" and "April Fool".
- Chatterjee started his career in the late 1950s and went on to work in films like "Biwi Aur Makan", "Sagaa", "Kohra" among others. In 1975, he directed and produced "Kahte Hain Mujhko Raja",

featuring himself along with Dharmendra, Hema Malini and Rekha.

Southern Railway bags Silver in SKOCH Awards

- Southern Railway has won SILVER in the prestigious SKOCH Awards under the category of Excellence in Response to COVID-19.
- Participation for the SKOCH award was initiated by the Commercial branch of Southern Railway.

51st International Film Festival of India

- The 51st edition of International Film Festival of India (IFFI) held its coveted award ceremony on the closing day of the festival on Sunday in Goa. While Danish World War II drama Into the Darkness won the Golden Peacock Award, Tzu-Chuan Liu and Zofia Stafiej won the top acting honours.

Philanthropist Ravi Gaikwad awarded "Nelson Mandela" World Humanitarian Award

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

Anna Award

- Anna Award for heroic deed to the driver Suresh who stopped the train without colliding with the rocks
- Those who have done heroic deeds in Tamil Nadu are given a check for Rs.1 Lakhs.

32 Children Awarded Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2021

- The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) for the year 2021 has been conferred to 32 children, hailing from from 32 districts of 21 States/UTs..
- The PMRBP award is given by the Government of India to the children with exceptional abilities and outstanding accomplishments, in the fields of innovation, scholastic, sports, arts & culture, social service and bravery.
- Distribution of 32 awards based on the respective categories
 - ▶ • Art & Culture - 7
 - ▶ • Innovation - 9
 - ▶ • Scholastic achievements - 5
 - ▶ • Sports - 7
 - ▶ • Bravery - 3
 - ▶ • Social Service 1

City Police Chief gets President's medal

- Chennai Police Commissioner Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal is among three police officers from Tamil Nadu chosen for the award of the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.
- The 1994-batch IPS officer was earlier been conferred with the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Police Medal for Excellence in Public Service and also the Police Medal for Meritorious Service and Chief Minister's Medal for Outstanding Devotion to Duty.

Padma Vibhushan for SPB, Shinzo Abe

- Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and late singer SP Balasubrahmanyam were named for the Padma Vibhushan, the

second-highest civilian award in India, while Singer K.S.Chithra will get the Padma Bhushan.

Ten from T.N. chosen for Padma Shri

- Ten personalities from various fields from Tamil Nadu were among the 102 persons chosen for Padma Shri awards announced.
- Legendary playback singer and musician S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, who died in September 2020, was chosen for Padma Vibhushan along with six others. No one from the State was among the 10 persons chosen for Padma Bhushan awards.
- The following is the list of Padma Shri awardees and the field in which they have been chosen: P.Subramanian (posthumous), trade and industry; Thiruvengadam Veeraraghavan (posthumous), medicine; K.C. Sivasankaran (posthumous), art; Pappammal, agriculture; Subbu Arumugam, art; Solomon Pappaiah, literature and education-journalism; Marachi Subburaman, social work; Bombay Jayashri Ramnath, art; Sridhar Vembu, trade and industry, and P. Anitha, sports.

'Gear man'

- P. Subramanian, known as the "gear man of Coimbatore", who passed away in December 2020, started Shanthi Gears in the 1970s and made gears for a wide range of industries and even designed and developed machinery to make the gears. Apart from that, he is known for his philanthropy. "He was not a person who liked recognition.

Two-rupee doctor

- Dr. Thiruvengadam Veeraraghavan, popularly known as "the two rupee doctor", who died in August 2020 at the age of 70, catered to patients from north

Chennai. Born to Veeraraghavan, a farmer, and Radhabai, Villupattu exponent Subbu Arumugam, whose popular and energetic opening line 'Thandhanathom endru solliye' is remembered by his fans, is a native of Tirunelveli district. In a message conveyed through his daughter Bharathi Thirumagan, who performs on stage with him, he said, "It is all with the blessings of Maha Periyava that this has been possible."

- Solomon Pappaiah, 84, renowned judge of 'pattimandram' (debates) and a Tamil scholar, expressed joy on the announcement. A native of Madurai, he studied in American College and later worked in the same institution as a professor in the Department of Tamil. A recipient of Kalaimamani award from the Tamil Nadu government in 2000.

Empowering women

- Marachi Subburaman, 71, is the director of the Tiruchi-based non-governmental organisation, Society for Community Organisation and People's Education (SCOPE). Through the organisation, he has taken up projects on women empowerment and livelihood, watershed development and ecological sanitation, specialising in 'urine diversion' toilets and human waste composting. He has been involved in the construction of a large number of leach pit toilets in Tiruchi and other districts.

Fireman to get President's Medal

- The President's Fire Service Medal for gallantry has been announced for a fireman who lost his life while attempting to rescue two labourers in Perambalur district.
- R.Rajkumar, 36, died of suffocation while rescuing two labourers trapped in a well a Selliampalayam in Perambalur district

in July last. The government gave ₹10 lakh solatium to the family.

Galwan hero gets Maha Vir Chakra honour

- Colonel B.Santhosh Babu, Commanding Officer of 16 Bihar regiment deployed in Galwan during Operation Snow Leopard, who lost his life along with 19 others in the violent clash with Chinese troops in June, has been posthumously selected for the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), the Second highest wartime gallantry award of India.
- Five other personnel deployed there have been named for the Vir Chakra (VrC), which is the third highest wartime gallantry award.

Vir Chakras

- Hav. Tejinder Singh from 2 Medium Regiment will get the Vir Chakra along with four others posthumously-Nb Sub Nuduram Soren and Nk Deepak Singh from 16 Bihar, Hav. K Palani from 81 Field regiment and Sep. Gurutej Singh from 3 Punjab. In addition, the President has announced one Kirti Chakra posthumously and three Shaurya Chakras, one of which is posthumous.
- The President has approved award of 455 gallantry and other defence decorations to the armed forces personnel and others on the eve of the 72nd Republic Day celebrations.
- They are one MVC, five Kirti Chakras, five VrC, seven Shaurya Chakras, 134 Sena Medal (all gallantry), 30 Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM, four Uttam Yudh Seva Medal (UYSM), 51 Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (YSM), 46 Sena Medal (Devotion to Duty), including for two COVID-19 warriors, eight Nao Sena Medal (devotion to duty), 14 Vayu Sena Medal (devotion to

duty) and 134 Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM), including 13 COVID-19 warriors.

CBI bags 30 police medals this year

- The CBI has bagged 30 President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service and Police Medal for Meritorious Service awards this year.
- The President's Police Medals for Distinguished Service have been awarded to six officials, while the Police Medals have been conferred on 24.

Paswan, Gogoi to get Padma Bhushan

- Legendary singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, who died last year, will get the Padma Vibushan, the second highest civilian award in the country, posthumously.
- Former Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe, Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, cardiologist B.M. Hegde and B.B. Lal, the archaeologist who claimed to have discovered temple remains at Ayodhya, will also get the Padma Vibhushan, the Union Home Ministry announced on the eve of Republic Day. Singer K.S. Chithra, former Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan, Nripendra Misra, former Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and former Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities Tarlochan Singh are among the 10 Padma Bhushan recipients.
- The Padma Bhushan will be conferred posthumously on former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, former Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, former Gujarat Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel and Shia cleric Kalbe Sadiq.
- The 1971 Bangladesh war veteran Lt.Col. Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahid and Bangladeshi artist Sanjida Khatun will get the Padma Shri.

- Rajni Bector of Mrs Bector's Food Specialities, the Punjab-based company that is known for its biscuits and bakery products and whose initial public offering (IPO) was oversubscribed last year, has been selected for Padma Shri.
- Sangkhumi Bualchhuak from Mizoram will be given Padma Shri in the social work category.
- Sindhutai Sapkal from Maharashtra, known to help orphans, will get Padma Shri. Professor C.L Sapru from Jammu and Kashmir, who died last year, will get Padma Shri posthumously.
- Kanagaraj (70), a tribal from Telangana's Kumarambim Asifabad district, has been awarded the Padma Award. He is best known for his peacock feathers, a tribal dance called Gussadi.
- Guzzadi dances at the 1981 Republic Day celebrations in Delhi. Gussadi has produced hundreds of dancers.

Over 900 police, CAPF staff will get medals

- More than 900 police and Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel were selected for medals, including 207 gallantry medals.
- Assistant sub-inspector Mohan Lal of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), who was killed in the suicide bombing attack in Pulwama on February 14, 2019, was selected for the President's Police Medal for Gallantry (PPMG) posthumously. Mr. Lal, who was on picket duty, tried to flag down the car and fired at the speeding vehicle but was killed along with 39 personnel on the bus when the bomb exploded. Sixty-eight other CRPF personnel get bravery medals.
- The Border Security Force won 20 Police Medals for Gallantry (PMG), five PPMDS and 46 Police Medals for Meritorious Service (PMMS).

Kanagaraj's request to receive Padma Shri award

- The Central Government announced the Padma Awards. Of these, Telangana has received only one award.

K. Kesavasamy receives Padmasree award for innovation in puppetry

- The Central Government has announced the Padma Shri award for K. Kesavasamy, a retired teacher and puppet artist from Karaikal.
- The Central Government announced the Padma Awards for the year 2021. On the eve of Republic Day, the Padma Awards were presented to 119 people for their achievements in various fields, including education, social service, public administration, science and technology, literature and sports. Of these, 102 have been awarded the Padma Shri in the country. K. Kesavasamy (78), a puppet artist and retired teacher from Karaikal, Pondicherry Union Territory is one of them.

CM gives away Anna gallantry medals

- A schoolteacher who risked her life to save her students from an explosion, a veterinary surgeon who rescued an elephant that plunged into a 60-ft-deep well, a loco pilot who noticed boulders on railway tracks and saved his passengers and a cab driver who acted swiftly to save the life of an injured policeman were awarded the prestigious Anna Medal for Gallantry during the Republic Day celebrations.

- The Anna Medal for Gallantry (given to government servants and the general public) carries a cheque of ₹1 lakh, a medal worth ₹9,000 and a certificate.

Param Vishist Seva Medal recipient from coastal guard

- Shri Krishnaswamy Natarajan, Director General, Coast Guard has been conferred the Param Vishisht Seva Medal.

Uttar Pradesh wins best tableau award

- Uttar Pradesh was adjudged the best tableau among the 32 tableaux, 17 from States and Union Territories (UTs), nine from various Ministries, departments and paramilitary forces and six from Defence Ministry, that participated in the Republic Day parade.
- The tableau of Uttar Pradesh was based on the theme Ayodhya: Cultural Heritage of Uttar Pradesh. Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports and MoS for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijju gave away the awards to the participants.
- Tableau of Tripura and Uttrakhand were adjudged the second and third place respectively.

Recco Bank bags awards; MD as Women leader of the year

- Chennai based Recco Bank Managing Director R S Isabella has won an award from Women Leaders of the Year by the Frontiers in Co-operative Banking Awards-2020. The award is in the PACs/ Credit Society Category.
- The FCBA (Frontiers in Cooperative Banking Awards) was set up in 2006 and it felicitates the selfless services rendered by cooperatives and rural markets. The awards are a mix of technology, strong vision and business acumen.

A.R.Rahman presentd 'Alert Being Icon Award'

- From providing medication and nutritious food to organizing a baby shower, Leo Akash Raj has helped over 350 pregnant HIV positive women, differently abled, widows and those from the economically weaker section.
- Oscar Awar-winning music director A.R.Rahman was chosen for the "Alert Being Icon Award". The Alert Being Icon Award for an organization was presented to the Biocon Foundation founded by Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw.

1.8 Cultural Panorama

Pt Satish Vyas conferred Tansen Samman at the World Music Festival

- In Madhya Pradesh, 96th Tansen Music Festival began in Gwalior with strict COVID-19 guidelines in place. In the inaugural ceremony renowned santoor player, Pandit Satish Vyas was conferred upon the prestigious Tansen Samman.
- Bhopal-based institution Abhinav Kala Parishad was honoured with Raja Mansingh Tomar award. The festival pays tribute to Tansen, one of 9 gems in Akbar's court.

Discovery Of Sangam age Borewell Near Villupuram

- A Sangam age cover well has been found near Villupuram.
- Near Villupuram is the village of Vedampattu. It was then discovered that there was a borehole in the area. This borehole is found with six layers. There are also brick structures in the area.
- Villages near Villupuram, including Viratikkuppam, Alathur, Nannadu and Perumbakkam, are of historical significance. Historical traces from various periods beginning with the New Stone Age have already been discovered. The area pretended to be in that category is now of historical significance. Many more historical traces may be available if excavated in this area.

Cherry Blossom Mao Festival held in Manipur

- In Manipur, the Cherry Blossom Mao Festival was held at Senapati district

marking the beginning of pink season in the district.

- The Mao area of Senapati district in Manipur is known for Cherry Blossom, a plant which is popularly known as Sakura in Japan.

12 Tamil literatures, including Thirukkural, in 10 languages, including Hindi

- The Central Institute of Classical Tamil Studies, started by former chief minister Karunanidhi.
- Professor Ira Chandrasekaran was appointed to this post last February after 13 years. Yet the Presidential Award and Artist Award on behalf of the Classical Institute have not been presented for many years.
- The company has been paralyzed for about 9 years without publishing editions of 12 Tamil literatures in 10 languages, including Hindi and Telugu, and Tolkappiyam and Silappathikaram.

Telangana celebrates festival of cattle 'Kanuma'

- In Telangana, people are celebrating Kanuma, the festival of cattle, on the third day of Sankranti festival.
- On the occasion, the people especially in rural areas, worship cattle and agriculture tools. Rural craftsmen and artisans who help farmers in their daily chores are specially honoured.

Tamil Nadu excavation Started

- The Tamil Nadu state archaeology department announced that the excavation in the sixth phase, which was started on

February 19 this year, would be extended to the villages of Keeladi, Manalur, Konthagai and Agaram.

Ancient temple granary in Villupuram cries for attention

- The granary in the Ranganathaswamy temple in Adhi Thiruvarangam in Villupuram district is in a state of neglect.
- It is one of the few granaries in the temples in Tamil Nadu. The other granaries are in Srirangam temple, Jambukeswarar temple in Tiruvanaikaval and Palaivananathar temple in Thirupalaivalam in Thanjavur district, which were restored recently.
- Known as Uthararangam, the main deity of the temple in reclining posture is made of medicinal herbs. The deity is bigger than the presiding deity of Srirangam Ranganathaswamy. The granary was built during the reign of Vijayanagara kings to store the paddy from the fields of the temple.

Grants to temple

- Inscriptions in the temple testify to the grants given by the Vijayanagara kings for the renovation of the temple tank and lands for temple employees.

Pallava statue found near Uttiramerur

- Statue of Muthadevi (Moodevi) found at Uttiramerur.
- A statue of Pallava was found near Uttiramerur in Kanchipuram district .
- A gold treasure weighing 565 grams was found on December 13 at the Kulambeswarar temple in Uttiramerur.
- Knowing about this statue Uttiramerur Historical Study Center, doing research that went to the Pallava period moothadevi proclaimed that the jesta Statue.

1.9 India and its Neighbours

U.S. Congress passes 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' for Pakistani women

- On January 01, 2021, the U.S. Congress has passed the 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' to increase the number of scholarships for Pakistani women in higher education under a merit and needs-based programme.
- The bill requires the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to award at least 50% of scholarships under a Pakistan-based higher education scholarship programme to Pakistani women, from 2020 to 2022, across a range of academic disciplines and in accordance with existing eligibility criteria.

India to gift 'Covishield' vaccines to Bangladesh

- India will gift 2 million doses of the 'Covishield' vaccine of Serum Institute of India (SII) to Bangladesh. In this regard, a special Indian flight carrying the vaccines will land at Bangladesh's Shahjalal International Airport on January 20, 2021. This Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine will be stored at the facilities of Directorate General of Health Services in Bangladesh.

1.1 Appointments – Who is who?

Retired judge named to head SHRC

- The State has named retired High Court judge S. Baskaran as the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu State Human Rights Commission.
- The order from Governor Banwarilal Purohit said he would head the body for three years or till he attained 70 years of age.

Sanjib Banerjee appointed for High Court of Madras

- The Central Government has cleared the appointment of three new Chief Justices to helm the High Courts of Orissa, Telangana and Madras.
- Justice Sanjib Banerjee, a judge of the Calcutta High Court, has been appointed as the next Chief Justice of Madras High Court. Justice Banerjee enrolled as an advocate in the year 1990 and practiced mainly in Calcutta High Court. He was appointed permanent judge of that High Court in 2006.

Umesh Sinha named deputy election commissioner

- Umesh Sinha has been named as the deputy election commissioner in the Election Commission of India.
- Sinha, a 1986-batch IAS officer (retired) is at present serving as secretary-general in the commission.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet cleared the extension in the term

of reemployment of Sinha as deputy election commissioner on contract basis for a period of six months beyond December 31, 2020.

Governor administers oath of office to Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee

- Governor Banwarilal Purohit administered the oath of office to Madras High Court's 42nd Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee at the Raj Bhavan and handed over a warrant of appointment issued by President Ram Nath Kovind.

Hima Kohli Appointed as First Woman Chief Justice of Telangana High Court

- The senior-most judge of Delhi High Court, Justice Hima Kohli has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of Telangana High Court.
- She is the first woman to be sworn in as CJ of Telangana HC.
- Justice Kohli was administered the oath of office by Telangana Governor Dr Tamilsai Soundararajan on January 07, 2021.
- She replaces CJ Raghvendra Singh Chauhan, who has been appointed as the CJ of Uttarakhand HC.

Indian-American Raj Iyer takes charge as US Army's first Chief Information Officer

- Indian-American Dr Raj Iyer has been appointed as the first Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the US Army, since the creation of the position by the Pentagon in July 2020.

- Iyer currently serves as the principal advisor to the Secretary of the Army.
- He will supervise an annual budget of USD 16 billion for the US Army's IT operations.

Jay Shah named BCCI's Official Representative on ICC Board

- Jay Shah has been named as the official representative of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board meetings.
- Shah is the Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
- He will replace BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, who was currently representing India at the ICC Board.

Human Rights Council Elects Fiji's Nazhat Shameem Khan as its President for 2021

- Nazhat Shameem Khan, the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations Office at Geneva, has been elected by the UN Human Rights Council as its President for 2021.
- Ambassador Khan was elected during the Council's 15th annual meeting on 15 January 2021, through a secret ballot process, where she won 29 votes from among 47 members council.
- She replaces Australian lawyer Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger, who was serving as the President of the Geneva-based human rights body for 2020.

Indian-American Garima Verma named digital director in Office of the First Lady

- Incoming First Lady, Jill Biden has named Indian-American Garima Verma as her digital director and Michael LaRosa press secretary, the Biden transition team has announced.
- She served as audience development and content strategist on the Biden-Harris campaign.
- Verma was a volunteer with the content team, designing graphics for distribution to Biden-Harris volunteers across the country.

TN appoints chairperson for TNSCPCR

- The state has finally appointed a new chairperson to the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TNSCPCR). Saraswathi Rangaswamy took charge earlier this week.
- This will be Saraswathi's second stint at the commission as she had previously served in the same post between 2013-15. This time, she took charge from MP Nirmala who headed the commission for more than two years since May, 2017.

Jayati Ghosh appointed to UN advisory panel

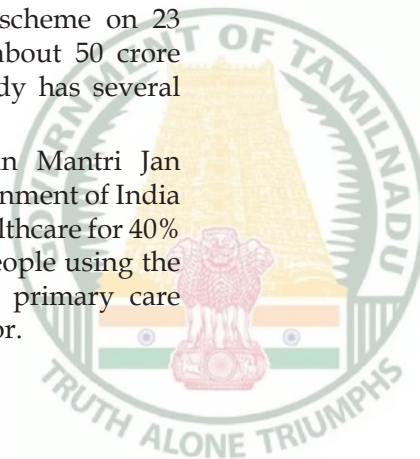
- Indian development economist Jayati Ghosh is among the 20 prominent personalities appointed by the UN to a high-level advisory board that will provide recommendations for the Secretary-general to respond to the current and future socio-economic challenges in the post-COVID-19 world. Dr.Ghosh, 65, is currently a professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

R S Sharma appointed as new CEO of Ayushman Bharat Scheme

- The National Health Authority (NHA) has appointed RS Sharma as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of country's flagship public health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat, also called Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.
- He would replace Indu Bhushan, who is serving as the Chief Executive of the Ayushman Scheme since its inception in 2018.

Ayushman Bharat Scheme

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi rolled out this health insurance scheme on 23 September 2018 to cover about 50 crore citizens in India and already has several success stories to its credit.
- Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana of the Government of India to provide free access to healthcare for 40% of people in the country. People using the program access their own primary care services from a family doctor.





2.1 Latest Court Verdicts

Jharkhand launches crop relief scheme 'Kisan Fasal Rahat Yojana'

- Jharkhand launches its own crop relief scheme to replace the Prime Minister's insurance scheme.
- It is a compensation scheme aimed at providing security cover to Jharkhand farmers in case of crop damage due to natural calamity. It will cover both land owning and landless farmers.
- The Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Co-operative will be the implementing agency and it will work in association with a project management unit, which will be a consultancy firm that will take care of technical requirements.

Prayas Scheme

- The central government has introduced a scheme called 'Prayas'. Under this scheme, the Employees Provident Fund Scheme will be paid on the day of retirement of the employees who are members in 1995.

Uttar Pradesh to launch 'Kisan Kalyan Mission'

- The Uttar Pradesh Government will launch the 'Kisan Kalyan Mission' with

an aim to double farmers income. The program will cover all the farmers of all the assembly constituencies.

Supreme Court okays Central Vista and new Parliament projects in two to one majority

- India's supreme court has given approval for a new parliament building that critics have called an "expensive vanity project" for the prime minister, Narendra Modi.
- Under the \$3bn development project, Delhi's iconic central vista at the heart of the capital, home to its parliament and the famous India Gate monument, will be transformed by a new triangular parliament building, government and legislature offices and a new home for the prime minister.
- The government plans to have the new parliament building ready by India's 75th Independence Day in August 2022, but was forced to halt construction in December after a legal challenge in India's highest court over allegations it had violated environmental and land use laws. The vista is the only area in India designated Grade I heritage status.

2.1 Govt – Welfare oriented Govt schemes, their utility

Centre launches Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0 in 600 districts

- The Government of India launched the third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana on 15 January 2021.
- The scheme has been rolled out for the current financial year, ending March 2021, and will be implemented by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana-3.0, skills training would be provided in 600 districts across all states, (except four states including Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal) to 8 lakh candidates over next three months with an outlay of Rs 948.90 crore with focus on Covid-related skills.

PM To Release 2,691 Crore to Beneficiaries Of Housing Scheme In UP

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release financial assistance of around 2,691 crore to 6.1 lakh beneficiaries in Uttar Pradesh under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G) via video conferencing.
- The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) the assistance would include release of first installment to 5.3 lakh beneficiaries and second installment to 80 thousand beneficiaries.
- PM Modi has set a target of "housing for all by 2022", for which a flagship programme of PMAY-G was launched in November 2016.

Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches 'PANKH Abhiyan' for Girl Child

- In Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched a new scheme 'PANKH Abhiyan' on 24 January, to mark the occasion of National Girl Child Day.
- The scheme has been launched under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme for the empowerment and growth of the girl child.
- 'PANKH Abhiyan' is a year long programme. The letter in the PANKH scheme stands for:
 - ▶ • 'P' – protection
 - ▶ • 'A' – awareness of their rights
 - ▶ • 'N' – nutrition
 - ▶ • 'K' – knowledge
 - ▶ • 'H' – health

Senior Citizen Savings Scheme

- The number of enrollees is increasing as the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme is restructured to maximize benefits. With 2.50 lakh beneficiaries, Tamil Nadu is in the 2nd place in the country.
- The Central Government has introduced the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme to ensure that senior citizens are financially secure during retirement.
- The government has decided to keep the interest rate on small savings schemes unchanged for the quarter January to March 2021. The interest rate on PPF remains at 7.1 per cent per annum while for the Senior Citizen Savings Scheme, the interest rate is 7.4 per cent per annum. The 1-year time deposit, the rate of interest stands at 5.5 per cent.
- The federal government last year revised the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme, which

began in 2004, and set new rules. People over the age of 60 can open a savings account under the scheme, which is implemented in post offices and banks. The minimum deposit is Rs.1,000 to a maximum of Rs.15 lakh.

2.5 lakh houses built by LIFE Mission: Pinarayi

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government will not wither under pressure tactics employed by political rivals to torpedo its development projects that are in various stages of execution.
- Announcing the completion of construction of 2.5 lakh houses under the LIFE mission housing project Mr.Vijayan alleged that certain quarters sought to scuttle the State's progress by propagating falsehoods and raking up controversies.
- As many as 2,50,547 houses have been constructed under the LIFE Mission thus far, thereby enabling over 10 lakh people in the State to lead dignified lives. In its initial phase, the project provided 52,607 houses for people without both land and a home.

Health outcomes in PM-JAY States better: Survey

- The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) contributed to improvement in many health outcomes in States that implemented the ambitious programmed

the Centre had launched more than two years ago to provide healthcare access to most vulnerable sections, according to the Economic Survey 2020-21.

- Across all the States, the proportion of households with health insurance increased by 54% for States that implemented PM-JAY while falling by 10% in States that did not.
- An analysis of claims under the scheme showed a long-tailed distribution that peaks in the range of `10,000-15,000.

Articles Related to Assembly session

- **Article 176(1) of the Constitution** of India enjoins that the Governor shall Address both the Houses assembled together at the commencement of the first Session after each general election to the Assembly and at the commencement of the first session of each year and inform the Legislature of the causes of its Summons.
- Article 87 of the constitution provides two instances when the President specially addresses both Houses of Parliament. The President of India addresses both the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha at the beginning of the first Session after each general election when the reconstituted lower house meets for the first time.
- Article 152- 162 : The executive power of the State shall be vested in the Governor and shall be exercised by him either directly or through officers subordinate to him in accordance with this Constitution.

3. GEOGRAPHY



3.1 Policy on Environment and Ecology

India becomes co-chair of Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP), a regional forum to conserve wildlife

- India has been chosen as the co-chair of the IUCN-supported Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP) for a period of three years till November 2023.
- The APAP is chaired by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Asia and co-chaired by an APAP nation member on rotational basis.
- India will replace South Korea, which held the post for 3 years until November, 2020.
- As a co-chair, India would be responsible to assist other Asian countries in managing their protected areas.

Highest rainfall Chennai received in last 100 years'

- With the Northeast monsoon yet to withdraw, several parts of the State are witnessing moderate to heavy rainfall, which is unusual in January.
- This is among the highest rainfall the city has experienced in the last 100 years, announced 'Tamil Nadu Weatherman' Pradeep John on his blog. The city received 145 mm of rainfall in a 15-hour window.

Bird flu outbreak: From Kerala to Rajasthan, list of affected states in India

- As India continues the downward trend for fresh Covid-19 infections, another

pressing matter appears to have left several states baffled as hundreds of birds have died due to bird flu across the country.

- Bird flu, also called avian influenza, has come as a double whammy for Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat that are already fighting their biggest battle against the novel coronavirus pandemic.
- The district administrations of Alappuzha and Kottayam have begun the culling of poultry, a day after bird flu was detected in certain parts of the districts.

2020 was 8th warmest year in India on record since 1901: IMD

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a statement on Indian Climate during 2020. The IMD's Climate Research and Services (CRS) revealed that the 2020 was the eighth warmest year in India on record since 1901. The main contributors to this warming were the monsoon and post-monsoon seasons.

Bird Festival 'Kalrav' at Nagi-Nakti bird sanctuary

- The Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar inaugurated the first-ever bird festival of the state, 'Kalrav', at Nagi-Nakti bird sanctuary, located in Jamui district.
- The three-day bird festival was organised from January 15 to 17, 2021.
- The festival was organized by the state environment, forest and climate change

department to create awareness among people about birds, especially the migratory birds.

Climate change may change rainfall patterns in south India, intensify floods: Study

- Future climate change will cause an uneven shifting of the tropical rain belt a narrow band of heavy precipitation near the Earth's equator leading to increased flooding in parts of India, a new study warns. The study, published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, examined computer simulations from 27 state-of-the-art climate models, and measured the tropical rain belt's response to a future scenario in which greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise through the end of the current century.
- According to the research, a northward shift of the tropical rain belt over eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean could result in "intensified flooding in southern India," and may impact global biodiversity and food security by 2100.

Maharashtra government renames Nagpur's Gorewada International Zoo after Bal Thackeray

- The Maharashtra government has renamed Gorewada International Zoo in Nagpur as 'Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park'.
- The zoological park will come up on nearly 2,000 hectares forest land and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will inaugurate the Indian safari at the zoo.
- Three special 40-seat capacity vehicles and an online ticket booking facility will be made available to the people as soon after the Indian safari is inaugurated.

Sunderbans is home to 428 species of birds, says ZSI

- Indian Sunderbans, which is part of the largest mangrove forest in the world, is home to 428 species of birds, a recent publication of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) States.
- The publication, "Birds of the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve", released earlier this month by the ZSI, not only documents the avifauna of the Sunderbans, but also serves as comprehensive photographic field guide, with detailed distribution and locality data for all the species from the region.
- The Indian Sunderbans, which covers 4,200 sq km, comprises of the Sunderban Tiger Reserve of 2,585 sq km – home to about 96 Royal Bengal Tigers (as per last census in 2020) – is also a world heritage site and a Ramsar Site. The publication has been compiled by three scientists – Kaliash Chandra, Director ZSI, Gopinathan Maheshwaran, head of the bird section of the ZSI and Amitava Majumdar.
- India has over 1,300 species of birds and if 428 species of birds are from Sunderbans, it means that one in every three birds in the country is found in the unique ecosystem.

Indonesia: 2,968-m Mount Merapi volcano erupts

- Indonesia's most active volcano has erupted, sending a river of lava and searing gas clouds flowing 3,000 metres (9,850ft) down its slopes.
- It was Mount Merapi's biggest lava flow since authorities raised its danger level in November, said Hanik Humaida, the head of the Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Centre in the nearby city of Yogyakarta.



4. ECONOMICS

4.1 New Economic Policy & Govt. Sector

GST collections at all-time high of over Rs 1.15 lakh cr in Dec

- GST collections touched a record high of over Rs 1.15 lakh crore in December, reflecting festive demand and reflating economy.
- The gross GST revenue collected in the month of December 2020 is Rs 1,15,174 crore and is the highest since the introduction of Goods and Services Tax from July 1, 2017.
- "This is the highest growth in monthly revenues for the last 21 months.

Over Rs 70,000 crore economic loss in Q3 due to farmers' agitation

- The farmers' agitation against new agri laws will lead to economic loss of over Rs 70,000 crore in the December quarter owing to supply chain disruptions, particularly in Punjab, Haryana and border areas of Delhi. The chamber's President Sanjay Aggarwal said "the 36 days farm agitation so far will have more than Rs 70,000 crore economic loss in the Q3 FY 2020-21 due to disruption in supply chains and day-to-day economic activities particularly in the progressive states of Punjab and Haryana and border areas of National capital Delhi.

World Bank approves \$105 million loan to improve Waterways in West Bengal

- The World Bank has signed a \$105 million project with the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal to improve the inland water transport infrastructure in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- The West Bengal Inland Water Transport, Logistics and Spatial Development Project will improve passenger and freight movement across the Hooghly river as well as improve accessibility in the Kolkata Metropolitan Area, enhance the quality of life of its residents and contribute to the growth of the state's logistics sector.

World Bank Projects Indian Economy to Contract By 9.6% in 2020-21; global economy to expand by 4% in 2021

- World Bank has projected the Indian economy to contract by 9.6 percent in the fiscal year 2020-21, in its Global Economic Prospects report.
- World Bank estimates Growth to recover to 5.4 percent in 2021.

- The global economy is estimated to expand by 4 percent in 2021 by World Bank.
- According to the report, global growth is projected to moderate to 3.8 percent in 2022.

National Statistical Office (NSO) Projects India's GDP to contract 7.7% in FY21

- The GDP of India is expected to contract by 7.7 percent in the current fiscal year 2020-21, as per the first advanced estimates released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI).
- The first advance estimates of GDP of a financial year are released before the Union Budget. This data helps in the budget-making process.

Indian economy likely to rebound with 8.9% growth in FY22: IHS Markit

- London-based financial services company IHS Markit has projected the Indian economy to rebound by 8.9 percent in the fiscal year 2021-22, beginning April 2021.
- This upward estimate is based on the backdrop of the significant improvement in domestic economic activity in the fourth quarter of 2020 by India.

Indian economy to rebound with 8.9% growth in FY22

- Indian economy is likely to rebound with an 8.9 per cent growth in the fiscal year beginning April 2021 after economic activity showed significant improvement

in the last quarter. The National Statistical Organisation (NSO) predicted that the economy will contract 7.7 per cent in the current financial year ending in March, the worst performance in four decades.

- The Indian economy suffered a severe recession in 2020,".
- The worst contraction occurred during the period from March until August, with the economy having shown a strong rebound in economic activity since September.
- The GDP contracted by a record 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter following a national lockdown to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The contraction came down to 7.5 per cent in the September quarter.

Bandhan Bank unveils account for army personnel

- Private lender Bandhan Bank has signed an agreement with the Indian Army to provide banking services to the personnel of the force.
- The bank got the mandate to maintain and a Bank Shaurya Salary Account of the Army personnel. Bandhan Bank Shaurya Salary Account will have a zero balance facility. The Shaurya Salary Account also offers protection for self and assets.
- They will be offered other preferential services such as six per cent interest on balance over Rs one lakh, unlimited free ATM transactions across ATMs, waiver of issuance and annual charge on Shaurya Visa Platinum Debit Card and unlimited free NEFT/RTGS/IMPS/DD transactions.

India's 7th Trade Policy Review (TPR) at WTO

- The second session of the 7th Trade Policy Review (TPR) of India concluded at the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- This was the final session of the 7th trade policy review. Trade Policy Review is a key mechanism under the monitoring function of WTO.

First time in history, Union Budget 2021 to be paperless

- Union Budget 2021, slated to be presented on February 1, is going to be completely paperless in the wake of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.
- This will be the first time since independence that the budget papers will not be printed. The Centre has received permission for the same from both houses of parliament.
- The decision has been taken as several people (approximately 100) would be required to stay at the printing press for around a fortnight amid the COVID-19 fear.
- The budget papers are usually printed at the ministry's in-house printing press in the North Block.
- This year's budget may reportedly witness several conventions being broken as the traditional 'Halwa' ceremony, which is a given every year is also not likely to take place, or a low-key function may be held.

11 Indian companies find place among Hurun Global 500 for 2020

- Total 11 private Indian firms have made it to the list of 500 most valuable companies across the world, and the country is ranked 10th on the chart. The total value of these 11 companies grew 14 per cent

and has been pegged at \$805 billion or nearly a third of the Indian GDP.

- The list of 500 is led by consumer technology major Apple with a valuation of \$2.1 trillion and is followed by Microsoft and Amazon at \$1.6 trillion. The US accounted for nearly half of the enterprises with 242 of the 500 entries, followed by China at 51 and Japan at 30 companies.
- As per the Hurun Global 500 report, Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries leads among the local enterprises with a 20.5 per cent jump in valuation to \$168.8 billion as of December 1 and is ranked 54th globally, as per the list. Tata Consultancy Services' ranked 73rd globally and making it the second most valuable Indian firm.

Yes Bank Joins Hand with Aditya Birla Financial Services to launch wellness-themed credit cards

- Private sector lender YES BANK has launched 'YES BANK Wellness' and 'YES BANK Wellness Plus' credit cards in partnership with Aditya Birla Wellness Private Limited, for holistic health, self-care and wellness of consumers.
- The credit cardholders will be able to enjoy the complimentary health benefits by simply registering on the Aditya Birla Multiply App.

Government may unveil informal workers' registry on 1 February

- Budget 2021-22 is likely to announce the creation of a database of up to 250 million informal workers and migrants, with the aim of ensuring that they get the benefits of the government's welfare schemes. This comes in the wake of last year's lockdown-induced flight of migrants to their hometowns and villages.

FDI in India rose by 13% in 2020 as inflows declined in major economies: UN

- Foreign Direct Investment into India rose by 13 per cent in 2020, boosted by interest in the digital sector, and while fund flows “declined most strongly” in major economies such as the UK, the US and Russia due to the COVID-19 pandemic, India and China bucked the trend.
- An ‘investment trends monitor’ issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) announced that global foreign direct investment (FDI) collapsed in 2020 by 42 per cent to an estimated USD 859 billion from USD 1.5 trillion in 2019.
- Such a low level was last seen in the 1990s and is more than 30 per cent below the investment trough that followed the 2008-2009 global financial crisis.
- The decline in FDI inflows was concentrated in developed countries, where fund flows fell by 69 per cent to an estimated USD 229 billion.

Indian economy may contract by 9.6% in 2020, grow at 7.3% in 2021: UN

- India’s economy is projected to grow at 7.3 per cent in 2021, even as it is estimated to contract by 9.6 per cent in 2020 as lockdowns and other efforts to control the Covid-19 pandemic slashed domestic consumption.
- The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2021, produced by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), announced the world economy was hit by a once-in-a-century crisis a Great Disruption unleashed by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

Govt proposes ‘green tax’ for 15-year-old petrol, diesel vehicles

- People owning more than 15-year-old petrol and diesel cars or eight-year-old commercial vehicles may have to pay an additional “green tax” across the country and the charges may be much more – approximately 50% of the road tax – for owning such vehicles in highly polluted cities such as Mumbai, Lucknow and Kanpur.
- Based on the principle of “polluters must pay”, this charge would be levied when commercial vehicles go for obtaining fresh fitness certificate and private vehicles for seeking renewal of registration. The proposed policy guidelines have been approved by Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari.

GDP to contract 8% in FY21, FICCI survey shows

- India’s GDP is expected to contract by 8% in 2021-21, according to the latest round of FICCI’s Economic outlook Survey.
- The annual median growth forecast by the industry body is based on responses from leading economists representing industry, banking and financial services sectors. The survey was conducted in January.
- The median growth forecast for agriculture and allied activities has been pegged at 3.5% for 2020-21.

India set to grow 11.5% in 2021: IMF

- The IMF projected an 11.5% growth rate for India in 2021, making the country the only major economy to register double-digit growth this year amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The International Monetary Fund's growth projections for India reflected a rebound in the economy, which is estimated to have contracted by 8% in 2020 due to the pandemic.
- China is next with 8.1% growth in 2021 followed by Spain (5.9%) and France (5.5%). The IMF said that in 2021 China is the only major country which registered a positive growth rate of 2.3%.

Economic Survey to be tabled today

- Parliament's Budget session kicks off beginning with the tabling of the Economic Survey for this year. The Union Budget, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said will be 'one like never before' in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, will be presented.
- A key factor in the fiscal calculations for 2021-22 will also be the government's stance on the recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission (FFC).

Reducing State's share

- In its interim report for Fy21 presented last year, the FFC had proposed reducing the share of states in the divisible pool of taxes from 42% to 41%, citing the creation of the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir.
- "Budget would be expansionary with the higher-than-trend expenditure allocations for infrastructure and welfare measures.
- The theme would have to be 'sustainable revival of the economy and employment creation, through targeted tax incentives and higher spending on infrastructure while maintaining an eye on fiscal consolidation.

India's gold demand fell to 25-year low in 2020: WGC

- Gold demand in India hit a 25-year low at 446.4 tonnes in 2020, compared with 690.4 tonnes in 2019 due to the COVID-19 induced lockdown and on account of record high prices, the India office of the World Gold Council.
- Total investment demand for the calendar year was down by 11% at 130.4 tonnes in comparison with 145.8 tonnes in the previous year.

Plug gaps in GST to raise fiscal support

- India should propose a credible privatisation plan for public sector firms, plug gaps in GST collections and cut wasteful expenditure from the Budget in order to contain borrowing costs while enhancing fiscal support for the economy, International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief economist Gita Gopinath.
- On the IMF's forecast for India's economy to grow by 11.5% in 2021-22.

Economic Survey predicts 11% growth next fiscal

- India's economy is firmly in the middle of a V-shaped recovery and will bounce back to record 11% growth in 2021-22 after an estimated 7.7% contraction this year, as per a "conservative" estimate in the Economic Survey for 2020-21, which termed this a "lockdown dividend" from the country's stringent response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. SCIENCE



5.1 Latest Inventions on Science & Technology

ISRO Chairman K Sivan gets one year extension up to January 14, 2022

- The Central Government has approved the extension of the term of ISRO Chairman K Sivan, for a period of one year.
- He was due to retire on January 14, 2021.
- Sivan will now continue as ISRO chairman and Secretary, Department of Space up to January 14, 2022.

Brian Pinker, 82, becomes first person to receive Oxford vaccine in UK

- In the fight against the novel coronavirus pandemic, Britain took another giant step on Monday, ramping up its immunisation programme by giving the first shots in the world from the vaccine created by Oxford University and pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca.
- Britain has become the first country to roll out the low cost and easily transportable AstraZeneca and Oxford University vaccine against the novel coronavirus, another step forward in the global response to the pandemic.

BARC Develops India's First Ruthenium 106 Plaque For Effective Eye Cancer Treatment

- Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)-developed eye cancer therapy has been successfully used for the first time for the

treatment of patients with ocular tumours in AIIMS-Delhi and the results of using Ruthenium 106 plaque for treatment of a patient with choroidal hemangioma (benign tumour in blood vessels) have been found to be satisfactory.

- Ruthenium plaque therapy involves placing a radioactive source like Ruthenium-106 (a radioisotope) in contact with the surface of the eyeball for cancer therapy.
- Ru-106 is recovered from radioactive waste and has a simple and slim design. One plaque can treat about 50 patients and its usable life is one year.

WHO approves Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine in breakthrough for developing nations

- The World Health Organization has approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for emergency use, paving the way for lower and middle-income countries to begin immunizing their populations against Covid-19.
- The vaccine was first approved in the UK on December 8 for emergency use within the country, with the US, Canada and European Union following soon after. All have begun their own vaccination drives.

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

- Japan's Sumitomo Forestry company and Kyoto University of Japan is all set to launch the world's first wood-based space satellite by 2023 to combat the problem of space junk. In this regard, several wooden materials are being tested by the research team to find a suitable one for space missions.
- According to the European Space Agency (ESA) statistical model, there are more than 130 million pieces of anthropogenic space debris due to human activities. ESA is also planning to launch a mission to collect space debris in 2025.
- The debris can travel at a speed of more than 22<300 mph and can impact other satellites.

Pakistan Successfully Test Fires Indigenously Developed Rocket System, Fatah-1

- The Pakistan Army successfully conducted the test flight of an indigenously developed Guided Multi Launch Rocket System, Fatah-1, on January 07, 2021.
- Fatah-1 weapon system is capable of precisely delivering conventional warheads deep into "enemy territory."
- It can hit targets up to a range of 140 km.

India places order for 11 million Covishield doses with Serum Institute

- The Indian government placed an order with Serum Institute of India (SII) to purchase the first tranche of 11 million doses of the Covishield vaccine at 210 rupees each.
- The transportation of the first consignment of the vaccine, developed by Oxford University and British-Swedish pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca.

- According to the Indian government's each dose of the vaccine has been priced at 200 rupees and a Goods and Services tax of 10 rupees will be added for a total price of 210 rupees.

UK begins major trial for new inhaler-based coronavirus treatment

- A new potentially life-saving inhaler-based treatment which is hoped will protect COVID-19 patients from developing severe illness has begun a major trial at UK hospitals.
- It involves inhaling a protein called interferon beta-1a (SNG001), which the body produces when it gets a viral infection, and the hope is it will stimulate the body's immune system and prime cells to be ready to fight off viruses.

NASA targets final test of 'world's most powerful rocket'

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is looking to carry out the eighth and final test in its "Green Run" test series.
- This eighth stage termed "hot fire," will bring to an end a series of tests which, NASA says, will gradually bring together the core stage of the Space Launch System (SLS) to life for the very first time.
- The core stage of the SLS will form the backbone of what NASA says will be the "most powerful rocket in the world" and will power its next-generation human Moon Missions.

India to procure 21 MiG-29 and 12 Sukhoi-30MKI fighter aircraft from Russia

- The Government of India is set to procure 21 MiG-29 and 12 Sukhoi-30MKI fighter aircraft from Russia.

- Apart from this, the Centre will also purchase the upgrades of the existing fleets of aircrafts from Russian state-run defence export arm Rosoboronexport.
- The new set of 21 MiG-29 will add to existing 59 such jets already with the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the 12 Sukhoi-30MKIs, on the other hand, will add to the existing fleet of 272 such fighter aircraft.

India's first multi-wavelength space satellite Astrosat

- Astronomers, with the help of India's first multi-wavelength space satellite Astrosat, have spotted a massive intriguing globular cluster in the Milky Way galaxy with rare hot UV-bright stars in it, the Department of Science and Technology .
- These stars whose inner core is almost exposed, making them very hot, exist in the late stages of evolution of a Sun-like star. It is not clear how these stars end their lives as not many of them are detected in these fast-evolving phases, making their study crucial.

ISRO to launch satellites built by start-ups onboard PSLV-C51

- After India launched its latest communication satellite CMS-01 on board the launch vehicle PSLV-C50, ISRO chairperson K Sivan announced that the next mission would launch an earth observation satellite 'ANAND' that is fully built by a start-up as part of enabling private players in space exploration.
- The next mission PSLV-C51 (polar satellite launch vehicle) is special for us. It is special for the entire country.

SpaceX breaks ISRO's Record by launching 143 Satellites in a single mission

- SpaceX successfully launched its ambitious rideshare mission called Transporter-1, on 24 January 2021, carrying 143 small satellites, and created a new record of launching many satellites from a single rocket.
- SpaceX broke the record set by ISRO in February 2017 for deploying 104 satellites onboard PSLV in a single mission.
- The SpaceX used two-stage Falcon 9 rocket for the mission, from the Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida.
- The 143 satellites included 133 commercial and government satellites and 10 Starlink satellites of SpaceX.

Vaccines are safe for those who are on blood thinners: ICMR

- Both COVID-19 vaccines approved for emergency use in India-Covaxin and Covishield- are safe for people on blood thinners, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Director-General Balram Bhargav.
- At a Health Minister press conference, he announced manufacturers of both the vaccines had approached the Drugs Controller-General of India (DCGI) for revision of this contraindication on their fact sheets.
- The Health Ministry added that it was engaging with private stakeholders to look at increasing the future coverage of COVID-19 vaccines.

Indo-Bangladesh sign MoU on joint student satellite

- On India's 72nd Republic Day, India and Bangladesh signed a memorandum of understanding to design, make, and launch a satellite fabricated by students from both countries.
- The Indian side was represented by the Chennai-based Space Kidz India (SKI), a private organization, which focusses on encouraging students to study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, especially space science. The Bangladesh side was represented by Global Law Thinkers Society, a global youth organization.
- To mark 50 years of India-Bangladesh ties and to motivate the next generation of scientific thinkers, the students of both countries will be jointly developing a satellite.
- The Satellite name would be named as **Bangla- Bharat**.
- Team Spacekidz has requested ISRO to launch this satellite, which would be the first by Bangladesh, and help the children in the neighbouring country learn the basics of satellites. The 1U cube satellite is expected to carry temperature sensors and radiation counters, besides a camera that the team is planning to install.



5.2 Latest Discoveries in Health Science

Preeti Pant Panel to study adverse findings of NFHS-5

- The Health and Family Welfare Ministry has recently formed a technical expert group to study the adverse findings from the National Family Health Survey-5.
- The Ministry has set up the technical committee of medicine and nutrition experts under the leadership of Joint Secretary Preeti Pant.
- The committee will examine the findings of the National Family Health Survey-5 as well as suggest policies and courses of action to improve on indicators related to anaemia, malnutrition, C-section, and stunting.

5.3 Mass Media & Communication

Indian Air Force chief Bhadauria launches e-governance portal

- Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria launched an e-governance portal for the Indian Air Force (IAF) in order to promote a paperless office.
- The launch of e-governance in IAF marks a paradigm shift from the current method of correspondence, filing and documentation to a digital one.
- The implementation undertaken as part of Digital India and e-governance initiative will transform the entire Indian Air Force to a 'paperless office' workflow.

J&K LG, Manoj Sinha launches Mobile Application 'Satark Nagrik' and Departmental Vigilance Officers Portal

- Jammu & Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, launched Mobile Application 'Satark Nagrik' and Departmental Vigilance Officers (DVO) Portal of J&K Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) recently.

Satark Nagrik App

- This app has been developed to facilitate seamless flow of information about corruption and enable citizens to submit their grievances with ease and mobility.

CoWIN app

- Two Covid-19 vaccines have been approved by the Drug Control General of India (DCGI)'s approval for restricted emergency use. Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech are ready to supply vaccines for the first phase of the vaccination which will include frontline workers followed by people who are above 50 years old. For further vaccination process, the central government has introduced an application named CoWIN (Covid Vaccine Intelligence Work).

MeitY collaborates with Amazon to set up India's first quantum computing lab

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has announced a collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to develop a Quantum Computing Applications Lab in the country.
- The lab is meant to provide access to quantum computing development

environment for the developer, scientific and academic communities.

- Amazon will provide hosting with technical and programmatic support for the lab.

Karnataka CM launches 'Avolokana Software' Transparent e-governance tool

- Karnataka Chief Minister (CM), B.S.Yediyurappa launched 'Avolokana Software' Transparent e-governance tool. The software will be used by the Government to monitor & access data on sanctions & expenditures incurred on 1800 programmes which have been implemented by 39 Departments.
- Expenditures & Sanctions on Sustainable Development Goals, Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan, Tribal Sub-Plan & Central Sponsored Schemes will be the main areas of focus.
- It will also provide Assembly Constituency-wise information on Government grants and allocations under various development programmes.

Union Minister Arjun Munda Virtually Launches "Shramshakti" Portal for Migrant Workers

- The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda launched a National Migration Support Portal "ShramShakti", during a virtual programme organised at Panjim, Goa, on 22 January, 2021.
- The portal will help the government in smooth formulation of state and national level programs for migrant workers.
- Government would also be able to link the migrant population with existing Welfare Scheme- under Atam Nirbhar Bharat.

- The minister also launched "ShramSaathi", a training manual for migrant workers, to ensure that the process of livelihood migration is safe and productive.
- Apart from this, a dedicated Migration cell was also launched in Goa to facilitate and support migrants who come from different States to Goa. This makes Goa first destination state of India to set up dedicated migration cell to address diverse issues of migrant workers.

'Halwa' ritual held, Budget app unveiled

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur and senior officials of the Finance Ministry participated in the symbolic 'Halwa ceremony' that marks the beginning of compilation of budget documents.
- The ceremony used to mark the launch of the printing exercise 101 the Budget. This will be the first time since independent India's first Budget on November 26, 1947, that the documents will not be physically printed.
- The Finance Minister also launched the 'Union Budget Mobile App' for access of Budget documents by Members of Parliament and the general public.
- The app facilitates access to 14 Budget documents as prescribed by the Constitution.

Akshay Kumar launches mobile action game FAU-G

- On the 72nd Republic Day, Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar took to social media to announce the launch of mobile action game Fearless and United Guards (FAU-G).

Akshay took to Twitter and wrote, “Face the enemy. Fight for your country. Protect Our Flag. India’s most anticipated action game, Fearless and United Guards: FAU-G takes you to the frontlines and beyond! Start your mission today.”

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

- Dealroom.co data analysed by London & Partners (the Mayor of London’s international trade and investment agency) has revealed that Bengaluru, Karnataka has emerged as the World’s fastest growing mature tech ecosystem, with investment in it increased 5.4 times from USD 1.3 billion in 2016 to USD 1.2 billion in 2020. **Bengaluru** secures 6th place

in global top 10 for Venture Capital (VC) investment. This list is topped by Beijing and San Francisco, New York, Shanghai and London.

Reliance Jio is the fifth strongest brand globally

- Reliance Jio has been declared as the fifth strongest brand globally by Brand Finance. The telecom company has been ranked at 5 behind the likes of Coca Cola and Ferrari. In the list which has ranked the brands based on their relative strength, the Chinese Mobile App WeChat is on the top pushing Ferrari on the second position. Russian Bank Sber is on 3rd position and Coca Cola is on fourth.



6. NATIONAL DIARY OF EVENT



India's first Pollinator Park inaugurated in Haldwani, Uttarakhand

- India's first pollinator park has been developed at Haldwani in Nainital, of the state of Uttarakhand.
- The new Pollinator Park was inaugurated on 29 December 2020 by renowned butterfly expert Peter Smetacek.
- The colourful park has been developed by the research wing of the Uttarakhand Forest Department over four acres of land.
- There are over 40 species of butterflies, honeybees, birds and insects in the park.

UNDP and Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation to co-create India's first Social Impact Bond

- Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) recently signed an MoU with UNDP India to co-create India's first Social Impact Bond (SIB).
- This SIB will support the PCMC in improving healthcare services for its citizens, especially with respect to the pandemic while incurring minimum investment risks.
- This is the first time that a government body will act as the 'Outcome Funder' in a bond, whereas traditionally most government-funded public projects

require large and early investments by the government with a substantial gestation period of outcomes and involve various kinds of risks.

Chhattisgarh signs MoU to set up India's 1st ethanol plant under PPP model

- Chhattisgarh government signed a contract execution (MoU) for the country's first ethanol plant to be set up in the state under the public-private partnership (PPP) model.
- The contract was signed by Boramdev Cooperative Sugar Factory Kawardha and Chhattisgarh Distillery Limited's subsidiary NKJ Biofuel for a period of 30 years.
- The establishment of the ethanol plant will generate direct and indirect employment opportunities and will form the basis for economic prosperity in the region.

PM Modi lays foundation stone of Light House projects (LHPs) across six states

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Light House projects (LHPs) at six sites across six States through video conference on 1st January 2021.

- The LHPs will be implemented at Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Rajkot (Gujarat), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Agartala (Tripura) and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh).
- The project is being constructed under Global Housing Technology Challenge (GHTC)-India. It has been conceptualised by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- GHTC-India envisages to provide an ecosystem for adoption of innovative technologies in the housing construction sector in a holistic manner.
- Under the programme, over 1,000 houses would be build in each of the six cities in 12 months along with allied infrastructure facilities.

PM Modi lays foundation of Light House Project

- The foundation stone of Light House Projects under the Global Housing Technology Challenge-India (GHTC-India) was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at six sites across six states. The GHTC-India is a programme that seeks to construct over 1,000 houses each in these cities in a span of 12 months.
- The project involves the construction of around 1,000 houses each with allied infrastructure facilities within a year using new-age alternate global technologies, materials, and processes in Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Rajkot (Gujarat), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Agartala (Tripura) and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh).

PM Modi to lay foundation of IIM-Sambalpur

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of the permanent campus of IIM Sambalpur, Odisha, via video conferencing.
- IIM Sambalpur is the first IIM to implement the idea of ‘flipped classrooms’, according to the PMO.
- The institute also romped ahead of all other IIMs in terms of highest gender diversity with 49% girl students in MBA (2019-21) batch and 43% in MBA (2020-22) batch.

Delhi government sets up Tamil Academy

- An academy has been set up by the Delhi government to promote Tamil language and culture.
- The Tamil Academy under the the Department of Art, Culture and Language of the city government, under the leadership of Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.
- The Delhi government has appointed former municipal councillor and current member of Delhi Tamil Sangam N Raja as the vice-chairman of the academy.

PM Modi to inaugurate Kochi-Mangaluru natural gas pipeline

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate the Kochi-Mangaluru natural gas pipeline to the nation via video conferencing.
- The event will mark an important milestone towards the creation of ‘one nation, one gas grid.

- The 450-km-long pipeline has been built by Gail (India) Ltd.
- It has transportation capacity of 12 million metric standard cubic metres per day and will carry natural gas from the liquefied natural gas (LNG) regasification terminal in Kochi to Mangaluru, passing through Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod districts.

Oscar nominee 'Another Round' to be opening movie at 51st IFFI

- The 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will open on 16th January, with the Indian premiere of the movie 'Another Round' by Thomas Vinterberg.
- The movie starring Cannes Best Actor Award winner Mads Mikkelsen is among a star-studded line up of movies being showcased at IFFI.
- The movie is also Denmark's official entry to the Oscars. The festival will also witness the World Premiere of 'Mehrunisa'. The film by Sandeep Kumar will premier mid-fest.
- The festival will close on 24th January with the India Premiere of the historical drama 'Wife of a Spy' by Kiyoshi Kurosawa.

PM Modi inaugurates National Metrology Conclave 2021 organised by CSIR

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the National Metrology Conclave, via video conferencing.
- Theme: 'Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation'.
- National Metrology Conclave 2021 was

organised by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi, to mark its 75th year of inception.

- PM Modi also dedicated 'National Atomic Timescale', and 'Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya' to the nation, and laid the foundation stone of the 'National Environmental Standards Laboratory'.

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

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

About the Project:

- The construction of the platform is done with an expenditure of Rs.90 core for remodeling of wards, building work, signaling, third entrance construction, electrical and other related works.
- This project is a part of doubling between Hubballi and Bengaluru which is underway since November 2019.

Kerala to host 4th Global Ayurveda Festival 2021: March 12th to 19th

- V Muraleedharan, Union Minister of State for External Affairs and the chairman of Global Ayurveda Festival announced that the 4th Global Ayurveda Festival 2021 (GAF2021), world's largest festival of Ayurveda community will be organized in a high end virtual space from 12th to

19th March 2021 in Kerala. The festival is organized by Centre for Innovation in Science and Social Action (CISSA), the Ayurveda Medical Association of India (AMAI), the Ayurveda Hospital Management Association, in collaboration with various departments of the central and state government.

Delhi govt. sets up academy to promote Tamil culture

- The Department of Art, Culture and Language of the Delhi government set up a Tamil academy to promote the South Indian language and culture in the Capital. It also appointed former municipal councillor and member of the Delhi Tamil Sangam N. Raja as vice-chairman of the academy.
- The academy will introduce various awards to promote and reward the works of people in Tamil language and culture.

This Train Turns Methane From Human Waste Into Electricity As Eco-Friendly Fuel

- The newly developed railcar is called BioUltra and it converts biomethane gas into electricity, which charges the batteries and helps it move. The novel railcar has been developed by engineers with the Worcester-based Ultra-Light Rail Partners.
- The railcar originally is going to be roughly 20 metres long with a top speed of 50 miles per hour. To showcase the technology, engineers developed a demo train which was roughly 10 metres long, weighing around 12 tonnes.

- The biomethane powered train does not release any toxic fumes in the air like nitrogen dioxide. And even though biomethane is known to be stinky, the fumes that are released are almost odourless. Moreover, The capacity of the BioUltra car's tanks will offer a maximum range of around 2,000 miles between refuelling stations.

Govt implementing Rs 320-cr project for 5 ports to enable digital ecosystem

- The government is implementing a Rs 320-crore project for five major ports in order to provide a digital port ecosystem, according to the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- These ports are Mumbai, Chennai, Deendayal, Paradip and Kolkata (including Haldia).
- The system will adopt international best practices without losing its alignment to existing local needs.
- In addition, a centralised web-based port community system (PCS) has been operationalised across all major ports which enables seamless data flow between various stakeholders through common interface.

Bajaj, India becomes world's most valuable two-wheeler company

- Indian multinational two-wheeler and three-wheeler manufacturing company, Bajaj Auto announced that it becomes the first two-wheeler company globally to cross a market capitalization of INR one trillion.

- The share price of Bajaj Auto Ltd, closed at INR 3,479 per share on NSE making its market capitalization Rs 100,6.70 billion at this price.

Toycathon-2021 and Toycathon Portal jointly launched by Union Education Minister and Union Minister WCD

- The Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and Union Minister WCD and Textiles Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani jointly launched Toycathon-2021 and the Toycathon Portal on January 05, 2021.
- Toycathon is being organized to develop India as the global Toy manufacturing hub.
- Toycathon will provide a platform to conceptualize innovative toys based on the Indian value system which will inculcate the positive behaviour and good value among the children.

The Toycathon will be based on nine themes:

- Indian Culture, History, Knowledge of India and Ethos;
- Learning, Education and Schooling;
- Social and human values;
- Occupations & specific fields;
- Environment;
- Divyang ;
- Fitness and sport;
- Out of the box, creative and logical thinking and
- Rediscovering/redesigning traditional Indian toys.

40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica flagged off from Mormugao Port, Goa

- The 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica was flagged off on January 05, 2021, from Mormugao Port, Goa.
- The chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasily Golovnin has been chosen for the prestigious 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica (ISEA) mission journey and will reach Antarctica in 30 days.
- The expedition journey has 43 members onboard.
- India's major fuel supplier, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) has supplied Jet A1 fuel, lubes and Marine Gas Oil (MGO) for the mission.

Centre constitutes high-level group for South Asia energy security

- The Central Government has set up a high-level group to build a South Asia-focused energy security architecture
- The high-level group, named the South Asia Group for Energy (SAGE), will be headed by former Union Power Secretary Ram Vinay Shahi.
- SAGE has been set up under the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)-run think tank Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS).

Madhya Pradesh Government launches 'Launch Pad Scheme' to make youth self-reliant

- The government of Madhya Pradesh has launched a 'Launch Pad Scheme' for the boys and girls coming out of child care

institutions and having completed 18 years of age.

- This scheme has been launched by the Women and Child Development Department of the state with the objective to provide a platform to these youth, through which they will be able to become self-reliant by continuing their education and training.
- Under the scheme, the District Administration will provide space to these youths for opening of coffee shops, stationery, photocopying, computer typing and DTP work.

Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal to inaugurate 'EDUCON-2020'

- Union Education Minister Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' will inaugurate the two-day Virtual International Akhand Conference 'EDUCON 2020' through a video the conferencing platform on 7th January, 2021. This two-day International Conference is being organized by Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB) in collaboration with the Global Education Research Association (GERA) under the patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Raghavendra P. Tiwari, Vice Chancellor, CUPB & Padma Shri Dr. Mahendra Sodha (Patron, GERA). The focal theme of EDUCON-2020 is Envisioning education for Transforming Youth to Restore Global Peace. This International Conference will commence with the Inaugural address by Hon'ble Minister of Education Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'. The Chief Guest of Valedictory Ceremony will be Prof. Dharendra Pal Singh, Chairman, UGC, New Delhi.

World's first Double Stack Long Haul Container Train

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 306 km long New Rewari - New Madar Section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC), through video conference on January 07, 2021.
- The New Rewari-New Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor is situated in Haryana and Rajasthan.
- He also flagged off the Double Stack Long Haul Container Train on the same route.
- This 1.5 km long train is the first double stacked container freight train. It will run from New Ateli in Haryana to New Kishanganj in Rajasthan,
- The freight trains will run at the maximum speed of 100 km per hour as against the current maximum speed of 75 kmph on Indian Railway tracks.

Centre approves Rs 28,000-crore plan to draw industries in J&K

- The Centre on Wednesday approved a Rs 28,400-crore new industrial developmental scheme, paving the path for attracting investments and creating jobs for the youth in the militancy-hit Jammu and Kashmir.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), headed by the Prime Minister, on Wednesday approved the proposal of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade for Central Sector Scheme for Industrial Development of Jammu & Kashmir.

Karnataka Government launches Krishi Sanjeevani Vans to test soil, water & suggest remedies for pest control

- The Chief Minister of Karnataka , Shri B.S. Yediyurappa flagged off 40 Krishi Sanjeevani vans in Bengaluru on January 07, 2021.
- These vans have been launched by state Agriculture Department with Central assistance under National Krishi Vikas Yojana to take up this novel programme.
- Objective: to take labs to the agriculture fields, study the conditions and address the needs of the farmers about pest control, fertility of the soil, weeds and suitable crops in the existing conditions, so that farmers get support for their farming techniques.

Centre plans to form committee, headed by MoS for Home G Kishan Reddy, to protect language, culture & land of Ladakh

- The Central Government has decided to form a committee to protect the unique language, cultural identity and land of Ladakh.
- The Committee will be headed by the Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy.
- This committee will also ensure citizen's participation in the development of the Union Territory.
- The other members of the committee will include elected representatives from Ladakh, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, central government, and the Ladakh administration.

10,000 Govt offices to be declared green in Kerala on January 26

- A total of 10,000 state Government offices and public sector undertakings in Kerala will be declared “green” on January 26, the Republic Day. After the declaration, functions would be held in various offices across the state in which the certificate for the compliance of the green protocol would be submitted to its heads by the chairpersons of the local self-government institutions or jointly by the ward member/councillor and a member of the green action force.

PNB Collaborates with IIT Kanpur to set up Fintech Innovation Centre

- Punjab National Bank has partnered with IIT Kanpur and the Foundation for Innovation & Research in Science & Technology (FIRST) to set up a ‘Fintech Innovation Centre (FIC)’ at the institute’s campus.
- PNB and IIT Kanpur will jointly work to set up this innovation centre as a vehicle for research and development of technological solutions, with the help of FIRST, to address challenges and explore opportunities in the BFSI space.

World’s largest floating solar project to start in MP by 2023: State Govt

- The world’s largest floating 600 MW solar energy project to be constructed at Omkareshwar dam on Narmada river in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh will begin power generation by year 2022-23.
- The estimated investment in this project stands at Rs 3,000 crore. The International Finance Corporation, World Bank and

Power Grid have granted in-principle consent for providing aid for the said project development.

- The project will have floating solar panels of 600 MW power generation capacity in the backwaters of Omkareshwar dam. Electricity will be produced in about 2000-hectare water area by installing solar panels in the dam. Solar panels will float on the surface of the water in the reservoir.

High Level Committee for 125th birth anniversary of Subhas Chandra Bose set up

- Indian universities and colleges with the Institutions of Eminence (IOEs) tag, which include several IITs, will now be able to set up campuses in foreign countries with the University Grants Commission (UGC) issuing fresh guidelines on the same.
- The Education Ministry had launched the IoE scheme in 2018 as per which 20 institutions were to be selected -- 10 public and 10 private ones -- that would enjoy complete academic and administrative autonomy.
- Indian Institutes of Delhi, IIT Bombay and the Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Science (IISc) were awarded the IoE status in the public sector, and Manipal Academy of Higher Education and BITS Pilani in the private sector, while the Jio Institute by Reliance Foundation was given the tag in Greenfield category.

Indian Railways enhances its maximum speed to 130 kmph

- Indian Railways enhanced the maximum speed to 130 kmph for 1,280 km length out of 1,612 Km in Golden Quadrilateral

- Golden Diagonal (GQ-GD) route. This covers the entire GQ-GD route over South Central Railway, except Vijayawada - Duvvada section, where signaling up-gradation work is in progress.

- The enhanced speed limits could be achieved due to the systematic and planned strengthening of track & its infrastructure by removing bottlenecks in these sections on a fast pace.
- This included heavier rails, laying of 260 meters Long welded rail panels, improvement of curves and gradients among others
- Accordingly, the South-Central Railway zone has received sanction to enhance the maximum speed limits to 130 kmph along the following routes:
 - Golden Diagonal (Grand Trunk) Route: 744 Route Km
 - ▶ Ballarshah to Kazipet - 234 Rkm
 - ▶ Kazipet-Vijayawada-Gudur - 510 Rkm
 - Golden Quadrilateral Route (Chennai -Mumbai section): 536 Route Km
 - ▶ Renigunta to Gooty - 281 Rkm
 - ▶ Gooty to Wadi - 255Rkm
 - Already, the maximum speed limits in the High-Density Network (HDN) between Secunderabad - Kazipet (132 Kms distance) had been enhanced to 130 kmph.

Two Made-In-India Covid Vaccines Ready to Save Humanity: PM Modi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi reflected upon India's transformation from a country that till recently imported medical devices and equipment to one that is ready to "save humanity" with two Made-In-India vaccines to fight coronavirus.

- And also he quotes a tirukkural
“Kedariyaa ketta idathum valamkundra
Naadenba naatin thalai” for Indians living
in abroad

NIXI offers free Domain in local Indian languages

- The National Internet Exchange of India, NIXI has announced that it will offer a free Internationalized Domain Name, IDN in any of the preferred 22 official Indian language along with every IN domain booked by the registrant.
- Applicant will also get a free email in local language. This offer has been created to stimulate the adoption of भारत IDN domain name and proliferation of local language content.
- This offer is valid for new .in users who register up to 31st of January. This offer is also extended to those existing in users who renew their domain in the month of January 2021.

Bureau of Indian Standards Celebrates its Anniversary

- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) celebrates its 74th anniversary. BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) is that the National Standards Body of India established under the “Bureau of Indian Standards Act” of 2016.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) :

- BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) is that the National Standards Body of India established under the “Bureau of Indian Standards Act” of 2016, going to coordinate the event of standardization, marking and quality certification activities and related problems with commodities.

GoI sanctions INR 37.8 Crores for Developing Parashuram Kund in Arunachal Pradesh

- Government of India (GoI) has sanctioned INR 37.8 Crores for the Developing Parshuram Kund Pilgrimage Site at Lohit district, Arunachal Pradesh. It is one of the most sacred places in India and is visited by a large number of pilgrims during Makar Sankranti.
- Thousands of Devotees take holy dip in the Lohit River.
- It is expected to boost the livelihood of the locals & socio-economic development of the area.

Manipur launches ‘COSFOM’ website for Community Forest Management

- Awangbow Newbai, Minister of Forest, Environment & Climate Change, Manipur launched a website for Community-based Sustainable Forest Management for Water Resource Conservation in Manipur (COSFOM) - www.cosfom.mn.gov.in at the Forest Headquarters, Sanjenthong, Manipur.
- COSFOM is a component under Indo-German Programme ‘Climate Change Adaption in the Himalaya’.
- It is a project of the Government of India supported by the Federal Government of Germany through KfW, a German development bank.
- Manipur Forest Department is the implementing agency and it is managed by Community Forestry and Water Conservation Society-Manipur (CF & WCS).

Labour Ministry likely to shape National Employment Policy by December 2021

- NEP would take a shape based on the data inputs of these four surveys, says Director General of Labour Bureau
- The Ministry of Labour and Employment is likely to shape the National Employment Policy (NEP) by December this year following the implementation of four labour codes and completion of four major surveys, including one on migrant workers.
- The NEP will draw a broad road map for improving job opportunities in the country, mainly by various initiatives like skill development, bringing investment in employment intensive segments and other policy interventions.

PM Modi encourages youth to take part in Prarambh on January 15-16

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged the youth of India on January 11, 2021 to be a part of the Start-Up India International Summit 'Prarambh' on January 15-16.
- The Prime Minister highlighted that virtual events have given a great opportunity to the youth to be a part of many domestic and global forums and one such opportunity is the Start-Up India International Summit.
- The summit seeks to bring together the best minds from industry, investment, academia, banking, finance and young start-up leaders.

Suriname President to be Republic Day 2021 Chief Guest

- Indian-origin President of Suriname, Chandrikapersad Santokhi will attend the Republic Day Parade 2021 as a chief guest

on January 26, 2021. President Santokhi was also the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention. Earlier, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson was likely to attend the event. However, the PM Johnson cancelled his visit to India.

West Bengal CM Inaugurates 26th Kolkata International Film Festival

- West Bengal CM, Mamata Banerjee has inaugurated the 26th Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF).
- The inaugural ceremony was also virtually attended by Bollywood superstar and West Bengal's brand ambassador Shah Rukh Khan from Mumbai.
- Legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray's classic 'Apur Sansar' will be the inaugural film of the festival in which 131 movies from 45 countries will be screened till January 13.

Union Minister Harsh Vardhan inaugurates Coastal Research Vessel 'Sagar Anveshika'

- The Union Science and Technology Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched state-of-the-art vessel 'Sagar Anveshika' on 9 January 2021, at Chennai Port Trust in Chennai.
- The vessel 'Sagar Anveshika' will enable the scientists to launch deep ocean mission for ocean exploration.
- The research ship 'Sagar Anveshika' has been developed by the Titagarh Marine Limited, Kolkata for the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai.
- The research vessel can accommodate about 15-20 scientists for research purposes and has advanced navigation systems as well as well equipped laboratories with research and exploration apparatus for taking up scientific explorations.

Heritage Conservation Committee

- The Supreme Court recently cleared the Central Vista Project that covers a three kilo metre stretch between the Rashtrapati Bhavan and India Gate. Following this, the Heritage Conservation Committee has approved the construction of a new parliament.
- The Heritage Conservation Committee is set up under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary, Ministry of Urban Affairs under the provisions of Section 23 in Delhi Building Byelaws, 1983 to protect heritage buildings. Only buildings in and around Delhi are governed by these laws. Similar conservation committees are set up at state levels as well.
- The local authority should consult the Heritage Conservation Committee before granting permission. The heritage buildings are graded by the Heritage Conservation Committee for developmental activities.

Arunachal Pradesh to be India's prime Vanadium producer

- Arunachal Pradesh is expected to become the prime producer of Vanadium in India. Vanadium is a high-value metal that is used to strengthen titanium and steel. During an exploration by the Geological Survey of India, Arunachal Pradesh was placed on the vanadium map and it is likely that the geologists will soon find a deposit.

Nitin Gadkari to launch "Khadi Prakritik Paint" developed by KVIC

- Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari will be launching an innovative new paint developed

by Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

- The eco-friendly, non-toxic paint, called "Khadi Prakritik Paint" is a first-of-its-kind product, with anti-fungal, anti-bacterial properties.
- Based on cow dung as its main ingredient, the paint is cost-effective and odourless and has been certified by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

"Period Room" set up for women at a public toilet in Maharashtra

- In a bid to help the women, residing in congested slums, during their menstruation days, a 'period room' has been set up at a public toilet in Maharashtra's Thane city.
- Equipped with several basic facilities, the period room aims to facilitate menstrual hygiene among women dwelling in slums.
- The much-needed facility has been set up by the Thane Municipal Corporation in collaboration with an NGO, at a slum in Shanti Nagar locality of Wagle Estate area in Thane.

India Ranks 85 in Henley Passport Index 2021; Japan Tops

- The Henley Passport Index 2021 has been released by Henley & Partners, based on the exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- The index presents the original ranking of the world's most powerful passports, according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa.
- As per the latest report, India has been ranked 85th among 110 countries, in the

Henley Passport Index for 2021, with a visa-free score of 58.

- Japan has once again topped the list of being the most powerful passport in the world, for third consecutive year. Japanese citizens can travel to as many as 191 countries visa-free.
- Singapore is in second place (190) and South Korea ties with Germany in third place (189).
- Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan are the countries with the worst passport, with a passport score of 29, 28 and 26 respectively.

India's first 'eco-friendly' cow dung paint launched

- India has its own cow dung paint. Among the country's several innovative inventions, this unique paint certainly takes the cake. According to the Press Information Bureau, Nitin Gadkari, the Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSME, launched the new paint, the country's first, on January 12. The paint has been developed by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission at his residence.

First ever Ice climbing festival celebrated in Nubra valley

- In Leh, the first ever Ice climbing festival was celebrated in Nubra valley. The Seven Day event was organized by Nubra Adventure Club.
- To promote winter tourism in Nubra valley, Nubra Adventure Club, with the help of Social activist Dr. Nordan Otzer, has organized the Seven Day Ice Climbing festival.

Naveen Patnaik inaugurates India's first 'Fire Park' in Bhubaneswar

- The Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik virtually inaugurated a first of its kind 'Fire Park', to educate and bring awareness on basic fire safety measures among the people, particularly the students.
- The 'Fire Park' is located inside the premises of the Odisha Fire and Disaster Academy in Bhubaneswar.
- The minister also launched an online portal, 'AgnishamaSeva' of Odisha Fire Service.
- The fire park will facilitate demonstrations on use of first aid fire-fighting equipment, rescue and disaster operations, visit to exhibition hall, screening of films and distribution of leaflets on fire safety.

Bhopal Issues ID Cards for Third Gender

- In a first for India, the local administration in Bhopal has started issuing ID cards to people from the third gender to help them avail the benefits of the state government's welfare schemes. Through the ID cards, the third gender would be eligible for the schemes that are run by the social justice department in the state.

150-m cross-border tunnel detected by BSF along IB in JK

- A 150-m tunnel constructed along the International Border (IB) to facilitate infiltration of terrorists into Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan was detected by Border Security Force (BSF) personnel in Hiranagar sector of Kathua district.

- This is the third tunnel unearthed by alert border guards along the IB in the twin districts of Samba and Kathua in Jammu region over the past six months and ninth in the past decade.
- “A nearly 150-m-long tunnel was detected by a BSF patrol party during an anti-tunnelling operation in Bobiyaan village of Hirnagar sector this morning,” Inspector General of BSF, Jammu frontier, N S Jamwal told reporters at the scene. He along with other senior officers rushed to Bobiyaan soon after the detection of the tunnel.

Working Women Should Register Themselves With Police

- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has announced a new system where a woman going out of home for work will have to register herself at the police station, and the police will then track her for her safety. Inaugurating an awareness programme on crime against women called “Samman”, CM Chouhan said that a helpline number will be given to these women, which will help them call for help when in distress.

Tesla sets up India subsidiary in Bengaluru

- Elon Musk-owned electric vehicle (EV) company Tesla has registered a fully-owned subsidiary in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Tesla, the world’s most valued carmaker has incorporated a fully owned subsidiary ahead as a first step to set up an R&D unit and a manufacturing plant for its electric vehicles in the country.

- The office, situated on Lavelle Road in Bengaluru, is registered with a total paid-up capital of Rs 1,00,000 and authorised share capital of Rs 15 lakh.

Rajnath Singh unveils India’s first indigenously developed driverless metro car

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled the country’s first indigenously designed and developed Driverless Metro Car at the BEML manufacturing facility in Bengaluru.
- According to BEML, state-of-the-art driverless metro cars, being manufactured at the company’s Bangalore Complex, are made up of stainless-steel body with a capacity of carrying 2280 passengers in six-cars Metro train-set.

Kerala becomes 8th State to complete ease of doing business reforms

- Kerala has become the 8th State in the country to successfully undertake “Ease of Doing Business” reform stipulated by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.
- Kerala has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs.2,373 crore through Open Market Borrowings. Permission for the same was issued by the Department of Expenditure on 12th January 2021.
- Kerala has now joined the seven other States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, who have completed this reform.

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh launches India's First Indigenously Designed & Developed Driverless Metro Car

- Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled India's first 'Driverless Metro Car' on 15 January 2021 during a function held at BEML's Bangalore Complex
- The indigenously designed & developed state-of-the-art Driverless Metro trains are being manufactured at BEML Bangalore manufacturing facility, for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA).

PM Modi launches Rs 1,000-crore 'Startup India Seed Fund'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Rs 1,000-crore 'Startup India Seed Fund' on 16 January 2021, while addressing the 'Prarambh: Startup India International Summit' 2021.
- The Startup India Seed Fund would support startups in need of initial capital to start and grow their business and help budding entrepreneurs pursue innovative ideas.
- This initiative will help in setting up new startups and promote their growth.

Kerala gets second public sector bottled water plant

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the much-awaited bottled water plant at Aruvikkara the second such manufacturing unit to be set up in the public sector in the state.
- The plant, envisaged to make the government's packaged drinking water brand 'Hilly Aqua', was set up by the Kerala Irrigation Infrastructure Development Corporation (KIDC).

Himachal Pradesh: India's first voter votes in panchayat elections

- Knees, India's first voter Shyam Saran Negi reached his polling booth in Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur to exercise his franchise in the panchayat elections .
- Negi, who is 103-year-old, cast his vote at the Kalpa polling booth, where he was given a warm welcome by laying a red carpet by the district administration.
- Kalpa went to polls in the first round of the three-phase panchayati elections in Himachal Pradesh.

Union Education Minister honoured by Canada's Hindi Writers Guild

- Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' was honoured by the Hindi Writers Guild, Canada for his literary work on January 16, 2021. Nishank was conferred with the "Sahitya Gaurav Samman" through a virtual programme. India's High Commissioner in Canada Ajay Bisaria was also present on the occasion.

Kerala: India's first 'Labour Movement Museum' to be set up in Alappuzha

- The country's first Labour Movement Museum, showcasing the history of world labour movement, would be launched in Alappuzha, Kerala. The museum will feature a huge repository of documents and exhibits that shaped the labour movements across the continents, state Tourism department on January 17, 2021.

PM flags off 8 trains to boost connectivity to Statue of Unity at Kevadia, Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 17, 2021 flagged off eight trains connecting

different parts of the country to Kevadia in Gujarat, via video conferencing. Kevadia is famous for world's tallest statue, the Statue of Unity of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, which Modi inaugurated in October 2018. These trains will connect Kevadia to Varanasi, Dadar, Ahmedabad, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Rewa, Chennai and Pratapnagar. The Ahmedabad-Kevadia Jan Shatabdi Express, one of the eight trains, has been equipped with the 'Vista-dome tourist coach' which offers large viewing areas with rooftop glasses and seats for passengers

'SAKSHAM' Campaign launched by Petroleum Ministry

- The Union Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas launched the 'SAKSHAM' campaign on January 16, 2021 with an aim to raise awareness about the fossil fuels and adverse impact of rising carbon footprints among the customers. The motive is to convince consumers to switch to the use of cleaner fuels.

India's first COVID-19 Vaccine recipient is Manish Kumar

- Manish Kumar, a sanitation worker in Delhi, became the first person to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in India after PM Modi flagged off the nationwide vaccination drive on 16 January 2021.
- Manish Kumar was given the injection at AIIMS in Delhi while Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan was also present.
- PM Modi launched the nationwide vaccine drive via videoconferencing and congratulated the people of India on getting two Made in India vaccines.

Kerala Governor launches 'One School One IAS' scheme

- Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan has inaugurated the 'One School One IAS' scheme which has been rolled out under the Vedhik Erudite Foundations Scholarship Programme.
- The programme will be providing free training to the students who are economically backward but are academically brilliant aspirants of civil service and other competitive exams.
- The scheme is supported by sponsors, which expects an enrollment of 10,000 boys and girls across the state.

Bhawana Kanth to be first woman pilot to take part in Republic Day 2021

- Bhawana Kanth is likely to become the first woman fighter pilot to participate in the Republic Day Parade this year. She will showcase mock-ups of Light Combat Aircraft (LAC), light combat helicopter and Sukhoi-30 fighter plane by being a part of Indian Air Force (IAF) tableau at the parade. Bhawana is also among the first women fighter pilots to join the IAF.

Centre Declares Netaji's birthday to be marked as 'Parakram Diwas' every year

- The Government of India has decided to celebrate the birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, that falls on January 23 as 'Parakram Diwas' from now on every year.
- This day will be dedicated to honour and remember Netaji's indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation.
- 23rd January 2021 will mark the 125th birth anniversary year of Netaji.

Kochi airport commissions one of the biggest floating solar powerplants in Kerala

- The Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL), the company which operates the world's first airport fully powered by solar energy commissioned one of the biggest floating solar power plants in Kerala.
- With this floating solar plant, which has a capacity of 452 KWh, the total installed capacity of the airport has become 40 MWp helping the airport to produce around 1.60 lakh units of power a day as against its daily consumption stands around 1.30 lakh units.

Amit Shah to launch Ayushman healthcare scheme for CAPF

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah is expected to launch the Ayushman healthcare scheme for central paramilitary force personnel in Assam later this week.
- Shah will hand over the first Ayushman health cards to the chiefs, a sub-officer and a jawan of each of the central armed police forces (CAPFs) like the CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP and SSB apart from the NSG and the Assam Rifles that function under the command of his ministry on January 23.
- The CAPFs, with an estimated manpower of about 10 lakh personnel, are deployed for rendering a variety of internal security duties across the country, border guarding and VIP protection.

Gujarat Government renames dragon fruit as 'Kamalam'

- The Gujarat state government has decided to rename dragon fruit as "Kamalam". The renaming has been done as the outer shape of the fruit resembles a lotus.
- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani

informed on January 19, 2021 that state government has decided to rename Dragon Fruit. Kamalam means Lotus in Sanskrit.

- He added saying that the name of dragon fruit is associated with China and hence, the state has changed it. Dragon Fruit is a tropical fruit with a unique look and taste.

India, Japan sign agreement on movement of 'skilled workers'

- India and Japan have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on a basic partnership framework for operation of the 'specified skilled worker' (SSW) system under which the Japanese government accepts foreign nationals who have a certain level of expertise and skill.
- SSW is a new status of residence created in Japan in April, 2019, to accept foreign nationals who have a certain level of expertise and skill. Indian nationals with certain professional and language skills will be eligible to work under the SSW system.

Kiren Rijiju gets additional charge of Ayush Ministry

- Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has been temporarily assigned the charge of the Ministry of AYUSH, according to a Rashtrapati Bhavan communique issued.
- The move was necessitated as Shripad Yesso Naik, the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH) was undergoing treatment at a hospital in Goa.

15th India Digital Summit 2021 begins

- The India Digital Summit, the flagship event of the Internet and Mobile

Association of India (IAMAI) is one of the biggest conferences for the digital industry.

- The summit, in its 15th year, will bring thought leadership on various digital initiatives that will cover Policies, Business, Investment, Advertising, Digital Commerce, Start-ups Ecosystem, Emerging Tech, and other Digital Trends.
- The theme for this year's summit, which is being held virtually is 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat – Start of New Decade' in line with the government's 'Make for the World' Initiatives.

NITI Aayog Releases Second Edition of India Innovation Index

- NITI Aayog released the second edition of the India Innovation Index on 20 January 2021, along with the Institute for Competitiveness.
- The report examines the innovation capabilities and performance of the states and union territories.
- The innovation index ranking is based on five enabler parameters ('Human Capital', 'Investment', 'Knowledge Workers', 'Business Environment', 'Safety and Legal Environment'), and two performance parameters ('Knowledge Output' and 'Knowledge Diffusion').
- In the 'Major States' category, Karnataka occupied the top position, followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu respectively.
- In UT and city states category, Delhi topped followed by Chandigarh.
- Under the 'North-Eastern/Hill States' category, Himachal Pradesh emerged as the top state.

'Hunar Haat' to be held in Lucknow from January 22

- Hunar Haat, the minority affairs ministry's initiative to generate employment for master artisans, will be held in Uttar Pradesh's capital Lucknow from January 22 to February 4 with the theme of 'vocal for local'.
- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will formally inaugurate the 'Hunar Haat' on January 23.

Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani announced 'Mukhyamantri Bagayat Vikas Mission'

- State Government of Gujarat is all set for the formation of 'Mukhyamantri Bagayat Vikas Mission' or 'Horticulture Development Mission' to accelerate agriculture, horticulture and promote farming of herbal plants in the state. It aims to double the income of farmers engaged in medicinal and horticulture farming.
- It was announced by Gujarat's Chief Minister (CM) Vijay Rupani during a press conference in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- The mission will also create employment opportunities along with increase in the export of such products.

CM Thakur launches HP's first online youth radio station

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has launched Himachal Pradesh's first online youth radio station "Radio Hills-Youngistan Ka Dil".
- The Chief Minister appreciated the efforts of young entrepreneurs. The developer of the online radio Karan, and Radio Jockeys Palak, Rahul and Nidhi were also present on the occasion.

Cabinet approves ₹5,282-cr investment for 850 MW Ratle project on Chenab river

- The Union Cabinet has approved 850 megawatt (MW) Ratle hydropower project worth a Rs. 5281.94 crore on Chenab river in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The project is being implemented under the Centre's plan to expedite strategically important hydropower projects in the union territory post its reorganization.
- It will be developed by a new joint venture company between state run National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Ltd and Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Ltd (JKSPDC), where NHPC will have a 51% stake in the JV firm, while the balance will be held by JKSPDC.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh was briefed about the proposed Film City in Sikkim by a team of senior State officials

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space.

PM to launch programme to allot 'patta' to over 1 lakh indigenous people in Assam

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a special programme of the Assam government to distribute land 'patta' or land allotment certificates to over one lakh landless indigenous people.
- This is for the first time since independence

that such a large number of people will be given 'patta' in Assam in one go.

Serum Institute of India fire, Covishield vaccine production unaffected

- Five people were killed after a major fire engulfed the three upper floors of a newly-constructed six-storey building inside one of the campuses of Serum Institute of India (SII), which is a key player in the global supplies of vaccines against the novel coronavirus disease.
- SII CEO Adar Poonawalla told The Indian Express that the fire had caused "lots of damage".
- Poonawalla, who is currently abroad, had earlier said the fire had not impacted the production of Covishield, the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine that Serum is manufacturing under licence.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

- The government has approved the construction of over 1.68 lakh houses in urban areas under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, taking the total number of houses sanctioned so far to 1.1 crore.
- The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said that the decision was taken at a meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC) where officials from 14 states and union territories participated.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's birthday to be celebrated as 'Parakram Diwas'; PM Modi to visit Bengal on Jan 23

- PM Narendra Modi may visit Bengal on January 23 to take part in Netaji's birthday celebrations at Victoria Memorial

- Mamata Banerjee has asked the Modi govt to announce Netaji's birthday as national holiday.

India's longest Road Arch Bridge inaugurated in Meghalaya

- Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K.Sangma inaugurated India's longest road arch bridge "Wahrew Bridge" at Sohbar in East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya on 22 January 2021.
- The arch bridge has been constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 49.395 crore under the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) of the Ministry of Development of North East Region (DoNER).
- The iconic structure is expected to boost the tourism sector in the State.

Harsh Vardhan inaugurates 7th Edition of MASCRADE 2021 organized by FICCI

- The 7th edition of 'MASCRADE 2021 - Movement against Smuggled & Counterfeit Trade' was inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, the Union Minister of Health and Family welfare, on 21 January 2021.
- The two-day programme was organized by FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy), to combat illicit trade, especially in a post COVID era.

World Economic Forum releases the Global Risks for 2021

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) recently released the 16th edition of the Global Risks Report, 2021. The report was released based on the Global Risks Perception Survey undertaken by more

than 650 members of World Economic Forum.

- The report was released before the upcoming Davos Agenda Summit of World Economic Forum. This year, in 2021, the World Economic Forum is to launch the Great Reset Initiative alongside Davos Agenda Summit. The main aim of the report is to prepare the Government and other international communities during the times of crisis.
- The report describes that the top 3 risks by likelihood are extreme weather, climate action failures and human environmental damage. This is very likely to happen in the next 10 years. And the top 3 risks by impact are infectious diseases, climate action failures and weapon of mass destruction, these are the amount of impact they are expected to create.

Tripura observed 42nd Kokborok day with colourful events

- Tripura observed the 42nd anniversary of the recognition of Kokborok dialect as an official language of the state with a series of programs and colourful events.
- Tripura chief minister Biplab Kumar Deb delivered his speech during the event. He announced that the state Cabinet has decided to rename Barmura hill range as 'Hathai Kotor'.

CM to inaugurate first child-friendly police station of U'khand

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister, Trivendra Singh Rawat will inaugurate the first child-friendly police station of Uttarakhand, which is meant to provide a friendly environment to children associated with crimes.
- The child-friendly police unit has been

set up in the Dalanwala police station with a budget of about Rs 5 lakhs on the recommendation of the Child Protection Committee of Uttarakhand.

Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurates new 4-lane Thaltej-Shilaj-Rancharda railway overbridge in Ahmedabad

- The Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah inaugurated the new 4-lane Thaltej-Shilaj-Rancharda railway overbridge in Ahmedabad city of Gujarat through video conferencing.
- The new overbridge has been built at a cost of Rs 55 crore.

Jharkhand Mine Mineral

- Koderma is one of the districts of Jharkhand which is blessed with abundant natural resources and rich mineral deposits throughout the district.
- Giridih and Koderma districts of Jharkhand are rich in mica mineral.

'Hunar Haat' has given employment opportunities to over 5 lakh artisans in 5 years

- Employment opportunities have been generated for over five lakh artisans, craftsmen and people associated with them through the "Hunar Haat" initiative of the government in the last five years, Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi.
- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will inaugurate the 24th Hunar Haat of indigenous products of artisans and craftsmen in the state capital. Artisans and craftsmen from 31 states and Union territories will participate in the event.

- About 500 artisans, craftsmen and culinary experts from 31 states and Union territories, including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, will participate in the event.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme

- The Modi government acted swiftly to announce a Rs 20 lakh crore relief package, the last tranche of which saw an allocation of Rs 40,000 crore more to MGNREGA.
- The government relied on MGNREGA, the flagship rural job guarantee scheme of the UPA government, to provide employment to hordes of labourers migrating back to their villages as lockdowns halted economic activity in urban areas.

▪ Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (or, NREGA No 42, later renamed as the "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" or MGNREGA), is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the 'right to work'. This act was passed in September 2005 under the UPA government of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

Pragati and Saksham

- The All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) has extended the last date for its scholarship initiatives Pragati, scheme for girls, and Saksham, scheme for specially-abled students. The last date to apply for the AICTE scholarship schemes is now 31 January 2021.

PM Modi calls Netaji 'true son of Mother India

- BJP and Centre have decided to observe January 23 as 'Parakram Diwas' to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bose, who was born on this day in 1897.
- Bengal CM and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee has tweeted: Homage to Deshnayak Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his 125th birthday. He was a true leader & strongly believed in unity of all people. We are celebrating this day as Desh Nayak Dibas. Govt of West Bengal has also set up a committee to conduct year-long celebrations till January 23, 2022.

National science conference 2021

- The Scientific dissertation submitted by two students, Vidathakumal Government School students Pa.Devaki and K.Kumarabarathi, near Narikkudi, Tiruchirappalli district, has been selected for the National Science Conference.
- There is a Government High School in Vidathakulam Vilalge near Narikkudi in Tiruchirappalli district in Virudhunagar district.

CM unveils buildings for government departments

- Chief Minister Edappadi K.Palaniswami has unveiled at Vaniyambadi in Tirupattur district set up at a cost of ₹6.25 crore.
- He also unveiled during the video conference meeting, new buildings for Labour and Employment Department constructed at a cost of ₹3.34 crore.
- The skill development centre has been set up by a joint collaboration between Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation and Central Footwear Training Institute.

The centre, spread over 1.15 acre, would help in the training of over 2,000 persons annually.

Book released

- The Chief Minister also released the first copy of 'Nurturing Music and Fine Arts-Ahistorical Perspective' published by Tamil Nadu Dr. J.Jayalalithaa Music and Fine Arts University.

Set-up office for international affairs

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked the higher education institutes across the country to establish an office for international affairs. These offices, said UGC, will be an "integral part of internationalisation of higher education in India".

UP becomes first Indian State to have 2 Expressway airstrips for landing & take-off of fighter planes

- In Uttar Pradesh, a new 3,300-metre-long airstrip has been constructed near Kurebhar on Purvanchal Expressway.
- With this new airstrip, Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in India having two airstrips on expressways.
- Uttar Pradesh also has an airstrip on Lucknow-Agra Expressway.
- Airstrips on expressways are designed to facilitate emergency landing and take-off of fighter planes.

India Ranks 7th in Global Climate Risk Index 2021 of Germanwatch; Mozambique Tops

- India has been placed among the top 10 most affected countries by climate change, in the Global Climate Risk

Index 2021 published by the Bonn-based environmental think tank Germanwatch.

- India ranked as the seventh worst-hit country in terms of climate change in 2019.
- The Global Climate Risk Index 2021 is the 16th edition of the annual report and has taken into account the data available for 2019 and from 2000 to 2019.
- **Objective:** The index analyses and ranks to what extent countries and regions have been affected by impacts of climate related extreme weather events (storms, floods, heatwaves etc.)
- **Top 3 countries :** Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Bahamas were the top three most affected countries in 2019 respectively.
- Top 3 Countries most affected in past 20 years: Between 2000-2019, Puerto Rico, Myanmar and Haiti were the countries most affected by the impacts of such weather events.
- The Global Climate Risk Index indicates a level of exposure and vulnerability to extreme weather events, which countries should understand as warnings in order to be prepared for more frequent and/or more severe events in the future.

Tsari Chu River

- The village, built between November 2019 and November 2020 and located a couple of kilometres across the LAC, beyond what India sees as the border separating Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet, on the banks of Tsari Chu river in Upper Subansiri district in Arunachal and it is at least 2 km south of the McMahon Line.

Mock Trials for Remote Voting Facility to Begin Soon

- The Election Commission has collaborated with IIT-Madras to work on a new

technology which will allow electors to vote from faraway cities without going to designated polling station of their constituencies.

- Mock trials for remote voting facility for electors would begin soon, Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora has announced.
- In his message to mark the 11th National Voters' Day, he proclaimed a research project on remote voting using cutting-edge technology has already begun.

e-EPIC programme For Voter ID cards

- The Election Commission has made additional arrangements for encouraging online registration of eligible voters during the summary revision of electoral rolls.
- Union Ministry for Law and Justice, Communications and Electronics and Information Technology will launch the e-EPIC programme and distribute e-EPICs and Elector Photo Identity Cards to five new voters. e-EPIC, a digital version of the Elector Photo Identity Card can be accessed through the Voter Helpline App and websites.

Indian Railways' longest freight train 'Vasuki' sets a new record

- Indian Railways' South Eastern Central Railway (SECR) zone has created another record when it operated the longest freight train on the Indian Railways network.
- SECR Raipur division for the first time amalgamated five rakes of freight coaches from Bhilai D Cabin till Korba which falls under the Bilaspur division.
- The total length of the freight train was around 3.5 kilometers after joining the five rakes and it was named 'Vasuki'. The distance between Bhilai to Korba is

224 kilometers and the long-haul freight train named 'Vasuki' covered the whole distance with five rakes of a freight train.

Bharat Parv 2021 being organised on a virtual platform

- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated the Bharat Parv-2021 in the presence of Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Patel.
- This event will provide an opportunity to know and understand the art, culture, food, clothing and traditions of the 28 states and eight Union territories of the country.
- To celebrate the spirit of India, the annual event of 'Bharat Parv' will this year be conducted on a virtual platform from January 26 to January 31.

Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands flags off 14 electric buses

- Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Admiral (Retd) D K Joshi flagged-off a fleet of 14 electric buses in the union territory.
- Last year in March, state-owned power producer NTPC had said it will deploy electric buses in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and will also set up public charging infrastructure in the UT.

Soorarai Pottru Starring Suriya Goes Into Oscar Race 2021

- Tamil film Soorarai Pottru starring Suriya has made its entry into the Oscar race. The film is loosely based on the biography of Captain Gopinath, founder of the low-cost airline, Air Deccan. The film is competing in the general category of Oscars and is in the race for Best Actor, Best Actress, Best

Director, Best Composer, and Best story writer among other categories.

In a first, Kolkata gets boat library

- A children's library on a boat was launched in Kolkata on Republic Day, a first of a kind initiative. Children will be able to choose from a selection of 500 titles in English and Bengali on the Young Readers' Boat Library.
- The idea behind the boat library is that one can read some good collection of books while appreciating the beauty of Kolkata, cruising on the Hooghly river.

Goa govt will give jobs to kin of freedom fighters

- Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant assured to fulfil the demand of government jobs to family members of freedom fighters in the state.
- The coastal state got liberated from the Portuguese rule in December 1961.
- Family members of several people, who fought for Goa's liberation from Portuguese rule, have been sitting on hunger strike since January 22 at the Azad Maidan in Panaji over their demand for government jobs.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad to launch virtual intelligence tool Tejas rsprasad

- Electronics, Information Technology and Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad will launch a virtual intelligence tool Tejas.
- This system will help in improving policy decisions and efficiency of government's services along with ensuring delivery of citizen centric services.

India Secures 86th Rank in Corruption Perception Index 2020; New Zealand and Denmark tops

- India has been ranked 86th among 180 countries in Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2020, released by Transparency International (Headquarter - Berlin, Germany) on 28 January 2021.
- This year, India's rank has slipped six places compared to 2019, when it was ranked at 80th spot.
- The CPI score for India in 2020 is 40.
- CPI Index: The CPI index ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people.

"AYU SAMVAD" campaign program organized by All India Institute of Ayurveda New Delhi

- "AYU SAMVAD" (My Health My Responsibility) is one of the largest public awareness campaign program on AYURVEDA and COVID 19 PANDEMIC, organized by All India Institute of Ayurveda New Delhi, as envisioned & supported by Ministry of AYUSH.
- More than 5 lac lectures will be organized across the nation by Ayurveda Physicians for citizens of India.
- The main objective of the campaign is to create awareness through Lecture series to make common people aware about the theme "Ayurveda for COVID 19 Pandemic".

Rajasthan becomes 5th State to complete Urban Local Bodies reforms

- Rajasthan has become the fifth state in the nation to complete Urban Local Bodies

(ULB) reforms, which were stipulated by Expenditure Department under the Finance Ministry.

- The state has also become eligible for additional reform linked to borrowing. Accordingly, the State has been granted permission by the Department of Expenditure to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs2,731 crore through Open Market Borrowings.

Bare necessities gap between States has narrowed since 2012, survey shows

- Poorer States have reduced the gap with wealthy States in relation to in providing citizens with access to the basics of daily life - housing, water, power, sanitation, cooking gas - according to a new 'Bare Necessities Index' (BNI) within the Economic Survey 2020-21.
- The index, which draws its name from Baloo the Bear's song in the movie adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's Jungle Book, uses existing National Statistical Office survey data to show that between 2012 and 2018, serious gains were made in the area of sanitation although equity in housing access still lagged .
- States such as Kerala, Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat top the index, while eastern Indian States of Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Tripura occupy the lowest rungs. States which showed significant improvement include Uttarkhand, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- Inter-State disparities in the access to 'the bare necessities' have declined in 2018 when compared to 2012 across rural and urban areas.

PM Modi to address 125th Anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata' on Jan 31di

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the 125th Anniversary celebrations of 'Prabuddha Bharata'. The event is being organized by Advaita Ashrama situated at Mayavati Ashram in Uttarakhand.
- Prabuddha Bharata, a monthly journal of the Ramakrishna order started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896. The journal 'Prabuddha Bharata' has been an important medium for spreading the message of India's ancient spiritual wisdom.
- Its publication was started from Chennai erstwhile Madras where it continued to be published for two years after which it was published from Almora.
- Later, in April 1899, the place of publication of the Journal was shifted to Advaita Ashrama and it has been continuously published from there since then.
- Luminaries like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Sister Nivedita, Sri Aurobindo, Former President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan have contributed to the Journal over the years.
- The Advaita Ashrama is working towards making the entire 'Prabuddha Bharata' archive available online on its website.

India's First 'Gender Park' to be inaugurated in Kozhikode, Kerala

- The state government of Kerala will launch first of its kind three-storeyed 'Gender Park' in Kozhikode, to promote gender equality and empowerment in the state.
- The overall cost of establishing the park is around Rs 300 crore. spread over 24 acre land.
- This new Gender Park will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan during the second edition of the International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE-II), which will be held from February 11 to 13, 2021.
- Along with the Gender Park, a Gender Museum, Gender Library, Convention Centre and an Amphitheatre will also be launched at the event.
- These facilities have been established under the Phase I of the gender park.

Igloo Cafe becomes the new attraction for tourists at J-K's Gulmarg

- Igloo Café at Kashmir's Gulmarg has become the centre of attraction for the people visit the Valley. The café built of snow is country's first and Asia's biggest Igloo Cafe which is located at the ski resort here.

7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



Vijay Shankar to be a judge in Supreme Court

- Indian-origin advocate Vijay Shankar will become a judge in the Supreme Court of the US capital, Washington DC, after the Senate approval of President Donald Trump's decision.
- Trump has nominated advocate Vijay Shankar as an associate judge in the District Court of Appeals in Columbia. His term will be for 15 years after Senate approval on the appointment of Advocate Vijay Shankar. Vijay Shankar will replace the recently retired John R. Fisher. The District Court of Appeals of Columbia is the highest court in Washington DC.

60,000! India records the highest number of babies born on New Year's Day

- More than 371,500 babies were born worldwide on New Year's Day and India is estimated to have recorded the highest number of births at around 60,000, according to the UN's children's agency.
- Fiji in the Pacific was projected to have welcomed 2021's first baby while the United States would welcome its last.
- Globally, over half of these births are estimated to have taken place in 10 countries: India (59,995), China (35,615),

Nigeria (21,439), Pakistan (14,161), Indonesia (12,336), Ethiopia (12,006), the United States (10,312), Egypt (9,455), Bangladesh (9,236) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (8,640).

China holds third South Asia multilateral meet in new push

- China has held its third multilateral dialogue with countries from South Asia to take forward closer cooperation on fighting COVID-19 and coordinating their economic agendas, reflecting a new approach in Beijing's outreach to the region.
- The third dialogue, held virtually on January 6, brought together every country in the region barring India, Bhutan and the Maldives, and was aimed at "anti-epidemic cooperation and poverty reduction cooperation."

Air India's All-Women Cockpit Crew Completes Historic 17-Hour Flight To Bengaluru

- An all-women cockpit crew operating Air India's inaugural San Francisco-Bengaluru flight arrived in Karnataka's capital after flying over the North Pole and covering a distance of about 16,000 kilometres.

- The flight number AI176 left San Francisco on Saturday at 8.30 PM (local time) and arrived in Bengaluru at 3.45 AM according to Air India sources.

Bangladesh Declared as 'Country in Focus' for 51st IFFI

- Bangladesh has been chosen as the 'Country in Focus' for the 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI).
- The festival will be held at Goa from January 16 to January 24, 2021.
- The Country in Focus is a special segment that recognizes the cinematic excellence and contributions of the country. This section at the 51st IFFI will showcase four films from Bangladesh.

Saudi Arabia's public investment fund to invest in a city without cars

- NEOM, part of Saudi Arabia's public investment fund, will start construction of THE LINE, a 170km belt of hyper-connected future communities, without cars and roads and built around nature, in Q1 of 2021.
- One of the largest sovereign wealth funds in the world, NEOM, expects the project will create 380,000 jobs and contribute SAR 180bn (\$48bn) to GDP by 2030.
- Throughout history, cities were built to protect their citizens. After the Industrial Revolution, cities prioritized machines, cars and factories over people. In cities that are viewed as the world's most advanced, people spend years of their lives commuting. By 2050, commute durations will double. By 2050, one billion people will have to relocate due

to rising CO2 emissions and sea levels," said Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince and NEOM's Chairman.

France hosts 4th One Planet Summit in cooperation with UN and World Bank

- The Government of France organised the fourth 'One Planet Summit' on 11 January 2021, through videoconferencing, which aimed at protecting the world's biodiversity.
- The theme of the Summit was "Let's act together for nature!"
- The Summit was organised in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank.
- It was inaugurated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres, French President Emmanuel Macron, and President of the World Bank Group David Malpass.

Archaeologists Find Oldest Painting in Indonesian Cave Painted At least 4,500 Years Ago

- Archaeologists have discovered the world's oldest known cave art, a life-sized picture of a wild pig that was painted at least 45,500 years ago in Indonesia.
- The cave painting uncovered in South Sulawesi consists of a figurative depiction of a warty pig, a wild boar that is endemic to this Indonesian island.
- The Sulawesi warty pig painting, dated to at least 45,500 years ago, is part of a rock art panel located above a high ledge along the rear wall of Leang Tedongnge.

Donald Trump becomes the first U.S. President to be impeached twice

- President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House for a historic second time on January 13, charged with “incitement of insurrection” over the deadly mob siege of the Capitol in a swift and stunning collapse of his final days in office.
- He was first impeached in 2019 over his Ukraine dealings. The House voted 232-197 to impeach Mr Trump.

India has largest diaspora in the world: UN

- The Indian diaspora, one of the most “vibrant and dynamic”, is the largest in the world, with 18 million people from the country living outside their homeland in 2020, UN said in its report, ‘International Migration 2020 Highlights’. Other countries with a large diaspora included Mexico and Russia (11 million each), China (10 million) and Syria (8 million).
- The report said India’s large diaspora is distributed across a number of major countries of destination, with the UAE (3.5 million), the US (2.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (2.5 million) hosting the largest numbers of migrants from India.
- Between 2000 and 2020, the size of the migrant population abroad grew for nearly all countries and areas of the world. India experienced the largest gain during that period at nearly 10 million, followed in order of magnitude by Syria, Venezuela, China and the Philippines.

Indian art form ‘Kolam’ part of Biden-Harris inauguration ceremony

- Kolam, an Indian art form was a part of the virtual kick-off ceremony of the inauguration of US President-elect Joe

Biden and Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris on January 16, 2021.

- The art form, which is a traditional art form from Tamil Nadu in South India, comprises geometric patterns consisting of dots and lines as a symbol of welcome.
- The art form is generally drawn on the floors outside houses using powdered rice. Thousands of such tiles were made as a tribute to the soon-to-be first female and first Indian-origin Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris.

Joe Biden takes oath as 46th US President while Kamala Harris as 49th Vice President

- Joseph Robinette Biden Jr., famous as Joe Biden, has been sworn in as the 46th president of the United States.
- The 78-year-old, Biden took the oath of the office on 20 January 2021, becoming the oldest president in American history.
- Kamala Harris took oath as 49th Vice President of the country, becoming the first woman to hold the post in the history of United States.
- She is even the first Black American and first person of South Asian descent to hold the nation’s second highest office.

Special train tour to see UNESCO heritage sites

- IRCTC has organized a special train tour from Tamil Nadu to see the UNESCO heritage sites.
- The Bharat Darshan Tourist Train is operated by the Indian Railways Food and Tourism Corporation (IOCTC). So far more than 370 special train services have been operated. Following this, a special train tour has been arranged to leave Tamil

Nadu and visit UNESCO heritage sites.

- The special train will depart from Madurai on February 18 via Coimbatore, Botany, Erode, Salem, Chennai, Perambur., Halai Dam, Bimbatka Cave in Bhopal and Bhojpu Shiva Temple.

India Africa Trade Council 2021 inaugurated in Chennai, India

- The India Africa Trade Council 2021 was inaugurated in Hotel Crowne Plaza, Chennai (Tamil Nadu) for building up business relations between India and Africa.
- It was inaugurated by the Additional Secretary (Africa) Ambassador Nagma Mallick (IFS) Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Govt. of India and the Ambassador of Ethiopia in Indian Dr Tizita Mulugeta Yimam.
- Ramakrishan, Founder of Corporate Clinic in Chennai was appointed as the Director of the India Africa Trade Council during the ceremony in Chennai.

75,000 square feet of grand temple in Dubai

- A temple for Hindus in Dubai will be launched by Diwali next year. The foundation stone of this temple was laid during the epidemic in August last year.
- The Sindhi Guru Durbar Temple is one of the oldest Hindu temples located here, which began in the 1950s.
- This temple is a hallmark of open views and mentality of people in UAE and Dubai. This journey of being transformed from an old one room temple to a 70,000 square foot temple and community center in the 1950s is not possible without the generosity and open views of the rulers of

Dubai and the unprecedented support of CDA, Dubai Could have been done.

Estonia's first female PM sworn in as new government takes power

- Estonia's new prime minister has promised to restore the Baltic nation's reputation, after two turbulent years in which a far-right party was part of the country's government.
- The 43-year-old Kallas becomes the country's first female prime minister since Estonia regained independence in 1991.

New Zealand tops COVID-19 performance ranking

- New Zealand and Vietnam were ranked the best performing countries in their response to the pandemic, according to a COVID-19 "performance index" put together by the Lowy Institute, an Australian think tank, which sought to assess the impact of geography, political systems and economic development in assessing outcomes.
- The index, which was based on six different indicators, including confirmed people and the scale of testing, sought "to gauge the relative performance of countries", assessing 98 countries in the 36 weeks that followed their hundredth case.

U.S., Brazil worst

- India ranked 86 out of 98 countries, while the U.S. stood at 94 and Brazil at the bottom of the index. Taiwan, Thailand and Cyprus were in the top five. Sri Lanka was the best faring nation in South Asia, ranking 10, while the Maldives was at 25, Pakistan at 69, Nepal at 70, and Bangladesh at 84.
- Population size was one factor. Smaller countries with fewer than 10 million

people “consistently outperformed their larger counter parts throughout 2020”.

- The level of economic development and regime-type were less significant than expected, which it attributed to “the relatively ‘low-tech’ nature of the health measures used to mitigate the spread of the virus” which “may have created a more level playing field between developed to developing countries”.
- In general, countries with smaller populations, cohesive societies, and capable institutions have a comparative advantage in dealing with a global crisis such as a pandemic the think tank concluded.

India ranks 10th in EIU’s Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index

- India has been ranked 10th among 11 Asia Pacific countries in a newly-launched “Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index ‘by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
- The index aims to measure the progress of each of the 11 countries towards adopting personalised healthcare, enabling the right care to be made available to the right person at the right time.
- The 11 nations ranked in the index are Australia, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and New Zealand.
- Overall, Singapore has topped the index. It is followed by Taiwan (2nd), Japan (3rd) and Australia (4th).
- Indonesia was the last ranked country at 11th in the index.

Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)

- It is the research and analysis division of Economist Group. It provides the forecasting and advisory services by doing research and analysis. It provides five-year country economic forecasts, monthly country reports, country risk service reports and industry reports. It has several offices across the world including two offices in China and one in Hong Kong.

PHI

- The ‘Personalised Health Index’ ranks each of the country based on 27 different indicators of personalized health, with each grouped into four categories called ‘Vital Signs’. These include Policy Context, Health Information, Personalised Technologies and Health Services

Country’s largest buddha statue

- Country’s largest reclining Buddha statue which will be 100-feet long is being made in Kolkata. It is expected to be installed on the occasion of Buddha Purnima this year in Bodh Gaya.
- The work on the statue is on at the Nainan Bandhab Samiti ground in Baranagar’s Ghospara area. The statue will be installed in the temple of Buddha International Welfare Mission in the Bihar holy town.

8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS



Cauvery-Gundar river

- Cauvery-Gundar river linking project was fully implemented, Ramanathapuram would be the biggest beneficiary, with about one lakh acres of land getting irrigated. The three-phase project involved an outlay of ₹14,000 crore, and ₹700 had been allotted this year.

'P.H. Pandian's legal battle in SC for irrigation projects laudable

- Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami, who inaugurated a memorial for former Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker P.H. Pandian at his native village Govindaperi near Cheranmahadevi on his first death anniversary on Monday, recalled the development works executed in Cheranmahadevi constituency at his initiative.
- Born on February 27, 1945, Pandian became the member of the AIADMK immediately after it was founded by late M.G. Ramachandran. He was elected to Tamil Nadu Assembly from erstwhile Cheranmahadevi constituency in 1977, 1980 and 1984, and served as the Speaker from 1985 to 1989.
- He was elected to the Lok Sabha from Tirunelveli Parliamentary constituency in 1999.

Amma Call Centre

- Amma Call Centre 24/7 is a single window IT enabled facility of government of Tamilnadu that acts as an intermediary between citizens and government to enable expeditious disposal of grievances of Citizens through toll free number 1100.

Third Eye Project

- ATGP AK Viswanathan the 'Third Eye' surveillance camera project was only possible with the full cooperation of the public .
- SurfShark surveyed 138 countries around the world for surveillance cameras.
- SurfShark can provide cyber security. The company was launched in 2018 to provide solutions for cyber privacy and security. The company is headquartered on the island of Tardola in the British Virgin Islands off the Caribbean. The company has released a map of which cities in the world have the most CCTV surveillance.
- Chennai tops the list with 657 surveillance cameras per square kilometer. Currently, there are 2 lakh 80 thousand surveillance cameras in Chennai . Hyderabad is ranked 2nd with 480 cameras and Delhi is ranked 3rd with 289 cameras.

- London, the only non-Asian city, is ranked 4th with 399 cameras. The next 6 places are occupied by cities in China. The Chinese capital Beijing ranks 10th on the list, but Beijing ranks first in the world with a total number of 11 lakh surveillance cameras.

Tamil Nadu Government to provide 2GB Data free to College students for 4 months for online classes

- Tamil Nadu Government would be providing 2 GB free data per day to college students from January 2021 to April 2021. In order to enable the students as colleges remain closed and largely depended on online teaching, the government has announced the plan to provide free data package for students. As many as 9.69 lakh students would benefit from the scheme.
- Students enrolled in government and government aided arts and science colleges, polytechnic colleges, engineering colleges as well as scholarship funded private colleges are eligible for the scheme. Under the same, a 2 GB per day limit would be applicable for the first four months of the year.
- Colleges in Tamil Nadu had reopened from December 2, 2020 for final year post-graduate students. Medical Colleges for both undergraduate and postgraduate students also reopened from December 7. As per the notice, the college for final year undergraduate degree courses would begin from February 1, 2021.

Community library opens in Trichy, first under govt scheme

- District collector S Sivarasu inaugurated the state's first community library launched under the state government scheme announced last year, at Rohini Garden enclaves 'C' block. As the name suggests, it is managed by the community and will be attached to the central library in the district.

NCM V Chairperson appreciates Tamil Nadu for being pioneer in working for uplift of minorities

- In Tamil Nadu, The Vice Chairperson of National Commission for Minorities, Atif Rasheed has appreciated the state for being a pioneer in working for the uplift of minorities in educational, social and economic sectors.
- Speaking to media on his two day visit to Chennai, he said that the State Government had utilised 100 percent financial target for unique scholarship and had formed a dedicated IT cell to address issues being faced by the minority students.

CRS to inspect MRTS extension project

- The Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Southern Circle, Bengaluru, is expected to inspect the MRTS extension project by the end of February.
- The extension project, from Velachery to St. Thomas Mount, has been delayed for several years due to an issue pertaining to the acquisition of land, for 500 m, between St. Thomas Mount and Adambakkam railway stations.

- The Chennai division, having almost completed all railway infrastructure works at the Puzhuthivakkam and Adambakkam railway stations, will also be approaching CRS, Southern Circle, Bengaluru, for conducting a track inspection, by the end of February, for issuance of a completion certificate.

6.26 crore voters in Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu Chief Electoral Officer Satyabrata Sahoo released the total electorate in Tamil Nadu. A total of 6,26,74,446 voters are in the state including 3,18,28,727 women, 3,08,38,473 men and 7,246 third gender persons.
- As per the final electoral rolls, the Shozhinganllur assembly constituency located in the Chengalpeta district continues to hold the highest number of electors.

Centre invested Rs 27,000 cr for schemes relating to blue economy

- Union Minister for Fisheries Dr. Giriraj Singh has said that the Centre has invested 27 thousand crore rupees for schemes relating to blue economy. Laying the foundation stone for the Aquatic Quarantine facility at Aquatic Animal Quarantine Centre at Padappai.

Salem Town Police Station ranked best in State

- The Salem Town Police Station has been ranked the best in Tamil Nadu for the year 2019. Following audits in various levels, the station scored 5,558 marks in the assessment.
- Stations across the State were being assessed on about 20-25 areas and the Salem Town Police Station with Inspector B. Kumar scored top marks in the State.

TN to showcase replica of Pallava monuments at Republic Day parade

- Historic monuments from the Pallava dynasty, which performed host to the casual summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in October 2019, will likely be in limelight but once more within the nationwide capital this month.
- Replicas of the traditional monuments will likely be a part of Tamil Nadu's tableau on the Republic Day parade in Delhi.
- 4 Bharathanatyam dancers will carry out conventional music with thavil and nathasvaram for the well-known track by poet Bharathiyar 'Parukulle Nalla Nadu.' "There will be four musicians - two on nathasvaram and two on thavil on both sides of the tableau, marching on the Rajpath on Republic Day.

MGR Community Development Research Center, University of Madras

- Chief Minister K Palanisamy announced at the university function that the MGR Centenary Social Development Research Center will be set up at the University of Chennai at a cost of Rs 5 crore.
- Those who have studied here have been working in various important fields in India and abroad. According to the National Rankings, the University of Chennai is ranked 18th in the top 100 universities.

App for the emergency department of the fire department

- Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami launched a mobile app called Thee (Fire), developed by the State Fire and

Rescue Services Department, to help the public approach the department during fire accidents, floods, mishaps due to borewells, rescuing wild animals, leakage of chemical and poisonous gas and other emergency needs. This is a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country.

National Health Mission selects Tamil Nadu's mentoring concept as best practice

- Tamil Nadu's mentoring concept in which obstetricians and gynaecologists (OGs) were roped in for management of antenatal mothers was selected by the National Health Mission (NHM) as one of the best practices. Through this initiative, over 2.8 lakh high risk pregnant women were identified during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The mentoring concept - Management of High Risk Antenatal (AN) Mothers during COVID-19 pandemic - introduced by NHM, Tamil Nadu was presented at the 7th National Summit on Good Replicable Practices and Innovations in Public Health Care Systems in India.
- The concept was Launched during in November - December 2019.

Washington Sundar is election icon of Chennai Corporation

- The Greater Chennai Corporation has nominated cricketer Washington Sundar as the Chennai District Election Icon for the upcoming Assembly election.
- Chennai Corporation Deputy Commissioner (Revenue and Finance) Meghanatha Reddy announced the cricketer would play a role in reaching out to first-time voters in the 16 Assembly constituencies of the city.

- Mr.Sundar will participate in events to be conducted in colleges as part of the OPEN (online participation of electoral network) campaign by the Corporation.

Setting up of NCLAT Chennai bench to help cos, litigants in southern states

- Union minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced setting up of a bench of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) will provide a major relief to companies and litigants in the southern states, and also help in reducing pendency of cases. The Chennai bench of the NCLAT was inaugurated by Sitharaman, who is in charge of finance as well as corporate affairs ministries.
- The bench will have jurisdiction to hear appeals against orders passed by the benches of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) having jurisdiction of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Lakshwadeep and Puducherry.

Selfie point on Marina beach inaugurated

- Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami launched the Namma Chennai Selfie Point on Marina beach.
- The artwork has been modelled on the structures at Delhi, Hyderabad and Bengaluru.
- The structure, estimated to have a budget of ₹24 lakh, has been designed to withstand any cyclone and weighs 2.5 tonnes.
- The project has been funded by the Smart City mission. Namma Chennai is part of the development of an art district in the city.

3 private colleges under Health Department

- The Higher Education Department has issued an order transferring the Rajah Muthiah Medical College and Hospital, the Rani Meyyammai College of Nursing and the Rajah Muthiah Dental College and Hospital to the Health Department.

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre

- The student community across the country must become a part of the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) family, announced its Chairman K. Sivan during a virtual address from Bengaluru.
- The formation of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre in June last by Prime Minister Narendra Modi inspired 12 students of the institute to collaborate with ISRO and develop 'SriShaktiSat'.
- The satellites developed by these students will be a part of the UNITYSat, which will be launched into orbit on February 28 by ISRO's PSLV C-51.

Tamil Studies Research Festival at World Tamil Research Institute on Feb 1st, 2021

- Jayalalithaa's birthday will be celebrated at the World Tamil Research Institute in Chennai from February 1 to March 8 as 'Tamil Thai 73 - Tamil Studies Festival'.

₹52,257-cr. Investment proposals cleared

- The Tamil Nadu Cabinet accorded approval for 34 major proposals for investments to the tune of ₹52,257 crore in the State.
- The Cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami at the Secretariat, also cleared the Tamil Nadu Industrial Policy 2021, which will be unveiled soon.
- Sun Edison will invest ₹4,629 crore and employ over 5,000 people to produce solar photo-voltaic modules. Ola Electric will invest ₹2,354 crore and create employment for 2,182 persons in the SIPCOT park at Bargur, Kirshnagiri, for making electric vehicles and batteries. The release said German company Eickhoff Wind Ltd. will invest ₹621 Crore and employ 319 persons to make gearboxes for wind energy production near Chennai.