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## An important message from Team Smartkeeda

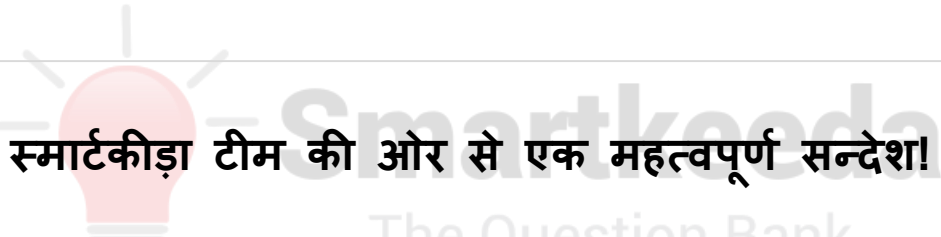
Hi Folks! We hope you all are doing well. We would like to state here that this PDF is meant for preparing for the upcoming MockDrill Test of January 2021 Month at Testzone. In this Current Affairs PDF we have added all the important Current Affairs information in form of 'Key-points' which are crucial 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 जनवरी 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



# INDEX

National & States Affairs.....	5
International Affairs.....	13
Banking & Economic Affairs.....	14
Defence Affairs.....	16
Schemes & Initiatives.....	17
Sports & Games.....	18
Important Days & Dates.....	19
Meetings, Conferences and Summits.....	21
Arts & Cultural Affairs.....	21
Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes.....	22
Appointments & Resignations.....	25
Amount & Agreements.....	26
Ranks, Reports & Surveys.....	26
Acquisitions & Mergers.....	28
MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships.....	28
Books & Authors.....	29
Obituaries .....	30
Persons in News .....	31
Science & Technology.....	31



# National & States Affairs

**501.** On January 20, A Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has launched Himachal Pradesh's first online youth radio station "Radio Hills-Youngistan Ka Dil". [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Himachal Pradesh – launched its 1<sup>st</sup> online youth radio station "Radio Hills-Youngistan Ka Dil"
- Himachal Pradesh: Capital – Shimla & Dharamshala | CM – Jai Ram Thakur | Governor – Bandaru Dattatreya

**502.** On January 23, Uttarakhand chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat has announced a fund of ₹1 Cr for taking care of street children and orphans under the child-friendly police station initiative. He has made the announcement after inaugurating the state's first child-friendly police station in Dehradun's Dalanwala. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Uttarakhand – announced a fund of ₹1 Cr for welfare of orphans & street kids
- Trivendra Singh Rawat inaugurated state's 1<sup>st</sup> child-friendly police station – in Dalanwala, Dehradun
- Uttarakhand: Capital – Dehradun & Gairsain | CM – Trivendra Singh Rawat | Governor – Baby Rani Maurya

**503.** The Ministry of Labour and Employment has prepared a parade Tableau for this year's Republic Day Parade. The theme of the tableau is 'Respect for hard work and Equal rights for all'. The Labour ministry has recently got 4 labour codes approved by Parliament. The 44 central labour laws have been amalgamated into 4 codes on wages, industrial relations, social security and occupational safety, health & working conditions. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Theme of the tableau of Labour Ministry – 'Respect for hard work and Equal rights for all'
- Labour ministry recently got 4 labour codes approved by Parliament
- MoS in Ministry of Labour and Employment – Santosh Gangwar

**504.** Airtel Payments Bank (APB) has launched a new feature 'Airtel Safe Pay' to protect Airtel customers from the growing incidents of online payment frauds. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Airtel Payments Bank – launched a new feature 'Safe Pay'
- HQs of APB – New Delhi | CEO – Anubrata Biswas



**505.** Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan will soon host a reality show named “100 Days in Heaven” to promote Uttarakhand tourism. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Amitabh Bachchan – host “100 Days in Heaven” reality show to promote tourism of Uttarakhand
- Uttarakhand: Capital – Dehradun & Gairsain | CM – Trivendra Singh Rawat | Governor – Baby Rani Maurya

**506.** The Uttar Pradesh government has developed an anti-land mafia software called “Dhara”. The software will help in the prevention of duplication of revenue records, which will prevent manipulation of records by officers. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Uttar Pradesh – developed an anti-land mafia software called “Dhara”
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

**507.** The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda has virtually launched “ShramShakti”, a National Migration Support Portal at a programme held at Panjim, Goa. He also launched ‘Dedicated Migration Cell’ in Goa. Goa is going to be first destination state of India to set up ‘Dedicated Migration Cell’ to address diverse issues of migrant workers. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Arjun Munda – launched “ShramShakti” - a National Migration Support Portal
- Goa – 1<sup>st</sup> state of India to set up ‘Dedicated Migration Cell’
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs – Arjun Munda (Constituency – Khunti, Jharkhand)

**508.** Under the Covid vaccination drive, the government uses ‘Rapid Assessment System (RAS)’, a platform developed by Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) for taking feedback from those who get vaccinated. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Indian government uses “RAS” platform for instant feedback under the Covid Vaccination Drive
- RAS – Rapid Assessment System – developed by MeitY
- Ravi Shankar Prasad – Ministry of Communications, MeitY, Law and Justice (Patna Sahib, Bihar)

**509.** On January 19, the government has nominated 28 non-official members on the National Startup Advisory Council. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) had constituted the council on January 21 to advise the government on measures required to build a strong ecosystem. The council is chaired by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. [{Read more}](#)



**Key Points:**

- National Startup Advisory Council – nominated 28 Non-official members on the committee
- The council is chaired by – Piyush Goyal

**510.** On January 19, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has approved the adoption of a new policy namely “Land Allotment Policy 2021-30” for allotment of land to industrial entrepreneurs. It will also cover land allotment for health institutions/medi-cities and educational institutions/edu-cities. Under the policy, land will be allotted to the investors on lease for an initial period of 40 years, extendable to 99 years. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- J&K approved the adoption of “Land Allotment Policy 2021-30” for allotment of land to industrial Entrepreneurs
- J & K: Capital – Srinagar | Lt. Governor – Manoj Sinha

**511.** On January 25, Chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has flagged-off the Mobile Dispensing Units (MDU) to be deployed for distribution of rice and other essential commodities under Public Distribution System (PDS) from Benz circle in Vijayawada city. With this, Andhra Pradesh is the first state in the country to launch the door-delivery of rice under PDS. The cost per annum of this scheme will be Rs. 830 Cr. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Andhra Pradesh – flagged off “Mobile Dispensing Units” (door delivery vehicles) in Vijayawada
- Andhra Pradesh: Capital – Amravati (LC), Visakhapatnam (EC) & Kurnool (JC)
- CM – YS Jaganmohan Reddy | Governor – Biswabhusan Harichandan

**512.** In Madhya Pradesh, Wipro group is all set to act as knowledge partner of the State Government to implement the New Education Policy (NEP). The Wipro Group will also set up a Software Development Centre in Bhopal. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Wipro – will act as knowledge partner of the State Government to implement the NEP
- Wipro – will set up a Software Development Centre in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
- Madhya Pradesh: Capital – Bhopal | CM – Shivraj Singh Chouhan | Governor – Anandiben Patel
- HQs of Wipro – Bangalore, Karnataka | MD & CEO – Thierry Delaporte



**513.** On January 22, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the 18<sup>th</sup> convocation of Tezpur University in Assam. Assam Governor and chancellor of Tezpur University, Jagdish Mukhi, will preside over the convocation and award the degrees and diplomas to the students virtually. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Narendra Modi – addressed the 18<sup>th</sup> convocation of Tezpur University in Assam
- Location of Tezpur University – Assam | Chancellor – Jagdish Mukhi | Established in – 1994
- Assam: Capital – Dispur | CM – Sarbananda Sonowal | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi

**514.** Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) have signed an MOU with the government of Gujarat for exploring possibilities of development of a Dedicated Air Cargo Complex (DACC) and India's largest Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) at Virochan Nagar near Sanand, Gujarat. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Adani Ports and SEZ + Gujarat = an MoU for a Dedicated Air Cargo Complex and India's largest MMLP
- HQs of APSEZ – Ahmedabad, Gujarat | CEO – Karan Adani
- Gujarat: Capital – Gandhinagar | CM – Vijay Rupani | Governor – Acharya Devvrat

**515.** The government has approved the first set of 5 pharma projects, worth a total committed investment of ₹3,761 Cr, under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for promoting domestic manufacture of bulk drugs and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Government approved the first set of 5 pharma projects (worth ₹3,761 Cr) under PLI scheme
- PLI – Production Linked Incentive

**516.** The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has roped in Top Technical Institutions to set up a Decision Support System (DSS) which will use Artificial Intelligence to help improve the air quality in Delhi and NCR. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- CAQM roped in Top Technical Institutions to set up a “DSS” to use AI to improve air quality in Delhi-NCR
- DSS – Decision Support System
- Delhi: CM – Arvind Kejriwal | Governor – Anil Baijal | Chief Secretary – Vijay Dev





**517.** On January 20, the Indian government has stated that any attempt by China to set up a Hydropower Station on the Brahmaputra river will act as an encroachment on the entitled rights of lower riparian states like India and Bangladesh and adversely affect the availability of water in its basin during the lean season. India also plans to build a multipurpose 10,000 MW reservoir in Arunachal Pradesh to offset the impact. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Any attempt by China to set up a Hydropower Station on the Brahmaputra river will act as an encroachment
- Brahmaputra = Siang river (in Arunachal Pradesh) = Yarlung Zangbo River (in Tibet)
- [China – Beijing – Renminbi | President – Xi Jinping](#)

**518.** The Uttarakhand government has increased the number of working days guaranteed per year under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) programme from 100 to 150. The scheme aims to provide investment subsidy from 15-25% to those who want to start their own businesses. Uttarakhand is expected to conduct Assembly polls in 2022. The state government has also launched the 'Uttarakhand Aajeevika App' with the aim to provide help to the unemployed people. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Uttarakhand increased number of working days per year from 100 to 150 under MGNREGA scheme
- Uttarakhand has also launched the 'Aajeevika App' for unemployed people
- The scheme aims to provide investment subsidy from 15-25% to those who want to start their own businesses
- [Uttarakhand: Capital – Dehradun & Gairsain | CM – Trivendra Singh Rawat | Governor – Baby Rani Maurya](#)

**519.** On January 21, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family welfare has inaugurated the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of "MASCRADE 2021" movement against smuggled & counterfeit trade organised by FICCI Cascade. The Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 was amended under Drugs & Cosmetics Amendment Act 2008. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan – inaugurated the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of "MASCRADE 2021" movement – organised by FICCI
- Aim of "MASCRADE 2021" – movement against smuggled & counterfeit trade of spurious products
- [HQs of FICCI – New Delhi | President – Uday Shankar | Secretary General – Dilip Chenoy](#)

**520.** January 21, the Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah has inaugurated the new 4-lane Thaltej-Shilaj-Rancharda railway overbridge, built at a cost of Rs 55 Cr, in Ahmedabad city of Gujarat. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Amit Shah – inaugurated the new 4-lane Thaltej-Shilaj-Rancharda railway overbridge – in Ahmedabad, Gujarat
- Cost of the bridge – Rs 55 Cr
- [Gujarat: Capital – Gandhinagar | CM – Vijay Rupani | Governor – Acharya Devvrat](#)



**521.** On January 22, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma has formally inaugurated the longest road arch bridge in India - the Wahrew Bridge at Sohbar in East Khasi Hills district. The arch bridge was constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 49.395 Cr under the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) of the Ministry of Development of North East Region (DoNER). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “Wahrew Bridge” - India’s longest road arch bridge – inaugurated at Sohbar, Meghalaya | Length – 169m
- NLCPR Scheme – belongs to Ministry of DoNER | NLCPR was initiated in – 1998
- Meghalaya: Capital – Shillong | CM – Conrad Kongkal Sangma | Governor – Satya Pal Malik

**522.** On January 19, Karnataka CM B.S. Yediyurappa has chaired a meeting of the State Wildlife Board and approved a proposal to set up a ‘Grey Wolf Sanctuary’ spread over 800 acres of forest area at Bankapura-2 reserve in Gangavathi division of Koppal district, Kalyana-Karnataka region. The Indian Grey Wolves inhabit the dry grassland region in the Koppal district. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- India’s 1<sup>st</sup> ‘Grey Wolf Sanctuary’ is to be set up – in Koppal, Karnataka
- Karnataka: Capital – Bangalore | CM – BS Yediyurappa | Governor – Vajubhai Vala

**523.** On January 21, Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers D.V. Sadananda Gowda has chaired a meeting on upcoming 12.7 lakh MMTPA (Million Metric Tonne Per Annum) capacity urea plant at Namrup in Assam. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- 12.7 lakh MMTPA capacity urea plant is to be set up at Namrup in Assam
- Assam: Capital – Dispur | CM – Sarbananda Sonowal | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi

**524.** On January 24, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has inaugurated the 24<sup>th</sup> “Hunar Haat” of indigenous products of artisans and craftsmen at Lucknow’s Avadh Shilpgram. It was organised by the Union Ministry of Minority Affairs. “One District One Product” (ODOP) articles of UP have been included for the first time in the Hunar Haat, which will continue till February 4. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Uttar Pradesh inaugurated the 24<sup>th</sup> “Hunar Haat” of indigenous products of artisans and craftsmen – in Lucknow
- It was organised by – Union Ministry of Minority Affairs
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel



**525.** On January 26, a tableau from Ladakh has participated in the Republic Day Parade on Rajpath for the first time this year. Ladakh's tableau has depicted the iconic 'Thiksey Monastery' located on top of a hill in Thikse in Leh district. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- A tableau from Ladakh – participated in the Republic Day Parade on Rajpath for the first time
- Ladakh's tableau – depicted the iconic 'Thiksey Monastery'

**526.** Uttar Pradesh government has launched 'Udyam Sarathi' mobile app to promote entrepreneurship among youth and help them explore new opportunities for self-employment. Yogi Adityanath has unveiled the app on 'UP Diwas' on January 24. Apart from this, the government also launched 'Abhyudaya' - Free coaching facility programme & 'UP Garav Samman' award. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Uttar Pradesh launched 'Udyam Sarathi' mobile app to promote entrepreneurship among youth
- January 24 – 'UP Diwas'
- UP government also launched – 'Abhyudaya' - Free coaching facility programme & 'UP Garav Samman' award
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

**527.** On January 23, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has launched "Union Budget mobile app" to provide information about the Union Budget 2021-22. The app has been developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the guidance of the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Nirmala Sitharaman launched "Union Budget mobile app" – developed by NIC
- HQs of NIC – New Delhi | Director General – Neeta Verma

**528.** Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is scheduled to perform the Bhoomi Poojan of Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II and Surat Metro Rail Project. The Metro Projects will provide an environment friendly 'Mass Rapid Transit System' to these cities. Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II is 28.25 Kms long with two corridors. While Surat Metro Rail Project is 40.35 Kms long and comprises two corridors. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Narendra Modi – performed the Bhoomi Poojan of Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II & Surat Metro Rail
- Gujarat: Capital – Gandhinagar | CM – Vijay Rupani | Governor – Acharya Devvrat



**529.** On 25 January, Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has inaugurated IIT Kharagpur's Agri-Food Techathon (AFT) 2021. The AFT was conducted by the Institute in association with NABARD to promote Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The foundation of the Agri-Business Incubation Centre will also be laid at the inaugural event. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has inaugurated IIT Kharagpur's Agri-Food Techathon (AFT) 2021
- The AFT was conducted by = IIT Kharagpur + NABARD
- HQs of NABARD – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Chintala Govinda Rajulu | Founded in – 1982

**530.** Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has recently launched an e-EPIC programme. Electors will be able to download electronic versions of the Electors Photo Identity Cards (e-EPICs) from January 25 which is National Voters Day. The e-EPIC would be a non-editable PDF of the EPIC that can be downloaded on the phone and stored on the DigiLocker app or self-printed from a computer. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ravi Shankar Prasad – launched an “e-EPIC programme”
- e-EPICs = electronic-Electors Photo Identity Cards
- Ravi Shankar Prasad – Ministry of Communications, MeitY, Law and Justice (Patna Sahib, Bihar)

**531.** On January 25, during the 40<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Transport Development Council, Union minister for road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari has approved a proposal to levy a “Green Tax” on vehicles older than 8 years at the time of renewal of fitness certificate. Nitin Gadkari also approved the policy of deregistration and scrapping of vehicles owned by government department and PSU above 15 years. It will be notified and come into effect from April 1, 2022. The government has also proposed higher tax (50% of the road tax) for vehicles registered in highly polluted cities. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ministry for Road Transport – approved a proposal to levy a “Green Tax” on vehicles older than 8 years
- Policy of deregistration and scrapping of government's vehicles above 15 years – effective from April 1, 2022
- Higher tax (50% of the road tax) is also approved for vehicles registered in Highly Polluted Cities
- Nitin Gadkari – Ministry of Road Transport and Highway, Ministry of MSMEs (Nagpur, Maharashtra)



# International Affairs

**532.** The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 2017, but none of the nine countries known or believed to possess nuclear weapons supported it and neither did the NATO alliance. The treaty came into force on January 19, 2021. Nuclear-capable countries - USA, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea & Israel (Undeclared Nuclear Power) did not support the Treaty nor have signed it. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – came into force on January 19
- The treaty was approved by the UNGA in 2017
- Nuclear-capable countries – USA, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea & Israel
- HQs of UNGA – New York, USA | President – Volkan Bozkir | Member Countries – 193

**533.** On January 21, India has handed over 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to Nepal under grant assistance in sync with its 'Neighbourhood First' policy under the "Vaccine Maitri" Initiative. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- India handed over 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to Nepal under "Vaccine Maitri" Initiative
- Nepal – Kathmandu – Nepalese Rupee | President – Bidhya Devi Bhandari

**534.** On January 21, the UK government has placed a temporary export ban on Robert Clive's Indian silver Durbar set. It is made up of rosewater sprinklers, paan caskets and huqqa bases worth around 730,000 pound. The set is believed to have been used in Mughal court assemblies in India. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- UK – placed a temporary export ban on Robert Clive's Indian silver Durbar set
- UK – London – Pound Sterling | PM of UK – Boris Johnson

**535.** Spain's largest utility Iberdrola SA and the French food giant Danone SA have signed an agreement to build 590 MW-capacity photo-voltaic plant, the largest in Europe. It will be built at the cost of 300 million-euro (\$364 million). [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Spain + France = signed an agreement to build 590 MW-capacity & the largest Solar Power Plant of Europe
- Spain – Madrid – Euro | PM – Pedro Sanchez
- France – Paris – Euro | President – Emmanuel Macron | PM – Jean Castex



**536.** Russia and the United States have signed a deal to extend the “New START” nuclear arms control treaty for 5 years. Signed in 2010, the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is a cornerstone of global arms control. It limits the number of strategic nuclear warheads deployed by the United States and Russia to 1,550 each. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Russia + USA = signed a deal to extend the “New START” nuclear arms control treaty for 5 years
- The treaty was initially signed in – 2010 | It limits no. of nuclear warheads – to 1,550 for each country
- Russia – Moscow – Russian Ruble | PM – Mikhail Mishustin | President – Vladimir Putin
- USA – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | 46<sup>th</sup> President – Joe Biden | 49<sup>th</sup> VP – Kamala Harris

**537.** On January 22, Germany’s current account surplus shrank for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row in 2020 as China overtook Europe’s biggest economy during the COVID-19 pandemic to run the world’s largest current account surplus, a survey by the IFO institute. China’s current account surplus has more than doubled to \$310 billion last year. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- China overtook Germany’s Current Account Surplus (China’s current account surplus in 2020 - \$310 billion)
- China – Beijing – Renminbi | President – Xi Jinping
- Germany – Berlin – Euro | President – Frank-Walter Steinmeier

**538.** Project Loon, the Google X spinout that hoped to make broadband more accessible using solar-powered balloons, has been shut down by parent company Alphabet. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “Project Loon” – shut down by Alphabet Inc.
- HQs of Alphabet Inc. – California, USA | CEO – Sundar Pichai

## **Banking & Economic Affairs**

**539.** On January 21, the RBI has imposed a penalty of Rs 2 Cr on Standard Chartered Bank India for delays in reporting of frauds to it. The monetary penalty has been imposed on the bank for non-compliance with certain directions contained in the ‘RBI (Frauds - Classification and Reporting by commercial banks and select FIs) Directions 2016’. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- RBI – imposed a penalty of Rs 2 Cr on Standard Chartered Bank India
- HQs of RBI – Mumbai | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25<sup>th</sup>) | Established in – 1<sup>st</sup> April 1935
- HQs of SCB – London, UK | CEO – Bill Winters



**540.** On January 21, Education fintech company GrayQuest has collaborated with SBM Bank India to facilitate access of affordable funds to its clients. Established in 2017, GrayQuest is working towards increasing convenience of educational fee payments in the country. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- GrayQuest + SBM Bank India = collaboration to facilitate access of affordable funds to its clients
- HQs of GrayQuest – Mumbai, MH | Founder & CEO – Rishab Mehta
- HQs of SBM Bank India – Mumbai, MH | MD&CEO – Sidharth Rath | Commenced operation in India – in 2018

**541.** On January 21, the RBI has released the January 2021 issue of its monthly Bulletin. The Bulletin includes one Speech, 4 Articles and Current Statistics. The 4 articles are: I. State of the Economy; II. Effective Exchange Rate Indices of the Indian Rupee; III. Small Finance Banks: Balancing Financial Inclusion and Viability; IV. Green Finance in India: Progress and Challenges. As per the Article III, the assets of small finance banks (SFBs) have grown 150% annually between FY 2017-18 and 2019-20. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- RBI – released the January 2021 issue of its monthly Bulletin
- The 4 articles are:
  - I. State of the Economy
  - II. Effective Exchange Rate Indices of the Indian Rupee
  - III. Small Finance Banks: Balancing Financial Inclusion and Viability
  - IV. Green Finance in India: Progress and Challenges
- Assets of SFBs grew 150% annually between FY 2017-18 & 2019-20
- HQs of RBI – Mumbai | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25<sup>th</sup>) | Established in – 1<sup>st</sup> April 1935

**542.** On January 23, the RBI has issued a Discussion Paper on a scale-based regulation of Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs). NBFCs will be benefited through the revised regulatory framework. In its discussion paper on revised regulatory framework for NBFCs, the RBI has proposed a tighter regulatory framework for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) by creating a four-tier structure with a progressive increase in intensity of regulation. The 4 layers are: Base Layer, Middle Layer, Upper Layer and a possible Top Layer. It has also proposed classification of non-performing assets (NPAs) of base layer NBFCs from 180 days to 90 days overdue. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- RBI – issued a Discussion Paper on a scale-based regulation of NBFCs
- RBI proposed a 4-tier structure for tighter regulatory framework of NBFCs
- RBI also proposed classification of NPAs of 'Base layer' NBFCs from 180 days to 90 days overdue
- HQs of RBI – Mumbai | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25<sup>th</sup>) | Established in – 1<sup>st</sup> April 1935



# Defence Affairs

**543.** On January 21, An MoU was signed between the Indian Army and Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers for Defence equipment manufacturing on the occasion of 25 Years of Army-Industry Partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Indian Army + Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers = an MoU for Defence equipment manufacturing
- HQs of Indian Army – New Delhi | Chief – Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane | Vice Chief – Chandi Prasad Mohanty

**544.** A large scale Joint Military exercise - “Exercise Kavach” involving assets of Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard will be conducted in January under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- “Exercise Kavach” will be conducted under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command
- This exercise involves – Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard
- HQs of Andaman and Nicobar Command – Port Blair | 15<sup>th</sup> Commander-in-Chief – Lt. Gen Manoj Pande

**545.** Delhi Police has requested ITBP to deploy its “Crack K9 Commandos” team for deployment to sanitise and secure the area around India Gate and Rajpath. This team includes dogs like Belgian Malinois. These dogs belong to the ITBP's K9 QRT (Quick Reaction Team). [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Delhi Police requested to deploy “Crack K9 Commandos” team of ITBP
- This team includes dogs like – Belgian Malinois
- HQs of ITBP – New Delhi | DG – Surjeet Singh Deswal | ADG – Manoj Singh Rawat

**546.** On January 20, Border Security Force (BSF) has launched “Operation Sard Hawa” under which it aims to increase security on the borders in Jaisalmer. BSF runs Operation “Garam Hawa” in summer season and operation “Sard Hawa” during the winter season as a routine exercise. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- BSF – launched “Operation Sard Hawa” to increase security on the borders in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan
- Operation “Garam Hawa” in summer season & Operation “Sard Hawa” in winter season – run by BSF
- HQs of BSF – New Delhi | Director General (DG) – Rakesh Asthana





**547.** A large-scale tri-service joint amphibious exercise “AMPHEX – 21” was conducted in Andaman & Nicobar group of islands from 21 – 25 Jan 2021. The exercise involved the participation of Naval ships, amphibious troops of the Army and different types of aircraft from the Air force. Exercise “KAVACH” for defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands formed a part of AMPHEX – 21. [{Read more}](#)

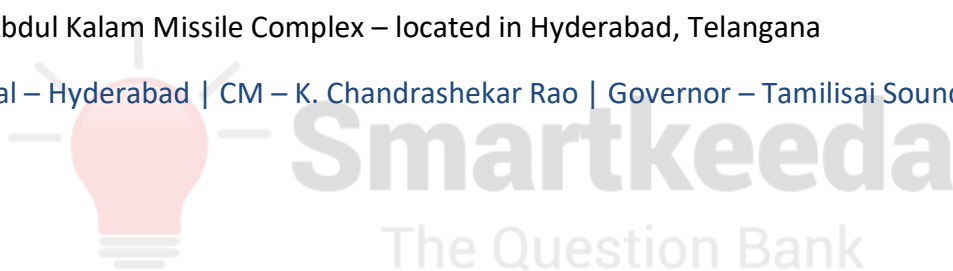
**Key Points:**

- A large-scale tri-service joint amphibious exercise “AMPHEX – 21” conducted in Andaman & Nicobar islands
- Exercise “KAVACH” for defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands was a part of “AMPHEX – 21”
- [Andaman and Nicobar Islands: Capital – Port Blair | Lieu. Governor– Admiral Devendra Kumar Joshi](#)

**548.** On January 25, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu has inaugurated the Integrated Weapons System Design Centre at DRDO’s APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex in Hyderabad. The facility would enhance capability in design and development of command and control systems for surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems and ballistic missile defence systems. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- M Venkaiah Naidu – inaugurated DRDO’s “Integrated Weapons System Design Centre” in Hyderabad
- DRDO’s Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex – located in Hyderabad, Telangana
- [Telangana: Capital – Hyderabad | CM – K. Chandrashekar Rao | Governor – Tamilisai Soundararajan](#)



## **Schemes & Initiatives**

**549.** On January 18, Rajasthan government has decided to rename the central government’s “Ayushman Bharat Health Insurance Scheme” as “Ayushman Bharat Mahatma Gandhi Health Insurance Scheme”. The scheme will provide health care benefits worth Rs 5 Lakh to around 1 crore 10 lakh families in the state. The total outlay of the Scheme is ₹1800 Cr annually. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Rajasthan – renamed “AB Health Insurance Scheme” as “AB Mahatma Gandhi Health Insurance Scheme”
- Health care benefits worth – Rs 5 Lakh | Total annual outlay of the Scheme – ₹1800 Cr
- [Rajasthan: Capital – Jaipur | CM – Ashok Gehlot | Governor – Kalraj Mishra](#)

**550.** Union Home Minister Amit Shah has launched the “Ayushman CAPF” scheme in Assam, extending the benefit of the central health insurance programme to the personnel of all armed police forces in the country. The scheme will be fully implemented by May 1, 2021. Amit Shah has ceremoniously distributed the “Ayushman CAPF” health cards among some personnel from the 7 Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) in Guwahati, Assam. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- Amit Shah – “Ayushman CAPF” scheme in Assam (to be fully implemented by May 1, 2021)
- Amit Shah – distributed the “Ayushman CAPF” health cards among some personnel from the 7 CAPF in Guwahati
- Ministry of Home Affairs – Shri Amit Shah | Constituency – Gandhinagar, Gujarat
- Assam: Capital – Dispur | CM – Sarbananda Sonowal | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi

**551.** In a first-of-its-kind project in Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has launched the State’s ‘Jail Tourism’ initiative on Republic Day-2021. The ‘Jail Yatra’, which began with Pune’s 150-year-old Yerwada Jail on the occasion of Republic Day, will eventually be extended to other prisons in the State. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Maharashtra launched its ‘Jail Tourism’ initiative on Republic Day-2021 (‘Jail Yatra’ began in Pune)
- Maharashtra: CM – Uddhav Thackeray | Governor – Bhagat Singh Koshyari



## Sports & Games

**552.** One of the greatest bowling sensations of IPL and for Mumbai Indians, Lasith Malinga has decided to retire from franchise cricket. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Lasith Malinga (Sri Lanka – Cricket) – decided to retire from franchise Cricket
- Sri Lanka – Colombo/Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte – Sri Lankan rupee
- PM – Mahinda Rajapaksa | President – Gotabaya Rajapaksa

**553.** On January 21, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has won the Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) 10<sup>th</sup> National Ice Hockey Championship trophy after a win over Ladakh in the finals in Gulmarg, J & K. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- ITBP – won the IHAI 10<sup>th</sup> National Ice Hockey Championship trophy – in Gulmarg, J & K
- HQs of ITBP – New Delhi | DG – Surjeet Singh Deswal | ADG – Manoj Singh Rawat
- HQs of IHAI – New Delhi | President – Surinder Mohan Bali



## Important Days & Dates

**554.** India has celebrated the 13<sup>th</sup> National Girl Child Day this year on January 24. The initiative was started by the ministry of women and child development in 2008. Punjab has announced January 2021 to be the 'Month of the Girl Child'. The scheme "Dheeyan Di Lohri" has also been launched. Madhya Pradesh will celebrate National Girl Child Day with the theme of "Aware girl child, Able Madhya Pradesh". This day will also mark the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' (BBBP) scheme which was launched in 2015. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- January 24 – 13<sup>th</sup> National Girl Child Day – since 2008
- Punjab announced January 2021 as – 'Month of the Girl Child'
- Punjab launched – 'Dheeyan Di Lohri' scheme
- Madhya Pradesh launched – 'PANKH' (Protection Awareness Nutrition Knowledge Health) Abhiyan – under BBBP
- Rajasthan launched – 'Ek Paudha Suposhit Beti Ke Naam' – under BBBP scheme
- 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' (BBBP) scheme – launched in 2015 by PM Modi
- Punjab: Capital – Chandigarh | CM – Captain Amarinder Singh | Governor – V. P. Singh Badnore

**555.** On January 24, Home Minister Amit Shah has attended the first BTR (Bodoland Territorial Region) Accord Day celebration at Kokrajhar in Assam. Mr. Shah has assured that the Bodo language and culture and political rights of Bodo people will be preserved. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- January 24 – 1<sup>st</sup> edition of BTR Accord Day – celebrated at Kokrajhar, Assam
- Bodo – an associate official language of Assam
- Total official languages listed in the 8<sup>th</sup> Schedule of Indian Constitution – 22 languages
- Assam: Capital – Dispur | CM – Sarbananda Sonowal | Governor – Jagdish Mukhi

**556.** Every year, January 25 is observed as National Tourism Day in India. This year, the theme of National Tourism Day is "Dekho Apna Desh". From January 21 to February 22, the Ministry of Tourism has been organizing seminars pertaining to the theme. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- January 25 – National Tourism Day | Theme – "Dekho Apna Desh"



**557.** The 11<sup>th</sup> National Voters' Day was observed on 25 January in order to encourage more young voters to take part in the polling process. The day has been observed on January 25 every year since 2011 to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India. This year, the theme is 'Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed'. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- January 25 – 11<sup>th</sup> National Voters' Day – by ECI since 2011
- Theme – “Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed”
- HQs of ECI – New Delhi | Chief Election Commissioner – Sunil Arora (23<sup>rd</sup>) | Formed on – 25<sup>th</sup> Jan, 1950

**558.** Every year, 24 January is celebrated as International Day of Education. This year, the theme is “Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation”. The pandemic also fast-tracked dropout rates in India. The Annual State of Education Report (ASER) by NGO Pratham has indicated that from 1.8% children not enrolling in schools in rural India in 2018, the number peaked to 5.3% in 2020. Article 21-A of the Indian Constitution provides for free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years as a Fundamental Right. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- January 24 – 3<sup>rd</sup> International Day of Education – by the UN
- Theme – “Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation”
- As per ASER by NGO Pratham: 5.3% children are not enrolling in schools in rural India in 2020
- ‘National Education Day’ – was observed on November 11

**559.** On 25 January, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has unveiled the Golden Jubilee Plaque to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Statehood day. He stated that new schemes such as Jan Manch, Mukhya Mantri Seva Sankalp Helpline, Himachal Grihini Suvidha Yojana, Himcare and Sahara have been successful. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- January 25 – Golden Jubilee or 50<sup>th</sup> Statehood Day of Himachal Pradesh
- Schemes: Jan Manch, Mukhya Mantri Seva Sankalp Helpline, Himachal Grihini Suvidha Yojana, Himcare & Sahara
- Himachal Pradesh: Capital – Shimla & Dharamshala | CM – Jai Ram Thakur | Governor – Bandaru Dattatreya



## Meetings, Conferences and Summits

**560.** The 15<sup>th</sup> India Digital Summit, the flagship event of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) was scheduled on January 19 and 20, 2021. It was inaugurated by Ravi Shankar Prasad. The theme for this year's summit is 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat - Start of New Decade'. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated the 15<sup>th</sup> India Digital Summit – organised by IMAI
- Theme of the Summit – “Aatmanirbhar Bharat - Start of New Decade”
- HQs of IMAI – New Delhi | President – Subho Ray

**561.** The 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) on “India-Bangladesh Cooperation in the Energy Sector” was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The meeting also discussed the status of 1320 MW Maitree Super Thermal Power Project at Rampal. Indian delegation was led by the Power Secretary Sanjiv Nandan Sahai. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the JSC on “India-Bangladesh Cooperation in the Energy Sector” – held in Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Indian delegation was led by – Sanjiv Nandan Sahai (Power Secretary)
- Bangladesh – Dhaka – Taka | PM – Sheikh Hasina | President – Abdul Hamid

**562.** Union Home Minister Amit Shah has chaired the 69<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the North Eastern Council (NEC) at Shillong, Meghalaya on January 23 and 24. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Amit Shah chaired the 69<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the North Eastern Council (NEC) at Shillong, Meghalaya
- Meghalaya: Capital – Shillong | CM – Conrad Kongkal Sangma | Governor – Satya Pal Malik
- Ministry of Home Affairs – Shri Amit Shah | Constituency – Gandhinagar, Gujarat

## Arts & Cultural Affairs

**563.** Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb has promoted the traditional 'Risa' - a handwoven cloth used by the state's indigenous communities, as a signature identity of the state. The Risa is set to be a national brand under the India Handloom Brand. The traditional Tripuri female attire comprises 3 parts - Risa, Rignai and Rikutu. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Biplab Kumar Deb – has promoted the traditional 'Risa' - a handwoven cloth
- Risa, Rignai and Rikutu – the parts of the traditional female attire of Tripura
- Tripura: Capital – Agartala | CM – Biplab Kumar Deb | Governor – Ramesh Bais



# Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes

**564.** On January 21, Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi has launched Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) of Coal India Ltd (CIL) & also assured CIL for full government support. Coal India accounts for over 80% of domestic coal output. ERP in Coal India will be implemented in two phases. Pralhad Joshi has also presented “Coal Minister’s Award-2020” to 3 coal companies of Coal India Ltd - Northern Coalfields Ltd (NCL), Central Coalfields Ltd (CCL) and Western Coalfields Ltd (WCL). [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Pralhad Joshi launched Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) of CIL
- CIL – accounts for over 80% of domestic coal output
- “Coal Minister’s Award-2020” to = Northern Coalfields Ltd + Central Coalfields Ltd + Western Coalfields Ltd
- Pralhad Joshi – Minister of Coal, Minister of Mines (Constituency – Dharwad, Karnataka)

**565.** Nikhil Srivastava, a young Indian mathematician, has been named winner of the prestigious “2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize” along with two others for solving long-standing questions on the Kadison-Singer problem and on Ramanujan graphs. The prize consists of a medal and \$1,00,000. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Nikhil Srivastava (mathematician) – winner of the prestigious “2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize”
- The prize consists of – \$1,00,000

**566.** On January 23, “Subhash Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar” is announced every year on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. For the year 2021, Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS - in the institutional category) and Rajendra Kumar Bhandari (in the individual category) have been selected for the Prize for their excellent work in disaster management. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- “Subhash Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar-2021” – announced in 2 categories
- Institutional Category: Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (₹51 lakh + Certificate)
- Individual Category: Rajendra Kumar Bhandari (₹5 lakh + Certificate)

**567.** The awards have been announced at the closing ceremony of the 1<sup>st</sup> ever hybrid version of the IFFI held at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium in Panaji, Goa on January 24, 2021. The “IFFI 51 Special Jury Award” for a film goes to Bulgarian Director Kamin Kalev for his 2020 film ‘February’. The Awards have been decided by the ‘IFFI 51 International Jury’ comprising eminent filmmakers from across the world, with Argentine Director Pablo Cesar as Chairman. This year, Bangladesh was the focus country in the 51<sup>st</sup> IFFI. The rest of the awards are as mentioned below. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- 1<sup>st</sup> ever hybrid version of the 51<sup>st</sup> IFFI – held at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium (in Panaji, Goa)
- Chairman of 'IFFI 51 International Jury' – Pablo Cesar ([Argentina](#))
- Focus country in the 51<sup>st</sup> IFFI – Bangladesh
- The awards were given as below:

Name	Award	Film
Kamin Kalev (Bulgaria)	IFFI 51 Special Jury Award (for film 'February')	–
Kripal Kalita (India)	IFFI 51 Special Mention Award – for film 'Bridge')	–
Zofia Stafiej (Poland)	The Silver Peacock for Best Actor (female)	I Never Cry
Tzu-Chuan Liu (Taiwan)	The Silver Peacock for Best Actor (male)	The Silent Forest
Chen-Nien Ko (Taiwan)	The Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Best Director)	The Silent Forest
'Into the Darkness' movie (Denmark)	The Golden Peacock Award	–
Biswajit Chatterjee (India)	Indian Personality of the Year Award	–
Vittorio Storaro (Italy)	Lifetime Achievement Award	–

**568.** Galwan martyr Colonel Bikumalla Santosh Babu has been posthumously awarded with 'Maha Vir Chakra'. This is the second-highest military decoration, announced posthumously by the government on the eve of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Republic Day. He led his troops against the 'vicious' Chinese attack in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh in June, 2020. Four other soldiers have been named for 'Vir Chakra' awards posthumously. The other Chakra awardees are as mentioned below. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- The list of Chakra awardees announced posthumously by the government on the eve of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Republic Day:

Name	Award
Colonel Bikumalla Santosh Babu	Maha Vir Chakra (Posthumously)
Hav K Palani	Vir Chakra (Posthumously)
Nk Deepak Singh	Vir Chakra ( Posthumously)
Sep Gurtej Singh	Vir Chakra (Posthumously)
Nb Sub Nuduram Soren	Vir Chakra (Posthumously)
Hav Tejinder Singh	Vir Chakra
Sub Sanjiv Kumar	Kirti Chakra (Posthumously)
Maj Anuj Sood	Shaurya Chakra (Posthumously)
PTR Sonam Tshering Tamang	Shaurya Chakra
Rfn Pranab Jyoti Das	Shaurya Chakra



**569.** Padma Awards - one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in 3 categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The “Padma Awards 2021” have been announced recently on January 25. 7 people were awarded the Padma Vibhushan, 10 named for the Padma Bhushan and 102 named for Padma Shri. 29 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 10 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI, 16 Posthumous awardees and 1 transgender awardee. The awards were given as mentioned below. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- The “Padma Awards 2021”: Padma Vibhushan – 7 | Padma Bhushan – 10 | Padma Shri – 102
- Women awardees – 29 | Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI – 10 | Posthumous – 16 | Transgender – 1

<b>Padma Vibhushan - 7</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Field</b>
<b>Shinzo Abe</b> (Japan)	Public Affairs
<b>Dr. Belle Monappa Hegde</b> (Karnataka)	Medicine
<b>B. B. Lal</b> (Delhi)	Archaeology (others)
<b>Maulana Wahiduddin Khan</b> (Delhi)	Spiritualism (others)
<b>Sudarshan Sahoo</b> (Odisha)	Art
<b>S P Balasubramaniam</b> (Tamil Nadu)	Art (Posthumous)
<b>Narinder Singh Kapany</b> (USA)	Science and Engineering (Posthumous)

<b>Padma Bhushan - 10</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Field</b>
<b>Nripendra Misra</b> (Uttar Pradesh)	Civil Service
<b>Krishnan Nair Shantakumari Chithra</b> (Kerala)	Art
<b>Chandrashekhar Kambara</b> (Karnataka)	Literature & Education
<b>Rajnikant Devidas Shroff</b> (Maharashtra)	Trade & Industry
<b>Sumitra Mahajan</b> (Madhya Pradesh)	Public Affairs
<b>Tarlochan Singh</b> (Haryana)	Public Affairs
<b>Tarun Gogoi</b> (Assam)	Public Affairs <b>(Posthumous)</b>
<b>Ram Vilas Paswan</b> (Bihar)	Public Affairs <b>(Posthumous)</b>
<b>Keshubhai Patel</b> (Gujarat)	Public Affairs <b>(Posthumous)</b>
<b>Kalbe Sadiq</b> (Uttar Pradesh)	Others - Spiritualism <b>(Posthumous)</b>

**570.** On January 24, Thirty-two children have been awarded the “Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar” this year for their exceptional abilities and outstanding accomplishments in 6 fields - innovation, scholastics, sports, art & culture, social service and bravery. 7 awards have been given in the field of Art and Culture, 9 for Innovation and 5 for Scholastic Achievements, 7 for Sports category, 3 for Bravery and 1 child has been honoured for her efforts in the field of Social Service. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- 32 children – awarded the “Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar-2021”





# Appointments & Resignations

**571.** On January 20, Mongolia's Prime Minister Khurelsukh Ukhnaa has submitted his resignation to parliament after protests in the capital Ulaanbaatar over the government's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Khurelsukh Ukhnaa – PM of Mongolia – submitted his resignation
- Mongolia – Ulaanbaatar – Mongolian Togrog | President – Khaltmaagiin Battulga

**572.** On January 21, Jayant N. Khobragade, an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer of the 1995 batch, has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Jayant N. Khobragade – appointed as India's next Ambassador to ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta
- Chairmanship of ASEAN 2021 – Brunei | Secretariat of ASEAN – Jakarta, Indonesia | Members – 10

**573.** The board of Sundaram Finance has named Rajiv Lochan (director Strategy) as Managing Director with effect from April 1. The current managing director T. T. Srinivasaraghavan will be retiring on March 31, 2020. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Rajiv Lochan – appointed as MD of Sundaram Finance – from April 1
- HQs of Sundaram Finance – Chennai, Tamil Nadu | Current MD – T. T. Srinivasaraghavan

**574.** On January 23, Indian Broadcasting Foundation has appointed former Chief Justice of Jammu & Kashmir High Court Justice Gita Mittal as the new Chairperson of Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC). Mittal succeeds former Supreme Court Judge, Justice Vikramajit Sen. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Gita Mittal – appointed as new Chairperson of Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC)

**575.** Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa has been re-elected to a second term in office as President of Portugal. He has secured 61 per cent of the vote. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa – re-elected as President of Portugal (2<sup>nd</sup> term)
- Portugal – Lisbon – Euro | President – Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa



## Amount & Agreements

**576.** On January 24, the finance ministry has allocated an additional ₹660 Cr to Madhya Pradesh for capital expenditure to undertake citizen-centric reforms under the 'Special Assistance to States for capital expenditure' scheme was announced by the Centre in October, 2020. 50% amount has been released to the state as first installment for the projects. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Finance ministry – allocated an additional ₹660 Cr to Madhya Pradesh (1<sup>st</sup> state) for capital expenditure
- Madhya Pradesh: Capital – Bhopal | CM – Shivraj Singh Chouhan | Governor – Anandiben Patel

## Ranks, Reports & Surveys

**577.** The National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) has remained the world's largest derivatives exchange for the second consecutive year in 2020 in terms of number of contracts traded, according to the Futures Industry Association (FIA). In addition, it has been ranked fourth in the world in cash equities by number of trades by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE) for calendar year 2020. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- NSE – remained the world's largest derivatives exchange in 2020 – according to the Futures Industry Association
- NSE – 4<sup>th</sup> in the world in cash equities by number of trades by the World Federation of Exchanges
- HQs of NSE – Mumbai, MH | Chairman – Girish Chandra Chaturvedi | MD & CEO – Vikram Limaye

**578.** According to data from the US agency, the National Science Foundation (NSF), India is currently in third place, only behind China and the United States, with 1,35,788 scientific publications in the year 2018. The NSF database shows that India's growth rate of scientific publication was 12.9%, as against the world average of 4.9%. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- India – currently at the 3<sup>rd</sup> place in scientific publications | 1<sup>st</sup> – China | 2<sup>nd</sup> – USA
- HQs of NSF – Virginia, US | Director – Sethuraman “Panch” Panchanathan

**579.** According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Mukesh Ambani has moved up to the 11<sup>th</sup> spot with a total net worth of \$79.2 billion (around Rs 5.78 lakh Cr). Tesla CEO Elon Musk remained the richest man in the world with a net worth of \$202 billion. Close behind him is Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos with a net worth of \$192 billion and Microsoft founder Bill Gates with net worth of \$133 billion. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- “World’s Richest Persons List” – as per the Bloomberg Billionaires Index (as on January 22, 2021)
- 1<sup>st</sup> – Elon Musk (\$202 Billion) | 2<sup>nd</sup> – Jeff Bezos (\$192 Billion) | 3<sup>rd</sup> – Bill Gates (\$133 Billion)
- Mukesh Ambani – 11<sup>th</sup>

**580.** The report, titled “Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk” and compiled by United Nations University’s Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH), says most of the 58,700 large dams worldwide were constructed between 1930 and 1970 with a design life of 50 to 100 years. By 2050, most people on Earth will live downstream of tens of thousands of large dams built in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The report said that 32,716 large dams (55% of the world’s total) are found in just 4 Asian countries: China, India, Japan and South Korea. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- “Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk” report – released by UNU-INWEH ([Canada](#))
- The average life expectancy of a dam as per the report is – around 50 years
- 55% of the world’s total large dams are found in – China, India, Japan & South Korea

**581.** Bengaluru has emerged as the world’s fastest-growing mature Tech Ecosystem in the world since 2016, followed by the European cities of London, Munich, Berlin, Paris and Mumbai according to the Dealroom.co data analysed by London & Partners. Bengaluru is also ranked 6<sup>th</sup> for the world’s Tech Venture Capitalist (VC) investments, on a global list topped by Beijing. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Bengaluru – emerged as the world’s fastest-growing mature Tech Ecosystem in the world since 2016
- The world’s Tech Venture Capitalist (VC) investments: 1<sup>st</sup> – Beijing | Bangalore – 6<sup>th</sup>

**582.** Indian Sundarbans, which is part of the largest mangrove forest in the world, is home to 428 species of birds, as per the recent publication “Birds of the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve” by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI). The publication has been compiled by 3 scientists - Kaliash Chandra, Gopinathan Maheshwaran and Amitava Majumdar. Sundarbans is home to about 96 Royal Bengal Tigers (as per last census in 2020). [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- ‘Sundarbans’ is home to 428 species of birds – as per the recent publication by ZSI
- ‘Sundarbans’ is home to about 96 Royal Bengal Tigers (as per last census in 2020)
- Sundarbans – spans from the Hooghly River (West Bengal) to Baleswar River (Bangladesh)



**583.** Indian billionaires increased their wealth by 35% during the lockdown to ₹ 3 trillion, ranking India after U.S., China, Germany, Russia and France, according to Oxfam's 'Inequality Virus Report' released on the opening day of the World Economic Forum in Davos. Mukesh Ambani has earned ₹90 Cr an hour during pandemic when around 24% of people in India were earning under ₹3,000 a month. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- "Inequality Virus Report" – released by Oxfam (HQs - Nairobi, Kenya) | India – 6th | 1st – USA
- Indian billionaires increased their wealth by 35% during the lockdown to ₹ 3 trillion
- Mukesh Ambani earned ₹90 Cr an hour during pandemic

## **Acquisitions & Mergers**

**584.** On January 21, Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) Ltd has planned to sell 24.48% stake in Good Host Spaces Pvt. Ltd for a cash consideration of ₹232.81 Cr. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- HDFC Ltd – to sell 24.48% stake in Good Host Spaces Pvt. Ltd – for a cash consideration of ₹232.81 Cr
- HQs of HDFC Ltd – Mumbai, MH | Chairman – Deepak Parekh | CEO – Keki Mistry

## **MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships**

**585.** On January 21, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has joined hands with the California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) to offer over 200 free e-learning courses through eSkillIndia platform of NSDC for skill seekers in India. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- NSDC + California State University = partnership to offer over 200 free e-learning courses
- HQs of NSDC – New Delhi | MD & CEO – Manish Kumar

**586.** On January 23, the Union Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) has signed an MoU with IIT Roorkee for continuation of MoRTH Professorial Chair focusing on research and development, teaching and training in the area of Development of Highway Infrastructure. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- MoRTH + IIT Roorkee = for continuation of MoRTH Professorial Chair
- Nitin Gadkari – Ministry of Road Transport and Highway, Ministry of MSMEs (Nagpur, Maharashtra)



**587.** On January 22, Madhya Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation has entered into an MoU with IIM-Indore for 3 years with intent to introduce effective policy improvements aimed at developing an ecosystem for industries and businesses in the state. It is a move towards the roadmap of achieving 'Aatmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh'. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Madhya Pradesh + IIM-Indore = an MoU for 3 years for the roadmap of achieving 'Aatmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh'
- Madhya Pradesh: Capital – Bhopal | CM – Shivraj Singh Chouhan | Governor – Anandiben Patel

## **Books & Authors**

**588.** On January 17, the story of Aadhaar, as narrated in “The Making of Aadhaar: World’s Largest Identity Platform”, sounds like the story of the average startup. The author of this book is Ram Sewak Sharma. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “The Making of Aadhaar: World’s Largest Identity Platform” book – authored Ram Sewak Sharma

**589.** A new book titled “Flying Blind: India’s Quest for Global Leadership” by foreign affairs consultant Mohamed Zeeshan argues that India needs a more coherent strategy for its relations with the outside world in order to fulfil its domestic development needs and global leadership aspirations. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “Flying Blind: India's Quest for Global Leadership” book – authored by Mohamed Zeeshan

**590.** “India 2030: The Rise of a Rajasic Nation” is a collection of essays authored & edited by Observer Research Foundation vice president Gautam Chikermane. These are 20 forecasts by 20 thought leaders on 20 themes. The book was published by Penguin Random House. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- “India 2030: The Rise of a Rajasic Nation” book – edited & authored by Gautam Chikermane

# Obituaries

**591.** On January 20, Veteran actor Unnikrishnan Namboothiri has passed away in Kannur, Kerala. He was 98. He had tested positive for COVID-19 recently. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Unnikrishnan Namboothiri (Kerala) – a Malayalam Actor – passed away
- Kerala: Capital – Thiruvananthapuram | CM – Pinarayi Vijayan | Governor – Arif Mohammad Khan

**592.** On January 22, Popular Bhajan singer Narendra Chanchal has passed away. He was best known for his songs "Chalo bulawa aaya hai" and "Tune mujhe bulaya sherawaliye". In 2009, Chanchal had released his autobiography "Midnight Singer". [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Narendra Chanchal – a Bhajan singer – passed away
- Autobiography of Narendra Chanchal – "Midnight Singer" (in 2009)

**593.** On January 23, Iconic TV & radio interviewer Larry King from America has passed away. He won an 'Emmy award for Lifetime Achievement' in 2011. In 1978, he started a nightly coast-to-coast radio talk show on the Mutual Radio Network, called "The Larry King Show". He was known for hosting CNN's popular show "Larry King Live". [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Larry King (USA) – Iconic TV & radio interviewer – passed away
- He won 'Emmy award for Lifetime Achievement' in 2011
- USA – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | 46<sup>th</sup> President – Joe Biden | 49<sup>th</sup> VP – Kamala Harris

**594.** Well-known poet, historian, author and retired bureaucrat Narendra Luther has passed away. He was 88. Born in Hoshiarpur in Punjab in 1932, he began his stint in Indian administrative service in Kurnool in 1956 and was posted to Hyderabad in 1959. [{Read more}](#)

## Key Points:

- Narendra Luther – Poet, Historian, Author & Retired Bureaucrat – passed away



## Person in News

**595.** Flight lieutenant Bhawana Kanth is set to become the first woman fighter pilot to take part in the Republic Day parade. She will be a part of the Indian Air Force's (IAF's) tableau. Along with Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh, Kanth was inducted into the IAF as the first women fighter pilots in 2016. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Bhawana Kanth – to become the first woman fighter pilot to take part in the Republic Day parade

**596.** To mark the National Girl Child Day, Haridwar teenager Srishti Goswami has taken charge as the chief minister of Uttarakhand for one day on January 24. Goswami, a student of BSc Agriculture, lives in Daulatpur village of the district. The one-day chief minister will administer from Gairsain, the summer capital of the state. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Srishti Goswami – took charge as the CM of Uttarakhand for one day on January 24
- Uttarakhand: Capital – Dehradun & Gairsain | CM – Trivendra Singh Rawat | Governor – Baby Rani Maurya

## Science & Technology

**597.** On January 23, two new species of a rare ant genus have been discovered in Kerala and Tamil Nadu by a team of scientists from Punjabi University. One of the two species found in the Periyar Tiger Reserve of Kerala has been named 'Ooceraea Joshii' in honour of professor Amitabh Joshi. The other named 'Ooceraea decamera' was discovered from Alagarkoil in Madurai. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- 2 new species of Ant – discovered in Kerala and Tamil Nadu by a team of scientists from Punjabi University
- Periyar Tiger Reserve – Kerala
- Kerala: Capital – Thiruvananthapuram | CM – Pinarayi Vijayan | Governor – Arif Mohammad Khan
- Tamil Nadu: Capital – Chennai | CM – Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami | Governor – Banwarilal Purohit

**598.** The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) will launch its new flagship "H3 rocket" which is intended to fully replace the older, active "H-IIA rocket" after 2023. The cost is aimed at about 5 billion yen (\$48.2 million). [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- JAXA – to launch its new flagship "H3 rocket" | It will replace "H-IIA rocket" after 2023
- HQs of JAXA – Tokyo, Japan | Administrator – Hiroshi Yamakawa



**599.** On January 26, Elon Musk's SpaceX has managed to break the world record of the most number of satellites carried by a single rocket as Falcon 9 carried as many as 143 payloads into space. The launch was part of SpaceX's SmallSat Rideshare Program mission. Previously, the record was 104 satellites being deployed on a single mission, achieved by the ISRO in 2017. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- SpaceX – broke the world record of the most number of satellites carried by a single rocket
- SpaceX's 'Falcon 9 rocket' carried as many as 143 satellites ('Falcon 9' is World's 1<sup>st</sup> Orbital-class reusable rocket)
- HQs of SpaceX – California, U.S. | CEO – Elon Musk | Founded in – 2002

**600.** On January 23, CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI) Durgapur has unveiled 'Aqua Rejuv', the first-ever Waste Water Treatment Technology Model which purifies Waste Water for Irrigation/Farming purposes. Aqua Rejuvenation Plant (ARP) is an Integrated Waste Water Rejuvenation Model which has Six-Stage purification profile. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- CSIR-CMERI (Durgapur) – unveiled 'Aqua Rejuv' - the 1<sup>st</sup> ever Waste Water Treatment Technology Model
- ARP – Aqua Rejuvenation Plant
- HQs of CSIR – New Delhi | CSIR President – Narendra Modi | Director General – Shekhar C. Mande







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