

JANUARY 3rd Week Current Affairs 2021

National News

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju assigned additional charge of Ministry of AYUSH

- Union Minister **Kiren Rijiju** has been assigned the **additional charge of the Ministry of AYUSH**.
- During the hospitalization and treatment of AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik following a road accident
- The President has directed that this arrangement may continue till **Mr Naik resumes his work related to the Ministry of AYUSH**.
- The President of India, as advised by the Prime Minister, has directed that during the hospitalization and treatment of Shripad Yesso Naik, Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH); and Minister of State in Ministry of Defence, following a road accident, his portfolio related to Ministry of AYUSH, be temporarily assigned to Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State (Independent Charge) in addition to his existing portfolios.”

About AYUSH :

- Office Holder : Shripad Naik
- Founded : 9 November, 2014
- Headquarters : New Delhi

MoRTH notifies Inter Country Transport Vehicles Rules 2021

- The **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** has notified **Inter Country Transport Vehicles Rules, 2021** which would **facilitate and regulate the movement of passenger and goods vehicles between India and neighbouring countries**.
- As per the rules, the State Transport Authority has been given the power to grant the Inter Country Transport Permit after thoroughly examining the application.
- The permit will remain valid for a period of **one year** from the date of its issue and it will be **renewable for a period of five years on a yearly basis**.
- The State Transport Department will take care of formalities like provisioning of tickets, debugging of bus, frisking or checking of passengers, handling of luggage before departure from the designated place. The frequency can be reviewed by the State Transport Department and it can be increased as per the demand.
- The decision has been taken considering the requests made by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to notify rules under provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act 1988 to facilitate movement of vehicles carrying goods and passengers between India and neighbouring countries.

About Ministry of Road Transport and Highways :

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Founded : July 1942

- Minister of State : Mansukh L. Mandaviya
- Union Minister : Nitin Gadkari

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurates LNG truck-loading unit of Shell India in Gujarat

- **Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan** inaugurated the **LNG truck-loading unit of Shell India at Hazira, Gujarat.**
- The unit will **boost availability of natural gas in off-grid areas** where there are no gas pipelines. It will also **promote the use of LNG in long-haul trucking.**
- Increasing competition in the LNG sector will help in emergence of new markets, creating new employment opportunities, ensure cleaner fuels for industries and facilitate environment conservation.
- This is another big step towards a cleaner and greener future for India.
- The LNG sector will help in the emergence of new markets, create new employment opportunities, ensure cleaner fuels for industries and facilitate environment conservation.

Bhawana Kanth to become the 1st woman fighter pilot to take part in R Day parade

- 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 that will showcase mock-ups of the light combat aircraft, light combat helicopter and the Sukhoi-30 fighter plane.
- She is currently posted at an airbase in Rajasthan where she flies the MiG-21 Bison fighter plane.
- Kanth is also one of the first women fighter pilots in the IAF.
- She, along with Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh, was inducted into the IAF as the first women fighter pilots in 2016.
- Ten women have been commissioned as fighter pilots after an experimental scheme for their induction into the IAF's combat stream was introduced in 2015.

India's 2021 Republic Day parade

- The newly inducted Rafale fighter aircraft will feature in India's Republic Day parade on January 26 and culminate the flypast by carrying out the 'Vertical Charlie' formation.
- A total of 38 IAF aircraft and four planes of the Indian Army will participate in the flypast on January 26,
- The flypast will be divided into two blocks
- In the first block, there will be three formations. The first will be the 'Nishan' formation consisting of four Mi17V5 aircraft that will carry the national flag and logos of all three services.

About Indian Air Force :

- Founded : 8 October 1932

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Commander in Chief : Ram Nath Kovind

India's first Labour Movement museum to come up in Kerala

- The country's **first Labour Movement Museum**, showcasing the **history of world labour movement**, would be launched in **Kerala's houseboat tourism hub, Alappuzha**.
- The museum will feature a huge repository of documents and exhibits that shaped the labour movements across the continents and impacted Alappuzha, the cradle of the labour movement in the country.
- The museum would be launched as part of the LDF **government's second 100-day programme**.
- The New Model Cooperative Society Limited, previously **run by the Bombay Company**, has been converted into the Labour Movement Museum.
- It will portray, through pictures, documents and other exhibits, the growth of the world labour movement and the history of Kerala's labour movement"

About Kerala :

- CM : Pinarayi Vijayan
- Governor : Arif Mohammad Khan
- Capital : Thiruvananthapuram

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

- **Kerala** has become the **8th State** in the country to successfully undertake **Ease of Doing Business** reform stipulated by the **Department of Expenditure**, Ministry of Finance.
- The State has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of **2,373 crore** through Open Market Borrowings.
- Permission for the same was issued by the Department of Expenditure, on 12th January 2021,
- Kerala has now joined the seven other States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana, who have completed this reform. On completion of reforms facilitating ease of doing business, these eight States have been granted additional borrowing permission of Rs 23,149 crore.

About ease of doing business :

- The ease of doing business is an important indicator of the investment-friendly business climate in the country. Improvements in the ease of doing business will enable faster future growth of the state economy.
- Therefore, the government of India had in May 2020, decided to link grant of additional borrowing permissions to States who undertake the reforms to facilitate ease of doing business.

Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani announces 'Horticulture Development Mission'

- In **Gujarat**, Chief Minister **Vijay Rupani** announced the '**Horticulture Development Mission**' (**Bagayat Vikas Mission**).
- **Aim** : this mission is to double the income of farmers involved in medicinal and horticulture farming.
- Under this mission, **the waste land of the government will be given on 30-year lease for farming of horticulture and medicinal crops.**
- As per an estimate, the government has about 50,000 non-cultivated land waste lands. The government intends to convert this land into cultivation.
- A list of land blocks for land allotment in transparent manner will be released on I-Khedut portal. The government will also offer priority assistance to lease owners for drip-sprinkler fountains.
- Surendranagar, Patan, Sabarkantha and Banaskantha districts in the first phase.

About the Mission :

- Under this mission, a tax on land conversion will be waived off. Lease amount applicable will be Rs 100 to Rs 500 per year per acre during 6th to 30th year.
- Lease holders will be able to set up solar panel, windmills to generate energy for their own use, but will not be allowed to sell it.
- If land is returned before the end of the lease period, no compensation will be payable. Final decision on land allotment will be taken by a high power committee chaired by the Chief Minister.

About Gujarat :

- Capital : Gandhinagar
- Governor : Acharya Devvrat
- Chief Minister : Vijay Rupani

Nagpur's Gorewada Zoo renamed as Balasaheb Thackeray Zoological Park

- The **Maharashtra government** renamed **Nagpur's Gorewada International Zoo** as **Balasaheb Thackeray Zoological Park** .
- The zoological park, spread **over 1,900 hectares**, will be inaugurated on **January 26** by **Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray**.
- Three special 40-seat capacity vehicles and an online ticket booking facility will be made available to the people as soon after the Indian safari is inaugurated,
- **Aim** : to protect forests and promote tourism, Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), had announced the setting up of the 'international-standard' bio park in August 2019.
- The task was entrusted to the Forest Development Corporation of Maharashtra Ltd.

About Maharashtra :

- Chief Minister : Uddhav Thackeray
- Governor : Bhagat Singh Koshyari

- Capital : Mumbai

DRDO hands over MotorBike Ambulance Rakshita to CRPF

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation** handed over **MotorBike Ambulance Rakshita to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)**.
- Director General of CRPF **Dr A P Maheshwari** flagged off the contingent of **21 bikes** on the occasion.
- It is a **bike-based casualty transport emergency vehicle**.
- It was Developed by DRDO lab Institute of **Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS)** in New Delhi.
- Rakshita is fitted with a customized reclining Casualty Evacuation Seat (CES), which can be fitted in and taken out as per requirement.
- Other major features are the head immobilizer, safety harness jacket, hand and foot straps for safety, adjustable footrest, physiological parameter measuring equipment with wireless monitoring capability and auto warning system for the driver.

Purpose :

- The bike ambulance will help in overcoming the problems faced by Indian security forces and emergency health care providers. The bike ambulances will provide life-saving aid for evacuation of injured patients from low intensity conflict areas.

About DRDO :

- Founded : 1958
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Chairman : Dr G. Satheesh Reddy

About CRPF :

- Formed : 27 July, 1939
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Minister : Amit Shah
- Comes under Ministry of Home Affairs
- Director General : Dr A P Maheshwari

Defence Secretary inaugurates Swachhata Pakhwada organised by NCC at India Gate

- **Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar** inaugurated **Swachhata Pakhwada** organised by **National Cadet Corps, NCC at India Gate**.
- The theme of this Swachhata Pakhwada is **'Clean India, Green India, Yeh Hai Mera Dream India'**.
- It has contributed immensely towards nation building, through activities such as 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat' and Special National Integration Camps, Leadership and Personality Development and Swachhata Abhiyan Programmes.

- During the Swachhata Pakhwada the NCC cadets will keep Rajpath clean for the Republic Day Parade – 2021 by spreading awareness through displaying banners, distribution of pamphlets and showcasing Swachhata through Nukkad Nataks

About National Cadet Corps :

- Founder : Government of United Kingdom
- Founded : 16 April, 1948
- Director General : Lt. Gen. Tarun Kumar Aich
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Motto : Unity and Discipline

Kerala, MP change MoU on Responsible Tourism

- **Madhya Pradesh** signed a **memorandum of understanding** with Kerala for replicating the latter's pioneering **Responsible Tourism (RT) initiative**.
- The States signed a joint declaration underneath which Kerala will prolong a sequence of companies underneath a **16-point programme**.
- The MoU was exchanged by Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran and his Madhya Pradesh counterpart Usha Thakur.
- Next week, a 13-member staff from Bhopal, led by Ms Thakur, will tour totally different elements of Kerala to assemble first-hand information about RT within the State.

About MP :

- Capital : Bhopal
- Chief Minister : Shivraj Singh Chouhan

First bird fest at mahananda sanctuary from feb 20

- First, a **bird festival** is being organised at the **Mahananda wildlife sanctuary** in **West Bengal** to provide an opportunity to enthusiasts to explore the forest and watch different bird
- The Darjeeling Wildlife Division will be organising the **1st Mahananda Bird Festival from February 20 to 23**
- Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary is rich in fauna and has more than **300 species of birds**.
- The sanctuary has been designated as an 'important bird area' due to its critical role in the conservation of birds and their habitat.
- The sanctuary is well known among the birding community, and bird watchers flock to it for sighting the Rufous-necked hornbill, among other birds.

About West Bengal :

- Governor : Jagdeep Dhankhar
- Capital : Kolkata

Tesla Sets up India subsidiary in Bangalore

- **Elon Musk-owned electric vehicle (EV) company Tesla** has registered a fully-owned subsidiary in **Bengaluru, Karnataka**.
- The firm is looking at setting up an R&D facility and eventually an assembly plant.
- Tesla's global senior director David Jon Feinstein, chief accounting officer Vaibhav Taneja and Bengaluru-based entrepreneur Venkatrangam Sreeram are on the board of the India unit, Tesla India Motors and Energy Pvt Ltd.
- The total paid up capital of the company is **Rs 1,00,000** and authorised share capital is **Rs 15 lakhs**.

About Tesla:

- CEO : Elon Musk
- Founded : 1 July, 2003
- Headquarters : Palo Alto, California, United States

Aviation services launched between Chandigarh and Hisar

- Haryana Chief Minister **Manohar Lal Khattar** launched an **air taxi service** between **Chandigarh and Hisar from the Chandigarh International Airport under the UDAN scheme of the central government**.
- The airline Aviation Connectivity & Infrastructure Developers Pvt. Ltd (Air Taxi) was awarded the **Hisar – Chandigarh – Hisar route under the UDAN 4 bidding process**.
- The airline has become the first startup airline of the country to assist the nation with Air Taxi services.
- These UDAN flights will reduce the journey time between Hisar to Chandigarh from 4.50 hours to a comfortable **45 minutes journey** that too at an affordable fare since financial incentives in the form of **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** is being provided from the Centre, State governments & airport operators to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and underserved airports under the scheme.
- The air service will start from Hisar to Dehradun on January 18 and from Hisar to Dharamshala on January 23.

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

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** unveiled the country's first indigenously designed and developed **Driverless Metro Car at the BEML manufacturing facility in Bengaluru**.
- The indigenously designed & developed state-of-the-art Driverless Metro trains are being manufactured at BEML Bangalore manufacturing facility, for **Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA)**.
- BEML bagged a total order of 576 cars for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA)'s MRS1 project and the supply is scheduled progressively up to January 2024.
- BEML recently opened its Depot office at Charkop Metro Depot, MMRDA, Mumbai for commissioning, testing and round-the-clock services for Driverless Metro cars.

India's first Fire Park comes up in Odisha

- Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** inaugurated the '**Fire Park**', a first of its kind initiative in the country, **to bring awareness on fire safety measures.**
- This Will Facilitate Demonstrations on use of first aid fire-fighting equipment, rescue and disaster operations, visit to exhibition hall, screening of films and distribution of leaflets on fire safety will be part of the activities. Students from schools and colleges will be the focus group.
- He also launched a dynamic online portal, '**AgnishamaSeva**' of Odisha Fire Service on virtual platform.

What's On Show

- Demonstrations on use of first aid fire-fighting equipment
- Demo on rescue and disaster operations
- Visit to exhibition hall
- Screening of films and distribution of leaflets on fire safety
- The Fire Park will be opened to public on every Saturday from 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm

About Odisha :

- Chief Minister : Naveen Patnaik
- Capital: Bhubaneswar.
- Governor : Ganeshi Lal

PM Modi Launches Third Phase of PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana

- The **Third Phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana** was launched in **600 districts** across the country.
- This phase will focus **on new-age and COVID-related skills.**
- Skill India Mission-PMKVY 3.0 envisages training of eight lakh candidates over a scheme period of 2020-2021 with an outlay of **Rs 949 crore.**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Skill India Programme in 2015 and it has gained tremendous momentum through the launch of its flagship scheme PMKVY to unlock the vision of making India the Skill Capital of the world.

About Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana :

- This Scheme is Comes Under Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship : Mahendra Nath Pandey.

Preeti Pant Panel to Study NFHS-5 Findings

- The **Health and Family Welfare Ministry** has set up a technical expert group to examine the adverse findings from the **National Family Health Survey-5.**
- The Union Ministry has set up the technical committee of medicine and nutrition experts under the leadership of **Joint Secretary Preeti Pant.**

- The expert group also includes State programme officers from **Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka**.
- The technical committee will examine the findings of the National Family Health Survey-5 as well as suggest policies and courses of action to improve on indicators related to anemia, malnutrition, C-section, and stunting.
- The newly formed technical expert group will conduct meetings regularly and will provide its recommendations soon.
- As of now, no meeting has been held and no date has been finalized for the first meeting.

About Ministry of Health and Family Welfare :

- Founded : 1976
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Minister : Harsh Vardhan
- Minister of State : Faggan Singh Kulaste

Japan Commits Rs 2113 Crore Support for COVID relief efforts

- **Japan** has committed **Official Development Assistance (ODA)** loan of an amount of **JPY 30 billion (about ₹2,113 crore)** to support India's efforts at providing social assistance to the poor and vulnerable households severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- This programme loan aims to support India's efforts to provide coordinated and adequate social protection to the poor and vulnerable across the country against the severe impact of Covid-19 pandemic.
- India and Japan have had a long history of bilateral development cooperation since 1958.
- In the last few years, the economic cooperation between India and Japan has grown into strategic partnership.

About Japan :

- Capital : Tokyo
- Currency : Japanese Yen
- Prime Minister : Yoshihide Suga

Home Minister Amit Shah launches 'Single Window Clearance System' for coal mines

- Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** launched the '**Single Window Clearance System**', an online platform to obtain clearances for smooth operationalisation of coal mines.
- It will be an online platform to obtain clearances for smooth operationalisation of coal mines.
- The Coal Sector has the potential to be the biggest contributor towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Vision of making India a **5 trillion dollar economy by 2024**.
- This will give the states an estimated revenue of about Rs 6500 crore per year and will also create more than 70,000 Jobs.

RS Sharma, former Trai chief, to head empowered panel for Covid-19 vaccine

- The Union government has appointed **RS Sharma, former Trai chief**, as the chairperson of an empowered committee for administration of Covid-19 vaccine.
- This has come days ahead of the **mega vaccination drive to start in India**.
- A **ten member team** has been constituted to **be headed by Sharma**.
- The panel can invite eminent persons as and when required to ensure delivery of the vaccine through the Co-Win technology platform
- It must be noted that Sharma is also a member of the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration of Covid-19 that was formed in August 2020 and is headed by Niti Aayog member, VK Paul.
- Sharma was the first person to officially initiate a discussion on vaccination delivery in the government in the summer of 2020 when Covid-19 cases peaked.

About TRAI:

- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
- Founded : 20 Feb 1997
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chairperson : Ram Sewak Sharma
- Secretary : Sunil K. Gupta

Two-day coastal defence drill 'Sea Vigil-21' kicks off

- The **second edition of the biennial pan-India** coastal defence exercise '**Sea Vigil-21**' will be conducted on **12-13 January 2021**.
- It will involve all the **13 coastal states** and Union Territories along with other maritime stakeholders.
- And That will cover the country's **7,516 km coastline** and exclusive economic zone.
- The exercise is being coordinated by the **Indian Navy**.
- The entire coastal security set up was reorganised after the 26/11 Terror attack at Mumbai which was launched via the sea route.
- **SEA VIGIL 21**' will provide a realistic assessment of our strengths and weaknesses and thus will help in further strengthening maritime and national security.
- The exercise is a build up towards the major Theatre level exercise **TROPEX [Theatre-level Readiness Operational Exercise]** which Indian Navy conducts every two years.

About Indian Navy :

- Founded : 26 January, 1950
- Vice Chief of the Naval Staff : Vice Admiral G. Ashok Kumar
- Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff : Vice Admiral M.S. Pawar
- Chief of the Naval Staff : Admiral Karambir Singh
- Commander in Chief : Ram Nath Kovind

Mamata Inaugurates 26th Kolkata International Film Festival

- **West Bengal** Chief Minister **Mamata Banerjee** virtually inaugurated the **26th Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF)**.
- The inaugural ceremony was also virtually attended by Bollywood superstar and West Bengal's brand ambassador Shah Rukh Khan from Mumbai.
- Legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray's classic '**Apur Sansar**' will be the inaugural film of the festival in which 131 movies from 45 countries will be screened till January 13.
- Films will be screened at Rabindra Sadan, Nandan, Sisir Mancha and Rabindra Okakura Bhavan in Salt Lake.
- Six films by Italian filmmaker Federico Fellini and movies on sitarist Ravi Shankar, singer Hemanta Mukherjee and flicks of comedian Bhanu Bandyopadhyay will be screened.

About West Bengal :

- Governor : Jagdeep Dhankhar
- Chief Minister : Mamata Banerjee
- Capital : Kolkata

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US President-elect Joe Biden names two Indian Americans in National Security Council of White House

- In the United States, the President-elect **Joe Biden** has appointed **two Indian-Americans** to the **National Security Council of the White House**.
- Biden has named Indian-American Sumona Guha as senior director for South Asia and Tarun Chhabra as senior director for Technology and National Security.
- Sumona Guha was co-chair of the South Asia foreign policy working group during the Biden-Harris campaign.
- During the Obama-Biden administration, Chhabra had also served on the National Security Council staff as director for Strategic Planning and director for Human Rights and National Security Issues.
- Biden has also named Shanthi Kalathil as Coordinator for Democracy and Human Rights in his National Security Council. She is currently senior director of the International Forum for Democratic Studies at the National Endowment for Democracy.

About US :

- Capital : Washington, D.C.

Bangladesh to be country of focus at 51st International Film Festival of India

- **Bangladesh** has been chosen as the '**Country in Focus**' for the **51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI)** starting at Goa on January 16.

- The country of focus section will include Jibandhuli directed by **Tanvir Mokammel**, Meghmallar directed by **Zahidur Rahman Anjan**, Under Construction by Rubaiyat Hossain and Sincerely Yours, Dhaka by Nuhash Humanyun, Syed Ahmed Shawki and 9 other individual directors.
- The International Film Festival of India (IFFI), founded in **1952**, is one of the most significant film festivals in Asia.
- The festival aims at providing a common platform for the cinemas of the world to project the excellence of the film art, contributing to the understanding and appreciation of film cultures of different nations in the context of their social and cultural ethos, and promoting friendship and cooperation among people of the world.
- The festival is conducted jointly by the Directorate of Film Festivals (under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and the state Government of Goa
- The festival will conclude on 24th January.

About Ministry of Information and Broadcasting :

- Minister : Prakash Javadekar
- Headquarters : New Delhi

Twitter deletes new Donald Trump's tweets on @POTUS handle, suspends campaign account

- **Twitter Inc.** on January 8 deleted new tweets posted by **US President Donald Trump** on the official government account **@POTUS** and suspended the account of his presidential campaign, after booting his personal account off the platform permanently.
- **@POTUS** government account, has **4 million followers**.
- Twitter had permanently suspended the president's go-to megaphone, his **@realDonaldTrump** personal account.
- Twitter shut down his **@TeamTrump** campaign account shortly after it sent out a tweet with a "statement from President Trump" accusing Twitter of "banning free speech" and coordinating with "the Democrats and the Radical Left" to silence him.

About Twitter :

- CEO : Jack Dorsey
- Founded : 21 March 2006
- Headquarters : San Francisco, California, US

19th Dhaka International Film Festival to pay tribute to Satyajit Ray

- The **19th Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF)** will be inaugurated on **16th January**. The film festival this year is dedicated to the **birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**.
- The Festival that will Screen **225 films from 73 countries** will be screened during the **9 day long festival between 16-24 January**.

- The festival will have **10 categories** including Cinema of the world, Children's Film, Women Film Maker's section, Spiritual Films, Bangladesh Panorama, Tribute and Retrospective among others.
- Spring Blossom, a film from France, directed by Suzanne Lindon will be the opening film of the festival.
- The tribute section of the festival will be dedicated to the legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray to commemorate his birth centenary.
- The festival will also hold seminars and discussions around the work and life of Satyajit Ray.
- The section will showcase Pather Panchali, Aparajito, Jalsaghar, Sonar Kella and Hirok Rajar Deshe directed by Satyajit Ray.

About Dhaka International Film Festival:

- Founded by : Ahmed Muztaba Zamal

Nepali climbers make history, become first to scale world's second highest mountain K2 in winter

- A team of **10 Nepali climbers** made history by becoming **the first to scale in winter the world's second highest mountain K2**, considered as the **world's most dangerous and challenging peak**.
- K2 with its daunting **8,611 meters height** is located in Gilgit-Baltistan side of the Karakoram range.
- It was the only among 8,000-meter high peaks that was never scaled in winter.
- The achievement was the result of a collaborative effort between the climbers affiliated with multiple teams: one led by Nirmal Purja and the other by Mingma Gyalje Sherpa.

UK sets out new laws to protect historic statues, monuments

- The **UK government** unveiled **new laws to protect England's cultural and historic heritage** in the form of statues and monuments to ensure they are not removed at a whim.
- The move comes in the wake of Black Lives Matter protests in the country last year targeting several historic monuments, including with graffiti on Mahatma Gandhi's statue in Parliament Square in London.
- New legal protections mean that historic statues should be retained and explained for future generations and individuals who want to remove any historic statue, whether protected with a listed status or not, will now require listed building consent or planning permission.

About UK :

- Prime Minister : Boris Johnson
- Currency : Pound sterling
- Capital : London

Netherlands PM Mark Rutte and his entire cabinet quits over welfare scandal

- Dutch Prime Minister **Mark Rutte** and his entire Cabinet resigned **to take political responsibility for a scandal involving investigations** into child welfare payments that wrongly labeled thousands of parents as fraudsters.
- Rutte and his cabinet will continue running the government in a caretaker capacity, with general elections already scheduled for **March 2021**.
- The resignation brings to an end a decade in office for Rutte, although his party is expected to win the election, putting him first in line to begin talks to form the next government. If he succeeds in forming a new coalition, Rutte would most likely again become prime minister.

About Netherlands :

- Capital : Amsterdam
- Currency : Euro

CURRENT AFFAIRS : BANKING & FINANCE

ICICI Bank launches 'InstaFX' mobile app to help customers obtain Forex Prepaid Card swiftly

- **ICICI Bank** on January 20 launched a new mobile application '**InstaFX**' for **authorised money changers to help customers of any bank get 'ICICI Bank Forex Prepaid Card' swiftly**.
- The bank is **the first in the country** to offer such a **facility to money changers**.
- The app enables the authorised money changers, who are partners of the Bank, to complete the KYC verification and validation of customers digitally and on a real-time basis.
- The 'InstaFX' app will enable the authorised money changers, who are partners of the Bank, to complete the KYC verification and validation of customers digitally and on a real-time basis.
- The 'ICICI Bank Forex Prepaid Card' gets activated swiftly within a few hours, as against the industry practice of up to two-days, thus it will significantly improve customer convenience, even if they are not customers of ICICI bank.
- The 'InstaFX' app can be downloaded and operated from any android devices. Customers can avail the 'ICICI Bank Forex Prepaid Card' by visiting the partner money changer outlets in cities or at airports across the country.

What is Money Changer :

- A money changer is a person or organization whose business is the exchange of coins or currency of one country, for that of another.

About ICICI Bank :

- CEO : Sandeep Bakhshi
- Headquarters : Mumbai

- Founded : June 1994, Vadodara

RBI forms 6 Member working group on digital lending as frauds

- The **Reserve Bank of India** has set up a working group to study digital lending activities of the regulated and unregulated players.
- The group will suggest steps to regulate digital lending including online lending platform and mobile lending.
- The **six-member panel** comprised of four RBI internal and two external members
 1. Chairman : Jayant Kumar Dash, Executive Director,
 2. Ajay Kumar Choudhary, Chief General Manager-in-Charge, Department of Supervision,
 3. P Vasudevan, Chief General Manager, Department of Payment and Settlement Systems, RBI
 4. Manoranjan Mishra, Chief General Manager, Department of Regulation.
- The two external members are
 1. Vikram Mehta, Co-founder, Monexo Fintech and Rahul Sasi,
 2. Cyber Security Expert & Founder of CloudSEK.
- This Group will submit its report within 3 months.
- The group will evaluate digital lending activities and assess the penetration and standards of outsourced digital lending activities in RBI regulated entities.

About RBI:

- Headquarters : Mumbai
- Founder : British Raj
- Governor : Shaktikanta Das

Fitch Ratings Projects GDP of India at -9.4% in FY21 & 11% in FY22

- The **Fitch Ratings** expect **gross domestic product (GDP)** of India to **contract by 9.4 percent in FY21** (April 2020 to March 2021).
- Fitch further projects the GDP to expand by **11 percent in FY22** (April 2021 to March 2022).

About Fitch Ratings :

- Headquarters : New York, United States
- CEO : Paul Taylor
- Founder : John Knowles Fitch
- Founded : 1914

Icra forecasts India's real GDP to expand by 10.1% in FY22

- India's real GDP is projected to record a growth of **1 percent** in 2021-22, according to Icra Ratings.
- The rating agency ICRA had earlier projected a contraction of 7.8% for the ongoing fiscal 2020-21.

RBI cancels the licence of Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled** the licence of **Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank Ltd., Osmanabad, Maharashtra** to carry on banking business, with effect from the close of business on January 11.
- The Bank has failed to comply with the requirements of **Section 11(1) read with Section 56 of BR Act** and thus would be unable to pay its present depositors in full in its current financial position.
- The Commissioner for Cooperation and **Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RCS)**, Maharashtra has also been requested to issue an order for winding up the bank and appoint a liquidator for the bank.
- With the cancellation of licence and commencement of liquidation proceedings, the process of paying the depositors of Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank as per the DICGC Act will be set in motion.
- More than 99 percent of depositors of the bank will get full repayment of their deposits.

About Reserve Bank of India :

- Governor : Shaktikanta Das
- Repo Rate : 4.00%
- Reverse Repo Rate : 3.35 %
- Bank Rate : 4.65%
- Established : April 1, 1935

CURRENT AFFAIRS : SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

15th India Digital Summit 2021

- The **India Digital Summit**, the flagship event of the **Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)** is one of the biggest conferences for the digital industry scheduled on **January 19 and 20, 2021**.
- Honourable Union Minister for Communications, Electronics & IT and Law & Justice, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, who is the chief guest, will deliver the inaugural address at the Summit.

About the Summit :

- The summit, in its **15th year**, will bring thought leadership on various digital initiatives that will cover Policies, Business, Investment, Advertising, Digital Commerce, Start-ups Ecosystem, Emerging Tech, and other Digital Trends.

- The **theme** for this year's summit, which is being held virtually is 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat – Start of New Decade' in line with the government's 'Make for the World' Initiatives.
- The staggering increase in the total number of internet users in rural India recently presents us with the unique opportunity to establish India as a global powerhouse of Digital Growth.
- With an eye to empowering the nation's growing digital economy and bolstering Government of India's commitment to transform a connected nation by creating a new digital ecosystem, the 15th India Digital Summit (IDS) will be the platform for thought leaders to pursue the goal.

India, Singapore sign pact on submarine rescue support

- **India and Singapore** signed an **implementing agreement on submarine rescue support** and cooperation between their navies during the **5th Defence Minister's Dialogue** held over video conference,
- Both ministers were pleased to witness the signing of the **implementing agreement on submarine rescue support and cooperation between the two navies.**
- Rajnath Singh and his Singaporean counterpart Ng Eng Hen conveyed their full support towards early conclusion of agreements to "facilitate conduct of live firings and to establish reciprocal arrangements for the cross-attendance of military courses"

About Singapore :

- Currency : Dollar
- President : Halimah Yacob
- Prime Minister : Lee Hsien Loong

TRIFED and IFFDC ink MoU to work together for tribal livelihood generation

- **The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Indian Farm Forestry Development Co-operative Ltd (IFFDC)** to promote livelihood generation of **tribal people.**
- TRIFED is focusing its efforts on finding new ways to improve the lives and the livelihoods of the tribal people. As a part of its continued efforts, TRIFED has been partnering with like-minded organisations to create synergies together.
- The two organizations have agreed to partner with each other to organise training programmes for tribal artisans in the area of entrepreneurship skill and business development.
- They will also collaborate further to identify and implement CSR initiatives and tribal development efforts

About TRIFED :

- Founded : 1987
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Comes Under Ministry of Tribal Affairs

- Chairman : Ramesh Chand Meena
- Vice- Chairman : Pratibha Brahma
- Managing Director : Shri Pravir Krishna

About IFFDC :

- Chief Project Manager : Dr Harish Chandra Gena

Ministry of Statistics launches NCAVES India Forum 2021

- **Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of the Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) India Forum 2021** is being organised by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) virtually over three separate days, on 14, 21, and 28 January 2021.**
- In India, the NCAVES project is being implemented by the MoSPI in close collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) and the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC).
- **India** is one of the five countries taking part in this project – the other countries being Brazil, China, South Africa and Mexico.
- The NCAVES India Forum will be organized in collaboration with the **United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), European Union and UN Environment.**

About NCAVES

- The NCAVES Project, funded by the EU, has been jointly implemented by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD).
- Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) can help integrate the concerns of sustainability and conserving the environment for future use while charting the course for economic development.

India and Japan inks MoU to Enhance Cooperation in the Field of ICT

- **India and Japan** signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance cooperation in the field of **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)**, including **5G standardisation.**
- The MoU was signed between Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister for Communications, Electronics and IT and the Japanese Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Takeda Ryota, through a video conference.
- As per the agreement, both the countries will enhance mutual cooperation in the field of 5G technologies, telecom security, submarine optical fibre cable system to islands of India, spectrum management, smart cities, high-altitude platform for broadband in unconnected areas, disaster management and public safety.
- The new agreement will bring the cooperation between Japan and India in the field of ICT to another level, which has already been close under the Japan-India ICT Comprehensive Cooperation Framework of 2014

About Japan:

- Capital : Tokyo
- Currency : Japanese Yen
- Prime Minister : Yoshihide Suga

Indian Army signs a \$20 million contract with ideaForge to buy SWITCH drones

- The **Indian Army** has signed an approximately **\$20 million** contract for undisclosed quantities of a high-altitude variant of ideaForge's **SWITCH UAV** which will be delivered over a period of 1 year.
- IdeaForge has been awarded this contract after it emerged as the only vendor that qualified the operational requirements in an evaluation done in real-world conditions, for a fast-track procurement.
- The contract marks a strategic shift in the Indian defence procurement process as the Indian Army goes on an aggressive modernization drive. It has also cemented ideaForge's position as India's largest manufacturer of drones for defence, homeland security and industrial applications.

About SWITCH UAV :

- SWITCH UAV is an indigenous system built to cater for the most demanding surveillance operations of the Indian Forces. This Fixed Wing VTOL (Vertical Take-off and Landing) UAV can be deployed at high altitude and harsh environments for day and night surveillance in Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions. It is man-portable and has the highest time on target compared to any other UAV in its class.

About Idea Forge :

- CEO : Ankit Mehta
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra

Defence Secretary co-chairs 13th India-Vietnam Defence Security Dialogue with his Vietnamese counterpart

- Defence Secretary **Dr Ajay Kumar** co-chaired the **13th India-Vietnam Defence Security Dialogue** along with his Vietnamese co-chair Sr Lt Gen Nguyen Chi Vinh, Deputy Defence Minister of Vietnam.
- During virtual interaction, both of them expressed satisfaction at the ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries in spite of the limitations imposed by COVID 19.
- During the interaction, the Defence Secretary and the Deputy Defence Minister exchanged views on the plan of action that has emanated from the recently concluded Virtual Summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc in December 2020.

About Vietnam :

- Capital : Hanoi

- Currency : Vietnamese dong

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

- **The Government of France**, in cooperation with the **UN and the World Bank**, the **'One Planet Summit' for biodiversity on January 11** aims to advance the **protection of nature**.
- French President Emmanuel Macron, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, and World Bank Group President David Malpass are organising the fourth 'One Planet Summit' which will focus on biodiversity to mobilise commitments to protect ecosystems and make links to human health.
- The theme of the Summit was **"Let's act together for nature!"**
- The summit programme will focus on
 1. Biodiversity preservation
 2. The protection of terrestrial and marine ecosystems
 3. The promotion of agroecology,
 4. The mobilisation of funding for biodiversity
 5. The link between deforestation, species and human health.
- The event will be in a hybrid format with the participation of leaders in person in Paris and via video-tele-conferencing. It will be live-streamed on webtv.un.org.

About France :

- Capital : Paris
- President : Emmanuel Macron

About UN :

- Headquarters : New York
- Founded : 24 October, 1945
- Secretary General : Antonio Guterres

About World Bank :

- President : David Malpass
- Headquarters : Washington D.C., United States
- Founded : July 1944

CURRENT AFFAIRS : SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Infosys gets Google Cloud Partner status

- **Infosys** has accredited with the **Google Cloud Partner** Specialisation within the information and analytics area.
- It is among the many high world system integrators to be accredited with this specialisation, claimed the corporation.

- Infosys has achieved this recognition by efficiently demonstrating end-to-end capabilities on Google Cloud together with information ingestion and warehousing on the cloud, as per the agency.
- It has showcased technical proficiency, sturdy methodology, robust business experience, and success in specialised information and analytics options and repair areas.
- These information and analytics choices, a part of Infosys Cobalt.
- Along with AI capabilities assist migrate workloads to Google Cloud, modernise information landscapes, and optimise prices paving the best way for AI and cloud-native digital transformation for enterprises, Infosys additionally mentioned.

About Infosys :

- Founded : 7 July 1981
- Headquarters : Bangalore
- CDEO : Salil Parekh

Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurates the new entity CSIR-NIScPR in New Delhi

- The Union Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare **Harsh Vardhan** inaugurated a **new institute of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (CSIR-NIScPR), in New Delhi.**
- The new institute has been established consequent to the merger of two prestigious institutes of CSIR namely, CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (CSIR-NISCAIR) and CSIR-National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies (CSIR-NISTADS) which work at the interface of S&T and Society; and Science Communication and Policy Research.
- The purpose of this merger is to combine the strength of the two institutes in a synergistic way with a VISION to become a globally respected Think Tank and Resource Centre for understanding Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) Policy Research and Communication.

About Council of Scientific and Industrial Research:

- Comes Under Ministry of Science & Technology
- Founded : 26 September, 1942
- Head : Shekhar C. Mande

ICT Grand Challenge for development of 'smart water supply measurement and monitoring system' underway

- An **ICT Grand Challenge** for development of a '**smart water supply measurement and monitoring system**' is underway.
- It was launched on the 15th of September, 2020 by **National Jal Jeevan Mission in partnership with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.**

- Jal Jeevan Mission would be the user agent of the Grand Challenge and C-DAC, Bangalore is the implementing agency, providing technical support for the challenge.
- Currently, 10 applicants which were selected are developing prototypes.
- They will be evaluated in the last week of January wherein best four technologically viable prototypes will be selected for product development.
- Jal Jeevan Mission is a flagship programme of the Union Government which aims to provide tap water connection to every rural household by 2024. Announced by the Prime Minister on 15th August 2019, the Mission so far has provided 3.13 crore household tap connections in rural areas.

CURRENT AFFAIRS : DEFENSE NEWS

Indian and French air forces to conduct Exercise Desert Knight-21

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and **French Air and Space Force** are set to participate in **Exercise Desert Knight-21**.
- The bilateral air exercise will be held at **Jodhpur Air Force station in Rajasthan, India, from 20 to 24 January**.
- Exercise Desert Knight-21 aims to improve interoperability between the forces while exchanging 'ideas and best practices' gained from operational experience.
- According to the Indian Ministry of Defence, the exercise will see the deployment of Rafale aircraft by both countries.
- Both the air forces will deploy frontline fighter jets as well as transport, and tanker aircraft in the exercise.

About Indian Air Force :

- Founded : October 8, 1932
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Commander in Chief : Ram Nath Kovind

India set to procure more MiG-29 and Sukhoi fighter jets

- The government is set to procure **21 MiG-29 and 12 Sukhoi-30MKI** fighter aircraft from
- The **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)** approved the purchase of **83 Light Combat Aircraft Tejas from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**.
- The Centre will also purchase the upgrades of the aircraft's existing fleets.
- The Request for Proposal (RFP) will soon be issued to Russian state-run defence export arm Rosoboronexport.
- The MiG-29s are expected to be acquired at "relatively lower prices" and will add to 59 such jets already with the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- Before this, the Union cabinet had approved Rs 48000 crores acquisition of 83 LCA (Light Combat Aircraft) Tejas aircraft from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- This will include 73 improved Tejas Light Combat Aircraft Mk.1A fighters and ten LCA Mk.1 trainers.

About Russia :

- President : Vladimir Putin
- Capital : Moscow
- Currency : Russian ruble

About Hindustan Aeronautics Limited :

- Founder : Walchand Hirachand
- Founded : 23 December, 1940, Bangalore
- Headquarters : Bangalore

Cabinet clears purchase of 83 Tejas fighter jets for Indian Air Force

- Government has approved procurement of **83 Light Combat Aircraft, LCA**, Tejas worth about **48 thousand crore rupees from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for Indian Air Force.**
- The Cabinet Committee on Security, CCS chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.**
- The procurement of 73 LCA Tejas Mk-1A fighter aircrafts and 10 LCA Tejas Mk-1 Trainer aircrafts at the cost of Rs. 45,696 crore along with Design and Development of Infrastructure sanctions worth Rs.1,202 crore has been approved by the Cabinet under the PM Modi.
- Light Combat Aircraft Mk-1A variant is an indigenously designed, developed and manufactured state-of-the-art modern 4+ generation fighter aircraft.
- This aircraft is equipped with critical operational capabilities of Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) Radar, Beyond Visual Range (BVR) Missile, Electronic Warfare (EW) Suite and Air to Air Refuelling (AAR).

CURRENT AFFAIRS : RANKING

NITI Aayog releases 2nd edition of India Innovation Index-2020

- **NITI Aayog released the second edition of the India Innovation Index-2020.**
- The index demonstrates the government's continued **commitment towards transforming the country into an innovation-driven economy.**
- The report examines the innovation capabilities and performance of the **states and union territories.**
- The India Innovation Index aims to create an extensive framework for the continual evaluation of India's innovation environment. The index aims to rank states and UTs based on their scores, recognize opportunities and challenges, and assist in tailoring government policies to foster innovation.
- The innovation inputs were measured through five enabler parameters, and the output through two performance parameters. While 'Human Capital', 'Investment', 'Knowledge Workers', 'Business Environment', 'Safety and Legal Environment' were identified as enabler parameters, 'Knowledge Output' and 'Knowledge Diffusion' were chosen as the performance parameters.
- In the 'Major States' category, **Karnataka** continued to occupy the **top position**, while Maharashtra moved past Tamil Nadu to reach the second place. Telangana

- In Union Territory and city states category, **Delhi topped** followed by Chandigarh.
- Under the '**North-Eastern/Hill States**' category, **Himachal Pradesh** moved up from the second position to emerge as the **top ranker** this year.

About NITI Aayog :

- Formed : 1 January 2015
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Chairperson : Narendra Modi
- CEO : Amitabh Kant
- Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar

World's Most Powerful Passports 2021 List: India On No. 85

- **Henley and Partners Passport Index of 2021** has revealed the list of the **world's most powerful passports and India has been ranked 85th on it.**
- India's passport got a **visa-free score of 58**, which means Indian passport holders can visit 58 countries without prior visa. India shares the no. 85 rank with Tajikistan.
- **Japan tops the list** of being the most powerful passport in the world for the year 2021, according to the latest report by the Henley Passport Index released on January 5.
- Singapore is in second place (with a score of 190) and South Korea ties with Germany in third place (with a score of 189).
- Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan continue to be the countries with the 'worst passports to hold' at the bottom of the list with a passport score of 29, 28 and 26 respectively.

Most Powerful Passports in 2021 are:

1. Japan (191 destinations)
2. Singapore (190)
3. South Korea, Germany (189)
4. Italy, Finland, Spain, Luxembourg (188)
5. Denmark, Austria (187)
6. Sweden, France, Portugal, Netherlands, Ireland (186)
7. Switzerland, United States, United Kingdom, Norway, Belgium, New Zealand (185)
8. Greece, Malta, Czech Republic, Australia (184)
9. Canada (183)
10. Hungary (181)

Worst Passports to Hold :

Several countries around the world have visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to fewer than 40 countries. These include the following.

103. North Korea (39 destinations)
104. Libya, Nepal (38)
105. Palestinian territories (37)
106. Somalia, Yemen (33)
107. Pakistan (32)

- 108. Syria (29)
- 109. Iraq (28)
- 110. Afghanistan (26)

CURRENT AFFAIRS : APPOINTMENTS

Yoweri museveni wins sixth term as uganda's president

- **Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni** has scored a decisive election victory to **win a sixth term**.
- Mr Museveni, 76, has been in power since 1986 and is one of Africa's longest-serving leaders.
- Mr Museveni won 5.85 million votes, or 58.6 per cent, while Mr Wine had 3.48 million votes.

About Uganda :

- Capital : Kampala
- Currency : Ugandan Shilling

Vishwavir Ahuja re-appointed as CEO of RBL Bank

- **The board of directors of RBL Bank**, approved the **re-appointment of Vishwavir Ahuja** as the **Managing Director and CEO** of the bank for three years.
- The re-appointment is with effect from **June 30, 2021, to June 29, 2024**.
- Ahuja has been MD & CEO of RBL Bank since June 30, 2010. Prior to joining RBL Bank, he was the MD & CEO of Bank of America, India, from 2001 to 2009.
- As per the regulatory filing, under Ahuja's leadership, the deposits of the bank have grown almost 40 times, while advances have grown more than 45 times since 2011.

About RBL Bank :

- Founded : August 1943
- Under the Indian Companies Act, 1913
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra

PM Narendra Modi appointed chairman of Somnath temple trust

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** was appointed the **new chairman of the trust** which manages the **world famous Somnath Temple at Prabhas Patan town in Gujarat's Gir-Somnath district**.
- Modi, one of the trustees of the Shree Somnath Trust, was named to the top post unanimously
- PM Modi is the only second Prime Minister to hold the post, after Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

Other members of the trust includes:

- Union Home Minister **Amit Shah**,
- Veteran BJP leader **LK Advani**,
- **Harshvardhan Neotia**- chairman of Kolkata-based construction major Ambuja Neotia Goup,
- **Pravin Laheri**- retired chief secretary of Gujarat and
- **Jeevan Parmar**- retired professor of Sanskrit in Veraval

Kyrgyzstan election: Sadyr Japarov wins presidency with landslide

- Nationalist politician **Sadyr Japarov** won a landslide victory in **Kyrgyzstan's snap presidential election**, which was triggered by the collapse of the previous government.
- Japarov has won almost **80%** of the vote in the Central Asian nation which is closely allied with Russia, preliminary results cited by Kyrgyzstan's Central Election Commission.
- Kyrgyzstan has been in crisis since parliamentary elections last October.
- The results of those elections were disputed, leading to protests and the resignation of then-President Sooronbay Jeenbekov.

About Kyrgyzstan:

- Capital : Bishkek
- Currency : Kyrgyzstan som

Jay Shah named BCCI's representative on ICC Board

- On Jan 10, 2021, **Jay Shah** was named as the official representative of **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board meetings**.
- BCCI secretary Jay Shah is all set to be named as India's representative in the ICC Board.
- He will replace BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, was the person going on behalf of India to any meetings or interactions of the ICC Board, but he had recently suffered a heart condition on January 2 and was subsequently admitted to a hospital in his home town in Kolkata where he underwent primary angioplasty.

About BCCI :

- President : Sourav Ganguly
- Secretary : Jay Shah
- Headquarters : Mumbai
- Founded : December 1928

About ICC :

- Chairperson : Greg Barclay
- CEO : Manu Sawhney
- Headquarters : Dubai, United Arab Emirates

- Founded : 15 June, 1909

CURRENT AFFAIRS : HONOURS & AWARDS

Bilkis dadi and Harsh Mander conferred with Quaide Milleth Award

- **Bilkis Dadi**, and an eminent social activist and writer Harsh Mander of “**Karwan -e-Mohabbat**” were presented the **Quaide Milleth Award**.
- The awards consist of a Shawl, citation and a cash of **Rs 2.5lakh rupees** were presented to the recipients by Navaid Hamid, President, All India Majlis e Mushawarat.
- They are awarded for Probity in Political and Public Life at the India Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi.
- Both recipients had made a mark in public life with their determination and zeal to protect the secular fabric of the country.

CURRENT AFFAIRS : BOOKS & AUTHORS

Goa CM releases book 'Manohar Parrikar – Off the Record'

- Goa Chief Minister **Pramod Sawant** released a book '**Manohar Parrikar- Off the Record**' at a function organized at **Institute Menezes Braganza** hall in the city.
- The book has been written by senior journalist **Waman Subha Prabhu**.
- The book 'Manohar Parrikar- Off the Record' is a collection of memories of Mr Prabhu who happened to be with late Parrikar during the journey of his life.
- In the book the author has endeavored to narrate the multi-faceted personality of late Manohar Parrikar.
- This book, no doubt, will serve the purpose as it will help to inspire generations to generations

About Goa :

- Governor : Bhagat Singh Koshyari
- Capital : Panaji

Manipur Governor released a book titled Making of a General A Himalayan Echo

- Manipur Governor **Najma Heptulla** virtually released **Lt Gen Singh's** book **Making of a General-A Himalayan Echo (Konark Publishers)** at **Durbar Hall, Raj Bhavan, Imphal**
- The book elegantly summons the essence and imperatives of superior command of one of the most formidable forces in the world.

About the Book :

- The book highlights Manipur as the '**Land of Emeralds**'. On the other hand, this state is known as 'Unexplored Paradise'.
- The book was reviewed by senior journalist and editor of Imphal Review of Arts and Politics, Pradip Phanjoubam.

- The Book is the memoir of Lt Gen Konsam Himalay Singh who has traced his journey from a small village in Manipur to becoming the first person from North East India to hold the rank of a Three Star General of the Indian Army.

About Manipur:

- Capital : Imphal
- Governor : Najma Heptulla

CURRENT AFFAIRS : SPORTS NEWS

India defeat Australia by 3 wickets to win Border-Gavaskar Trophy

- **Ajinkya Rahane-led India** defeated **Australia by three wickets** in the final fourth Test of the **Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2020-21**.
- To clinch the series and bring an end to Australia's 32-year-long unbeaten streak at The Gabba.
- Australia's last defeat in Brisbane came against West Indies in 1988.
- They were undefeated at The Gabba in their last 31 games having won 24 and drawn seven matches.
- In that Man of the match is **Rishabh Pant**.

First ever Ice climbing festival celebrated in Nubra valley

- In Leh, the primary **ever Ice climbing festival was celebrated in Nubra valley**.
- The Seven Day occasion was organized by **Nubra Adventure Club**.
- Ice Climbing is a Popular Winter sport abroad and that will attract adventure tourists.
- The motive to conduct the Ice festival is to promote tourism in the region.
- **18 participants** across Nubra valley including 4 women, have taken part in Ice climbing.
- Three trainers Rigzin tsewang, Tsewang Namgyal and Kran Kowshik imparted ice climbing skills.

CURRENT AFFAIRS : DAYS

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

- The Government of India has decided to celebrate the birthday of **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** that falls on **January 23** as '**Parakram Diwas**' from now on every year.
- This day is Mainly for **To honour and remember Netaji's indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation**.
- The Government of India has decided to celebrate the 125th birth anniversary year of Netaji beginning from January 2021 in befitting manner at national and international level.
- The announcement assumes significance ahead of the West Bengal Assembly elections scheduled later this year.

- Bose, a noted freedom fighter, had floated Azad Hind Fauj to fight for India's independence.

Indian Armed Forces Veterans Day being observed On Jan 14

- **Indian Armed Forces Veterans Day** is observed each year on **14 January since 2017**.
- This day is celebrated on 14th of January every year to **honour services rendered by veterans of the Army**.
- This year is being celebrated as **Swarnim Vijay Varsh**.
- It marks the **50th Anniversary of 1971 Indo-Pak War**.
- **Significance** : This day is celebrated mainly for a recognition of the services rendered by the first Commander-in-Chief of Indian Armed Forces, Field Marshal KM Cariappa, OBE who retired on 14 Jan 1953.

About Indian Army :

- Commander in Chief : Ram Nath Kovind
- Founded : 1 April, 1895
- Headquarters : New Delhi

Indian Army Day Observed On Jan 15

- **Army Day** is celebrated on **January 15** every year to honor the soldiers of the country, who have set the greatest example of selfless service and brotherhood and more than anything the love for the country.
- In 2021 Marks **India's 73rd Army Day**.
- Army Day is celebrated **every year at all Army Command headquarters**.
- On the occasion of the 73rd Indian Army Day, the Indian Army will organise a marathon 'Vijay Run' to commemorate Swarnim Vijay Varsh celebrations of India's resounding victory over Pakistan in 1971.

History of Army Day :

- It was on this date in 1949, the Indian Army got its **first army chief Lieutenant General KM Cariappa**.
- General (later Field Marshal) KM Cariappa was appointed as Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army on January 15, 1949.
- He was the first Indian to be appointed as Commander-in-Chief.
- He took over the reins of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India.

National Road Safety Month 2021: From 18 January To 17 February

- **Road Safety Week** is observed from **11 January to 17th January** every year.
- **Aim** : For making the roads and streets in India safer.

- The Ministry of Transport and Highways, the ministry has decided to observe Road Safety Month from 18 January to 17 February 2021 instead of **National Road Safety Week**.
- During this period, various nation-wide activities have been planned to be conducted throughout the country in association with the state governments/ UT administrations, OEMs and other stakeholders.
- The month-long event will see awards being given to best performance in road safety to a state as well as Swachata Award, road safety activities by NHIDCL (**National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited**), HOAI (**Highway Operator Association of India**), NHAI among others.
- The various activities that are slated to take place during National Road Safety Month 2021 include advocacy of road safety, road safety awards, launch of digital road safety calendar 2021, selection of best performing states and UTS for road safety 2021, awards and certificates for road safety, good samaritans etc, and National Highways Excellence Awards.

National Youth Day 2021: Jan 12

- The **National Youth Day** is observed all over India on **12 January**.
- Theme for National Youth Day 2021 is '**Channelizing Youth Power for Nation Building**
- **Since 1984**, the birthday of Swami Vivekananda (January 12) is celebrated as National Youth Day across the country.
- The day was chosen to honour one of India's greatest spiritual and social leaders, Swami Vivekananda.
- It is also commonly known as **Yuva Diwas**.
- One of the main objectives of National Youth Day is to promote rational thinking among the youth, who are the future of the country.
- National Youth Day which aims to discuss the lectures, thoughts and writings of Swami Vivekananda. Several competitions on essay writing, debates and poetry also mark the day.
- In 2021, we are observing the 158th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand (12 January 1863).

World Hindi Day Observed on 10 January

- **World Hindi Day** is celebrated every year on **January 10**.
- Vishwa Hindi Divas commemorates the anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference held in Nagpur on **January 10, 1975**.
- The conference was inaugurated by the then prime minister **Indira Gandhi in Nagpur**.
- World Hindi Day was first celebrated in **2006 by former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh**.
- The aim of the conference was to promote Hindi language worldwide.
- **National Hindi Divas** which is celebrated annually on **September 14**.

NRI or Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2020: Observed on January 09

- Every year, January 9 is celebrated as the **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** (PBD) to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community to the development of the nation.
- The day commemorates the return of **Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai** on 9 January 1915.
- The **theme** of 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2021 is **“Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat”**.

CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARIES

Social Activist D Prakash Rao Passes Away at 63

- **Social activist and Padma Shri D Prakash Rao** passed away while undergoing treatment at the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. He was 63.
- Rao started the school **‘Asha O Ashwasana’** in Buxi Bazar area in 2000 to provide free education to slum kids when he saw kids in his neighbourhood talking about petty crimes.
- He was conferred with the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2019 for his contribution towards boosting the value of education among slum kids in Cuttack.
- Apart from this, he was also a well-known blood donor and tea seller.

Music producer Phil Spector, passes away

- **Phil Spector**, the eccentric and revolutionary music producer who transformed rock music with his **“Wall of Sound”** method and who later was convicted of murder, has died. He was 81
- Spector was convicted of murdering actress Lana Clarkson in 2003 at his castle-like mansion on the edge of Los Angeles.
- After a trial in 2009, he was sentenced to 19 years to life.
- While most sources give Spector’s birth date as 1940, it was listed as 1939 in court documents following his arrest.
- Decades before, Spector had been hailed as a visionary for channeling Wagnerian ambition into the three-minute song, creating the “Wall of Sound” that merged spirited vocal harmonies with lavish orchestral arrangements to produce such pop monuments as “Da Doo Ron Ron,” “Be My Baby” and “He’s a Rebel.”
- In 1969, Spector was called in to salvage the Beatles’ “Let It Be” album, a troubled “back to basics” production marked by dissension within the band.

Dr V Shanta, renowned Indian oncologist, passes away

- **Dr V Shanta**, renowned **Indian oncologist and doyen of cancer care**, has passed away at the age of 93.
- Dr V Shanta was the chairperson of **Adyar Cancer Institute** which she joined in 1954.
- The institute is known for providing state-of-the-art healthcare to all patients.

Achievements :

- She won several awards, including the **Padma Shri in 1986**, the **Magsaysay Award in 2005**, the **Padma Bhushan in 2006** and the **Padma Vibhushan in 2016**.



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