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## An important message from Team Smartkeeda

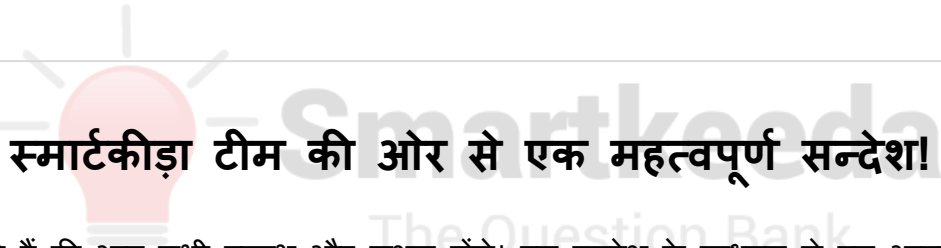
Hi Folks! We hope you all are doing well. We would like to state here that this PDF is meant for preparing for the upcoming MockDrill Test of December 2020 Month at Testzone. In this Current Affairs PDF we have added all the important Current Affairs information in form of 'Key-points' which are crucial if you want to score a high rank in Current Affairs Mocks at Testzone. Therefore, we urge you to go through each piece of information carefully and try to remember the facts and figures because the questions to be asked in the Current Affairs MockDrill will be based on the information given in the PDF only.

We hope you will make the best of use of this PDF and perform well in MockDrill Tests at Testzone.

All the best!

Regards

Team Smartkeeda



### स्मार्टकीड़ा टीम की ओर से एक महत्वपूर्ण सन्देश!

मित्रों! हम आशा करते हैं की आप सभी स्वस्थ और कुशल होंगे। इस सन्देश के माध्यम से हम आपसे यह कहना चाहते हैं की ये PDF दिसम्बर माह में Testzone पर होने वाले MockDrill Test में आपकी तैयारी को बेहतर करने के लिए उपलब्ध करायी जा रही है। इस PDF में हमने कुछ अति आवश्यक 'Key-Points' के माध्यम से आपको सम-सामयिकी (Current Affairs) सूचनाओं से अवगत कराया है और अगर आप MockDrill में अपनी योग्यता सिद्ध करना चाहते हैं तो आपके लिए हर सूचना को पढना, समझना और उसे याद रखना भी अति आवश्यक है क्योंकि MockDrill में शामिल किए गए प्रश्न PDF में दी गयी सूचना या जानकारी पर ही आधारित होंगे।

हम आशा करते हैं की आप इस PDF का भरपूर लाभ उठाते हुए आने वाले MockDrill Test में बेहतर अंक प्राप्त करेंगे।

आभार,

टीम स्मार्टकीड़ा



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# National & States Affairs

**801.** On December 29, the IRDAI has proposed Standard Guidelines for Travel Insurance with a view to ensuring uniformity and certainty about coverage, exclusions and terms of coverage for domestic as well as international travel. It is to be offered from April 1, 2021 by every general insurer and health insurer. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- IRDAI – proposed Standard Guidelines for Travel Insurance
- HQs of IRDAI – Hyderabad, Telangana | Chairman – SC Khuntia | ED – Suresh Mathur | Established in – 1999

**802.** On December 28, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has virtually hoisted International Blue Flags in 8 beaches across India. Blue Flag certification is a globally recognised eco-label accorded by “Foundation for Environment Education in Denmark” based on 33 stringent criteria. These beaches are as mentioned below. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Prakash Javadekar – virtually hoisted International Blue Flags in 8 beaches across India
- Kappad – Kerala | Rushikonda – Andhra Pradesh | Golden – Puri, Odisha | Radhanagar – A&N Islands
- Shivrajpur – Dwarka, Gujarat | Ghoghla – Diu | Kasarkod & Padubidri – Karnataka

**803.** President Ram Nath Kovind has recently inaugurated and laid foundation stones for several projects in Diu including the inauguration of the INS Khukri Memorial. Diu city has now become the first city in India, which is fulfilling 100% of its energy requirement during the day with solar energy. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Ram Nath Kovind – inaugurated and laid foundation stones for several projects in Diu
- Ram Nath Kovind – inaugurated INS Khukri Memorial – in Diu
- Diu – became the first city in India fulfilling 100% of its energy requirement with solar energy during the day
- Lt. Governor & Administrator of Diu & Daman – Praful Khoda Patel

**804.** In order to promote river tourism in Assam, Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated River cruise “Brahmaputra’r Mukuta” at the bank of the Brahmaputra near Bogibeel bridge in Dibrugarh. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Assam – inaugurated river cruise “Brahmaputra’r Mukuta” at the bank of the Brahmaputra
- Assam: Capital – Dispur | CM – Sarbananda Sonowal | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi



**805.** Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has commissioned a Monpa handmade paper making unit in Tawang which not only aims at reviving the art but also engaging the local youths with this art professionally and earn. The Monpa Handmade Paper of Arunachal Pradesh is 1000-year old heritage art. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- KVIC commissioned a Monpa handmade paper making unit in – Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh
- HQs of KVIC – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Vinai Kumar Saxena
- Arunachal Pradesh: Capital – Itanagar | CM – Pema Khandu | Governor – B D Mishra

**806.** Uttar Pradesh transport department has started cracking down on vehicles displaying castes, religions on windscreens, number plates of four and two-wheelers. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Uttar Pradesh – started taking action against owners of vehicles displaying caste or religion identities
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

**807.** Dr Harsh Vardhan has inaugurated the web-based ‘Digital Ocean’ application in a virtual meeting from New Delhi. It is developed by Hyderabad-based Indian National Centre for Ocean Information System (INCOIS). It is India’s 1st of its kind Digital platform for Ocean Data Management. It will play a central role in sustainable management of our oceans and expanding our ‘Blue Economy’ initiatives. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Dr Harsh Vardhan – inaugurated the web-based ‘Digital Ocean’ application (developed by – INCOIS)
- HQs of INCOIS – Hyderabad, Telangana | Director – Tummala Srinivasa Kumar | Founded in – 1998

**808.** Gujarat’s Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has announced the state’s new “Solar Power Policy-2021” which will be valid for the next 5 years. There will be no limitations on solar power production capacity for Individuals or Industries. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Gujarat – announced its new “Solar Power Policy-2021” valid for the next 5 years
- Gujarat: Capital – Gandhinagar | CM – Vijay Rupani | Governor – Acharya Devvrat

**809.** Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan has inaugurated the Indian Oil launched “Remote Monitoring and Operation Centre” in Hyderabad. It is a facility set up by BHEL-GE Gas Turbine Services, which is a joint venture of BHEL and General Electric for Tracking of Refinery Gas Turbines. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- Indian Oil launched “Remote Monitoring and Operation Centre” in Hyderabad
- A joint venture of = BHEL + General Electric
- Telangana: Capital – Hyderabad | CM – K. Chandrashekar Rao | Governor – Tamilisai Soundararajan
- HQs of IOCL – New Delhi | Chairperson – Shrikant Madhav Vaidya

**810.** The Uttarakhand forest department has dedicated the newly built Pollinator Park to the public, claiming it to be the country’s first such park, spread over 4 acres in Haldwani in Nainital district. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- India’s 1<sup>st</sup> Pollinator Park inaugurated – in Haldwani, Nainital, Uttarakhand
- Uttarakhand: Capital – Dehradun & Gairsain | CM – Trivendra Singh Rawat | Governor – Baby Rani Maurya

**811.** Minister for Earth Sciences (MoES) Dr Harsh Vardhan has virtually inaugurated the Highest Meteorological Centre (MC) in Leh, Ladakh which is located at 3,500 metres above sea level. After Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh, the Leh centre is the second MC located in the Himalayas. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the Highest Meteorological Centre (MC) – in Leh, Ladakh
- Ladakh: Capital – Leh | Lt. Governor – R K Mathur
- HQs of IMD – New Delhi | Director General – Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra

**812.** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami has inaugurated the newly-formed Mayiladuthurai district. The 38<sup>th</sup> district in the state has been carved out of Nagapattinam district. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Mayiladuthurai (38<sup>th</sup> district) – carved out of Nagapattinam district – in Tamil Nadu
- Tamil Nadu: Capital – Chennai | CM – Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami | Governor – Banwarilal Purohit

**813.** The External Affairs Ministry has launched the “Global Pravasi Rishta” portal and app to connect with the nearly 3.12-crore strong Indian diaspora across the world. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- External Affairs – launched the “Global Pravasi Rishta” portal and app
- Ministry of External Affairs – Subrahmanyam Jaishankar | Constituency – Gujarat



**814.** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved a modified scheme to enhance Ethanol Distillation Capacity in the country for producing 1<sup>st</sup> Generation (1G) ethanol from feed stocks such as cereals (rice, wheat, barley, corn & sorghum), sugarcane and sugar beet. The government has fixed target of 10% blending of fuel-grade ethanol with petrol by 2022 and 20% blending by 2030. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- CCEA approved a modified scheme to enhance 'Ethanol Distillation Capacity' in India for producing 1G Ethanol
- Target: 10% blending of fuel-grade ethanol with petrol by – 2022 & 20% blending by – 2030

**815.** The Cabinet Committee has approved Industrial Corridor Nodes at Andhra Pradesh's Krishnapatnam & Karnataka's Tumakuru under Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) and also approved Multi Modal Logistics Hub and Multi Modal Transport Hub (MMTH) at Greater Noida. The estimated cost of MMLH at Greater Noida is Rs 3,883.80 Cr. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- CCEA approved approved Industrial Corridor Nodes at Krishnapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) & Tumakuru (Karnataka)
- Multi Modal Logistics Hub and Multi Modal Transport Hub (MMTH) – at Greater Noida, UP (Cost: Rs 3,883.80 Cr)

**816.** PM Narendra Modi has praised the newly designed "Vistadome Tourist Coaches" developed by Indian Railways' Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai. It has completed the 180 kmph trial run recently and will have a larger viewing area including roof top glass along with 44 number of seats for passengers that can rotate up to 180 degrees. The vistadome coach has been built on the Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) platform. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- New "Vistadome Tourist Coaches" of Indian Railways – developed by Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai
- The vistadome coach has been built on – Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) platform
- HQs of Indian Railways – New Delhi | Chairman & CEO – Suneet Sharma

**817.** Till several years ago, the Kolar Leaf-Nosed Bat was found in only two caves in Kolar district of Karnataka. But now, the bat became locally extinct in one of the two caves. The Karnataka Forest Department, along with the Bat Conservation India Trust (BCIT), is on a war footing to save the remaining bats, which are endemic to the area, from extinction. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Kolar Leaf-Nosed Bat – found in Karnataka – became locally extinct
- Karnataka: Capital – Bangalore | CM – BS Yediyurappa | Governor – Vajubhai Vala





**818.** Union Home Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated several development projects in Manipur including the e-office and Thoubal Multipurpose Project (Thoubal Dam) in Imphal through virtual mode. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Amit Shah – inaugurated Thoubal Multipurpose Project (Thoubal Dam) – in Imphal, Manipur
- Manipur: Capital – Imphal | CM – N. Biren Singh | Governor – Najma Heptulla

**819.** Madhya Pradesh Government has introduced Campaign regarding promotion of “Ek Zila- Ek Shilp”. And also, the first of kind of exhibition called “Raag-Bhopali” is being organized to promote Zari-Zardozi crafts of Bhopal. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Madhya Pradesh – introduced “Ek Zila- Ek Shilp” Campaign
- “Zari-Zardozi” crafts – belongs to Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- Madhya Pradesh: Capital – Bhopal | CM – Shivraj Singh Chouhan | Governor – Anandiben Patel

## International Affairs

**820.** Japanese government has recently joined the ‘Five Eyes’ intelligence-sharing alliance. Five Eyes is a network of five nations - Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the US who collaborated to better respond to increasing threats by North Korea and China. Japan is on its way to become the ‘sixth eye’. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Japan – joined the ‘Five Eyes’ intelligence-sharing alliance
- Members in Five Eyes intelligence alliance: US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand
- Japan – Tokyo – Yen | PM – Yoshihide Suga

**821.** On December 30, the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the opening of 3 Indian Missions in Estonia, Paraguay and Dominican Republic in 2021. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Cabinet approved the opening of 3 Indian Missions in – Estonia, Paraguay and Dominican Republic
- Estonia – Tallinn – Euro | President – Kersti Kaljulaid
- Paraguay – Asuncion – Guarani | President – Mario Abdo Benitez
- Dominican Republic – Santo Domingo – Peso | President – Luis Rodolfo Abinader



**822.** Britain (UK) has decided to restrict promotion of unhealthy food from April 2022. “Buy one get one free” promotions for food high in fat, sugar or salt and free refills of sugary soft drinks in restaurants will be banned. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Britain (UK) – to restrict promotion of Unhealthy Food – from April 2022
- UK – London – Pound Sterling | PM of UK – Boris Johnson

**823.** China's central bank has asked billionaire Jack Ma's financial behemoth, the Ant Group to rectify its services as the company was about to create the largest IPO of all time. The Ant Group needs to overhaul its business model. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ant Group – is asked to rectify its business model / services – by People's Bank of China
- HQs of Ant Group – Hangzhou, China | CEO – Simon Xiaoming Hu

## Banking & Economic Affairs

**824.** On December 28, ICICI Bank has joined hands with Google Pay to issue FASTag through Unified Payments Interface (UPI) on its payment's app. This collaboration enables Google Pay users to order, track and even recharge ICICI Bank FASTag digitally on the payments platform itself. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- ICICI Bank + Google Pay = partnership to issue FASTag through UPI
- HQs of ICICI Bank – Mumbai | MD&CEO – Sandeep Bakhshi | ED – Sandeep Batra | Tagline – “Hum Hain Na!”
- HQs of Google – California, United States | CEO – Sundar Pichai

**825.** The CBIC has introduced “Rule 86B” in GST Rules, to be applicable from January 1, 2021, which restricts use of input tax credit for discharging GST liability to 99%. Businesses with monthly turnover of over Rs 50 lakh will have to mandatorily pay at least 1% of their GST liability in cash. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- CBIC introduced “Rule 86B” in GST Rules – applicable from January 1, 2021
- Businesses with monthly turnover of over Rs 50 lakh have to pay at least 1% of their GST liability in cash
- HQs of CBIC – New Delhi | Chairperson – M. Ajit Kumar



**826.** DBS Bank India has introduced “Travel Now”, a one-stop travel marketplace within the digibank app. The insurance offering is available to customers for flight and bus bookings in partnership with Bharti AXA General Insurance Company Ltd. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- DBS Bank India + Bharti AXA = introduced “Travel Now” - a one-stop travel marketplace
- HQs of DBS Bank India – Mumbai, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Surojit Shome
- HQs of Bharti AXA Life Ins. – Mumbai, MH | CEO – Parag Raja

**827.** Yes Bank has collaborated with Salesforce to build a next generation technology platform to power the retail lending business. This collaboration aims to engage customers with a unified experience and drive aggressive retail led growth for the Bank. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Yes Bank + Salesforce = partnership to build a Next Generation Technology platform
- HQs of Yes Bank – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – Prashant Kumar | Tagline – “Experience our Expertise”
- HQs of Salesforce – California, USA | CEO – Marc Benioff

**828.** The paper, authored by RBI Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra and another official Harendra Kumar Behera, has found a steady decline in trend inflation to 4.1 - 4.3% since 2014. Under the current dispensation, the RBI has been mandated by the government to maintain Retail Inflation at 4% with a margin of 2% on either side. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- RBI is mandated by the government to maintain Retail Inflation – at 4% (with a margin of 2% on either side)
- RBI: HQs – Mumbai | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25<sup>th</sup>) | Established in – 1<sup>st</sup> April 1935

**829.** The government has approved the 15<sup>th</sup> tranche of Electoral Bonds which will be open for sale between January 1 to 10. The State Bank of India has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 29 Authorised Branches. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- The government – approved the 15<sup>th</sup> tranche of Electoral Bonds open for sale between January 1 to 10
- SBI – is authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds
- HQs of SBI Bank – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Dinesh Kumar Khara
- MD – Challa Sreenivasulu Setty | Arjit Basu | Ashwani Bhatia



# Defence Affairs

**830.** The Indian Army has received 3 sets of 10-metre short span bridges developed and manufactured by the DRDO in collaboration with Larsen & Toubro Ltd (L&T). [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Indian Army – received 3 sets of 10-metre short span bridges
- Bridges are developed & manufactured by = DRDO + L&T
- HQs of Indian Army – New Delhi | Chief – Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane | Vice Chief – S K Saini
- HQs of DRDO – New Delhi | Chairman – G. Satheesh Reddy
- HQs L&T – Mumbai | CMD – SN Subrahmanyam

**831.** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) along with the Indian Navy has 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. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- DRDO + Indian Navy conducted = conducted the successful maiden test trial of “SAHAYAK-NG” – at Goa
- It is India’s first indigenously designed and developed Air Dropped Container
- HQs of DRDO – New Delhi | Chairman – G. Satheesh Reddy
- Chief of Indian Navy – Admiral Karambir Singh | Vice Chief – G. Ashok Kumar

**832.** The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi has approved the export of indigenously-developed surface-to-air “Akash” missile system. The Akash missile systems have over 96% indigenous components and the weapon can hit targets at a range of 25 km. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Cabinet approved the export of indigenously-developed surface-to-air “Akash” missile system
- Range of the missile – 25 km

**833.** Rafale fighter jets of India and France will carry out wargames codenamed Exercise “SKYROS” in Jodhpur from the 17 Squadron and the Su-30MKI fighters deployed there in the third week of January next year. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Rafale fighter jets of India and France – to carry out Exercise “SKYROS” – in Jodhpur, Rajasthan (in Jan 2021)
- France – Paris – Euro | President – Emmanuel Macron | New PM – Jean Castex
- Rajasthan: Capital – Jaipur | CM – Ashok Gehlot | Governor – Kalraj Mishra



## Schemes & Initiatives

**834.** On December 29, Jharkhand has replaced the central government's Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) with its own crop relief scheme "Kisan Fasal Rahat Yojana". The scheme will take 3 months to come into effect. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Jharkhand – launched "Kisan Fasal Rahat Yojana" crop relief scheme (by replacing government's PMFBY)
- Jharkhand: Capital – Ranchi | CM – Hemant Soren | Governor – Draupadi Murmu

## Sports & Games

**835.** Russian doubles badminton player Nikita Khakimov has received a 5-year ban by the Badminton World Federation (BWF) after being found guilty of betting, wagering and irregular match results. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Nikita Khakimov (Russia) – a Badminton player – banned for 5 years by BWF
- HQs of BWF – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia | President – Poul-Erik Hoyer Larsen

**836.** The BCCI has given approval to a 10-team Indian Premier League (IPL) during its Annual General Body Meeting but it will only materialise in 2022 instead of 2021. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- BCCI gave approval to a 10-team IPL from 2022 (instead 2021)
- HQs of BCCI – Mumbai, MH | Chairman – Sourav Ganguly | Founded in – 1928

**837.** The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has imposed a 4-year ban on boxer Nishu for doping. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Nishu – a Boxer – banned for 4 years by NADA
- HQs of NADA – New Delhi | CEO – Navin Agarwal



**838.** Goa's 14-year-old Leon Mendonca has become India's 67<sup>th</sup> chess Grandmaster by winning the third and final norm at a tournament in Italy. The player achieved his first GM norm at the Rigo Chess GM Round Robin in October while the second came in Budapest in November and the final one at the Vergani Cup in Italy. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

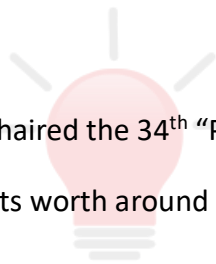
- Leon Mendonca (Goa) – become India's 67<sup>th</sup> chess Grandmaster – at the Vergani Cup in Italy
- "Vergani Cup" – related to Chess
- Goa: Capital – Panaji | CM – Pramod Sawant | Governor – Bhagat Singh Koshyari

## Meetings, Conferences and Summits

**839.** On December 30, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired the 34<sup>th</sup> "Pragati" meeting and assessed projects worth around Rs1 lakh Cr in 10 states and Union territories. Modi has been holding such meetings since he became the Prime Minister in 2014. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Narendra Modi – chaired the 34<sup>th</sup> "Pragati" meeting
- He assessed projects worth around Rs1 lakh Cr in 10 States & UTs



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## Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes

**840.** Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo has won the "Player of the Century" award at the "Globe Soccer Awards-2020". Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski has won the "Player of the Year" award. Besides, some other awards were also given which are as mentioned below. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Globe Soccer Awards - 2020:

Cristiano Ronaldo (Juventus FC)	Player of the Century
Robert Lewandowski (Bayern Munich FC)	Player of the Year
Hansi Flick (Bayern Munich FC)	Coach of the Year
Bayern Munich FC	Club of the Year
Real Madrid FC	Club of the Century
Pep Guardiola (Manchester City FC)	Coach of the Century



**841.** On December 30, V. K. Yadav has been conferred with the prestigious “Eminent Engineer Award - 2020” by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) for his outstanding contribution towards modernization and reforms over Indian Railways. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- V. K. Yadav – conferred with the prestigious “Eminent Engineer Award - 2020” – by the IET
- HQs of IET – London, UK | CEO – Nigel Fine
- HQs of Indian Railways – New Delhi | Chairman & CEO – Suneet Sharma

**842.** On December 30, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations has recognised 4 Tea producing sites spanning across 3 countries as the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS). All the 4 sites are in the Asian continent and include 2 sites from China and one each from Korea and Japan. The names of the sites are mentioned below. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- FAO recognised – 4 Tea producing sites as “Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems” (GIAHS)

1. Pu’er Traditional Tea Agrosystem ([China](#)) | 2. Fuzhou Jasmine ([China](#))

3. Traditional Tree Grass system ([Japan](#)) | 4. Traditional Hadong Tea Agrosystem ([South Korea](#))

- HQs of FAO – Rome, Italy | DG – QU Dongyu

**843.** On December 30, President Ram Nath Kovind has virtually conferred the 6th “Digital India Awards 2020”. The Digital India Awards 2020 have been announced under 7 categories including ‘Innovation in Pandemic’. Some of the important awards are mentioned as below. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ram Nath Kovind – conferred the 6th “Digital India Awards 2020” – under 7 categories
- Under ‘Innovation in Pandemic’ – eSanjeevani portal (Platinum Icon)
- Under ‘Excellence in ‘Digital Governance Ministry/Department’ – Department of Posts (Gold Icon)
- Under ‘Excellence in Digital Governance State/UT’ – Haryana (Platinum Icon) & Tamil Nadu (Gold Icon)
- Under ‘Excellence in Digital Governance District’ – Khargone, MP (Platinum Icon)
- Under ‘Open Data Champion’ – Department of Health and Family Welfare (Platinum Icon)
- Under ‘Exemplary Product’ – ServicePlus (Gold Icon)
- Under ‘Jury Choice Award’ – Aarogya Setu, eOffice (Platinum Icon)



**844.** Tansen Music Festival has begun in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. In the inaugural ceremony renowned santoor player Pandit Satish Vyas was conferred upon the prestigious “Tansen Samman-2020” on the occasion of 96<sup>th</sup> Tansen Sangeet Samaroh. Bhopal-based institution Abhinav Kala Parishad was honoured with “Raja Mansingh Tomar” award. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Pt Satish Vyas – conferred the prestigious “Tansen Samman-2020”
- Abhinav Kala Parishad – honoured with “Raja Mansingh Tomar” award

**845.** Indian stand-in skipper Ajinkya Rahane has been bestowed with the “Mullagh Medal” after winning ‘Man of the Match’ for his at the Boxing Day Test. He is the first recipient of the iconic medal which is named after former Australian skipper and cricket Johnny Mullagh. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ajinkya Rahane (Cricketer) – first recipient of the “Mullagh Medal” | Johnny Mullagh (Australia) – a Cricketer
- Australia – Canberra – Australian Dollar | PM – Scott Morrison

**846.** Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton has been awarded a “Knighthood” in the UK's New Year's Honours List. This year, Hamilton won his seventh F1 driver's championship title. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Lewis Hamilton – awarded a “Knighthood” in the UK's New Year's Honours List
- Lewis Hamilton (UK) – drives ‘Mercedes’

## **Appointments & Resignations**

**847.** On December 29, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan has been nominated by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) as a member on the GAVI Board until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. Dr. Harsh Vardhan will be representing the South East Area Regional Office (SEARO)/ Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) constituency on the GAVI Board. The seat is currently held by Mr. Myint Htwe of Myanmar. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan – nominated by the GAVI as a member on the GAVI Board until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023
- HQs of Gavi – Geneva, Switzerland | CEO – Dr Seth Berkley





**848.** On December 31, the 1984 batch IAS officer P. Ravi Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, has been appointed as the new Chief Secretary of Karnataka. He will succeed T.M. Vijay Bhaskar. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- P. Ravi Kumar – appointed as the new Chief Secretary of Karnataka (by succeeding - T.M. Vijay Bhaskar)
- Karnataka: Capital – Bangalore | CM – B S Yediyurappa | Governor – Vajubhai Vala

**849.** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the extension of tenure of K. Sivan as Secretary of Department of Space and Chairman of Space Commission for a period of one-year beyond January 14, 2021, that is up to January 14, 2022. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- K. Sivan – extended tenure for 1 year as Secretary of Department of Space and Chairman of Space Commission
- HQs of ISRO – Bengaluru, Karnataka | Director – Kailasavadivoo Sivan

**850.** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Suneet Sharma as the new Chairman and CEO of the Railway Board. The extended one-year tenure of Sharma's predecessor, Vinod Kumar Yadav ended on December 31. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Suneet Sharma – appointed as new Chairman and CEO of the Railway Board (by replacing – Vinod Kumar Yadav)
- HQs of Indian Railways – New Delhi | Chairman & CEO – Suneet Sharma

## **Ranks, Reports & Surveys**

**851.** On December 29, the report titled “Foreign Direct Investment Trends And Outlook In Asia And The Pacific 2020/2021” compiled by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), has stated that India has accounted for 77% of the total inflows to the South and South-West Asia sub-region and received \$51 billion in 2019, 20% up from the previous year. And overall inward FDI flows to South and South-West Asia has slightly decreased by 2% in 2019 to \$66 billion. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “Foreign Direct Investment Trends And Outlook In Asia And The Pacific 2020/2021” report – by UNESCAP
- India – accounted for 77% (\$51 billion) of the total inflows to the South and South-West Asia sub-region
- HQs of UNESCAP – Bangkok, Thailand | Executive Secretary – Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana



**852.** As per the latest “Nature Index 2020 Artificial Intelligence”, released by Nature Research, India has been the 3<sup>rd</sup> most productive country in AI research, with over 23,000 papers. On the overall AI Index, it is at the 20<sup>th</sup> position in a list dominated by European countries. Of the top 100 research organisations Nature identified, only one Indian organisation – ‘Anna University’ in Chennai, has made the cut. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “Nature Index 2020 Artificial Intelligence” – released by Nature Research
- India – 3<sup>rd</sup> most productive country in AI research | Overall, India – 20<sup>th</sup> in “Nature AI index”

## **Acquisitions & Mergers**

**853.** On December 30, Tata Sons has bought additional 32.67% stake in AirAsia India Limited (AAIL). Now, Tata’s stake in AirAsia India will rise to 83.67% while the Malaysian carrier’s stake will drop to 16.33%. The deal was done for \$37.6 million (₹275.9 Cr). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Tata Sons – acquired 32.67% stake (₹ 275.9 Cr) in AirAsia India Ltd (Now, its total share in AAIL will be 83.67%)
- HQs of Tata Sons – Mumbai, MH | Chairman – Natarajan Chandrasekaran
- HQs of AirAsia India Ltd – Bangalore, Karnataka | CEO – Sunil Bhaskaran

**854.** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of 8% stake in API Holdings Pvt Ltd by Singapore-based TPG Growth V SF Markets Pte Ltd. The CCI also approved the acquisition of 51% of equity share capital of Mukand Sumi Special Steel Ltd by Jamnalal Sons Pvt Ltd. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- CCI approved acquisition of 8% stake in API Holdings (France) – by TPG Growth V SF Markets (Singapore)
- CCI approved acquisition of 51% stake in Mukand Sumi Special Steel (Karnataka) – by Jamnalal Sons (Mumbai)
- HQs of CCI – New Delhi | Chairman – Ashok Kumar Gupta

**855.** IDBI Bank has concluded the sale of 23% stake in IDBI Federal Life Insurance Company Ltd (IFLI) to Ageas Insurance International NV for a consideration of Rs 507 Cr. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ageas Insurance International NV (Belgium) – acquired 23% stake in IDBI Federal Life Insurance
- HQs of IDBI Federal Life Insurance – Mumbai | CEO – Vighnesh Shahane



# MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships

**856.** Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) has recently signed an MoU with UNDP India to co-create India's first Social Impact Bond (SIB). UNDP will support PCMC in the design of the SIB by providing technical assistance through the SDG Finance Facility housed at UNDP. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Pimpri Chinchwad MC (Pune) + UNDP = an MoU to co-create India's first Social Impact Bond (SIB)
- HQs of UNDP – New York, USA | Administrator – Achim Steiner
- Maharashtra: CM – Uddhav Thackeray | Governor – Bhagat Singh Koshyari

**857.** Chhattisgarh government has signed a contract execution (MoU) for India'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 (BCSFK) and NKJ Biofuel for a period of 30 years. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- BCSFK + NKJ Biofuel = signed an MoU for India's first ethanol plant to be set up in – Chhattisgarh
- Chhattisgarh: Capital – Raipur | CM – Bhupesh Baghel | Governor – Anusuiya Uikey

**858.** Oakridge Energy has signed an agreement with Kendriya Vidyalaya and Delhi government for solarizing schools in Delhi. Under this scheme, Delhi government schools will not be required to make any investment, with the developer making all the investment. Schools would purchase the power at Rs 3.13/kWh, which is a discount of 65 per cent on their electricity bill. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Oakridge Energy + Kendriya Vidyalaya + Delhi gov = an agreement for solarizing schools in Delhi
- Delhi: CM – Arvind Kejriwal | Governor – Anil Baijal | Chief Secretary – Vijay Dev

**859.** The Union Cabinet has approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bhutan on peaceful uses of outer space. The MoU was signed between the two sides on November 19. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Union Cabinet – approved an MoU between India and Bhutan on peaceful uses of Outer Space
- Bhutan – Thimphu – Bhutanese Ngultrum | PM – Lotay Tshering



**860.** Indian Coast Guard has signed MoUs with 7 Asian countries for cooperation in maritime search and rescue operations. The seven countries are Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Vietnam. The Coast Guard also conducts the 'National Beacon Exercise'. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- The Coast Guard – signed MoUs with 7 Asian countries for cooperation in maritime search and rescue operations
- 7 countries – Japan, Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Indonesia & Vietnam
- HQs of ICG – New Delhi | Director General – Krishnaswamy Natarajan

## **Books & Authors**

**861.** Shantanu Naidu has authored a book titled "I Came Upon a Lighthouse: A Short Memoir of Life with Ratan Tata". The book is published by HarperCollins India and illustrated by Sanjana Desai. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- "I Came Upon a Lighthouse: A Short Memoir of Life with Ratan Tata" – authored by Shantanu Naidu
- The book is published by – HarperCollins India | illustrated by – Sanjana Desai

**862.** Manav Kaul has presented his first novel "Antima" to Ruskin Bond. He has previously written books such as "Tumhare Baare Mein" and "Bahut Door, Kitna Door Hota Hai". [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- "Antima" novel – written by Manav Kaul

**863.** Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan has released "Sabarimala Vijnanakosham" - a book written by K S Vijayanath. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- "Sabarimala Vijnanakosham" book – authored by "K S Vijayanath" | released by – Arif Mohammed
- Kerala: Capital – Thiruvananthapuram | CM – Pinarayi Vijayan | Governor – Arif Mohammad Khan



## Obituaries

**864.** Karnataka Legislative Council Deputy Chairman S L Dharme Gowda has passed away recently in December. According to police, he is suspected to have died by suicide. He was associated with JD(S). [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- S L Dharme Gowda – a Politician of JD(S) party – passed away (Karnataka Legislative Council deputy Chairman)
- Karnataka: Capital – Bangalore | CM – BS Yediyurappa | Governor – Vajubhai Vala

**865.** The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has condoled the demise of former Blue Tigers' Olympian Nikhil Nandy who passed away recently on December 29 at the age of 88. He finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. He was also a part of the side that notched-up a semi-final finish in the 1958 Asian Games in Tokyo, Japan. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Nikhil Nandy – a Football player – passed away
- HQs of AIFF – Dwarka, Delhi | President – Praful Patel

**866.** New Zealand's finest Test batsmen - John Fulton Reid has passed away due to cancer at the age of 64. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- John Fulton Reid (New Zealand) – a Cricketer – passed away
- New Zealand – Wellington – Dollar (NZD)

**867.** Indira Joseph Venniyoor, Renowned broadcaster of All India Radio veteran and the first English news announcer of Travancore Radio has passed away recently in December. She was 94. It was in 1949 that Travancore Radio started its first English news service. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Indira Joseph Venniyoor – Renowned broadcaster of All India Radio – passed away
- She was the first English news announcer of – Travancore Radio



**868.** Legendary Odia musician Shantanu Mohapatra has passed away recently in December. He was 84. The first Odia music composer to work with legends like Lata Mangeshkar, Manna Dey and Md Rafi and also the first to work in Hindi, Bengali, Assamese and Telugu film industries. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Shantanu Mohapatra – an Odia musician – passed away

**869.** Air vice-marshal (retired) Ajit Singh Lamba, a veteran aviator who flew planes until the age of 83, has passed away recently in December. He was 84. He was awarded with the Vir Chakra for gallantry in the 1965 Indo-Pak war. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ajit Lamba – Air vice-marshal (retired) – passed away (Vir Chakra for gallantry in the 1965 Indo-Pak war)

## Persons in News

**870.** The Department of Science and Technology under Frontier and Futuristic Technologies Division has constituted an Advisory Committee to use futuristic and new age technologies for Heritage Conservation. The committee is chaired by Prof. Santanu Chaudhury (Director of IIT Jodhpur). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Advisory Committee to use futuristic and new age technologies for Heritage Conservation – by Dept of S&T
- The committee is chaired by – Santanu Chaudhury

## Science & Technology

**871.** USA has planned to set up the first nuclear reactor on the moon by the end of 2026. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- USA – to set up the first nuclear reactor on the moon – by 2026
- USA – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | President – Joe Biden

**872.** Skyroot Aerospace, a Hyderabad based start-up in the space sector, has successfully test-fired a solid propulsion rocket engine named “Kalam-5”. This is Skyroot’s first of five Kalam series of solid rocket motors. It



is the country's first private sector company to successfully test-fire a solid propulsion rocket stage engine. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Skyroot Aerospace – successfully test-fired a solid propulsion rocket engine named “Kalam-5”
- HQs of Skyroot Aerospace – Hyderabad, Telangana | CEO – Pawan Kumar Chandana

**873.** Two new species of plants namely “Hedychium mechukanum” & “Amomum Arunachalense” have been discovered in Arunachal Pradesh. The discovery was published in Gardens Bulletin, Singapore. Hedychium mechukanum is a close relative of Hedychium coronarium also known as white ginger lily which is a mythological plant described by Vyasa. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “Hedychium mechukanum” & “Amomum Arunachalense” - species of plants – discovered in Arunachal Pradesh
- Discovery was published in – Gardens Bulletin (Singapore)
- Arunachal Pradesh: Capital – Itanagar | CM – Pema Khandu | Governor – B D Mishra

**874.** Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has developed “Ruthenium plaque therapy” that has been successfully used for the first time for the treatment of patients with ocular tumours (Eye cancer) in AIIMS-Delhi. The results of using it for treatment of a patient with choroidal hemangioma (benign tumour in blood vessels) have been found to be satisfactory. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- BARC – developed “Ruthenium plaque therapy” – used for the 1<sup>st</sup> time to treat Eye Cancer patients
- HQs of BARC – Mumbai, MH | Director – Ajit Kumar Mohanty

**875.** On December 29, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has achieved another milestone in quantum technology by successfully developing a Quantum Random Number Generator (QRNG). It is developed by the DRDO Young Scientist Laboratory for Quantum Technologies (DYSL-QT), a DRDO facility based in Mumbai. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- DYSL-QT (Mumbai) – successfully developed Quantum Random Number Generator (QRNG)
- HQs of DRDO – New Delhi | Chairman – G. Satheesh Reddy



**876.** IIT Delhi has partnered with the Common Services Center (CSC) Academy under the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to set up a Design and Innovation Lab aimed at helping rural entrepreneurs. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- IIT Delhi + CSC Academy = partnership to set up a Design and Innovation Lab for rural entrepreneurs

**877.** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) have identified a gene “BBX11” that facilitates in the greening of plants by playing a crucial role in regulating the levels of protochlorophyllide. The study was published in the prestigious British journal New Phytologist. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- IISER (Pune) – identified a gene “BBX11” that facilitates in the greening of plants
- The study was published in – “New Phytologist” journal

**878.** Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman K. Sivan has stated that the ISRO was developing “Green Propulsion” technology, believed to be less harmful to the environment, for its human spaceflight missions. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- ISRO – was developing “Green Propulsion” technology
- HQs of ISRO – Bengaluru, Karnataka | Director – Kailasavadivoo Sivan

**879.** Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal virtually laid the foundation stone for “TiHAN” - the country’s first test bed for Autonomous Navigation Systems (Terrestrial and Aerial) at the IIT-Hyderabad campus. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “TiHAN” - India’s first test bed for Autonomous Navigation Systems (Terrestrial and Aerial) – at IIT Hyderabad
- Ministry of Education – Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ (Constituency – Haridwar, Uttarakhand)

## **Ordinance, Bills and Acts**

**880.** The Assam government has tabled “The Assam Repealing Bill, 2020” to abolish all state-run madrassas and convert those into general schools with effect from April 1, 2021. The bill proposes to abolish two existing acts - “The Assam Madrassa Education (Provincialisation) Act, 1995” and “The Assam Madrassa Education Act, 2018”. There are 610 state-run madrassas across Assam. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Assam – tabled a Bill to abolish all state-run madrassas & convert them into general schools – from April 1, 2021
- Assam: Capital – Dispur | CM – Sarbananda Sonowal | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi







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