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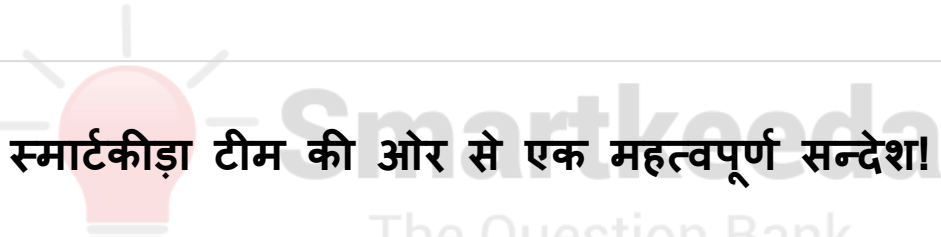
Hi Folks! We hope you all are doing well. We would like to state here that this PDF is meant for preparing for the upcoming MockDrill Test of January 2021 Month at Testzone. In this Current Affairs PDF we have added all the important Current Affairs information in form of 'Key-points' which are crucial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



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National & States Affairs

601. On January 27, Rajasthan government has brought Manufactured sand (M-sand) policy for construction works. It gives industry status to the units producing it for construction work and reducing the dependence on bajri (riverbed sand). The Supreme Court had banned illegal mining on riverbeds in 2017. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Rajasthan – brought Manufactured sand (M-sand) policy for construction works
- Rajasthan: Capital – Jaipur | CM – Ashok Gehlot | Governor – Kalraj Mishra

602. Ministry of Tourism has dedicated 3 virtual pavilions, Dekho Apna Desh, Statue of Unity & Incredible India in “Bharat Parv-2021” that was organized on a Virtual platform from January 26-31, 2021 to promote tourism. ‘Incredible India Pavilion’ comprises information on UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The virtual Bharat Parv was inaugurated by the Speaker of Lok Sabha Om Prakash Birla. Ministry of Tourism organizes Bharat Parv every year since 2016. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Ministry of Tourism – organized “Bharat Parv-2021” from January 26-31, 2021 (since 2016)
- The virtual Bharat Parv was inaugurated by – Om Prakash Birla
- 3 virtual pavilions = Dekho Apna Desh, Statue of Unity & Incredible India
- Prahlad Singh Patel – Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture

603. With the completion of the construction of the 3,300-metre-long airstrip near Kurebhar on Purvanchal Expressway, Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country with two airstrips on expressways to facilitate emergency landing and take-off of fighter planes. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Uttar Pradesh – became the 1st state in India with 2 airstrips on expressways to facilitate emergency landing
- Purvanchal Expressway – located in Uttar Pradesh
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

604. On January 27, Karnataka has launched a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country to automatically select beneficiaries for old-age pensions that will be paid through the direct benefit transfer (DBT) mode using the ‘Navodaya’ app. This model was piloted in Udupi and Ballari districts. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Karnataka launched Direct Benefit Transfer for old-age pensions automatically using ‘Navodaya’ app
- This model was launched on pilot basis in – Udupi & Ballari districts
- Karnataka: Capital – Bangalore | CM – BS Yediyurappa | Governor – Vajubhai Vala



605. To address nutritional challenges leading to stunting, underweight and anemia amongst children and women US food major Cargill, in partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and Delhi based Centre for Responsible Business (CRB), have launched a program to improve nutrition status in Jaipur, Rajasthan. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Cargill (USA) + UN WFP + CRB (Delhi) = launched a Nutritional Program – in Jaipur, Rajasthan
- HQs of UNWFP – Rome, Italy | ED – David Muldrow Beasley | Countries – 36
- Rajasthan: Capital – Jaipur | CM – Ashok Gehlot | Governor – Kalraj Mishra

606. On January 27, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved an increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Copra. The decision, taken by PM Narendra Modi, would benefit copra farmers in 12 coastal State. The MSP for Fair Average Quality of milling copra was increased by ₹375 to ₹10,335 a quintal for 2021 from ₹9,960 in 2020 & the MSP for ball copra was increased by ₹300 to ₹10,600 a quintal from ₹10,300 in 2020. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- CCEA approved an increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Copra
- MSP for 'milling copra' increased by ₹375 – to ₹10,335/quintal (from ₹9,960 in 2020)
- MSP for 'ball copra' increased by ₹300 – to ₹10,600 /quintal (from ₹10,300 in 2020)

607. On January 26, the 72nd Republic Day celebrations had several firsts and had also missed out some long-standing traditions for the first time. On this day, Indian National Congress (INC) had declared 'Purna Swaraj' in 1929. A total of 32 tableaux - 17 of states and UTs, 9 of ministries and 6 from the defence arm, rolled down at Rajpath. The tableau of Uttar Pradesh has won the first prize at this year's Republic Day parade. It was based on the theme 'Ayodhya: Cultural Heritage of Uttar Pradesh'. Below are the highlights of the events which were observed this year. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- The tableau of Uttar Pradesh has won the first prize at this year's Republic Day parade.
- Uttar Pradesh displayed a model of the upcoming 'Ram temple'.
- 122-member contingent from Bangladesh's armed forces participated at Rajpath.
- Rafale fighters flypast over Rajpath.
- Ladakh participated in the Republic Day Parade for the 1st time. It depicted the iconic 'Thiksey Monastery'.



- CRPF had its own tableau for the 1st time at Rajpath. Its tableau featured CRPF's 'Combat skills in conflict zones'.
- IAF tableau featured India's first woman fighter pilot – Bhawana Kanth (Bihar).
- A tableau of the Department of Biotechnology showcased the indigenous production of 'Covid vaccine'.
- Andaman & Nicobar Islands troops to participate for the first time.
- For the 1st time, there was no Chief Guest. Last time, it was in 1966 when there was no Chief Guest.

608. The West Bengal Transport Corporation has launched the first of its kind children's library on a boat namely "Young Readers' Boat Library" in Kolkata. The trip will start at Millenium Park to Belur Math jetty and return. A ride on the boat would cost ₹100 for adults and ₹50 for children. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- West Bengal – launched the first of its kind "Young Readers' Boat Library" in Kolkata
- West Bengal: Capital – Kolkata | CM – Mamta Banerjee | Governor – Jagdeep Dhankar

609. On January 25, Nirmala Sitharaman has inaugurated the Chennai Bench of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) through virtual mode. Shri Balvinder Singh and Justice Venugopal M. have taken charge of the newly constituted Chennai Bench of the NCLAT. Five new Benches of NCLT have been announced at Jaipur, Cuttack, Kochi, Indore and Amaravati, bringing the total number of Benches to 16 (including the Principal Bench). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Chennai Bench of NCLAT
- Balvinder Singh & Venugopal M. – took charge of the newly constituted Chennai Bench
- Nirmala Sitharaman – Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Corporate Affairs | Constituency – Karnataka
- Chairperson of NCLAT – Bansi Lal Bhat

610. 'Vasuki' train of the South-East Central Railways (SECR) zone in Chhattisgarh has broken its own previous record by successfully operating the longest ever freight train by amalgamating 5 rakes of goods trains as one unit of around 3.5 km. It covered the distance of 224 km between the railway stations of Bhilai & Korba. The nation's most profitable railways zone SECR had earlier operated 177 loaded wagons "Super Anaconda" of 2 km long freight train. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 'Vasuki' train of SECR broke record by successfully operating the longest ever freight train (Length – 3.5 km)
- HQs of SECR – Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh | General Manager – Shri Goutam Banerjee



611. On January 25, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled a revamped website that provides information about gallantry awards in India and their recipients since Independence. Along with portal, he also launched a Gallantry Award Quiz competition and an e-magazine 'Shauryawaan'. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Rajnath Singh – unveiled a revamped website that provides information about gallantry awards in India
- Rajnath Singh – launched a Gallantry Award Quiz competition & an e-magazine 'Shauryawaan'
- Ministry of Defence – Rajnath Singh (Constituency – Lucknow, UP)

612. On January 27, Bharti AXA General Insurance has launched its new app 'Krishi Sakha' to cater to the specific needs of the farmers in the country and guide them in adopting best farming practices and enhancing productivity. The farmers will also have access to the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) portal for crop insurance related information. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Bharti AXA General Insurance – launched its new app 'Krishi Sakha' for farmers
- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) was launched in – 2016
- HQs of Bharti AXA – Mumbai, Maharashtra | CEO – Sanjeev Srinivasan

613. The Supreme Court has recently stated that the successful bidders for a corporate debtor under 'Section 32 A' of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) would be immune from any investigations being conducted either by any investigating agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) or other statutory bodies such as Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- A corporate debtor would be immune from any investigations under 'Section 32 A' of the IBC
- CIRP – Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process | IBC came into being in – 2016

614. "Ayu Samvad" (My Health My Responsibility) is one of the largest public awareness campaign program on Ayurveda and Covid 19 Pandemic, organized by All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) New Delhi, as envisioned & supported by Ministry of AYUSH. More than 5 lakh lectures will be organized across the nation by Ayurveda Physicians for citizens of India. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Ayu Samvad" (My Health My Responsibility) – largest public awareness campaign on Ayurveda & Covid 19 Pandemic
- The campaign was organised by – All India Institute of Ayurveda (New Delhi)



615. On January 26, On the occasion of Republic Day, Akshay Kumar launched the mobile action game “Fearless and United Guards (FAU-G)”. The initial episode of the game is based in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh and the rest of the episodes will be set in other Indian battlegrounds. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Akshay Kumar – launched a mobile action game “FAU-G” (Fearless and United Guards)

616. On January 28, Maharashtra has formally launched the Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy. The state has also inaugurated Krishi Urja Abhiyan Policy Web Portal, Solar Energy Land Bank Portal, Maha Krishi Abhiyan App and ACF App prepared by the power discom Mahavitaran. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Maharashtra – launched the Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy
- Maharashtra: CM – Uddhav Thackeray | Governor – Bhagat Singh Koshyari

617. On January 27, a new School of Public Health (SPH) has been launched to make policy intervention for building public health capacity and skills and bridge gaps between education and practices in Rajasthan. The school is named after Indian Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR) chairperson S.D. Gupta. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- School of Public Health (SPH) – launched in Rajasthan
- The school is named after IIHMR chairperson – S. D. Gupta
- Rajasthan: Capital – Jaipur | CM – Ashok Gehlot | Governor – Kalraj Mishra

618. Odisha government in collaboration with UNICEF & technical support from Structural Dynamics Research Corporation (SDRC), has launched a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based interactive Dashboard for Teacher Education Institutes (TEI) to monitor progress against the annual academic calendar and improve the quality of teacher training. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Odisha + UNICEF + SDRC = launched a GIS-based interactive Dashboard for Teacher Education Institutes (TEI)
- Odisha: Capital – Bhubaneswar | CM – Naveen Patnaik | Governor – Ganeshi Lal
- HQs of UNICEF – New York, USA | Executive Director – Henrietta H. Fore | Established in – 1946
- HQs of SDRC – Texas, USA



619. On January 28, Union Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar has released 'Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines' for long-term conservation of marine species and their habitats. He has also launched 'National Marine Turtle Action Plan'. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Prakash Javadekar – released 'Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines' & 'National Marine Turtle Action Plan'
- Prakash Javadekar – Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Ministry of Info. & Broadcasting
- Constituency – Maharashtra

620. The Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board (UPSCWB) has formally launched the 'Dhannipur project' on the allocated 5-acre land at Dhannipur village of Ayodhya by hoisting the national flag and planting saplings to mark Republic Day celebrations. The Dhannipur project includes a mosque, hospital, museum, library, community kitchen, Indo-Islamic Cultural Research Centre and Publication House. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- UP Sunni Central Waqf Board launched the 'Dhannipur project' on the allocated 5-acre land in Ayodhya
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

621. The Haryana government will provide free books to Scheduled Caste students studying in state-run colleges for the year 2020-21. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Haryana – to provide free books to Scheduled Caste students studying in state-run colleges
- Haryana: Capital – Chandigarh | CM – Manohar Lal Khattar | Governor – Satyadev Narayan Arya

622. On January 27, a phoenix-themed memorial for late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa was inaugurated at Chennai. Palaniswami and Panneerselvam in May 2018 had jointly laid the foundation stone for the memorial adjacent to that of party founder and late chief minister M G Ramachandran located on the Marina Beach at Kamarajar Salai. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- A phoenix-themed memorial for late Tamil Nadu CM 'J. Jayalalithaa' was inaugurated at – Marina beach, Chennai
- Tamil Nadu: Capital – Chennai | CM – Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami | Governor – Banwarilal Purohit



623. On January 28, the Union Environment ministry has launched the “Indo-French Year of the Environment”. The Indo-French Year of the Environment over the period 2021-2022 would be based on 5 main themes including environmental protection, climate change, biodiversity conservation, sustainable urban development, renewable energy and energy efficiency. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Union Environment ministry launched the “Indo-French Year of the Environment”
- 5 themes: 1. Environmental Protection 2. Climate Change 3. Biodiversity Conservation
- 4. Sustainable Urban Development 5. Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
- France – Paris – Euro | President – Emmanuel Macron | PM – Jean Castex

624. Bharti Airtel has become the first telecom service provider in India to successfully “demonstrate and orchestrate” live 5G service. The demonstration took place in the city of Hyderabad. Airtel has tested the new 5G network over its existing liberalised spectrum in the 1800 MHz band through the NSA (non-standalone) network technology. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Airtel became the 1st telecom service provider in India to successfully demonstrate live 5G service – in Hyderabad
- HQs of Bharti Airtel – New Delhi | CEO & MD – Gopal Vittal | Chairman – Sunil Bharti Mittal
- Telangana: Capital – Hyderabad | CM – K. Chandrashekar Rao | Governor – Tamilisai Soundararajan

International Affairs

625. Google employees across the globe, in coordination with UNI Global Union, have formed an international union called the “Alpha Global”. The union consists of 13 different unions representing workers in 10 countries. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Google employees – formed an international union called “Alpha Global”
- HQs of Google – California, United States | CEO – Sundar Pichai



626. The UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution to promote a culture of peace and tolerance to safeguard religious sites all across the world. The resolution adopted calls for strengthened international efforts to foster a global dialogue on the promotion of a culture of tolerance and peace at all levels. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- UNGA adopted a resolution to promote a culture of peace and tolerance to safeguard Religious Sites
- HQs of UNGA – New York, USA | President – Volkan Bozkır | Member Countries – 193

627. The World Economic Forum has launched an Essential Digital Infrastructure and Services Network (EDISON) Alliance that will work towards ensuring global and equitable access to the digital economy. The alliance will be chaired by Verizon's Chairman and CEO Hans Vestberg. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- WEF launched 'EDISON' Alliance – chaired by Hans Vestberg (Chairman & CEO of Verizon)
- EDISON – Essential Digital Infrastructure and Services Network
- HQs of WEF – Cologny, Switzerland | Executive Chairman & Founder – Klaus Schwab



628. On January 23, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 1 Cr on HDFC Bank for wrongly invoking securities pledged by stock broking firm BRH Wealth Kreators in violation of an interim order by the regulator. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- SEBI imposed a penalty of Rs 1 Cr on HDFC Bank for wrongly invoking securities pledged by BRH Wealth Kreators
- HQs of SEBI – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Ajay Tyagi
- HQs of HDFC Bank – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – Sashidhar Jagdishan | Tagline – "We understand your world"
- HQs of BRH Wealth Kreators – Kolkata, West Bengal

629. Global financial services major HSBC has inaugurated its International Banking Unit (IBU) branch at GIFT City near Gandhinagar city in Gujarat. HSBC was the first bank to get a licence from the newly set up International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA). HSBC has been present in India for more than 160 years and its 4th branch globally was opened in India. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- HSBC – inaugurated its International Banking Unit (IBU) branch at GIFT City - Gandhinagar, Gujarat (4th branch)
- HSBC – the 1st bank to get a licence from the newly set up IFSCA
- HQs of HSBC – London, UK | CEO – Noel Quinn
- HQs of HCBC Bank India – Mumbai, MH | CEO – Surendra Rosh

630. IDFC First Bank has entered the 'Credit Card Business' with many industry first perquisite by way of lowest interest on revolving credit and nil interest on cash withdrawal for first 45 days. The bank will charge interest as low as 9% on revolving credit for those with a good track record. It will be offered to existing customers by invitation. For new customers, the card will be launched in March. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- IDFC First Bank entered the 'Credit Card Business' with lowest interest rate of 9%
- HQs of IDFC First Bank – Mumbai, Maharashtra | CEO – V. Vaidyanathan

631. According to Reserve Bank of India's data, overseas investment by domestic firms in India fell by over 42% to \$1.45 billion in December 2020. In the year-ago period, companies in India had invested \$2.51 billion in their foreign firm. Among major investors, ONGC Videsh Ltd invested a total of \$131.85 million in joint ventures and wholly-owned subsidiaries. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Overseas investment by domestic firms in India fell by over 42% to \$1.45 billion (in December 2020)
- ONGC Videsh Ltd – India's biggest Overseas investor (invested a total of \$131.85 million)
- HQs of ONGC Videsh Ltd – New Delhi | MD & CEO – A K Gupta
- HQs of ONGC – New Delhi | CMD – Sashi Shanker

632. On January 26, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is examining if there is a need to introduce Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) in India since private digital currencies, virtual currencies and cryptocurrencies gaining popularity in recent years. CBDC is a legal tender and a central bank liability in digital form denominated in a sovereign currency and appearing on the central bank's balance sheet. It is in the form of electronic currency which can be converted or exchanged at par with similarly denominated cash and traditional central bank deposits. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- RBI is examining if there is a need to introduce CBDC in India
- CBDC - Central Bank Digital Currency
- HQs of RBI – Mumbai | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25th) | Established in – 1st April 1935



633. One of the ways to restrict fiscal deficit is by resorting to “Off-budget borrowings”. Off-budget borrowings are loans that are taken not by the Centre directly, but by another public institution which borrows on the directions of the central government so that it is not counted in the calculation of fiscal deficit. Such borrowings are used to fulfill the government’s expenditure needs. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “Off-budget borrowings” – are loans that are taken not by the Centre directly but by another public institution
- $\text{Total Expenditure} - \text{Total Receipts/Revenue (excluding borrowings)} = \text{Fiscal Deficit}$

634. Global public debt is estimated to touch 98% of GDP at the end of 2020, as per the latest fiscal monitor update by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on January 28. As per the update, India's government debt is expected to remain elevated at 83% of GDP. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- As per the IMF’s report – Global public debt is estimated to touch 98% of GDP at the end of 2020 [{Estimation}](#)
- HQs of IMF – Washington, D.C., USA | President – Kristalina Georgieva | Member countries – 189

635. On January 27, Foreign direct investment (FDI) into India increased by 37% to USD 43.85 billion during April-November 2020, according to data by the commerce and industry ministry. It is the highest ever for the first 8 months of a financial year. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- FDI into India increased by 37% to USD 43.85 billion during April-November 2020
- Piyush Goyal – Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Commerce & Industry | Constituency – Maharashtra

636. On January 28, HDFC Bank and CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd - a Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC SPV) under the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY), has announced the EMI Collection Services for CSC-HDFC Bank’s Business Correspondents across India. The CSC-HDFC Bank Correspondent or Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE) will match the loan account with the customers’ registered phone number to cross-check the amount payable on the system. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- HDFC Bank + CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd = partnership for EMI Collection Services
- CSC e-Governance Services – functions under the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY)
- HQs of HDFC Bank – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – Sashidhar Jagdishan | Tagline – "We understand your world"



637. On January 28, RBI has announced in the 'Statement on Developmental and Regulatory Policies' issued as part of the Monetary Policy statement dated December 4, 2020 that with a view to strengthen and improve the efficacy of the grievance redress mechanism of banks, a comprehensive framework will be put in place during January 2021. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- RBI released Framework for strengthening Grievance Redress Mechanism in Banks
- Framework is titled – 'Statement on Developmental and Regulatory Policies'
- HQs of RBI – Mumbai | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25th) | Established in – 1st April 1935

Defence Affairs

638. On January 28, Indian Naval Fast Attack Craft (IN FAC) "T-81" of 'Super Dvora MK II' class was recently decommissioned after serving the nation successfully for over 20 years. The vessel was decommissioned at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai. The 25-metre long vessel, with 60 ton displacement, was built at Goa Shipyard Limited in collaboration with M/s Ramta of Israel, and was commissioned into the Navy on June 5, 1999. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- IN FAC "T-81" of 'Super Dvora MK II' class decommissioned after 20 years – at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai
- It was built in 1999 – at Goa Shipyard Limited
- MD & Chairman of Goa Shipyard – Bharat Bhushan Nagpal

Schemes & Initiatives

639. Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh has announced a hike from Rs 31,000 to Rs 51,000 in the "Shagun" amount for the marriage of daughters of construction workers in the state from April 1, 2021. In another major decision, the CM announced compensation worth Rs 2 lakh in case of death of a worker in an accident while being involved in any construction activity. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Punjab – announced a hike to Rs 51,000 in the "Shagun" scheme amount from April 1, 2021
- Punjab – announced compensation worth Rs 2 lakh in case of death of a worker in an accident
- Balri (Female Child) Birth Gift scheme – belongs
- Punjab: Capital – Chandigarh | CM – Captain Amarinder Singh | Governor – V. P. Singh Badnore



Sports & Games

640. On January 28, the Asian Football Confederation has announced that the “2022 Women’s Asian Cup” will be hosted by India from January 20 to February 6. The tournament will feature 12 teams, expanded from 8 in the previous edition. Maymol Rocky is the first female and present head coach of India women's National Football Team. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- AFC’s “2022 Women’s Asian Cup” – to be hosted by India from January 20 to February 6
- Present Head Coach of India women's National Football Team – Maymol Rocky (also 1st female)
- HQs of AFC – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia | President – Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa

641. Two Russian tennis players - Alija Merdeeva & Sofia Dmitrieva were banned for life time by the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) from the sport for life on January 27 for match-fixing. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Alija Merdeeva & Sofia Dmitrieva (Russia - Tennis) – banned life time by ITIA (London, UK)
- Russia – Moscow – Russian Ruble | PM – Mikhail Mishustin | President – Vladimir Putin

642. On January 28, Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has launched Anti-Doping Reference Material (RM), jointly developed by the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) and the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), Guwahati to strengthen the capacity of the anti-doping in India. NDTL and NIPER-G had signed an MoU in August 2020 to develop 20 rare RMs over 3 years. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Kiren Rijiju – launched Anti-Doping Reference Material (RM)
- It is jointly developed by = NDTL (New Delhi) + NIPER (Guwahati, Assam)
- Sports Minister – Kiren Rijiju | Constituency – Arunachal West

643. For the first time in 87 years or since its inception in 1934-35, the Ranji Trophy - the premier First Class cricket tournament in India, is suspended for a season, owing to the pandemic. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has informed its affiliates that the truncated season would comprise the Vijay Hazare Trophy, senior women’s one-day tournament and the Vinoo Mankad Trophy for under-19 boys. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- For the 1st time, “Ranji Trophy” is suspended by BCCI for a season due to pandemic | 1st edition – 1934 (87 years)
- Ranji Trophy + Vijay Hazare Trophy + Vinoo Mankad Trophy = associated with Cricket
- HQs of BCCI – Mumbai, MH | Chairman – Sourav Ganguly | Ethics Officer – D K Jain



Important Days & Dates

644. January 26 is celebrated as the International Customs Day (ICD). It is the day designated to honour the custom officials and agencies for their function in taking care of the flow of goods across the world borders. International Customs Day was created by CCC in 1983. The theme is “Customs bolstering recovery, renewal and resilience”. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- January 26 – International Customs Day (since 1983)
- Theme – “Customs bolstering recovery, renewal and resilience”
- HQs of World Customs Organization – Brussels, Belgium | Secretary General – Kunio Mikuriya

645. Every year January 27 is observed as the “International Holocaust Remembrance Day” to pay tribute to the victims of the Jewish holocaust at the hands of Hitler's Nazis in Europe during the Second World War. The UNGA officially designated the day in November 2005. This year the theme is “Facing the Aftermath: Recovery and Reconstitution after the Holocaust”. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- January 27 – International Holocaust Remembrance Day (since 2005)
- Theme – “Facing the Aftermath: Recovery and Reconstitution after the Holocaust”

646. National Informatics Centre services Incorporated (NICS) has celebrated its Silver Jubilee or 25 years of its establishment on 28 January 2021. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, the Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Communications and Law and Justice has honoured the event as Chief Guest. He launched “Tejas” - a Virtual Intelligence tool, e-Auction India, Work from Anywhere Portal. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- NICS (New Delhi) – celebrated its ‘Silver Jubilee’ or 25 years of its establishment on January 28
- Chief Guest of the event – Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad | NICS was established in – 1995
- Ravi Shankar Prasad – “Tejas” - a Virtual Intelligence tool + e-Auction India + Work from Anywhere Portal

647. January 28, 2021 has marked the 155th birth anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai. Lala Lajpat Rai (28 January 1865 – 17 November 1928) was one of India’s most celebrated freedom fighters. His ideology of nationalism and zealous patriotism earned him the title, ‘Punjab Kesari’ and ‘Lion of Punjab’. He was born on 28 January 1865 in Dhudike, Punjab. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- January 28 – 155th birth anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai (also known as ‘Punjab Kesari’ & ‘Lion of Punjab’)
- Punjab: Capital – Chandigarh | CM – Captain Amarinder Singh | Governor – V. P. Singh Badnore



648. Uttar Pradesh has held several programmes on the occasion of 2nd edition of World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day observed across the country on January 30. NTDs are a group of preventable diseases which include Lymphatic Filariasis (Hathipaon), Visceral Leishmaniasis (Kala-Azar), leprosy (Kusht-Rog), dengue, chikungunya, snakebite, rabies etc. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- January 30 – 2nd edition of World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day
- Uttar Pradesh held several programmes on the occasion of NTD Day
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

649. January 30 is observed as the “Martyrs' Day” or “Shaheed Diwas” every year across the country to mark the death anniversary of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi or Bapu. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- January 30 – “Martyrs' Day” or “Shaheed Diwas” – to mark the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

Meetings, Conferences and Summits

650. The 17th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) under the theme, “The New Normal and Safe and Healthy Tourism” was held on 21 January 2021 virtually. Ms. Riva Ganguly Das, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs represented India at the meeting. At the end of the Meeting, ‘Ankara Declaration’ was adopted by all the ACD countries. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Ms. Riva Ganguly Das – represented India at the 17th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue
- Theme – “The New Normal and Safe and Healthy Tourism”
- ‘Ankara Declaration’ was adopted by all the ACD countries in the Meeting

651. On January 25, PM Narendra Modi has addressed the online international Climate Adaptation Summit 2021 (CAS-21) that was hosted by the Netherlands and has convened global leaders and local stakeholders. India's target is to have 450 GW renewable energy capacity by 2030 and to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Narendra Modi addressed the Climate Adaptation Summit 2021 (CAS-21) – hosted by Netherlands
- India's target to have 450 GW renewable energy capacity by 2030
- India's target to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030
- Netherlands – Amsterdam – Euro | PM – Mark Rutte



652. The 14th meeting of the India-United Kingdom Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism was held virtually on 21-22 January, 2021. Mr. Mahaveer Singhvi, Joint Secretary for Counter Terrorism in the Ministry of External Affairs led the Indian delegation. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- The 14th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism – held between India & UK
- UK – London – Pound Sterling | PM of UK – Boris Johnson

653. On January 27, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has chaired the meeting of 35th edition of PRAGATI, the ICT based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, involving Central and State governments. During the interaction, the Prime Minister also reviewed the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan-aushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- PM Narendra Modi chaired the 35th edition of “PRAGATI” meeting
- PM Narendra Modi also reviewed the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan-aushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

654. India and Japan held the 5th joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum (AEF) on 28 January 2021 in New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Foreign Secretary, and H.E. Mr. Suzuki Satoshi, Ambassador of Japan to India. During the meeting, Japan has finalised its Sustainable Development of the Northeast Region of India initiative with India. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India & Japan held the 5th joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum (AEF) – in New Delhi
- The meeting was co-chaired by – Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla (Foreign Secretary)
- Ambassador of Japan to India – Mr. Suzuki Satoshi
- Japan – Tokyo – Yen | PM – Yoshihide Suga

655. The 2nd India-Bangladesh Consular Dialogue was held on 28 January 2021 in New Delhi. Shri Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Secretary (CPV & OIA) led the Indian delegation, while the delegation from Bangladesh was led by Amb. Mashfee Binte Shams, Secretary (East), MOFA. Consular dialogue mechanism between the two countries was instituted in 2017 to discuss issues related to consular, visa, and mutual legal assistance matters. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- The 2nd India-Bangladesh Consular Dialogue was held on 28 January 2021 in New Delhi
- Indian delegation – Sanjay Bhattacharyya | Consular dialogue mechanism instituted in – 2017
- Bangladesh – Dhaka – Taka | PM – Sheikh Hasina | President – Abdul Hamid



656. On January 27, Saudi Arabia has hosted the 4th edition of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) Forum 2021 from Riyadh. Around 100 speakers had participated virtually from FII hubs in New York, Paris, Beijing and Mumbai and 50 attended the conference in-person in Riyadh. The summit is dubbed “Davos in the desert”. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Saudi Arabia hosted the 4th edition of the “FII Forum 2021” (dubbed as “Davos in the desert”) from Riyadh
- Saudi Arab – Riyadh – Saudi Riyal | Saudi Crown Prince – Mohammed bin Salman

Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes

657. In Dubai, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has introduced the “ICC Player of the Month awards”. The award will recognise and celebrate the best performances of both male and female cricketers across all forms of international cricket throughout the year. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- ICC – introduced the “ICC Player of the Month awards” – in Dubai, UAE
- HQs of ICC – Dubai, UAE | Chairman – Greg Barclay | CEO – Manu Sawhney

658. The Tamil translation of French novel “Le mariage de plaisir” won the ‘Romain Rolland Book Prize-2021’ at the 3-day Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival which ended in Kolkata on January 24. The winners of the prize are translator Dr S A Vengada Soupraya Nayagar and publisher Amutharasan Paulraj of Thadagam Publishers for the Tamil translation of the book (with a title ‘Ullasa Thirumanam’), authored by Tahar Ben Jelloun. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Tamil translation of French novel “Le mariage de plaisir” won the ‘Romain Rolland Book Prize-2021’
- Author – Tahar Ben Jelloun | Translator – S A Vengada Soupraya Nayagar | Publisher – Amutharasan Paulraj

659. The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Meghalaya was selected for a Special Award for Information Technology applications in Elections by the Election Commission of India (ECI), in the “National Best Electoral Practices Awards-2020”. And New Delhi has received the Best Electoral Practices Award 2020 under the ‘Accessible Election’ category. Delhi also achieved error-free electoral roll and number of third gender electors had also increased. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- Meghalaya – won a Special Award for IT applications in Elections in “National Best Electoral Practices Awards-2020”
- New Delhi received “Best Electoral Practices Award 2020” under the ‘Accessible Election’ category
- Meghalaya: Capital – Shillong | CM – Conrad Kongkal Sangma | Governor – Satya Pal Malik
- HQs of ECI – New Delhi | Chief Election Commissioner – Sunil Arora (23rd) | Formed on – 25th Jan, 1950

660. Anshu Jamsenpa is the world's first woman to climb Mount Everest twice in 5 days. She hails from Arunachal Pradesh and has scaled the world's tallest mountain - Mt. Everest for total 5 times. Recognising her feats, the Union government has awarded her the “Padma Shri-2021”, the country's fourth-highest civilian award - on the eve of this year's Republic Day. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Anshu Jamsenpa (Arunachal Pradesh) – Indian mountaineer – received “Padma Shri-2021”
- She is the 1st woman to climb Mount Everest twice in 5 days

661. Shyam Srinivasan, managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of Federal Bank, is the Business Standard Banker of the Year for 2019-20 for his bank’s consistent healthy performance at a time when most of its peers witnessed large stress on asset quality, registered losses, or even invited regulatory actions. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Shyam Srinivasan – received the “Business Standard Banker of the year award for 2019-20”
- HQs Federal Bank – Kerala | MD & CEO – Shyam Srinivasan

Appointments & Resignations

662. Estonia's new Prime Minister Kaja Kallas has sworn in as the first female Prime Minister in the Baltic country since it regained independence in 1991. She is a 43-year-old lawyer and a former European Parliament lawmaker. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Kaja Kallas has sworn in as the 1st female Prime Minister of Estonia
- Estonia – Tallinn – Euro | President – Kersti Kaljulaid | New PM – Kaja Kallas



663. On January 27, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Swaminathan Janakiraman & Ashwini Kumar Tewari as Managing Directors of State Bank of India for 3 years. SBI is the country's largest commercial bank. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Swaminathan Janakiraman & Ashwini Kumar Tewari – appointed as MDs of SBI
- HQs of SBI Bank – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Dinesh Kumar Khara
- MD – Challa Sreenivasulu Setty | Ashwani Bhatia | Ashwini Kumar Tewari | Swaminathan Janakiraman

664. Shri Ajit Vinayak Gupte (IFS:1991), presently Ambassador of India to Denmark, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Arab Republic of Egypt. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Ajit Vinayak Gupte – appointed as next Ambassador of India to Egypt
- Egypt – Cairo – Egyptian Pound | President – Abdel Fattah el-Sisi

665. Ms. Shubhdarshini Tripathi (IFS:1994), presently Deputy Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Kazakhstan. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Ms. Shubhdarshini Tripathi – appointed as next Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan
- Kazakhstan – Nur-Sultan – Tenge | President – Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

666. On January 27, Dhanlaxmi Bank has appointed J. K. Shivan as Managing Director and CEO. The bank Board had moved a resolution on December 26 & it was passed with an overwhelming majority of 99.81%. The bank is currently managed by a committee of directors (COD). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- J. K. Shivan – appointed as MD & CEO of – Dhanlaxmi Bank
- HQs of Dhanlaxmi Bank – Thrissur, Kerala | MD & CEO – J. K. Shivan

667. Italy Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has resigned due to his government's effectiveness in the middle of the pandemic. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Giuseppe Conte – resigned from the post of Prime Minister of Italy
- Italy – Rome – Euro | President – Sergio Mattarella



668. Indian development economist Jayati Ghosh is among 20 prominent personalities appointed by the United Nations to a High-level Advisory Board (HLAB) on Economic and Social Affairs. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Jayati Ghosh – named among 20 prominent personalities appointed by the UN to a High-level Advisory Board
- UN-HLAB was established in – June, 2018
- HQs of UN – New York, United States | Director – Antonio Guterres

669. On January 28, Ms. Pooja Kapur (IFS:1996), presently Ambassador of India to the Republic of Bulgaria, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Denmark. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Pooja Kapur – appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Denmark
- Denmark – Copenhagen – Danish krone | PM – Mette Frederiksen

670. On January 28, Shri Palaniswamy Subramanyan Karthigeyan (IFS:2004), presently Deputy High Commissioner in the High Commission of India, Canberra, has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Fiji. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Palaniswamy Subramanyan Karthigeyan – appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Fiji
- Fiji – Suva – Fijian Dollar | President – Jioji Konrote

671. On January 26, Antony John Blinken has sworn in as the U. S. Secretary of State after his 78 to 22 confirmation at the Senate. The new Secretary was sworn in ceremonially by Vice-President Kamala Harris. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Antony Blinken – sworn in as the U. S. Secretary of State
- USA – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | 46th President – Joe Biden | 49th VP – Kamala Harris



Amount & Agreements

672. On January 27, India has announced a pledge of USD 150,000 to activities of the Peacebuilding Fund for 2021. As a part of its 2020-24 strategy, the Peacebuilding Fund has put forth a comprehensive scenario covering a horizon of 5 years. The Fund's 2020-2024 Strategy which set a target of USD 1.5 billion. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India announced a pledge of \$150,000 to activities of the 'Peacebuilding Fund' for 2021
- The target of Fund's 2020-2024 Strategy – \$1.5 billion

Ranks, Reports & Surveys

673. As per the 38th "Investment Trends Monitor" issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), China is the largest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2020 with the Chinese economy having brought in \$163 billion in inflows. China's GDP grew 2.3% in 2020. China is the world's second-largest economy. Overall, global FDI has collapsed by 42% to an estimated \$859 billion in 2020. However, FDI in India rose by 13%, boosted by investments in the digital sector. China is followed by the USA with an inflow of \$134 billion in 2020. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- The 38th "Investment Trends Monitor" – issued by UNCTAD
- China – became the largest recipient of FDI in 2020 (2020 – \$163 billion | 2019 – \$140 billion)
- USA – the 2nd largest recipient of FDI in 2020 (2020 – \$134 billion | 2019 – \$251 billion)
- Global FDI – collapsed by 42% in 2020 | FDI in India rose by 13% in 2020
- HQs of UNCTAD – Geneva, Switzerland | Secretary General – Mukhisa Kituyi
- China – Beijing – Renminbi | President – Xi Jinping
- USA – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | 46th President – Joe Biden | 49th VP – Kamala Harris

674. India was ranked the seventh worst-hit country in 2019 in the "Global Climate Risk Index 2021", released by environmental think tank and sustainable development lobbyist Germanwatch published on January 25. Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Bahamas were the worst-affected countries in 2019. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Global Climate Risk Index 2021" – released by lobbyist Germanwatch | India – 7th
- HQs of Germanwatch – Bonn, Germany



675. Dr. Harsh Vardhan has presided over the foundation day celebrations and launched the decadal year of the Indian Council of Medical Research - National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (ICMR-NCDIR), Bengaluru. The 1st of its kind “National Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Monitoring Survey (NNMS) 2017-18” was conducted. The results show that, average daily intake of salt was 8 gm and 6.2% adolescents were overweight or obese. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Harsh Vardhan attended the Foundation day celebrations & launched Decadal year of the ICMR-NCDIR (Bengaluru)
- Average daily intake of salt was 8 gm – as per the 1st “National NCD Monitoring Survey 2017-18”
- HQs of ICMR – New Delhi, India | Director General – Balram Bhargava | Established in – 1911

676. On January 28, India's rank has slipped 6 places to 86th with a score of 40 among 180 countries in “Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2020” released by Transparency International (TI). A country with a higher score has a higher rank. In 2019, India's score was 41 & ranked at 80th position. This year, New Zealand and Denmark rank at first position with scores of 88. Somalia and South Sudan rank lowest at 179th position with scores of 12. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2020” released by Transparency International (TI)
- India – 86th (Score – 40) | Top – New Zealand & Denmark (Score – 88) | Lowest – Somalia & South Sudan (12)
- HQs of TI – Berlin, Germany | Chairperson – Delia Ferreira Rubio

677. According to the Brand Finance ‘IT Services 25 2021’ report, Accenture has retained the title of world's most valuable and strongest IT services brand with a record brand value of \$26 billion, while IBM continued at the second place with brand value of \$16.1 billion. And Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is now the world's third most-valued IT services brand. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- The Brand Finance ‘IT Services 25 2021’ report: 1st Accenture | 2nd – IBM | 3rd – TCS
- HQs of Accenture – Dublin, Ireland | CEO – Julie Sweet | MD (in India) – Rekha Menon
- HQs of IBM – Armonk, New York, USA | CEO – [Arvind Krishna](#)
- HQs of TCS – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – Rajesh Gopinathan



678. According to a report by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), as many as 450 infrastructure projects, each worth Rs 150 Cr or more, have been hit by cost overruns totalling more than Rs 4.28 trillion. Of the 1,687 such projects, 450 reported cost overruns and 558 were delayed. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- According to MoSPI – 450 infrastructure projects, each worth Rs 150 Cr or more, have been hit by cost overruns
- [MoS I/C for Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation – Rao Inderjit Singh](#)

679. On January 28, Maharashtra has ranked first in the 2nd edition of the “India Justice Report (IJR) 2020” released by Tata Trusts. The report judges states on delivery of justice to people. Maharashtra retained its number one position among 18 large and mid-sized states, each with a population of over 1 Cr, followed by Tamil Nadu and Telangana. In the small states, with less than 1 Cr population, Tripura has best justice delivery system. Moreover, Telangana has the highest share of women judges at 46.2%. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 2nd edition of the “India Justice Report (IJR) 2020” released by Tata Trusts
- Large and mid-sized states: 1st – Maharashtra, 2nd – Tamil Nadu, 3rd – Telangana | Worst – Uttar Pradesh
- Small states: 1st – Tripura | Worst – Meghalaya
- Telangana – the highest share of women judges at 46.2%

680. Almost two-thirds of over 1.2 million people surveyed worldwide have said that climate change is a ‘Global Emergency’, as per the results of “People’s Climate Report” released by the UNDP on January 27. The survey covered 50 countries with over half the world’s population. The poll was the world’s biggest survey ever of public opinion on climate change. There were 4 Popular Climate Policies among the respondents for tackling Climate Change - Conservation of Forests & Land, Investing more in green businesses & jobs, Solar, Wind & Renewable Power and Climate-friendly farming techniques. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- The results of “People’s Climate Report” released by the UNDP
- 4 Popular Climate Policies were among the respondents for tackling Climate Change
- [HQs of UNDP – New York, USA | Administrator – Achim Steiner](#)

681. On January 28, New Zealand and Vietnam were ranked the best performing countries in their response to the pandemic according to the “COVID-19 Performance Index”, released by the Lowy Institute, an Australian think-tank. The index was based on 6 different indicators. India ranked 86 out of 98 countries, while the United States placed 94 and Brazil at the bottom of the index. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “COVID-19 Performance Index” – released by the Lowy Institute ([Australia](#))
- 1st New Zealand & 2nd – Vietnam | India – 86th



682. India ranked 10th out of 11 Asia Pacific countries in a newly-launched “Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index” by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) to measure the progress towards personalised healthcare. The ‘Personalised Health Index’ measures performance against 27 different indicators of personalised health across 4 categories called ‘Vital Signs’. These include Policy Context, Health Information, Personalised Technologies and Health Services. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index” – launched by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)
- India – 10th | 1st – Singapore | 2nd – Taiwan | 3rd – Japan
- Health Information category: India – 10th (Score – 41)
- Health Services category: India – 11th (Score – 24)
- Personalised Technologies category: India – 9th (Score – 30)
- Policy Context category: India – 5th (Score – 48)
- HQs of EIU – London, UK | MD & CEO – Robin Bew

Acquisitions & Mergers

683. UBS Principal Capital Asia Ltd has sold nearly 40 lakh shares of IndusInd Bank Ltd worth over Rs 366.56 Cr through an open market transaction. The shares of IndusInd Bank were purchased by BofA Securities Europe SA at the same price. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- UBS Principal Capital Asia Ltd – sold nearly 40 lakh shares of IndusInd Bank Ltd (worth over Rs 366.56 Cr)
- HQs of IndusInd Bank – Pune, MH | MD & CEO – Sumant Kathpalia | Tagline – "We Make You Feel Richer"

684. Adani Total Gas and Torrent Gas have each bought 5% stake in Indian Gas Exchange (IGX). The IGX is India’s first gas exchange, which until now was wholly-owned by the Indian Energy Exchange (IEX). Total 10% stake has been valued at ₹7.38 Cr. IGX is an automated trading platform for imported liquefied natural gas (LNG). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Adani Total Gas & Torrent Gas – bought 5% each stake in Indian Gas Exchange (for total ₹7.38 Cr)
- HQs of Adani Total Gas – Ahmedabad, Gujarat | CEO – Suresh P Manglani
- HQs of Torrent Gas – Ahmedabad, Gujarat | Executive Director – Narendra Kumar
- HQs of IGX – Ahmedabad, Gujarat | Head – Deepak Mehta



MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships

685. The Framework for Strategic Partnership between the International Energy Agency (IEA) members and the Government of India was signed on 27th January, 2021 to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation & enhance global energy security, stability and sustainability. The MoU was signed by Power Secretary Sanjiv Nandan Sahai and IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- IEA + India = a strategic partnership agreement to strengthen Mutual Trust & enhance Global Energy Security
- Power Secretary – Sanjiv Nandan Sahai
- HQs of IEA – Paris, France | Executive Director – Dr. Fatih Birol

686. Textiles Committee, Ministry of Textiles has signed an MoU with M/s Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre (Japan) to boost export of Textile and Apparel to Japanese market. The Cabinet had given the approval for this MoU on 2nd September, 2020. India and Japan have already signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in 2011 which facilitates import of garments from India to Japan at zero duty. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Ministry of Textiles (India) + M/s Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre (Japan) = an MoU to boost export of Textile
- Japan – Tokyo – Yen | PM – Yoshihide Suga
- Smriti Zubin Irani – Minister of Women & Child Development, Minister of Textiles (Amethi, Uttar Pradesh)

687. On the eve of India's 72nd Republic Day, India and Bangladesh have signed an MoU to design, make and launch a Student Satellite TV for PC to be developed by students from both countries. The Indian side was represented by the Chennai-based Space Kidz India (SKI) & Bangladesh side was represented by Global Law Thinkers Society. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India + Bangladesh = an MoU to design, make and launch a Student Satellite TV for PC
- HQs of Space Kidz India – Chennai, Tamil Nadu | Founder & CEO – Srimathy Kesan
- Bangladesh – Dhaka – Taka | PM – Sheikh Hasina | President – Abdul Hamid



688. On January 29, an agreement was signed between CSIR and Ladakh UT to accelerate its development through Science & Technology(S&T) interventions. The MoU was signed by Dr. D. Srinivas Reddy (Director of CSIR-IIIM). The MoU is aimed at development in the areas such as bioresource utilization endemic to Ladakh, introduction of cash crops in the region and exploration of natural resources. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- CSIR + Ladakh – an MoU to accelerate its development through S&T interventions
- HQs of CSIR – New Delhi | CSIR President – Narendra Modi | Director General – Shekhar C. Mande
- Ladakh Capital – Leh | Lt. Governor – R K Mathur

689. Karnataka has signed an MoU with global e-commerce giant Amazon India to help drive e-commerce exports from the state. Under the MoU, Amazon will train and onboard MSMEs from the State on Amazon Global Selling, its Exports Program, enabling them to sell their unique Made in India products globally to millions of Amazon customers across 200 plus countries and territories. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Karnataka + Amazon = an MoU to help drive e-commerce exports
- Karnataka: Capital – Bangalore | CM – BS Yediyurappa | Governor – Vajubhai Vala
- HQs of Amazon – Seattle , USA | Founder & CEO – Jeff Bezos

Books & Authors

690. On January 24, Justice N. V. Ramana has virtually launched a book “The Law of Emergency Powers: Comparative Common Law Perspectives” co-authored by senior advocate A. M. Singhvi. The book makes an in-depth analysis on provisions of

‘Article 356’ of the Indian Constitution. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Justice N. V. Ramana – launched a book “The Law of Emergency Powers: Comparative Common Law Perspectives”
- The books is co-authored by – A.M. Singhvi



691. Journalist Mihir Dalal's book "Big Billion Startup: The Untold Flipkart Story" was announced as the winner of the "Gaja Capital Business Book Prize 2020". With a purse of Rs 15 lakh for the winner, it is the biggest business book prize in the country. The book recounts how the Bansals built Flipkart into a multi-billion-dollar company and redefined India's e-commerce. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Big Billion Startup: The Untold Flipkart Story" book – authored by Mihir Dalal
- The book has won – "Gaja Capital Business Book Prize 2020" | Prize – Rs 15 lakh (the biggest business book prize)

692. "Soumitra Chatterjee: A Life in Cinema, Theatre, Poetry & Painting", a book written by Arjun Sengupta and Partha Mukherjee and published by Niyogi Books was recently released virtually on 19th January 2021, the 86th birth anniversary of Soumitra Chatterjee. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Soumitra Chatterjee: A Life in Cinema, Theatre, Poetry & Painting" – written by Arjun Sengupta & Partha Mukherjee
- Published by – Niyogi Books on 86th birth anniversary of Soumitra Chatterjee

693. Canadian Olympian sprinter Andre De Grasse is writing a picture book for children aged 6-10 years. Titled "Race With Me!", the motivational book is expected to be out in July 2021. The picture book is co-authored by De Grasse and Robert Budd, and it is illustrated by Joseph Osei Bonsu. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Race With Me!" motivational book – authored by Andre De Grasse ([Canada - Sprinter](#))
- Co-authored by – Robert Budd | illustrated by – Joseph Osei Bonsu
- [Canada – Ottawa – Canadian Dollar | PM – Justin Trudeau](#)

694. Priyanka Chopra has giggled excitedly when she got first copy of memoir "Unfinished". The book will be released on February 9, 2021. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Unfinished" memoir of – Priyanka Chopra Jonas (to be released on 9th Feb)



Obituaries

695. On January 27, Oscar-winning American actress & comedian Cloris Leachman has passed away at the age of 94. She received Oscar in 1971 for her portrayal of a lonely housewife in 'The Last Picture Show'. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Cloris Leachman (USA) – Actress & Comedian – passed away (Oscar in 1971)
- USA – Washington, D.C. – US Dollar | 46th President – Joe Biden | 49th VP – Kamala Harris

696. Former India goalkeeper Prasanta Dora, who also played for the big 3 clubs of Kolkata football, has passed away recently on January 26. He was 45. Prasanta made his national debut in 1999 against Thailand in the Olympic qualifiers. He also represented Bengal in the Santosh Trophy. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Prasanta Dora – a Football Player – passed away

697. On January 28, Patna-based Social Scientist and popular Economist Shaibal Gupta has passed away. Mr. Gupta founded the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI) in 1991 and was member-secretary of it since the beginning. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Shaibal Gupta (Bihar) – Social Scientist & popular Economist – passed away
- HQs of ADRI – Patna, Bihar | Founder – Shaibal Gupta

Science & Technology

698. NASA has shared pictures of a huge cluster of galaxies called “Abell 370”. NASA's Hubble Space Telescope shared this image on its official Instagram account on January 19. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- NASA – shared pictures of a huge cluster of galaxies called “Abell 370”
- HQs of NASA – Washington D.C., USA | Administrator – Jim Bridenstine | Founded in – 1958



699. On January 25, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted the maiden test of the New Generation Akash missile (Akash-NG) from Integrated Test Range off the coast of Odisha. It is a new generation Surface to Air Missile meant for use by Indian Air Force with an aim of intercepting high maneuvering low RCS (Radar Cross Section) aerial threats. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- DRDO – tested “New Generation Akash missile (Akash-NG)” off the coast of Odisha (Surface to Air Missile)
- RCS – Radar Cross Section
- HQs of DRDO – New Delhi | Chairman – G. Satheesh Reddy | Established in – 1958

700. 12 students of Sri Shakti Institute of Engineering and Technology with support from faculty have developed the satellite namely “Sri Shakti Sat” which the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch on February 28. The satellite weighed around 500 gm was developed at the cost of ₹2 Cr and would be pushed into orbit by ISRO’s PSLV C-51. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- ISRO will launch “Sri Shakti Sat” on February 28 (to be launched by ISRO’s PSLV C-51)
- “Sri Shakti Sat” is a Nano satellite designed by 12 college students | Cost: ₹2 Cr | Weight: 500 gm
- HQs of ISRO – Bengaluru, Karnataka | Director – Kailasavadivoo Sivan | Formed in – 1969





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