

### **CURRENT AFFAIRS : NATIONAL NEWS**

#### **47th Khajuraho Dance Festival begins in MP**

- The **week-long 47th Khajuraho Dance Festival** began in **Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh** which is based on the **Indian classical dance tradition**.
- The festival is being organized by the **Culture Department through Ustad Alauddin Khan Music and Arts Academy Bhopal. Director of the Academy,**
- Festival will give the audience a chance to watch the performance of the dancers amid the aura of the temple as the event is being held once again in the temple complex of the Western Temple Group of Khajuraho after a gap of 44 years.

#### **Aim :**

- The festival aims to promote and encourage dance, artists, culture and heritage of India through several Indian classical dance forms like Kathak, Odissi, Manipuri, Bharatnatyam, Kuchipudi, and Mohiniattam.
- The first day event is dedicated to Bharatanatyam performance by Geeta Chandran and her troupe and Kathak performance by Deepak Maharaj.

#### **About MP :**

- Capital : Bhopal
- CM : Shivraj Singh Chouhan
- Governor : Anandiben Patel

#### **Rajnath Singh inaugurates DRDO Skill Development Centre for Fire Safety Training**

- **Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh** has inaugurated **Skill Development Centre (SDC) for Fire Safety Training of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** at **Pilkhua in Uttar Pradesh** through virtual mode on February 22, 2021
- The facility, created by Delhi based DRDO laboratory **Centre for Fire, Explosive and Environment Safety (CFEES)**
- **Aim :** At developing trained human resources, fire safety technology and products to save precious human lives and valued assets.

#### **About CFEES :**

- Director : Rajiv Narang
- Founded : 1992

#### **About DRDO :**

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

#### **Ramky Enviro contract with Chennai for waste management**

- **Ramky Enviro Engineers Ltd (REEL)**, a leading waste management company, announced that it has entered into a seven-year contract with the **Greater Chennai Corporation** to design and implement an IOT-enabled solid waste collection programme.

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- The Hyderabad-based company said it will cover **four zones in Chennai including Tiruvottriyur (Zone 1), Manali (Zone 2), Madhavaram (Zone 3), and Ambattur (Zone 7).**
- The programme which has been **launched by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami**, will involve 100 per cent waste segregation at source across all the households in the four zones within one year and sustain these efforts consistently.

## Modi inaugurates Railway projects in West Bengal

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi harped** on the importance of infrastructure projects as a development index for **West Bengal.**
- While he said infra development was the priority for his government, Modi pulled up the ruling Trinamool Congress for tardy execution of development work.
- Syndicates, extortion and cut-money have been a recurring poll theme in Bengal.

## Desi cloud storage platform DigiBoxx launched in Tamil Nadu

- **DigiBoxx, India's first digital asset management platform** has launched its services in the Tamil Nadu market.
- **State Industries Minister MC Sampath** inaugurated the service.
- DigiBoxx is an Indian digital file storage, sharing and management **SaaS (Software as a Service)** product that provides storage options for businesses as well as individual users to store all files in one centralised location.
- As part of the **Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative**, NITI Aayog first launched the indigenously developed platform on December 22, 2020, to provide affordable storage services to individuals and businesses and most importantly to store user data within India.

## Kushinagar Airport in Uttar Pradesh Gets International Airport License From DGCA

- The under-construction **Kushinagar Airport** in **Uttar Pradesh** has received the **International Airport license from Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).**
- Once operational, this will be the **third international airport in UP after Lucknow and Varanasi.**
- With this, UP is set to become the state with the highest number of airports after the upcoming Ayodhya Airport also joins the list.
- That will boost tourism in the region & facilitate travel on Buddhist circuit by providing direct aviation connectivity to the city.
- Currently the other two international airports functional in **Uttar Pradesh** are **Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport at Lucknow and Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport at Varanasi.**
- Chitrakoot will be the first airport in Uttar Pradesh with 'Table Top' runway.

## About Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) :

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Minister : Suresh Prabhu
- Comes Under Ministry of Civil Aviation

## About UP :

- Capital : Lucknow
- Governor : Anandiben Patel

## Karnataka set to add value to its flower power

- **The Horticulture Department**, in collaboration with the **International Flower Auction Bangalore (IFAB)**, is setting up a flower processing centre to convert unsold flowers into various useful products.

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- This incubation centre will process flowers and convert them to value-added products such as natural dyes, floral papers, incense sticks, flower petal powder for cosmetic usage, floral embedded works, floral arts, and silica-stored flowers.
- A facility was needed as flower farmers have been suffering huge losses whenever there is a glut or market disruption. Growers can learn the art of flower processing from the centre.

## About Karnataka :

- CM : Yediyurappa
- Capital : Bangalore
- Governor : Vajubhai Vala.

## Centre Launches National Urban Digital Mission For Creating Digital Infra For Cities

- The **Central government** launched ‘**National Urban Digital Mission**’ to create a digital infrastructure for cities in the country.
- The **Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry (MoHUA)** said the move will institutionalise a citizen-centric and ecosystem-driven approach to urban governance and service delivery in cities by 2022, and across all cities and towns by 2024.
- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and Minister of Electronics and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad launched the ‘National Urban Digital Mission’ (NUDM) at a virtual event.
- The mission has three pillars – people, process, and platform.

## About NUDM :

- The National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM) will create a shared digital infrastructure for urban India, working across the **three pillars of people, process, and platform** to provide holistic support to cities and towns. It will institutionalise a citizen-centric and ecosystem-driven approach to urban governance and service delivery in 2022 cities by 2022, and across all cities and towns in India by 2024.
- NUDM will create a shared digital infrastructure that can consolidate and cross-leverage the various digital initiatives of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, enabling cities and towns across India to benefit from holistic and diverse forms of support, in keeping with their needs and local challenges.
- Apart from this, several other digital initiatives of MoHUA were also launched which includes: India Urban Data Exchange (IUDX), SmartCode platform, Smart Cities 2.0 website, and Geospatial Management Information System (GMIS).

## About IUDX :

- IUDX serves as a seamless interface for data providers and data users, including ULBs, to share, request, and access datasets related to cities, urban governance, and urban service delivery
- IUDX is an open-source software platform which facilitates secure, authenticated, and managed exchange of data amongst various data platforms, third party authenticated and authorised applications, and other sources.

## Several development projects launched by PM Modi in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will be on a day’s visit to **Tamil Nadu and Puducherry** to inaugurate and lay the foundation for **several developmental projects**.
- Modi will depart from Chennai to Coimbatore after his visit to Puducherry.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of multiple infrastructure projects worth over **12 thousand 400 crore rupees in Coimbatore**, the manchester of South India.
- Modi will dedicate the **Neyveli New Thermal Power project**, 709 MegaWatt Solar Power Project and the 8-laning of Korampallam Bridge and Rail Over Bridge built V.O.Chidambaranar Port, Tuticorin.
- Modi will inaugurate over **4000 tenements** constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana scheme.
- Modi will lay the foundation stone for the extension, renovation and modernization of **Lower Bhavani Project**.
- He will also lay the foundation for the development of Integrated Command and Control Centers.

## Center approves PLI Scheme for IT Hardware and Pharmaceuticals

- Union Cabinet approved Production **Linked Incentive Scheme for IT Hardware**.
- The scheme proposes incentives to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investments in the value chain of IT Hardware.
- **Communication and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad** said, the target segments of the scheme include laptops, tablets, all-in-one PCs and servers.
- Mr Prasad said, the total cost of the proposed scheme is around **Rs 7,350 crore** over four years.
- Prasad added that the scheme has direct and indirect employment generation potential of over **one lakh 80 thousand**.
- The Union Cabinet also approved **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** for Pharmaceuticals over a period of Financial Year 2020-21 to 2028-29.
- The Scheme will benefit domestic manufacturers, help in creating employment and is expected to contribute to the availability of a wider range of affordable medicines for consumers.

## 2nd edition of Maritime India Summit 2021 inaugurated by PM Modi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 2nd edition of the **Maritime India Summit 2021**.
- The summit will be organised virtually between 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021.
- First summit was organised in 2016 in Mumbai.
- **Rajiv Jalota**, Chairman, Mumbai Port Trust informed that the MIS 2021 will provide a unique platform where various stakeholders in the maritime sectors such as Senior Government Officials, Domestic and International Investors, Shipping Line Owners, Representatives of Major Ports from across the world as well as the Governments of Maritime States in India will participate.
- The Summit will also include an exclusive CEOs' forum with the Minister of State (I/c) of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.

## Home Minister releases book 'Rashtra Pratham – 82 varshon ki Swarnim Gatha'

- **Home Minister Amit Shah** released a book 'Rashtra Pratham – 82 varshon ki Swarnim Gatha' in **New Delhi**.
- The book chronicles the glorious history of CRPF since its raising in 1939 and it has detailed and thoroughly researched accounts of CRPF's journey, challenges, successes, and sacrifices.
- The Home Minister said, The Government is working on a scheme that all CAPF jawans should remain at least 100 days out of 365 days with their family members.
- The CRPF celebrated its **first-ever Veterans Day on February 19, 2021**, which was on Friday.
- From now on every third Friday of February will be celebrated as the Veterans Day of the CRPF every year.

## Nitin Gadkari inaugurates 50 artisan-based SFURTI clusters spread over 18 states

- **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister Nitin Gadkari** has inaugurated **50 artisan-based SFURTI clusters spread over 18 States**.
- In these clusters, over **42 thousand artisans** have been supported in the traditional segments of muslin, khadi, coir, handicraft, handlooms, wood craft, leather, pottery, carpet weaving, bamboo, agro processing, tea and others.
- These clusters have been inaugurated in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
- The MSME Ministry has funded 85 crore rupees for development of these SFURTI clusters.
- The Center is implementing the **Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)** to organize traditional industries and artisans into clusters to make them competitive and increase their income.

## About MSME :

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Founded : 2007

- Joint Secretary : Ateesh Kumar Singh

## Sardar Patel Cricket Stadium In Motera Renamed Narendra Modi Stadium

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** inaugurated the **newly revamped Motera cricket stadium** in **Ahmedabad**, which has been **renamed the Narendra Modi Stadium**.
- The ground, which was earlier named the **Sardar Patel Stadium, and more popularly known as the Motera stadium**, has been renamed after the Prime Minister, who was also formerly a president of the Gujarat Cricket Association.
- The Narendra Modi Stadium, which is the world's largest cricket stadium with a capacity of **1,10,000 spectators**, will host the first international match since the stadium was revamped.
- Home Minister Amit Shah and Sports Minister Kiren Rijju, along with the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah**, were also present at the event.
- The Narendra Modi Stadium, the largest cricket ground in the world will host its first international match on Wednesday, when India will take on England in the Day-Night Test.
- The stadium will be a part of the planned Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave in the city.
- The stadium is spread across 63 acres of land and has three entry points. It has a seating capacity of 1,32,000 people.

## PM KISAN scheme completes two years

- Feb 24 is the second anniversary of **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, PM KISAN**.
- The Scheme was formally launched on **24th February in the year 2019** by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a function at Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.
- PM KISAN was started with a view to augment the income of the farmers by providing income support to all landholding farmers' families across the country.
- Under the PM KISAN Scheme, an amount of **6000 rupees per year** is transferred in three installments of **2000 rupees directly into the bank accounts of the farmers**.

## Hoshangabad in MP to be renamed as Narmadapuram

- **Madhya Pradesh** Chief Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** has announced that **Hoshangabad** city in the state would be **renamed as Narmadapuram**.
- He made the announcement during the Narmada Jayanti programme held in Hoshangabad.
- Narmada is the lifeline of Madhya Pradesh.
- The city is famous for its beautiful ghats along the banks of the Narmada river.
- Hoshangabad was so far named after an attacker Hoshang Shah, but will be known after the lifeline Maa Narmada, which is a matter of happiness.

## About MP :

- CM : Shivraj Singh Chouhan
- Capital : Bhopal

## Manipur CM N Biren Singh launched PM FME Scheme

- In Manipur, the **State Chief Minister N. Biren Singh** launched the Prime Minister Formalization of **Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME) Scheme**.
- The launching of the Scheme was done during the inaugural function of Conference Cum Buyer Meet at Hotel Imphal.
- The PM FME Scheme aims to provide financial, technical and business support to micro food processing units, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Self Help Groups (SHGs).
- The Scheme will also promote **One District One Product** to reap the benefit of scales in terms of procurement of inputs, availing common services and marketing of products.

## JP Nadda to participate in series of programmes in Kolkata, West Bengal

- BJP national president **JP Nadda** will participate in a series of programmes in **Kolkata and North 24 Parganas** in West Bengal.
- Mr Nadda will launch Lokkho Sonar Bangla manifesto crowdsourcing campaign in Kolkata in the morning before visiting Rishi Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's residence and museum in Naihati.
- The BJP president will have lunch at a jute mill worker's household in Gouripur and visit Anandpuri Kalibari Temple, Barrackpore.
- He will visit Mangal Pandey Memorial before addressing Poriborton Yatra – Nabadwip zone culmination rally in Anandapuri Khelar Math.
- Later in Kolkata, Mr Nadda is scheduled to begin the Lokkho Sonar Bangla intellectuals meeting in Science City.

## PM Modi inaugurates and lays foundation stone of various development projects in Coimbatore

- On February 25, 2021, **Prime Minister** visited **Tamil Nadu to dedicate to the nation and lay the foundation stone of multiple infrastructure projects in Coimbatore.**

### The Projects are :

- **1000 MW Neyveli** New Thermal Power Project
- **709 MW Solar Power Project of NLCIL**
- He laid the foundation stone for design, supply, installation and commissioning of a 5MW grid connected ground based solar power plant at V.O.Chidambaranar Port and for the extension, renovation and modernisation of Lower Bhavani Project System.
- He also laid the foundation stone for development of **Integrated Command and Control Centers (ICCC) in nine Smart Cities** including Coimbatore, Madurai, Salem, Thanjavur, Vellore, Tiruchirappalli, Tiruppur, Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi.
- He inaugurated the **8-laning of Korampallam Bridge and Rail Over Bridge (ROB) at V.O.Chidambaranar Port** and the tenements constructed under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban)** scheme.
- The Prime Minister said that the modernization of Bhawani Sagar Dam will irrigate over 2 lakh acres of land and farmers of several districts will benefit from this project Governor, Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and Union Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi were present on the occasion.

## PM Modi will address Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University's 33rd convocation

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will address the **33rd Convocation** of the Tamil Nadu **M.G.R. Medical University** through video conferencing.
- A total of 17 thousand five hundred 91 candidates will be conferred with Degrees and Diplomas in the Convocation.
- Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit will be present on the occasion.
- The University is named after the former Chief Minister Dr. M. G. Ramachandran.
- It has a total of 686 affiliated institutions under its umbrella, encompassing the disciplines of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing, AYUSH, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Allied Health Sciences.
- These institutions are spread across the length and breadth of the state, including **41 Medical Colleges, 19 Dental Colleges, 48 AYUSH Colleges, 199 Nursing Colleges, 81 Pharmacy Colleges and the rest being specialty post-doctoral medical and allied health institutions.**

## President's Rule imposed in Puducherry

- Puducherry has been placed under the **President's rule days after the Congress-led Government collapsed after several resignations.**
- The Home Ministry issued a notification of imposing the President's rule in the Union Territory.
- President Ram Nath Kovind suspended the Puducherry Assembly as well.
- The Legislative Assembly of the Union territory is now placed under suspended animation.

- The Assembly polls are due in the Union Territory shortly.

## 2nd edition of Global Bio-India – organised from 1st to 3rd March

- To showcase the strength and opportunities of the India's biotechnology sector at national level and to the global community, the second edition of **Global Bio-India will be organized from 1st to 3rd March**.
- The **theme** for this year is **transforming lives** and **tag line** is **Biosciences to Bio economy**.
- **Science and Technology Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan** will inaugurate the event virtually.
- Global Bio-India is one of the largest biotechnology stakeholders' conglomerates that is being co-organized by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology along with its Public Sector Undertaking, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, BIRAC in partnership with industry association CII, Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises and Invest India.

## Indian Railways to reactivate facility of UTS ON MOBILE App

- **Indian Railways** has decided to reactivate the facility of **UTS ON MOBILE App** in zones **where unreserved train services are reintroduced**.
- To **decongest ticket booking counters** and to ensure smooth compliance of social distancing norms, the facility to book unreserved tickets through UTS ON MOBILE app is being reactivated by Indian Railways.
- The Railways Ministry said, it has been decided that in addition to UTS ON MOBILE App facility available on suburban sections, this facility may also be reintroduced on non-suburban sections of zonal Railways.

## The India Toy Fair 2021 inaugurate by PM Modi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the **India Toy Fair 2021** through video conferencing.
- Toys play a significant part in the development of a child's mind and also help improve psychomotor and cognitive skills in children.
- The Fair aims to provide an impetus to the underlying **themes of Atmanirbhar Bharat and vocal for local campaigns**, launched by the Government to promote indigenous industries.
- It also aims to leverage the potential of toys in making learning joyful across all ages in education.
- The four-day event aims to bring together all stakeholders including buyers, sellers, students, teachers and designers on a virtual platform to create sustainable linkages and encourage dialogue for the overall development of the industry.
- **Over one thousand exhibitors from across 30 States and Union Territories** will display their products in e-commerce enabled virtual exhibitions.
- It will showcase traditional Indian toys as well as modern toys including electronic toys, plush toys, puzzles and games.

## Kerala Governor Inaugurates India's First Digital University

- **Digital University** has been set up in **Kerala's Technocity, Mangalapuram**. The **Governor of Kerala Arif Mohammed Khan has inaugurated the country's first Digital University in the state**.
- Kerala University of Digital Sciences, Innovation and Technology (Digital University) is established by upgrading the two-decade old state government's **Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management Kerala (IIITM-K)**.
- The university is formed with a vision of creating a futuristic institution of higher learning, aspiring to set a global benchmark in Digital technologies and its management
- The launch of the first Digital University in the country will open tremendous opportunities for youngsters.
- India's first Digital University will focus on postgraduate programmes and research along with building strong industry-academic and academic-academic linkages with leading institutions in India and abroad. Developed on a 10-acre campus in Technocity, the university will provide education to 12,000 residential scholars on the campus and many technology-linked learners outside.
- The university seeks to lead the Digital Transformation Initiatives announced by the Kerala Government in the Budget 2021.
- India's first Digital University has been started with five schools

1. School of Computer Science and Engineering;
2. School of Digital Sciences;
3. School of Electronic Systems and Automation;
4. School of Informatics;
5. School of Digital Humanities and Liberal Arts, covering science, technology and humanities aspects of the Digital world

## About Kerala :

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

## Maharashtra's New Agriculture Pump Power Connection scheme bags good response

- In Maharashtra, the **State Government's New Agriculture Pump Power Connection scheme** has been receiving a good response.
- The scheme announced in **October 2020** has provided various relaxations to farmers to pay their pending dues.
- Since the scheme was announced, as many as three lakh 42 thousand farmers have paid dues to the tune of 312 crore 41 lakh rupees.
- In a bid to provide more relief to the farmers' the State Government has waived-off pending dues of 15 thousand crore rupees, an official press statement said.
- Farmers who will pay their Agri pumps dues in the first year will get **50 per cent relaxation** on their actual dues.
- Besides, the interest and late fees will also be waived off completely.
- This apart, farmers who will pay their total dues will be given nearly 66 per cent concession.

## 'E-Parivahan Vyavstha' launched by Himachal Pradesh CM Jai Ram Thakur

- **Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur** launched '**e-Parivahan Vyavstha**' of the State Transport Department to provide faceless services to the people of the State regarding **Driving Licence/Registration Certificates/Permits etc.**
- The Chief Minister said stress must be laid on educating the people to avail this facility.
- He said the success of this system would largely depend on how better and easily the people adopt this service.
- Jairam said credit of this goes to the officers and employees of the State.
- He said the State Government first started e-Vidhan Sabha, then e-Budget and now it has started e-cabinet.
- He said the e-Parivahan was a step forward in this direction.

## Retirement age raised to 60 years for Tamil Nadu govt. employees

- In **Tamil Nadu**, **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palanani** announced that the retirement age of State Government employees has been increased from **59 to 60 years**.
- Making a suo motu statement in the Legislative Assembly, he said, the order would be applicable to employees of the government and government-aided schools, legal and constitutional bodies, government sectors, local bodies, commissions, boards and unions.
- He said, all those who were in service and those who would retire on **31st of May** this year would be covered under the announcement.

## 39th Agartala International Book Fair started at Tripura

- In Tripura, the **39th Agartala International Book Fair** with the **theme "Ek Tripura, Shrestha Tripura"** has begun at Agartala.
- State Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb inaugurated the fair in presence of Bangladesh Assistant High Commissioner Md. Jobayed Hossain and other state cabinet ministers and MLAs.
- The Chief Minister said a book fair helps in building a positive mindset among people and that ensures a positive approach for overall progress in society.

- Cultural troops coming from Bangladesh, Northeastern States including Sikkim will be performing various cultural events on each day as part of the fair.

## Chenab bridge, world's highest rail bridge taller than Eiffel Tower, completed by end of 2021

- **Chenab bridge, the world's tallest railway bridge** over Chenab River in Kouri area, will achieve another engineering milestone.
- The **Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL)** is building the Chenab bridge over a challenging **111 km-stretch** under the **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL)**
- It will connect the Valley with the rest of the country through railways.
- The Chenab bridge is being constructed **359 metres above Chenab's river** bed and will be 35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower (which has a height of 324 metre).
- The length of the Chenab bridge will be 1,315 metres with 17 spans, of which the span of the main arch across Chenab river will be 467 metres. The viaduct portion comprises a straight and curved portion. The curvilinear portion is located on a 2.74-degree sharp curve.

### About KRCL :

- Headquarters : NaviMumbai, Maharashtra
- Chairman & Managing director : Sanjay Gupta
- Founder : E. Sreedharan
- Founded: 19 July 1990

## NPCI enables UPI AutoPay live on music streaming platform 'Gaana'

- **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has announced that **UPI AutoPay** has now gone live on **Gaana**.
- Its integration with **UPI AutoPay** has made **Gaana** the first player in the **Media and Entertainment** industry to roll out the innovative e-mandate feature on UPI.
- The introduction of UPI AutoPay will empower Gaana's users to experience a smooth and seamless mechanism of renewing their subscriptions.
- Customers can enjoy premium, uninterrupted streaming of their choicest music, podcasts and radio without having to remember about the subscription renewal date.
- The strategic role played by Paytm and Juspay as payment aggregators will create a superior transaction experience for the customers.
- Based on the mandate, the subscription amount will be deducted automatically on the authorized date without entering UPI PIN.

### About NPCI :

- MD & CEO : Dilip Asbe
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Founded : 2008

## New guidelines for social media intermediaries: Prakash Javadekar

- **Information & Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar** has said that the new guidelines for **social media intermediaries, OTT platforms and Digital Media** will bring **uniformity among all in the field of media**.
- **The Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics code** notified by the government, Mr. Javadekar said this will empower the users and will for the first time ensure grievance redressal mechanism for them.
- The Minister asserted that the new guidelines which have been welcomed by the world community is based on the principle of responsible freedom.
- The government had notified the new guidelines based on the **principle of soft-touch self-regulation mechanism for Digital Media, Social Media Intermediaries and OTT platforms in the country**.

## Saras Aajeevika Mela opens at Noida Haat

- **Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** inaugurated Saras Aajeevika Mela 2021 at Noida Haat.
- Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Kailash Choudhary was also present on the occasion.
- Mr Tomar said that the Ministry of Rural Development is working to include more women in **Self Help Groups (SHGs)**.
- He said these SHGs played a vital role in increasing family income and improving quality of life.
- Prime Minister's call for self-reliant India, the minister said Atmanirbharta can't be achieved only by Government's schemes and efforts.
- He urged the empowered **SHGs to come forward and help other SHGs to become Atmanirbhar**.
- The **Saras Aajeevika Mela 2021** is being organized from **26th February to 14th March 2021** by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- More than 300 rural self-help groups and craftsmen from 27 states are participating in the Mela.

## DGCA offers flight operators to give concessions in ticket prices to travellers who carry no baggage

- **Directorate General of Civil Aviation, DGCA** has allowed domestic flight operators to give concessions in ticket prices to travellers who carry no baggage or only cabin baggage.
- At present, a traveller can carry up to **7 kilograms of cabin baggage and 15 kilograms of check-in baggage** without having to pay any additional cost.
- The new rule will allow airline operators to provide tickets at lesser prices to those who opt to travel with no baggage or only with cabin baggage within the permissible weight limit.
- As part of the new airline baggage policy, scheduled airlines will be allowed to offer free baggage allowance as well as **zero baggage or no check in baggage fares**.
- The airlines will however have to prominently display the additional charges applicable in case the passenger turns up with extra baggage.

## Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik launches 5 online services of WCD, Mission Shakti Dept

- **Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik** launched **5 online services of the Women and Child Development Department and Mission Shakti**.
- The initiatives launched are **'Mo-Chhatua App'** for streamlining supply chain management of Take Home Ration (Chhatua)
- **e-Kalika**, an application for monitoring crèches for children under three;
- **'Mo Sishu portal'**, a comprehensive web based information management and monitoring system exclusively for child protection services;
- **'MAMATA App & MIS'**, making the flagship conditional cash transfer benefit scheme for pregnant women hassle free, paperless and citizen centric.
- The **'e-manadeya'** portal launched is for seamless, paperless transfer of honorarium to 1, 34,758 AWWs, mini anganwadi workers and helpers.
- On this occasion **WCD** Department also entered into technical collaboration with **CFTRI (Central Food Technological Research Institute)** for improving the quality of THR (Take Home Ration) including testing of samples of THR and hot cooked meals, mentoring THR producing women self help groups and capacity building of ICDS functionaries and women SHG.
- Also an understanding has been entered into with **ICMR- RMRC (Indian Council of Medical Research – Regional Medical Research Centre)** to conduct an annual nutrition survey.
- The **WCD & MS** Department also entered into a technical collaboration with **UNICEF** on capacity building of the Odisha State Child Protection Society to strengthen the capacities of the statutory bodies, service delivery structures and caregivers under the State Child Protection Scheme and with the World Food Programme for technical support for fortification.

## About Odisha :

- Capital : Bhubaneshwar

- Governor : Ganeshi Lal
- CM : Naveen Patnaik

## SIDBI joins hands with AP govt for Development of MSME ecosystem

- **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** has entered into a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Andhra Pradesh to develop the MSME ecosystem in the State.**
- The MoU was signed by J V N Subramanyam IAS, Director of Industries, Commerce and Export Promotion, Government of Andhra Pradesh and Sanjay Jain, General Manager, Regional Head, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Hyderabad, in the presence of Mekapati Goutham Reddy, Cabinet Minister of Industries, AP government.
- Under the agreement, a Project Management Unit (PMU) will be deployed by SIDBI to design schemes/programmes in the areas of equity support, interest subvention, resolution of stressed MSMEs, and facilitate intervention based on evaluation of the existing status of MSMEs.
- The PMU will study the existing framework of schemes currently available for MSMEs in the State and shall suggest modifications, if any, to enhance efficacy.

## About SIDBI :

- Headquarters : Lucknow
- Founded : 2 April 1990
- Chairman & MD : Devendra Kumar Singh

## About MSME :

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Founded : 2007
- Joint Secretary : Ateesh Kumar Singh

## Devotees of Kerala take part in Attukal pongala festival from their homes

- In Kerala, amid the **Covid-19 pandemic** the devotees will take part in the Attukal pongala from **their homes.**
- **Pongala** is the **annual ritual** of the **Attukal Bhagavathy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram** and holds the Guinness world record as the largest gathering of women.
- Every year nearly 20 lakh devotees take part in the festival.
- However, this time the authorities have decided to scale down the festival rituals by confining the ritual to the temple premises.
- The devotees have been asked to offer the ritual at their homes to avoid crowding.
- Pongala offerings at public places have been banned.

## Gujarat govt launched its Budget mobile app

- In Gujarat, **Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel** launched '**Gujarat Budget**' mobile application at **Gandhinagar.**
- Briefing media at Gandhinagar, Mr Patel said the mobile app will have five different sections, comprising budgetary allocations for **27 departments**, budget highlights, finance minister's speech, and important aspects of the budget and news coverage of it.
- He added that since budget publications will be available online, the government will print only **20 percent of material, which would save 55 lakh pages.**
- The month-long budget session of the Gujarat Assembly would begin on March 1st and the budget for the financial year 2021-22 will be presented on March 3rd.

## Union Health Minister lays foundation stone of Mon Medical College in Nagaland

- **Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan** laid the foundation stone of **Mon Medical College** covering 30 acres of land at **District Hospital Mon, Nagaland**.
- Harsh Vardhan said Prime Minister Modi has always been committed to the people of Northeast region since the day he entered the Parliament.
- He said PM Modi has a vision to ensure that a place like Mon situated in the extreme corner of the country should not be deprived of the various facilities and services.

## City Innovation Exchange (CiX) Launched for Fostering Innovation in Urban Ecosystem

- The **City Innovation Exchange (CiX)** platform was launched by **Shri Durga Shanker Mishra**, Secretary, **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** at an online event.
- The platform will be a significant addition **to the growing innovation ecosystem of India and focuses on fostering innovative practices in cities**.
- The City Innovation Exchange (CiX) will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges.
- The platform will ease the discovery, design & validation of solutions through a robust, transparent and user centric process that will reduce barriers for innovators and cities to discover fitting solutions.
- The Platform has more than **400 start-ups, 100 smart cities, more than 150 challenges statements and over 215 solutions at the time of launch**.

## Jal Shakti Ministry announces 12 iconic sites for transforming them into Swachh Tourist Destinations

- **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti** has announced the selection of **twelve iconic sites under Phase IV of Swachh Iconic Places**.
- These sites include Ajanta Caves in Maharashtra, Sanchi Stupa in Madhya Pradesh, Kumbhalgarh Fort, Jaisalmer Fort and Ramdevra in Rajasthan, Golconda Fort in Telangana and Konark Sun Temple in Odisha.
- Chandigarh's Rock Garden, Jammu and Kashmir's Dal Lake, Banke Bihari Temple in Mathura, Agra Fort in Uttar Pradesh and Kalighat Temple in West Bengal are the other sites.
- The initiative aims at enhancing the experience of both domestic and foreign visitors by improving the sanitation and cleanliness standards at and around the sites.

## Khadi, Village Industry Commission's e-Market Portal registers over one crore turnover in eight months

- **Khadi and Village Industry Commission's e-Market Portal** has registered a gross turnover of over **one crore 10 lakh rupees in just eight months of its launch**.
- Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises **Nitin Gadkari** lauded Khadi's successful e-commerce venture.
- This portal has provided a wide marketing platform for various Khadi and village industry products to a larger population.
- Online orders have been received from all 31 States and Union Territories including the far-flung Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir among others.

## About KVIC :

- Founded : 1956
- Headquarters : Mumbai
- Chairperson : Vinai Kumar Saxena
- Comes under Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

## Dr. Harsh Vardhan mark National Science Day function

- Union Minister of Science and Technology **Harsh Vardhan** highlighted how science technology and innovation (STI) would impact our future in education, skills and functioning in the post-pandemic world.

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- He was addressing the National Science Day (NSD) function **through video-conferencing** from Imphal, Manipur.
- Awards to science communicators and women scientists were also conferred on the occasion.
- National Science Day is celebrated to commemorate the discovery of Raman Effect on this day every year.
- Dr Vardhan said that 30 percent increase in this year's budget of Ministry of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences put together for the year 2021-22 would provide stimulus to Science and Technology infrastructure resources in the country.
- He said, in view of last year's challenges thrown by the COVID-19 pandemic, the **theme of the National Science Day 2021, 'Future of STI: Impacts on Education, Skills, and Work,'** becomes all the more important.

## PM highlights need to take science forward with mantra of 'Lab to Land'

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** stated that there is a lot of contribution of the power of science in the **'Atmanirbhar Bharat Campaign'**.
- He emphasized that the nation has to move science forward with the mantra of **'Lab to Land'**.
- He cited the example of Chintala Venkat Reddy from Hyderabad who developed breeds of wheat and rice that specially contained vitamin D. Mr Modi also mentioned Urugen Futsog of Ladakh who is growing about 20 crops organically there.
- The Prime Minister also touched upon the subject of examinations.
- He said like every year, this year too there will be a **'Pariksha Pe Charcha'** in March.
- He requested all exam warriors, parents and teachers to share their experiences and tips on MyGov platform and Narendra Modi app

## Consumer Affairs Ministry had launched Mobile App, and now it's step up

- Government has said that monitoring and predictive analysis of prices of essential commodities has taken a giant step forward in India **Mobile App for price monitoring of 22 essential commodities.**
- The **Consumer Affairs Ministry** had launched this Mobile App last month to improve the quality of prices data for reporting daily prices by the price reporting centers.
- The App is providing effective real time information about retail and wholesale prices from **127 locations across the country.**
- The Ministry said, price reporting through Mobile App ensures reporting from the market location as data are geo-tagged thereby displaying the location from where price data are reported.

## Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh begins first academic session of MBBS at GMC, Doda

- **Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Dr. Jitendra Singh** inaugurated the **first academic session of MBBS students at Government Medical College, Doda** in Jammu division of Jammu and Kashmir for the 2020-21 batch.
- Congratulating the students of the first batch of MBBS starting at GMC, Doda, the Minister described it as a historic moment and welcomed development.
- He thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan for the initiative to set up world class health infrastructure in the Union Territory by building five new Medical colleges.
- Singh said, Udhampur-Doda is the only parliamentary constituency in India which has three Government Medical Colleges.

## Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI) Celebrates its 9th Foundation Day

- The **Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI)** celebrated its **9th Foundation Day on 01 March 2021.**
- The event also included special addresses through virtual conferences by the High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh, Shri Vikram Kumar Doraiswami and other senior officers from the Government of India and the Asian Development Bank.
- The LPAI website, **Newsletter and News Journal were also launched during the Foundation Day event.**
- The event concluded with a virtual panel discussion on the subject "Facilitating Regional Trade and Connectivity through Land Route", which was attended by various eminent scholars and persons from India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal.

## About LPAI :

- Founded : 1 March 2012
- Comes Under Ministry of Home Affairs
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- The Land Ports Authority of India or LPAI is a statutory body working under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, Government of India is responsible for creating, upgrading, maintaining and managing border infrastructure in India.
- It manages several Integrated Check Posts all across Borders of India.

## Union Minister Piyush Goyal take the chair 3rd GCM of BIS

- **Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal** virtually presided the **Third Governing Council Meeting of the Bureau of Indian Standards**.
- He reviewed the process of making Indian Standards and their implementation with BIS officials, senior officials from different Ministries or Regulators.
- Mr Goyal said, there is a need to change the approach of the country towards standardization.
- He said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the three Mantras for faster economic development **SPEED, SKILL and SCALE**.
- Mr Goyal said, now it is time to add the fourth dimension of **STANDARD** into this.
- **The meeting was attended by** the Minister of State for Consumer Affairs Raosaheb Patil Danve, MP Rajya Sabha Mahesh Poddar, Secretary, Consumer Affairs Leena Nandan, DG, BIS P.K. Tiwari, Chairman of Quality Council of India Adil Zainulbhai and other senior officials of the Ministry and Bureau of Indian Standards.

## Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas launched by Union minister Nitin Gadkari

- **Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari** launched the **Real-Time Monitoring System of Toll Plazas** at a function in **New Delhi**.
- Speaking on the occasion, Mr Gadkari said that implementation of **FASTag** at toll plazas has improved electronic toll collections and facilitated ease of doing business.
- He said it also saves time and fuel.
- The government has made **FASTag mandatory from the 15th February midnight** and any vehicle not fitted with it will be charged double the toll at electronic toll plazas across the country.
- Mr Gadkari said the government is also working on ways to reduce the number of road accidents in the country by half up to 2025.
- Mr Gadkari said, over **eleven thousand kilometres of National Highways** were constructed in the 11 months of this financial year and the per day road construction has reached **33 kilometres**.

## Field assessment of Swachh Survekshan -2021 launched by Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry

- Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry launched the field assessment of **Swachh Survekshan -2021** at a **web event in New Delhi**.
- This will be the sixth edition of the annual cleanliness survey.
- Swachh Survekshan was introduced in 2016 as a competitive framework to encourage cities to improve the status of urban sanitation while encouraging large scale citizen participation.
- **Secretary of Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry Durga Shankar Mishra** said, the survey has led to a spirit of healthy competition among cities and towns.
- The journey that started in 2016 with only 73 cities with a million plus population has grown manifold, with 434 cities in 2017, 4,203 cities in 2018, 4,237 cities in 2019 and 4,242 cities in 2020.
- Cities have been regularly filling in their data, updating their progress in the MIS along with running several citizen centric campaigns in preparation of **Swachh Survekshan-2021**.

## **Sugamya Bharat App & handbook entitled “Access – The Photo Digest” launched by Union minister Thaawarchand Gehlot**

- **Minister for Social justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot** will virtually launch “**Sugamya Bharat App**” and a handbook entitled “**Access – The Photo Digest**”.
- Sugamya Bharat App is a means for sensitising and enhancing accessibility.
- It provides for five main features of which four are directly related to enhancing accessibility.
- They **include registration of complaints** of inaccessibility across the broad pillars of built environment, transportation sector and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ecosystem, positive feedback of examples and best practices worth emulating being shared by people as jan-bhagidhari; Departmental updates; and guidelines and circulars related to accessibility.
- The fifth feature is a special feature meant only for Divyangjan for COVID related issues.

## **PM Modi initiate Maritime India Summit-2021**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate **Maritime India Summit-2021** through video conferencing.
- The three-day Summit will be held till 4th of March.
- The three-day Maritime India Summit -2021 is being organized by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways on a virtual platform **maritime india summit.in**.
- The Summit will visualize a roadmap for India’s Maritime sector for next decade and will work to propel India to the forefront of the Global Maritime Sector.
- Eminent speakers from several countries are expected to attend the Summit and explore the potential business opportunities and investments in Indian Maritime domain.
- **Denmark is the partner country for the three-day summit.**

## **PM Modi salutes all those working towards wildlife protection- World Wildlife Day**

- On **World Wildlife Day**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has saluted all those working towards wildlife protection.
- He said, be it lions, tigers and leopards, India is seeing a steady rise in the population of various animals.
- Mr Modi added that people should do everything possible to ensure protection of the country’s forests and safe habitats for animals.

## **PM Jan Aushadhi Kendra inaugurated at District Hospital, Kargil**

- In Ladakh, Councillor (Town) LAHDC, Kargil Haji Mohammad Abass Adulpa inaugurated a **Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra at District Hospital, Kargil** to celebrate the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Diwas-2021**.
- Haji Abass purchased medicine from the centre in which all types of **Generic Medicines** will be available at lesser price.
- Haji Abass said that considerable progress has been made, but a lot more needs to be done for improving facilities for patients in government hospitals.
- He said that these stores would have a great impact on the lives of people by providing them quality medicines at affordable prices.
- **RMO Dr Shabir Hussain** briefed about the importance for the Scheme and urged the people to take maximum benefits from the Jan Aushadhi Store.
- A free Medical Check-up Camp was also organised at this juncture.

## **Ladakh villages: Merak and Khakted get mobile connectivity**

- In the eastern **Ladakh region, zero border villages** are now getting better connectivity by all means.
- **Opposite to much discussed finger four, Merak and Khakted villages on the southern side of Pangong Tso got mobile connectivity.**
- As things are easing, under operation Sadbhavana, the Army laid OFC cable to fulfill the decades dream of the villagers to have mobile connectivity.

- As BSNL provided the equipment and Chuchul Councillor Konchok Stanzin provided **solar power systems to the project.**
- Konchok Stanzin said army and border villagers are symbiotic and complement each other in need.
- Moreover as the situation is easing with disengagement at Line of Actual Control and with vaccination program on covid pandemic front, the stalled developmental activities are expected to take off this season in Chuchul and Changthang regions.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### China Surpasses US to become India's top trade partner in 2020

- **China** has regained its position as the **top trading partner of India in 2020**, which was held by the **United States**, since 2018-19.
- **Two-way trade** between the longstanding economic and strategic rivals stood at \$77.7 billion last year, according to provisional data from India's commerce ministry.
- The U.S. bilateral trade with whom came in at \$75.9 billion amid muted demand for goods in the middle of a pandemic.
- The bilateral trade gap with China was at almost \$40 billion in 2020, making it India's largest.
- Total imports from China at \$58.7 billion were more than India's combined purchases from the **S. and the U.A.E**, which are its **second- and third-largest trade partners**, respectively.

#### About China :

- Capital : Beijing
- Currency : Renminbi
- President : Xi Jinping

#### About US :

- Capital : Washington, D.C.
- President : Joe Biden

### Pakistan unlikely to exit 'grey list' as FATF meets

- **Pakistan** is unlikely to exit the **'grey list'** of the **FATF** as some European countries have taken the stand that Islamabad has not fully implemented all the points of a plan of action set by it, on the eve of the plenary meeting of the global watchdog for money laundering and terror financing.
- A **global dirty money** watchdog decided to keep Pakistan on its **"grey list"**, despite progress by Islamabad on meeting international anti-terrorism financing norms.

### Australia passes law to Facebook, Google pay for news

- **Australia's parliament** passed landmark legislation requiring **global technology giants** to pay for the news content shared on their platforms, in a move that is being closely watched around the world.
- The law was passed after a last-gasp deal that watered down binding rules **Facebook and Google** had fiercely opposed and which last week prompted Facebook to remove all news from its Australian platform.
- **Google** will now pay for news content that appears on its Showcase product and Facebook is expected to pay providers who appear on its **News product**, which is to be rolled out in Australia later this year.

### Jasmine Harrison becomes youngest woman to row solo across the ocean

- A British woman, **Jasmine Harrison** of **England** has become the **youngest woman** to row solo across an **Ocean** by **completing a 3,000-mile ( 4828 km )** journey across the Atlantic.

- The **21-year-old** from the landlocked town of Thirsk, England, set a world record as the youngest female to row solo across any ocean **70 days, 3 hours and 48 minutes** by finishing the **2020 Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge**, according to organizer Atlantic Campaigns.
- Harrison began her journey in Spain's Canary Islands on December 12, 2020 and arrived in Antigua on February 20, 2021.

## External Affairs Minister inaugurates new Indian High Commission building in Mauritius

- **External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar** inaugurated the new Indian High Commission building in Mauritius in the presence of **Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth and Foreign Minister Alan Ganoo**.
- Dr Jaishankar said, the green and efficient project reflects New India.
- He expressed confidence that it will inspire the work of the Indian High Commission even more.
- He reviewed the Dagotièrre Social Housing Project in Mauritius accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Housing Minister Louis Steven Obeegadoo.
- Dr Jaishankar expressed happiness that the **956 Housing Units built** with Indian support will be occupied soon.
- He thanked the workers who have done India proud.

## Govt. and AIIB sign loan agreement USD 304 million for Assam

- **Union Government** and the **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** signed a loan agreement for a **304 million dollar Assam Intra-State Transmission System Enhancement Project** to improve reliability, capacity and security of the power transmission network in the State of Assam.
- The project aims to strengthen Assam's electricity transmission system by constructing 10 transmission substations and laying transmission lines, upgrading 15 existing substations and providing technical assistance to support project implementation.

## Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister meets with External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar

- **Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov** who is on a two day visit to India met with **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar in New Delhi**.
- The discussion provided an opportunity to discuss various bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.
- The Ministers positively assessed the progress on the outcomes of the **India-Uzbekistan Virtual Summit** between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev held on 11th December last year.
- Both Ministers also discussed the evolving situation in Afghanistan and noted the importance of a stable and peaceful Afghanistan for regional peace, stability and security.

## 24th edition of India-USA Executive Steering Group meeting concluded

- The **24th edition of the India-USA Executive Steering Group meeting** was held at New Delhi from 22nd to 24th February.
- The meeting was attended by a **12 member delegation** from the US Army in person and virtually by 40 officers from different locations from the US. Major General Daniel McDaniel, Deputy Commanding General; US Army Pacific was the Head of delegation from the US side.
- Indian Army delegation consisted of **37 officers**.
- The forum is an Army to Army engagement that meets every year alternately in India and US to discuss Army to Army cooperation.

## Siliguri-Dhaka train service begin on Independence Day of Bangladesh

- The new Passenger train service between **India and Bangladesh** will start from 26th of March, the day the neighbouring country begins the **Golden Jubilee celebrations of its Independence**.

- Divisional Railway Manager of Katihar Division Ravindra Kumar Verma said, the train will leave NJP on every **Thursday and Monday** while it will depart from **Dhaka on Friday and Thursday**.
- The **Haldibari-Chilahati** (in Bangladesh) train route was opened after a gap of 55 years for goods trains on 17th of December last year.
- The passenger train between New Jalpaiguri and Dhaka will take the same route.

## MoS Dr. Jitendra Singh label India-Maldives Workshop

- **Union Minister of State for Personnel, Dr. Jitendra Singh** has said that India's successful commencement of the **COVID-19 vaccination programme** with two indigenously developed vaccines, offers a lot of hope of a decisive victory against the pandemic in the coming months.
- **India-Maldives Workshop on Good Governance Practices in a pandemic in New Delhi**, the Union Minister said the roadmap ahead for both the nations in winning the battle against the COVID-19, lies in restarting the economy, strengthening cooperative federalism with thrust on stronger institutions, stronger e-Governance models, digitally empowered citizens and improved healthcare.

## 'Lantern Festival' a traditional festival celebrated by China

- China is celebrating its traditional **Lantern festival**.
- Celebrated on the 15th day of the first Chinese lunar month, the Lantern Festival traditionally marks the end of the Chinese New Year also known as the 'Spring Festival' period.
- In 2021, China ushered into **Lunar New Year – the 'Year of the Ox' on 12th February**.
- The Lantern Festival is also the first full moon night in the Chinese calendar, marking the return of spring and symbolizing the reunion of family.
- According to China's various folk customs, people get together on the night of the Lantern Festival to celebrate with different activities.
- Lantern Festival customs and activities vary regionally including lighting and enjoying lanterns, appreciating the bright full moon, setting off fireworks, flying drones, guessing riddles written on lanterns, eating tangyuan or dumplings, lion dances, dragon dances, and walking on stilts

## Indian company Omega Seiki to set up electric vehicle plant in Bangladesh

- An Indian company **Omega Seiki** will set up an electric vehicle plant in Bangladesh.
- The manufacturing unit will be set up near Dhaka with an investment of **100 crore**.
- It is the first project of any Indian company producing Electrical vehicles in the international market.
- The project will be a modern greenfield facility and will focus on manufacturing two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and electric bicycles.
- **The Chairman of the Omega Seiki mobility Uday Narang** said that Bangladesh does not have a policy on Electrical Vehicles as yet but it may change fast.
- According to a press release issued by the Omega Seiki, the company will focus on coming out with best in class vehicles and quality service experience for the buyers.

## Russia launches first Arctic-monitoring satellite

- **Russia** has successfully launched its **first satellite to monitor the Arctic's climate and environment**.
- A **Soyuz-2.1b** carrier rocket with the "**Arktika-M**" satellite on board blasted off from the **Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan**
- The creation of a satellite system in highly elliptical orbits is necessary for information collection to solve operational meteorology and hydrology problems, and monitoring the climate and environment in the Arctic region
- The Arktika-M will provide round-the-clock continuous monitoring of the northern territory of Russia and the seas of the Arctic Ocean.
- The satellite will be able to transmit overview images of the Earth's northern polar region and the adjacent areas at least every 15-30 minutes.

## About Russia :

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

## Pakistan to remain on FATF 'greylist'

- **Global money** laundering watchdog the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** decided to keep Pakistan on its terrorism financing "**grey list**".
- FATF said Islamabad should demonstrate effective implementation of targeted financial sanctions against all **1267 and 1373 designated terrorists**.
- The FATF is an inter-governmental body set up in 1989 to combat money laundering, terror financing and other related threats to the international financial system.
- Currently, it has 39 members. Pakistan has been on the grey list since June 2018.

## About Financial Action Task Force :

- Headquarters : Paris, France
- President : marcus pleyer
- Founded : 1989

## India, Brazil will continue to work together in advance our space collaboration

- External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has congratulated Foreign Minister of Brazil Ernesto Araújo for successful launch of **Amazonia-1 on ISRO's PSLVC51 Mission**.
- Dr Jaishankar said, India and Brazil will continue to work to further advance our space collaboration.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : BANKING & FINANCE

### RBI will conduct a special OMO of Rs.15,000 crore on March 4

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will **conducts** simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities **for** an aggregate amount of Rs **15,000 crore** each on **March 4**.
- The central bank will purchase and sell government securities through multiple price auction methods.
- Accordingly, the details of securities for the simultaneous purchase and sale of Government securities under **Open Market Operations (OMOs)** for Rs.15,000 crore each on March 04, 2021 are as follows:
- Purchase

The Reserve Bank will purchase the following securities using the multiple price auction method:

Sr. No	ISIN	Security	Date of Maturity	Aggregate Amount
1	IN0020190396	6.18% GS 2024	04-Nov-2024	Rs.15,000 crore  (There is no security-wise notified amount)
2	IN0020170026	6.79% GS 2027	15-May-2027	
3	IN0020170042	6.68% GS 2031	17-Sep-2031	
4	IN0020050012	7.40% GS 2035	09-Sep-2035	

Sale

The Reserve Bank will simultaneously sell the following securities using the multiple price auction method:

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Sr. No	ISIN	Security	Date of Maturity	Aggregate Amount
1	IN0020110030	8.79% GS 2021	08-Nov-2021	Rs.15,000 crore
2	IN0020060037	8.20% GS 2022	15-Feb-2022	(There is no security-wise notified amount)

## Ola begins work on world's largest electric two-wheeler factory in TN

- **Ola**, said it had commenced construction of the **world's largest two-wheeler mega-factory on its 500-acre site**.
- The company announced a **2,400 crore** MoU with the Tamil Nadu government in December 2020 and rapidly completed the land acquisition in January this year.

## Global rating agency Moody's ups India's growth projection for FY22

- **Global rating agency Moody's** upped India's growth projection for the **financial year 2021-22 to 13.7 percent from 10.8 percent** estimated earlier.
- In its '**Global Macro Outlook 2021-22**', Moody's said, India's Economy has rebounded quickly from one of the world's longest and most stringent lockdowns, which also came with the steepest fall in GDP in the second quarter of 2020.
- For the current fiscal year, the agency expects the Indian economy to contract by 7 per cent, lower than its previous estimate of 10.6 percent contraction.
- The revised numbers came on the back of normalisation of activity and growing confidence in the market with the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines.

## State Bank of Sikkim under Reserve Bank of India's regulatory purview

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has **brought State Bank of Sikkim under its regulatory purview**.
- The bank, established **five years before Sikkim acceded** to India in 1973, provides treasury operations for the state government.
- It only operates within Sikkim and is wholly-owned by the state government.
- The bank's ownership structure will not change, but it will be regulated by the RBI on a par with other banks.

## About State Bank of Sikkim :

- Founded : 1968
- Headquarters : Gangtok
- Chairman : Dal Bahadur Gurung
- Managing Director : Phurba Wangdi Bhutia
- The bank currently has **42 branch offices and operates three revenue counters** for government works.

## HSBC ups India's FY22 GDP forecast to 11.2%

- **India HSBC** has raised their growth forecasts from **9 percent to 11.2 percent** for the coming fiscal year **2021-22 (FY22)**.
- The **2020-21 GDP forecast of India by HSBC remains -6.3 percent**, as projected earlier.

## About HSBC :

- CEO : Noel Quinn
- Headquarters : United Kingdom
- Founder : Thomas Sutherland
- Founded : 3 March 1865, Hong Kong

## Stellapps tie up with IPPB to drive financial inclusion for dairy farmers

- Dairy-tech start-up **Stellapps** has **tied up** with India Post Payments Bank (**IPPB**) to digitise the **milk** procurement value chain and promote banking facilities at **milk** collection centres.
- Through the tie-up, Stellapps is aiming to deliver dairy farmers within the monetary mainstream throughout villages in **Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Bihar, and Rajasthan within the coming months**, the corporation mentioned in a statement.
- IPPB will present entry to money and different banking providers like deposits, **Aadhar-enabled cost providers, home cash switch, invoice funds, and different associated providers.**
- Stellapps mentioned it plans to leverage IPPB's last-mile distribution community of over 1.36 lakh publishing places of work and practically **9 lakh postmen and Grameen Dak Sevaks**, geared up with smartphones and biometric gadgets.

## ICRA expects Indian economy to contract 7% in FY21; rebound 10.5% in FY22

- ICRA has projected the Indian economy to **contract 7 percent in current fiscal (FY21).**
- For the next fiscal, i.e. **FY22 (2021-22)**, ICRA expects a considerable rebound in India's **economic growth to 10.5 percent due to higher central government** spending, and a pick-up in consumption.

### About ICRA :

- Headquarters : Gurgaon, Haryana
- CEO : N. Sivaraman
- Founded : 1991
- Executive Vice president : L. Shivakumar, Jayanta Chatterjee, Anjan Deb Ghosh

## Ayushmann Khurrana inscribe BoroPlus products

- Kolkata-based FMCG company, Emami Ltd, has roped in National Award winning Bollywood actor, **Ayushmann Khurrana**, for its **BoroPlus** Soaps and Hand Wash range.
- **BoroPlus**, India's No.1 Antiseptic Cream Brand, has launched soaps & hand washes under its Hygiene portfolio last year.

## District panchayat plans to launch app, website of workers - 'labour bank',

- **Finding blue-collar jobs in the district** will no longer be a herculean task.
- If all goes as per the plan, the opportunity will knock at the door in the form of a mobile message.
- **The district panchayat of Kochi Corporation** has decided to develop an android-based application to end the uncertainty that loomed over hundreds of blue-collar workers in the district, especially after Covid-19 hit the country.
- The district panchayat, which has set aside Rs 2 lakh for developing the android-based app and web platform by associating with an engineering college in the city, is expected to launch the project within six months.
- "There are talented plumbing and construction workers, mechanics and other daily wage employees available in the district.
- But most of the time, it is hard for the employer to find the right person and this has resulted in depending more on the migrant workers.

## Indian economy to contract by 8% in 2020-21, NSO expects

- The growth in India's real **GDP during 2020-21** is estimated at **-8 percent** as compared to the **growth rate of 4.0 per cent in 2019-20.**
- The government had projected a GDP contraction of 7.7 per cent in its first advance estimate.

### About National Statistical Commission :

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- The objective of its constitution is to reduce the problems faced by statistical agencies in the country in relation to collection of data.
- Chairperson : Bimal Kumar Roy
- Formed : July 12, 2006
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Comes Under Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

## IRDAI issues guidelines for standard personal accident cover

- The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has directed all general and health insurance companies to mandatorily offer a **standard personal accident insurance policy by 1 April, 2021**.
- The policy will be named Saral Suraksha Bima, succeeded by the name of the insurance company. It will be offered with a tenure of one year.
- As per the final guidelines issued by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA), the minimum sum insured will be Rs.2.5 lakh and maximum sum insured Rs.1 crore.

## About IRDAI :

- Headquarters : Hyderabad
- Founded : 1999
- Chairman : Subhash Chandra Khuntia

## HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank to pick up 9.99% stake each in Ferbine

- Private lenders **HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank** have initiated exchanges that they have invested in **Ferbine Private Limited**.
- In its regulatory filing, HDFC Bank said that the bank has executed an agreement for subscribing to **4,995 equity shares** of the face value of Rs. 10 each fully paid up issued by Ferbine Private Limited for a consideration of Rs. 10 per equity share.
- **HDFC Bank will hold about 9.99% stake in Ferbine.**
- Meanwhile, Kotak Bank said that the bank has agreed to subscribe to 4,995 Equity Shares in Ferbine Private Limited for a consideration of Rs. 49,950 translating into an equity shareholding of 9.99%. The deal was completed.
- Ferbine has been incorporated to make an application to the Reserve Bank of India ('RBI') for setting up a pan-India Umbrella Entity ('PUE') for retail payments.

## About HDFC Bank :

- CEO : Sashidhar Jagdishan
- Founder : Hasmukhbhai Parekh
- Headquarters : Mumbai
- Founded : August 1994

## About Kotak Mahindra Bank :

- CEO : Uday Kotak
- Founded : Feb 2003
- Headquarters : Mumbai

## E-Daakhil portal for consumer grievance redressal now operational in 15 states, UTs

- The **'E-Daakhil' portal for consumer grievance redressal is now operational in 15 states and Union Territories (UTs)**.
- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019, which came into force from July 20, 2020, has a provision for e-filing of consumer complaints in the consumer commissions and online payment of the fees for filing a complaint.

- A web application for e-filing of consumer complaints named 'edaakhil.nic.in' has been developed by NIC for the purpose.

## About E-Daakhil :

- E-filing was launched by the **National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) on September 7, 2020.**
- **Delhi was the first state** to implement it on September 8, 2020.
- The E-Daakhil portal empowers the consumer and their advocates to file the consumer complaints along with payment of requisite fees online from anywhere for the redressal of their complaints.
- It has been developed and is maintained by the **National Information Centre (NIC)** under the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.**
- The portal facilitates e-filing of consumer complaints in the Consumer Commissions and also has provision of online payment of the fees from anywhere for the redressal of their complaints.
- It also facilitates the consumer commissions to scrutinize the complaints online to accept, reject or forward the complaint to the concerned commission for further processing. and online payment of the fees for filing a complaint.
- The portal has been launched under Consumer Protection Act, 2019, which has come into force from 20th July, 2020.

## About NCDRC :

- Headquarter -New Delhi.
- Head – Justice R K Agrawal
- NCDRC is a quasi-judicial commission in India which was set up in 1988 under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

## J&K: 2-day long 6th Technology Exhibition cum Seed Sale Mela Inaugurated by LG Manoj Sinha

- In the Union Territory of **Jammu and Kashmir**, **Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha** who is also the Chancellor of Sher-i-Kashmir University of Agriculture Science and Technology Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir) inaugurated a 2-day long 6th Technology Exhibition cum Seed Sale Mela on the **theme "Shaping the Future Farming for Better Returns"** at Shalimar campus of the University in Srinagar.
- The Lt. Governor inspected around 200 stalls showcasing a variety of products and technologies developed in the field of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Agroforestry, Agri-Engineering, and other related fields.

## Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated major healthcare projects in Imphal

- The Union Minister of Health **Harsh Vardhan** arrived in Manipur.
- The Minister will also attend the National Science Day Celebration to be held at Imphal.
- Union Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan who arrived in Imphal is going to inaugurate major healthcare projects taken up at **Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS)**
- These projects include a new 3 Tesla MRI Machine in the newly constructed MRI Block, a 100 bedded capacity PG ladies Hostel, a new Neuro-Surgery ICU and a new block of College of Nursing.

## Federal Bank will launch credit cards in next few months

- **Federal Bank** is set to **launch credit cards in coming months** and remains bullish about growth opportunities on the retail portfolio.
- "We are in the process of getting into **credit cards. In a couple of months** from now, we will be there," said Shalini Warriar, Executive Director, **Federal Bank.**

## Paytm steers India's digital payments – 1.2 billion monthly transactions

- Digital financial services firm Paytm said it achieved over **2 billion monthly transactions** on its platform, driven by growth in offline payments and financial services.
- “We have been promoting all digital payment methods giving multiple choices to consumers that have helped us in consolidating our leadership position.
- In fact, a large percentage of our users who started their digital journey with Paytm, have now adopted & embraced our financial services,” **Narendra Yadav, Paytm vice-president, said.**

## SBI General Insurance sign bancassurance pact with IOB

- **SBI General Insurance and Indian Overseas Bank** have signed a bancassurance agreement for distribution of non-life offerings.
- “Through the alliance, SBI General will offer a range of general insurance solutions and innovative products to IOB customers

## Principal Scientific Adviser of GOI launched Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship

- Announcing the fellowships, **Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, Prof. K. Vijay Raghavan** said, India is a diverse cultural wonder with our practices and lifestyle being confronted by many environmental challenges.
- The Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India under its Waste to Wealth Mission has launched the **Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship to recognize students, community workers or Self-Help Groups, SHGs and municipal or sanitary workers** who are engaged in tackling the enormous challenge of waste management, scientifically and sustainably.
- The Waste to Wealth Mission is one of the nine national missions of the **Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council, PM-STIAC.**
- Targeted to encourage community participation, the **Swachhta Saarthi Fellowships** invites applications from students and community workers who have done previous work or are currently engaged in waste management activities, including awareness campaigns, surveys and studies.
- There are **three categories** of awards under the fellowships.
- **Category-A** is Open to School students from 9th to 12th Standards engaged in waste management community work, **Category-B** is Open to College students (UG, PG, Research Students) engaged in waste management community work and **Category-C** is open to citizens working in the community and through SHGs, municipal or sanitary workers working beyond specifications of their job requirement or deions.

## Fino Payments Bank is now a scheduled bank

- **RBI** has announced through a notification issued dated 22 February 2021 that **Fino Payments Bank** has been included in the Second Schedule to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.
- The scheduled commercial bank (also called as scheduled bank) status allows Fino Payments Bank to enhance its banking position in the treasury and participation in LAF (Liquidity Facility) window as per the RBI. It also helps the bank strengthen its business proposition on liabilities generation.
- As a scheduled commercial bank, Fino Payments Bank will be better positioned to explore and manage government businesses. Mandates pertaining to pensions, provident funds and various welfare schemes under **direct benefit transfer (DBT)** will help enhance Fino's foot print in the financial inclusion space. Also, increased visibility on the government websites strengthens the customers' bond with the bank.
- Scheduled Commercial Banks in India are categorised into five groups based on their ownership/nature of operation. These bank groups are:
  - State Bank of India and its Associates
  - Nationalised Banks
  - Regional Rural Banks
  - Foreign Banks
  - Other Indian Scheduled Commercial Banks (in the private sector)

## About Fino Payments Bank :

- CEO : Rishi Gupta
- Founded : 2006
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra

## Bank of India organises cricket tourney in Guntur

- **Bank of India** organised a cricket tournament for **AMO Guntur, Zonal Office Vijayawada and AMO Tirupati at Pichukulagunta Grounds in Guntur.**
- Bank of India Vijayawada Zonal Manager **V Somasekhar** was the chief guest at the event. Deputy Zonal Manager D Ram Prasad supervised the conduct of the programme.
- While Tirupati AMO team won the first prize, Guntur AMO team won the second prize.
- Srikalahasti branch manager N Jogireddy has been declared as Man of the Series. Officials of 50 branches in the State participated in the tournament.

## SBI-sponsored RRBs launched video-KYC facility

- **Telangana Grameena Bank, Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank** becomes first RRBs in the country to adopt this tech that offers zero contact onboarding of customers, at par with commercial banks.
- **The Digital Insta Savings Account mobile app of Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank (APGVB) and Telangana Grameena Bank (TGB)** was launched recently by State Bank of India chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara.
- The app will be at the heart of the **Digital Insta Savings Account (DISA)** launched by the two regional rural banks.
- The benefits of DISA include zero balance account; can be opened within 10 minutes and activation of mobile banking and SMS alerts immediately.
- Rupay debit cards will be issued and the account holders need to successfully complete e-KYC at home branch or video-KYC within one year.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: BUSINESS NEWS

### Bharat Petroleum Corporation Board approves sale of its 61.65 % stake

- Bharat Petroleum Corporation Board has approved sale of its 61.65 percent stake **in Numaligarh Refinery for 9,875 crore rupees.**
- **Oil India Limited, Engineers India Ltd and Assam Government** will be picking up the stake.
- Government has also received Multiple Expressions of Interest for privatisation of Shipping Corporation of India Limited.
- The transaction will now move to the second stage.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### EAM S Jaishankar launches BRICS 2021 Website

- The **External Affairs Minister of India S. Jaishankar** on February 19, 2021, unveiled India's **BRICS 2021 website [www.brics2021.gov.in](http://www.brics2021.gov.in)** in New Delhi.
- India assumed the BRICS Chairship in 2021, at a time when BRICS is celebrating its **15th anniversary.**
- Under the theme **BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation**, India's approach is focused on **strengthening collaboration through Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus.**
- The newly launched website will be maintaining a dynamic and updated information repository and will be displaying all the relevant information for BRICS, along with the press releases, documents, a media gallery, and a registration platform for the events that have been planned over the year.

## About BRICS :

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- Founded : June 2006
- Formation : 2009
- BRICS is an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
- It is an influential bloc representing over **6 billion people**, which is half of the world's population. The member countries of **BRICS have a combined GDP of USD 16.6 trillion**.
- The grouping is significant as it brings together the major emerging economies of the world. With time, the member countries of BRICS have come together to discuss important issues under the three pillars of economic and financial, political and security, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

## ISRO successfully launches Brazil's Amazonia 1 satellite, along with 18 other passenger satellites

- In the **Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO)** first mission of the year, the country's polar rocket successfully launched **Brazilian satellite Amazonia-1 and 18 other satellites from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota**.
- The 18 co-passenger satellites placed in the orbit include four from ISRO's Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (three UNITY Sats from consortium of three Indian academic institutes and the SD-SAT from SKI) and 14 from NSIL.
- After **four stages** of separation, the rocket launched Brazil's 637 kilogram Amazonia 1 satellite, its primary passenger.
- Amazonia-1 is the optical earth observation satellite of National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

## About ISRO :

- Director : K. Sivan
- Founder : Vikram Sarabhai
- Founded: 15 August 1969

## The third edition of Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav begins

- The **third and final edition of the Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2021 in West Bengal** organized by the **Ministry of Culture, Government of India began on 27th February 2021 at Murshidabad, West Bengal**.
- Directors of all the zonal cultural centres of the Ministry of Culture were present during the inauguration of the Mahotsav and lit the ceremonial lamp .
- The Mahotsav in Murshidabad will run for two days, 27–28 February 2021.
- The Mahotsav started with colourful performances by the local artists, which included **'Baul Gaan', 'Alkupa Gaan', 'Leto gaan', 'Jhumuriya' and Ranpa folk dances**.
- Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav, the flagship festival of Culture Ministry has been organized since 2015 with the active participation of Seven Zonal Culture Centres and has been playing a pivotal role to take the vibrant culture of India out to the masses instead of confining it to auditoria and galleries.
- It has been instrumental in showcasing folk and tribal art, dance, music, cuisines & culture of one state in other states reinforcing the cherished goal of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" and at the same time providing an effective platform to the artists and artisans to support their livelihood.
- Earlier Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsavs have been held till date since November, 2015 in various states and cities such as Delhi, Varanasi, Bengaluru, Tawang, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tehri and Madhya Pradesh.

## About West Bengal :

- Governor : Jagdeep Dhankhar
- Capital : Kolkata

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENT NEWS

## Fullerton India Credit Company appointed Shantanu Mitra as CEO and MD

- **Fullerton India Credit Company** has appointed **Shantanu Mitra** as the **new CEO and Managing Director**.
- The appointment is with effect from April 2, it said in a statement.
- Mitra has over 40 years of experience in financial services, with over 20 years at Standard Chartered and Citibank, where he had stints in India, Singapore and Thailand.
- His last role in Standard Chartered was Senior Regional Risk Officer, India, Middle East and Africa.
- His previous experience with Fullerton included a stint from 2010 to 2017.

## Timothy Prentice appointed as TVS Motor Company Vice President – Design

- **TVS Motor Company** said it has appointed **Timothy Prentice as Vice President – Design**.
- Prentice brings on board 35 years of experience in motorcycle design, project management and product development.
- His appointment is expected to further boost the company's ability to stay ahead of rapid changes in design trends and maintain its competitive edge in future technology, TVS Motor Company said in a statement.

## Executive director appointed for Madurai AIIMS

- **Dr Mangu Hanumantha Rao**, the dean of **SV Institute of Sciences in Tirupati** has been appointed as the executive director of the All India Institute Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Madurai.
- A notification issued by the Union Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Training dated February 22, 2021, stated, "**The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Dr. Mangu Hanumantha Rao as the executive director of AIIMS at Madurai.**"
- Rao now serves as the Dean of SV Institute of Medical Sciences at Tirupati.

## Vijay Sampla takes charge as Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Castes

- **Former Union Minister Vijay Sampla** assumed the charge of **Chairman National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)**.
- Sampla has been the former Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment from **2014-19**.
- He was president of the BJP Punjab unit.
- He also served as Chairman, Khadi and Village Industries Board, Punjab from 2009-12 and subsequently, his name was recommended for Rashtrapati Award.

## About NCSC :

- Founded : 19 February 2004
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Minister : Thawar Chand Gehlot
- NCSC is an Indian constitutional body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, that works for the socio-economic development of the scheduled castes and to prevent atrocities against them.

## Rear Admiral Tarun Sobti takes over as Flag Officer Commanding Easter Fleet

- **Rear Admiral Tarun Sobti**, VSM took over the **Command of the Eastern Fleet, the Sword Arm of the Eastern Naval Command at Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam**.
- He has taken over the Command from Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan, AVSM, NM.
- Rear Admiral Tarun Sobti was commissioned into the **Indian Navy on 01 July 1988** and is a specialist in Navigation and Direction.
- Prior assuming command of the Eastern Fleet, the Flag Officer was Deputy Commandant and Chief Instructor of Indian Navy's premier officer training establishment Indian Naval Academy at Ezhimala.

## Kalpesh Kikani appointed as CEO of Piramal Alternatives

- Piramal Group appoints Kalpesh Kikani as CEO of Piramal Alternatives.
- Diversified group Piramal Enterprises Ltd said it has appointed Kalpesh Kikani as **Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of its Rs.11,000 plus crore AUM Alternatives business** managed through its subsidiaries and joint ventures.
- Kikani, who has more than 25 years of expertise in investing and financial services including a decade as founding **Managing Director at AION Capital**.

## Siegwerk India appointed Ramakrishna Karanth as its CEO

- **Ramakrishna's** experience spans over **30 years**, starting with a **Short Service Commissioned tenure of 6 years** with the Indian Air Force in Surface to Air Missiles division and a total industrial experience of 28 years

## Haryana Dy CM Dushyant Chautala re-elected TTFI president

- **Haryana's Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala** was unanimously **re-elected as the president of the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) for another four-year term at Panchkula**
- Chautala was elected unanimously during the **84th annual meeting of the TTFI**
- The 32-year-old was first elected as President of the TTFI in January 2017, becoming the youngest President in the history of TTFI.

### About TTFI :

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Founded : 1926
- President : Dushyant Chautala
- Secretary: M.P. Singh

## Russian supermodel 'Supernova' Natalia Vodianova is new UN goodwill ambassador

- **Russian supermodel and philanthropist Natalia Vodianova** became a **United Nations goodwill ambassador**
- **Purpose** : To promote the sexual and reproductive rights of women and girls and tackle stigmas surrounding their bodies.
- She will be a campaigner for the U.N. Population Fund, which now calls itself the **N.'s sexual and reproductive health agency, known as UNFPA**.
- UNFPA Executive Director Natalia Kanem, who announced her appointment, called Vodianova "above all a passionate, longtime advocate for the rights and the needs of women and girls and in particular people living with disabilities."
- Vodianova has focused on "breaking harmful taboos and tackling the stigmas that surround women's bodies and health, including menstrual health even during humanitarian crises, and all forms of gender-based violence."

### About Natalia Vodianova :

- Vodianova founded the Naked Heart Foundation to help children with special needs and their families in 2004 and is a member of the Special Olympics International board of directors.
- She told reporters that one focus of her work as a goodwill ambassador will be on the taboo and stigma surrounding menstruation, a monthly challenge for girls and women.
- She made the Forbes top models list in 2012 and is **nicknamed Supernova**

### About UNFPA :

- Headquarters : New York, United States
- Founded : 1969

- Head : Natalia Kanem

## Levi's appoints Deepika Padukone as global brand ambassador

- **Levi's** announced the appointment of actor **Deepika Padukone** as its **global brand ambassador**.
- The denim brand said the association will help attract a new generation of women consumers as it looks to expand the women's wear category.
- Padukone is the first female celebrity to become the face of the brand in India. She will be seen spearheading the new campaign focused on a new range of fashion fits from Levi's.
- Its strategy aims **to attract the new generation of women consumers with a new "fashion-forward" offering in line with the brand's DNA and comfort.**

## Nothing India appointed Manu Sharma as Vice President and General Manager

- **Nothing**, a new London based consumer technology company, announced the **appointment of Manu Sharma**, as its **Vice President and General Manager, Nothing India**.
- **Manu** will be driving the growth, business development & operations for **Nothing in India**.

## Sharad Goklani Appointed President & CTO At AU Small Finance Bank

- **Sharad Goklani** has been **appointed as President & CTO at AU Small Finance Bank**.
- He joins from **Equitas Small Finance Bank where he served as the EVP & CTO**.
- Earlier, he was associated with esteemed organizations like Bharti Airtel and NIIT among others.
- Goklani completed his MCA and BSc from University of Rajasthan.

## About AU Small Finance Bank :

- AU was started 25 years ago by Sanjay Agarwal, a merit holder Chartered Accountant and a first-generation entrepreneur. As per the official website, it was founded in Jaipur in 1996 as Au Financiers, a non-deposit taking Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC), it effectively worked on funding economic growth, especially for the under-served and un-served low & middle-class individuals.
- Au Financiers converted into AU Small Finance Bank in April 2017 after receiving the license from RBI.

## UN appointed Indian economist Ligia Noronha as Assistant Secretary-General

- **United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres** has announced the appointment of **Ligia Noronha of India as Assistant Secretary-General** and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme.
- Noronha is an economist with over 30 years of international experience in the field of sustainable development.
- She has worked since 2014 as Director of UNEP's Economy Division based in Nairobi, leading UNEP's work on climate mitigation and energy transitions on inclusive green economies, sustainable consumption and production as well as on trade and sustainable finance.

## Economic Affairs Secretary gets additional charge of Dept of Revenue

- Secretary of Department of Economic Affairs **Tarun Bajaj** has been given additional charge of Department of Revenue.
- He has been given additional charge after superannuation of Revenue Secretary **Dr Ajay Bhushan Pandey**.

## Vice Admiral R Hari Kumar takes oath as Western Naval Command Chief

- **Vice Admiral R Hari Kumar** took charge as the **Flag Officer Commanding-In-Chief of Western Naval Command**.
- He took the charge from C. Ajit Kumar in a ceremony at the Command Post of Headquarters, Western Naval Command, Mumbai.

- On assuming command Vice Admiral Hari Kumar laid a wreath at the Gaurav Stambh monument.

## Central Bank appointed Matam Venkata Rao as MD & CEO

- Public-sector lender Canara Bank said its Executive Director **Matam Venkata Rao** has been appointed as the **new MD & CEO of Central Bank of India**.
- The central government through a gazette notification on February 26, 2021 has appointed Matam Venkata Rao, Executive Director, Canara Bank, as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer in Central Bank of India for a period of three years, Canara Bank said in a regulatory filing.

## Anindya Basu appointed as KPMG in India National Managing Partner

- **KPMG in India** appoints **Anindya Basu** as National Managing Partner.
- KPMG in India has appointed Anindya Basu as National Managing Partner of the firm.
- He will be based out of Gurugram.
- Previously, Anindya was the Senior Managing Director & Country Head for Accenture in India for five years.

## Jaideep Bhatnagar takes charge as Principal DG, PIB

- **Jaideep Bhatnagar** has taken over as **Principal Director General, Press Information Bureau**.
- Bhatnagar is an Officer of the Indian Information Service belonging to the 1986 Batch.
- He has earlier served in Doordarshan as Head of the Commercial, Sales and Marketing Division.
- He also served as Prasar Bharati Special Correspondent in West Asia.
- He later went on to head the News Services Division of All India Radio.
- Bhatnagar takes over from Mr Kuldeep Singh Dhatwalia who has superannuated.

## Manpreet Vohra appointed India's High Commissioner to Australia

- **Manpreet Vohra**, presently the Ambassador of India to Mexico, has been appointed as the next High Commissioner to Australia, the **Ministry of External Affairs (EAM)**
- Vohra is a 1988 batch Indian Foreign Service officer.
- "Manpreet Vohra (IFS:1988), presently Ambassador of India to Mexico, has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to Australia.
- He is expected to take up the assignment shortly," MEA said in a statement.

## Tom Moody appointed as Director of Cricket, Sri Lanka

- **Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC)** confirmed the appointment of former **Australia all-rounder**, Tom Moody, as the new Director of Cricket.
- Moody's appointment came after recommendations made by the Technical Advisory Committee of the SLC to revamp Sri Lanka's Cricket operations.
- "Sri Lanka Cricket wishes to announce the appointment of **Tom Moody as the 'Director of Cricket,'** effective from March 1, 2021.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

### Asia Economic Dialogue 2021 to Begin on Feb 26

- The **Asia Economic Dialogue 2021 (AED 2021)** jointly convened by the **Ministry of External Affairs and Pune International Centre (PIC)**
- It will be held over **three days from February 26 to February 28**.
- This is the fifth AED and the second one organised by PIC, a prominent policy research think tank based in Pune, with the well-known scientist Dr. R A Mashelkar as its President and the noted economist, Dr. Vijay Kelkar, as Vice President.

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- The theme for this year's conference is 'Post Covid-19 Global Trade and Finance Dynamics' featuring high-level international participation from foreign ministers of a number of countries, senior bureaucrats, industry leaders and global financial experts.
- The Asia Economic Dialogue is a geoeconomics conference supported by India's Ministry of External Affairs.

## 11th India-EU Macroeconomic dialogue held through video conferencing

- The **11th India-EU Macroeconomic dialogue** was held through video conferencing.
- Secretary Economic Affairs Tarun Bajaj led the Indian delegation. The delegation from European Union was led by Director General of Economic and Financial Affairs **ECFIN in European Commission Maarten Verwey**.
- The dialogue today covered sharing of their experiences to enable both sides on various aspects including collaboration in the G20 on finance track matters.
- It covers all dimensions-political, economic, security, trade and investment, environment, research and innovation.
- The EU is one of India's largest trading partners, one of the largest investors in India and an important source for technology, innovation and best practices.

## India, Australia, and France hold trilateral dialogue with Indo-Pacific in focus

- A **trilateral dialogue** was held among **India, France, and Australia** on February 24, 2021 at the senior officials' level, with **focus on further enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific**.
- The first India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue was held virtually on September 9, 2020.
- The meeting was held with the objective of **building on the strong bilateral relations that the three countries share with each other and synergising their respective strengths to ensure a peaceful, secure, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific Region**.
- The three sides agreed to hold the dialogue on an annual basis.
- The Indian side was led by Joint Secretary (Europe West) in MEA, Sandeep Chakravorty, while the French side was led by Bertrand Lortholary, Director (Asia and Oceania), and the Australian side was led by Mr Gary Cowan, First Assistant Secretary (North and South Asia Division) and Mr John Geering, First Assistant Secretary (Europe and Latin America Division).

## International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) Symposium on Sustainable Development of Dams & River Basins inaugurated

- The **International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) Symposium** on Sustainable Development of Dams & River Basins was inaugurated by **Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**, Minister for Jal Shakti as Chief Guest and Shri R.K. Singh, Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Govt. of India presided over the Opening Ceremony.
- The theme of the symposium is **"Sustainable Development of Dams & River Basins"**.
- International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) in collaboration with Central Water Commission (CWC), Dam Rehabilitation Improvement Project (DRIP) and National Hydrology Project (NHP) is organising Symposium on "Sustainable Development of Dams and River Basins" under the aegis of ICOLD at New Delhi as Hybrid event from 24th – 27th February 2021. More than 300 delegates from across the country and abroad will participate in the Symposium.

### Objective ICOLD Symposium :

- The symposium is being organised to provide an excellent opportunity to Indian Dam Engineering Professionals and Agencies to share their experiences, ideas and latest developments in new materials and construction technologies, advancement in investigation techniques, best engineering practices, dam safety issues etc.
- Besides this offers the opportunity to network with the world renowned dam experts from different countries and global organizations involved in Dam Construction, management and operation and maintenance for mutual benefits.

### About ICOLD :

- Founded : 1928
- Headquarters : Paris, France
- President: Michael Rogers.

## Health Minister lauds contributions of medical professionals in pandemic

- Health Minister **Harsh Vardhan** has virtually addressed the **Global Indian Physicians Congress, organised by the Global Association for Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO)**, through video conference.
- Vardhan expressed his appreciation to GAPIO which since its inception in 2011 has endeavoured to bring 1.4 million physicians of Indian-origin across the world on a single platform to facilitate exchange of knowledge, skills and research.

## About GAPIO :

- GAPIO stands to empower physicians of Indian origin to achieve highest professional standards, to provide affordable good quality healthcare, to contribute to local and regional community development and thereby help to reduce health inequalities and alleviate suffering globally.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : SCHEMES

### Govt directs Public Sector Banks to facilitate quick and easy loan disbursement under PM-SVANidhi scheme

- Union Government has asked **Public Sector Banks to facilitate quick and easy loan disbursement under the PM-SVANidhi scheme.**
- The Housing and Urban Development Ministry in a letter written to the banks has suggested several measures to increase the outreach of the scheme extending collateral free loans to the street vendors in the country.
- It also added that the banks need to review their guidelines for extending credit to the vendors having low CIBIL score under this scheme.
- The Housing and Urban Development Ministry has also informed that camps will be held in various cities across the country by the bank officials to facilitate a one stop solution for the beneficiaries.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : BOOKS & AUTHORS

### Vice President Venkaiah Naidu Releases 'Maverick Messiah', the Biography of former Andhra Pradesh CM 'NTR'

- Vice-President **M Venkaiah Naidu** released a book '**Maverick Messiah**' on February 18, 2021.
- The book is a political biography of '**N T Rama Rao**', the former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.
- NTR ranked among **top pioneers of 'alternative politics'**.
- His entry into politics and his 'dramatic' success within about nine months of floating a regional party gave a new direction to national politics.

### Kabir Bedi's memoir 'Stories I Must Tell' will be released in April

- Veteran actor **Kabir Bedi** will tell the **story of his life "with raw emotional honesty"** in his memoir which will be **published this April.**

## About 'Stories I Must Tell:

- The Emotional Journey of an Actor' will take readers through the highs and lows of Bedi's professional and personal life, his relationships, including marriage and divorce, why his beliefs have changed, and his exciting days in film, television and theatre, in India, Europe and Hollywood.
- The book will be **published by Westland Publications.**

- This is the story of a middle-class boy from Delhi who met with extraordinary successes as well as heart-wrenching setbacks and a man who holds nothing back, in love or in storytelling.

## Book Titled 'Advantage India: The Story of Indian Tennis' by Anindya Dutta

- **Anindya Dutta** has written the book titled "Advantage India: The Story of Indian Tennis".
- The book **highlights the history of Indian tennis**.
- **Westland Sport publishes the book**.

### About the Book :

- The book provides an extensive **history of Indian tennis on both men's and women's sides**
- The book is the result of the detailed research of Anindya Dutta on the data from the archives of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and British newspapers from the past 200 years.
- The book covers pre-independence players such as Mohammed Sleem, the Fyzee brothers, S.M. Jacob and Ghaus Mohammed and tennis icons Dilip Bose, Sumant Misra, Naresh Kumar and Ramanathan Krishnan.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : AWARDS & HONOURS

### Sushant Singh Rajput posthumously honoured at Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards

- The **Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2021**, has **honoured late actor Sushant Singh Rajput with the Critic's Best Actor accolade in the award ceremony**.
- The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards was introduced by the Government of India in 1969, to commemorate 'the father of Indian cinema', Dadasaheb Phalke.

### The winner of the Award for 2021 :

1. Best Actor (Female) – Deepika Padukone, Chhapaak
2. Best Actor (Male) – Akshay Kumar, Laxmii
3. Critic's Best Actress – Kiara Advani, Guilty
4. Critic's Best Actor – Late Sushant Singh Rajput, Dil Bechara
5. Best Film – Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior
6. Best International Feature Film – Parasite Most Versatile Actor – Kay Kay Menon
7. Best Director – Anurag Basu, Ludo
8. Best Actor in a Supporting Role – Vikrant Massey, Chhapaak
9. Best Actress in Supporting Role – Radhika Madan, Angrezi Medium
10. Best Actor in Comic Role – Kunal Kemmu, Lootcase
11. Best Actor (Web Series) – Bobby Deol, Aashram
12. Best Actress (Web Series) – Sushmita Sen, Aarya
13. Best Web Series – Scam: 1992
14. Album of the Year – Titliyaan

### Akshaya Oorja Awards distributed in Kerala

- The **Akshaya Oorja Awards 2019**, instituted by the **Agency for Non-conventional Energy and Rural Technology (ANERT)**, were distributed here y at the agency's headquarters.
- **Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan** inaugurated the function through videoconference.
- Power minister MM Mani chaired the event.
- The individual award for outstanding contribution was handed over to field expert and researcher V K Damodaran by V K Prasanth, MLA, while the best industrial unit went to Malayala Manorama and Neelambari Exports.
- **Perinjayam panchayat in Thrissur** won the best local body award.

- The **best education institution** was awarded to National Skill Training Institute, Kozhikode, while the best commercial establishment was shared by Calicut University Cooperative Stores Ltd and Vallapat Clinic and Dentistry in Thrissur.
- In the category of non-profit organisations, Care Home Helping Hands, Kozhikode, won the award.

## Anjali Bharadwaj among 12 named for newly-instituted anti-corruption award

- **Anjali Bharadwaj**, an Indian social activist working on issues of transparency and accountability, is one of the **12 “courageous” individuals named by the Biden administration** for the newly-instituted **International Anti-Corruption Champions Award**.
- According to the State Department, Bhardwaj, 48, has served as an active member of the **Right to Information Movement in India for over two decades**.
- The Biden administration has announced this International Anti-Corruption Champions Award, to recognise individuals who have worked tirelessly, often in the face of adversity, to defend transparency, combat corruption, and ensure accountability in their own countries, so as to combat such issues.
- Bharadwaj is the founder of the **Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)**, a citizens’ group with a mandate to promote transparency and accountability in government and encourage active participation of citizens.
- She is also a convener of the National Campaign for Peoples’ Right to Information, which successfully advocated for the creation of an anti-corruption ombudsman and the WhistleBlowers’ Protection Act, offering protection to those who expose corruption and abuse of power.

## Other Winners

1. Ardian Dvorani of Albania
2. Diana Salazar of Ecuador
3. Sophia Pretrick of Micronesia
4. Juan Francisco Sandoval Alfaro of Guatemala
5. Ibrahima Kalil Gueye of Guinea
6. Dhuha A Mohammed of Iraq
7. Bolot Temirov of Kyrgyz Republic
8. Mustafa Abdullah Sanalla of Libya
9. Victor Sotto of The Philippines
10. Francis Ben Kaifala of Sierra Leone
11. Ruslan Ryaboshapka of Ukraine

## UP bags award for fastest implementation of PM KSNY

- Uttar Pradesh received award for fastest implementation of **Pradhan mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana**.
- Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has congratulated the people of state for this achievement.
- The Chief Minister said that under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi the state government is committed for the welfare of farmers of state.
- Discussion on the budget in the state assembly Chief Minister informed the house about this achievement.
- During his budget speech, the state Finance Minister had recently informed that **more than 27110 crores** has been transferred in the accounts of the farmers of state under **PM Kisan Samman Nidhi yojna**.

## Five awards conferred for Vijayawada postal division

- **Vijayawada Postal Division bagged five AP Circle level awards** in Aadhaar (first place), Sukanya Samridhhi Yojana (first place), postal life insurance (second place), India Post Payments Bank (second) and Philately (second) for the financial year 2019-20.
- The awards were announced at the AP Circle Level Divisional Heads Conference held in Vizag.
- **KVLN Murthy**, senior superintendent of post offices, Vijayawada division congratulated the staff and appealed to them to continue the same tempo this year also.

## APSRTC bags award for best digital initiatives

- **Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC)** has received Digital Technology Sabha Award, consecutively for the second consecutive time (2020 & 2021) in the category of **“Internet of Things”**.
- The Corporation also received the award in **2017**.
- RTC Vice-Chairman and Managing Director RP Thakur received the award from the **RTC House**

## TSSPDCL bags four energy awards

- **Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSSPDCL)** bagged four awards, two of which were the **‘ICC – 8th Innovation with Impact Awards 2020’**, under the categories of Overall Innovation with Impact (General States) and Quality of Service and Customer Empowerment.
- They were presented at the **14th India Energy Summit 2020-21**.
- The two other awards, as part of **IPPAI Awards 2020**, were bestowed on Discom under the categories of Best Distribution Company to Promote Consumer Awareness and Best Distribution Utility Achieving Highest Electrification, including metering of un-electrified households.

## Chadwick Boseman bags Golden Globe award posthumously

- Late American actor **Chadwick Boseman** has been **awarded** the prestigious **Golden Globe** for Best Actor in a Motion Picture, Drama.
- The actor **won the Golden Globe posthumously** for his performance as Levee in Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom.
- The **award** was accepted by his late wife Taylor Simone Ledward on his behalf.

## CERAWeek global energy and environment leadership award received by PM Narendra Modi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will receive the CERAWeek global energy and environment leadership award during an annual international energy conference next week.
- The prime minister will also deliver the keynote address at the **CERAWeek Conference-2021**, which will be held virtually from March 1 to 5, its organiser.

## PM Narendra Modi to receive CERAWeek global energy and environment leadership award

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will receive the **CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award** this week in recognition of his **commitment to sustainability in the energy and the environment**.
- Theme: **The New Map: Energy, Climate, and Charting the Future**
- CERAWeek by IHS Markit the world’s preeminent energy conference will be held virtually March 1-5.
- The year 2021 marks the **39th edition of the conference** and is the **first time** that it will be an all-virtual event.
- Modi will participate in a special plenary with Daniel Yergin, vice chairman of IHS Markit and conference chair, on March 5.
- He will receive the CERAWeek Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award in recognition of his commitment to sustainability in the energy and the environment.
- CERAWeek by IHS Markit is an annual international gathering of energy industry leaders, experts, government officials and policymakers, leaders from the technology, financial and industrial communities, as well as energy technology innovators.

## Golden Globes 2021: Complete list of winners

- The **Golden Globes 2021 ceremony** was held **March 1**.
- **Purpose** : To recognise excellence in film, both American and international, and American television.
- This was the **78th edition** of the annual event, which honored the best in American television, as well as film in 2020 and early 2021, as chosen by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.
- American TV series **“The Crown”** won the most awards for the ceremony with four awards.

## Winners in Film category

- Best Film – Drama: Nomadland
- Best Film – Musical/Comedy: Borat Subsequent Movie Film
- Best Director: Chloe Zhao for Nomadland
- Best Actress – Drama: Andra Day for The United States vs. Billie Holiday
- Best Actor – Drama: Chadwick Boseman for Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom
- Best Actress – Musical/Comedy: Rosamund Pike for I Care A Lot
- Best Actor – Musical/Comedy: Sacha Baron Cohen for Borat Subsequent Movie Film
- Best Supporting Actress: Jodie Foster for The Mauritanian
- Best Supporting Actor: Daniel Kaluuya for Judas And The Black Messiah
- Best Screenplay: Aaron Sorkin for The Trial of the Chicago 7
- Best Foreign Language Film: Minari
- Best Animated Feature: Soul
- Best Original Score: Soul
- Best Original Song: ‘Io Si (Seen)’ from The Life Ahead

## Winners in Television category

- Best TV Series – Drama: The Crown
- Best TV Series – Musical/Comedy: Schitt’s Creek
- Best Limited Series, Anthology or TV Film: The Queen’s Gambit
- Best Actress – Drama: Emma Corrin for The Crown
- Best Actor – Drama: Josh O’Connor for The Crown
- Best Actress – Musical/Comedy: Catherine O’Hara for Schitt’s Creek
- Best Actor – Musical/Comedy: Jason Sudeikis for Ted Lasso
- Best Supporting Actress: Gillian Anderson for The Crown
- Best Supporting Actor: John Boyega for Small Axe
- Best Actress (Limited Series, Anthology or TV Film): Anya Taylor-Joy for The Queen’s Gambit
- Best Actor (Limited Series, Anthology or TV Film): Mark Ruffalo for I Know This Much Is True

## Sreekumaran Thampi bags Arjuna Master Award

- The first **M K Arjuna Master award** was conferred on lyricist **Sreekumaran Thampi**.
- The event was organised by M K Arjuna Master Foundation in association with Medical Trust Hospital.
- Sreekumaran Thampi said, **“This award ignites a lot of emotions in me”**.
- Since 1968, Arjuna Master has been a strong presence when my film songs found acclaim.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : DEFENCE NEWS

### L&T-built Interceptor Boat, the 17th in series, commissioned at Chennai

- **Indian Coast Guard Ship C-453, the 17th of the 18 Interceptor Boat (IBs)** project indigenously constructed by **Larsen & Toubro Ltd**, has been commissioned at
- ICGS C-453, the **8-metre-long** Interceptor Boat with a displacement of **105 tonnes and Max Speed of 45 knots (85 kmph)** is capable of undertaking multifarious tasks including Surveillance, Interdiction, close coast patrol, Search and Rescue, in addition to rendering assistance to boats and craft in distress at sea.
- The vessel is equipped with advanced navigation and communication systems. The quick-reaction feature coupled with modern equipment endows the vessel with the capability to swiftly respond to any maritime situation at very short notice.
- ICGS C-453 is commanded by Assistant Commandant Animesh Sharma and will be based at Chennai under the operational control of Commander, Coast Guard Region (East).
- The ship will be deployed extensively for EEZ surveillance and other duties as enshrined in the Coast Guard Charter, to safeguard the Maritime interests of India.
- The Indian Coast Guard with this Ship joining the fleet will have 157 Ships & Boats and 62 Aircraft.

## Suryakirans, Sarang and Tejas to take part in Lanka Air Force's 70th anniversary celebrations

- **Suryakirans, Sarang and Light Combat Aircraft Tejas** will participate in an air show in Colombo from **March 3 to 5** as part of the **70th-anniversary celebrations of the Sri Lankan Air Force**.
- The IAF's aerobatic display teams, the fixed wing 'Suryakirans' and rotary wing 'Sarang', along with Tejas arrived at Colombo
- The IAF and SLAF have seen active exchanges and interactions for a number of years in diverse fields like training, operational exchanges and professional military education courses.
- IAFs participation in the 70th-anniversary celebration of SLAF is a further manifestation of the strong professional bonds that the two air forces share.
- The **IAF Suryakiran Aerobatic Team (SKAT)** had earlier toured Sri Lanka in 2001 for the 50th-anniversary celebrations of SLAF.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: MOU's

### TSIC signs MoU with Navam

- In the **next three to five years**, students in Telangana will get a one-of-its-kind innovation centre.
- Proposed on a **15-acre campus**, the **Innovation Lab & Centre of Excellence (ILCE)** will come up in Kamareddy district.
- The Telangana State Innovation Cell (TSIC) signed a **MoU with Navam Innovation Foundation** to set up this centre.
- This will be a collaborative effort between **Agastya International Foundation and Pravaha Foundation**, with an investment of **Rs 3,000 crore for the next 10 years**.
- The ILCE will serve as a resource centre for mini science centres, labs-on-bikes and immersive teacher training programmes.

### MPEDA ink MoU with NCDC for promotion of marine exports

- The **Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA)** and the **National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)** have inked a memorandum of understanding to synergies their various programmes in the interest of export-oriented capture and culture of fisheries and allied sectors for bringing better value to the stakeholders.
- The **MoU** was signed by KS Srinivas, Chairman, MPEDA and Sundeep Kumar Nayak, Managing Director, NCDC, here.

### India and Mauritius sign ink pact for Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement

- **India and Mauritius** have signed Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA).
- This is the **first trade Agreement** signed by India with a country in Africa.
- **The Agreement is a limited agreement**, which will cover Trade in Goods, Rules of Origin, Trade in Services, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, Dispute Settlement, Movement of Natural Persons, Telecom, Financial Services, Customs Procedures and Cooperation in other areas.
- Commerce Secretary Dr Anup Wadhawan and Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius Haymandoyal Dillum signed the agreement in Port Louis.
- Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar were also present on the occasion.

### Centre signs \$304 million pact with AIIB for power transmission network in Assam

- The Centre signed an **agreement with Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** for borrowing **\$304 million (over Rs.2,200 crore) to improve power transmission network in Assam**.
- The fund will be utilised for the 'Assam Intra-State Transmission System Enhancement Project', aiming to improve reliability, capacity and security of the power transmission network in the state.

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- The project aims to strengthen Assam's electricity transmission system by constructing 10 transmission substations, laying transmission lines, upgrading 15 existing substations, transmission lines and the existing ground wire to optical power ground wire.
- The total estimated cost of the project is \$365 million. AIIB will finance \$304 million while the remaining funding of \$61 million will be done by the state government.
- The programme will strengthen the existing intrastate transmission network of Assam by augmenting it with newer networks to achieve affordable, secure, efficient and reliable 247 power. This will, in turn, bring the state closer to ensuring long-term sustainability of its electricity supply.

## About AIIB :

- Headquarters : Beijing, China
- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is a multilateral development bank that aims to improve economic and social outcomes in Asia.
- The bank currently has 103 members as well as 21 prospective members from around the world.

## India and Uzbekistan agree to strengthen multilateral cooperation

- **India and Uzbekistan** agreed to strengthen multilateral cooperation.
- Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov and Dr S. Jaishankar discussed the bilateral relations concerning both the nations.
- Mr Kamilov, who is in Delhi, also discussed development, defence, connectivity, trade and culture.
- Both the leaders also exchanged views on the Afghanistan situation.

## Ministry of Corporate Affairs sign MoU with CBIC for exchange of data to enhance Ease of Doing Business in India

- **he Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs** have signed an **MoU** for exchange of data for enhancing ease of doing business in India and improving overall regulatory enforcement.
- Both the organisations will benefit from access to each other's databases which include details of import-export transactions and consolidated financial statements of companies registered in the country.
- The **MoU** was signed by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs Manoj Pandey and Additional Director General, CBIC B. B. Gupta.

## IWAI signs inks pact with MOL for transportation of LPG through inland waterways

- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the **Inland Waterways Authority of India and the MOL (Asia Oceania) Limited for transportation of Liquefied Natural Gas through barges on National Waterways-1 and National Waterways-2.**
- The MoU was inked in the presence of Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways **Mansukh Mandaviya.**
- The Inland Waterways Authority will provide support for, facilitating with adequate fairway, handling of LPG cargo on IWAI terminals or Multimodal Terminals at Haldia, Sahibganj and Varanasi.
- MOL Group is the world's largest gas carrier company and will invest for construction and operation of dedicated LPG barges under Make-in-India initiative.

## Ministry of Corporate Affairs sign MoU with CBIC Delhi for data exchange

- **The Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi** for data exchange between the two organisations.
- It is in line with the vision of both organisations to harness data capabilities to ensure effective enforcement.
- Both are going to benefit from access to each other's databases which include details of import-export transactions and consolidated financial statements of companies registered in the country.
- The data sharing arrangement gains significance in light of development of **MCA21 Version 3** which will utilise state of the art technology for enhancing ease of doing business in India and improve the regulatory

enforcement and similar steps by CBIC like the launch of Advanced Analytics in Indirect Taxation ADVAIT, a 360-degree taxpayer profiling tool.

## State Bank of India joins JPMorgan's blockchain-based payment network

- **State Bank of India** has tied up with JPMorgan to use the US bank's blockchain technology to speed up overseas transactions.
- The tie up is expected to **reduce SBI customers' transaction costs** and time taken for payments.
- Time taken to resolve cross-border payments-related inquiries can be reduced to a few hours from up to a fortnight.
- This will help cross-border payments reach beneficiaries faster and using limited steps.
- With this, SBI has become the first bank in India to go live on the blockchain-based payment network of JPMorgan on implementation and exploring application as part of the network to better serve our clients

## Cochin Port and FTWZ, signs MoU for Cryogenic Warehouse, Aviation Fuel Terminal

- As part of the **Maritime India Summit 2021**, Cochin Port Trust has signed three MoU's for developing a Free Trade Warehousing Zone, Cryogenic Warehouse and Aviation Fuel Terminal.
- The FTWZ, proposed at Vallarpadam at an estimated cost of **85 crore**, will facilitate storing, handling and rendering value-added services to both dry and cold storage of cargo and help generate jobs to at least 50 persons.

## Port Trust signs MoUs worth Rs 30,000 crore

- **The Visakhapatnam Port Trust (VPT)** has signed MoUs worth about **Rs 30,000 crore** with port-led industries and government agencies ahead of the Maritime India Summit 2021, which will be held in virtual mode from March 2.

## Nirmala Sitharaman attends virtual G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting

- **Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** has participated virtually in the **First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG)** meeting under the Italian Presidency to discuss policy actions for transformative and equitable recovery.
- **Purpose** : to discuss policy actions for transformative and equitable recovery along with other issues on the agenda including global economic outlook, financial sector issues, financial inclusion and sustainable finance.
- It must be noted that this meeting is follow-up for the upcoming **2021 G20 Summit**, the sixteenth meeting of Group of Twenty, scheduled to take place in **Rome, Italy, on 30–31 October 2021**.
- The Finance Minister also stressed the importance of transfer of green technologies and scaling up of climate finance.

## Health Minister Harsh Vardhan inaugurates second edition of Global-Bio India 2021

- The **Union Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan** inaugurated the **second edition of Global Bio-India-2021 in New Delhi** through virtual mode.
- The 3-day event will showcase the **strength and opportunities of the India's biotechnology sector at national level and to the global community**.
- The three day event being held from 1st to 3rd March 2021 has been organized on a digital platform.
- The theme for this year is **"Transforming lives" with the tagline "Biosciences to Bio-economy"**.
- Being one of the largest biotechnology stakeholder conglomerates, this event is being co-organised by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India along with its Public Sector Undertaking, and **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)** in partnership with industry association Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE) and Invest India.

- The Biotechnology sector has emerged as an integral part of the Indian economy over the past few decades, and the Government of India is playing a transformative and catalytic role in building a **USD 150 billion bio-economy by 2025**.
- The sector is recognized as one of the key drivers for India to achieve its USD 5 trillion target.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : SPORTS NEWS

### IOC names Australia as preferred bidder to host 2032 Olympic Games

- The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** has named **Brisbane, Australia** as the preferred bidder to host the **2032 Olympic Games**.
- The IOC's future host commission recommended that the body enter **"targeted dialogue"** with Brisbane bid organisers and the Australian Olympic Committee.
- The state of Queensland had hosted the 2018 Commonwealth Games and Brisbane was praised for its high percentage of existing venues, a good masterplan, experience in organising major events and its favourable weather.
- Several cities and countries had expressed an interest in hosting the Games, including Indonesia, Budapest, China, Doha and Germany's Ruhr Valley.
- The delayed 2020 Olympics will be held in Tokyo, Japan in the summer, with Paris in France staging the 2024 Games and Los Angeles in the United States hosting the 2028 Olympics.

### About IOC :

- Headquarters : Lausanne, Switzerland
- President : Thomas Bach
- Director General : Christophe De Kepper
- Founders : Pierre de Coubertin, Demetrius Vikelas
- Founded : 23 June 1894, Paris, France

### Prime Minister Modi to inaugurate 2nd Khelo India National Winter Games

- **PM Modi** will virtually inaugurate and deliver the inaugural address at the **2nd Khelo India National Winter Games on February 26, 2021**.
- The games will commence from **February 26 and will continue till March 2, 2021**.
- The games taking place in Gulmarg in Jammu and Kashmir will feature around 1200 athletes from 27 states and union territories, apart from the army personnel.
- The event has been organised by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council and the Winter Games Association of Jammu and Kashmir.

### Khelo India National Winter Games:

- Alpine Skiing
- Nordic Ski
- Snowboarding
- Ski Mountaineering
- Ice Skating
- Ice Hockey
- Ice Stock

### About Khelo India Winter Games:

- They are India's multidisciplinary grassroot winter games. The decision of organising the first games in 2020 was taken after the successful various editions of the Khelo India Youth Games.

## Yusuf Pathan Announces Retirement From All Forms Of Cricket

- **Yusuf Pathan**, former India all-rounder, **announced his retirement from all formats of cricket.**
- Yusuf, the older brother of another former India cricketer Irfan Pathan, is a **two-time World Cup winner.**
- Yusuf has also **won the Indian Premier League twice with Kolkata Knight Riders – in 2012, 2014 – and once with Rajasthan Royals in 2008.**
- Yusuf played 57 ODIs and 22 T20Is for India since making his international debut in 2007.
- He was part of the Indian team that won the ICC T20 World Cup 2007 and ICC Cricket World Cup 2011.
- Yusuf played 100 first-class matches, scoring 4825 runs and picking up 201 wickets. In List A cricket, the right-handed batsman accumulated 4797 runs and got 124 wickets from 199 matches.

## Pacer Vinay Kumar announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- **Pacer Vinay Kumar** announced his **retirement from all forms of cricket.**
- Davangere Express” after running for 25 years and passing so many stations of cricketing life, has finally arrived at a station called “retirement”.
- An intelligent pacer and a capable batsman, Vinay played one Test (against Australia in Perth in 2012), **31 ODIs and nine T20Is.**
- The 37-year-old last featured for India in the limited-overs leg of a home series against Australia in 2013.
- Vinay was an outstanding performer in his 17-year domestic career.
- He **scalped 504 wickets in 139 first-class matches** and is the highest wicket-taker among fast bowlers in Ranji Trophy history.
- He also has 225 and 194 wickets in List A and T20 matches respectively. With the bat, he scored two centuries and 17 fifties in first-class matches.
- Vinay made his Ranji Trophy debut for Karnataka in the 2004-05 season and quickly rose through the ranks to become their lead seamer.
- The 2007-08 season marked his arrival as he finished as the second leading wicket-taker in the Ranji Trophy season – a performance that ensured a call-up to the IPL where he represented Royal Challengers Bangalore.
- It soon got better as the 2009-10 Ranji Trophy season saw him take 46 wickets and lead his Karnataka side to the final.

## Indian men's skeet team wins bronze in ISSF World Cup

- The Indian trio of Mairaj Ahmed Khan, Angad Vir Singh Bajwa and Gurjoat Khangura won the bronze medal in men's skeet team event at the **International Shooting Sport Federation tournament (ISSF) Shotgun World Cup in Cairo.**
- The Indians defeated the Kazakhstan team of David Pochivalov, Eduard Yechshenko and Alexandr Mukhamediyev 6-2 in the bronze medal match on the third competition day of the International Shooting Sport Federation tournament.

### About ISSF :

- Headquarters : Munich, Germany
- President : Vladimir Lisin
- Founded : 1907
- Membership : 150 regions

## Vinesh Phogat beats Vanesa Kaladzinskaya to win gold in Ukraine wrestling event

- **India's star wrestler Vinesh Phogat** defeated **2017 world champion V Kaladzinskaya** to win the gold medal at the **Outstanding Ukrainian Wrestlers and Coaches Memorial tournament.**
- Haryana's Bhiwani-based Vinesh won in the **53kg bout with a 10-8 lead.**
- She is the only Indian woman wrestler to have qualified for the Tokyo Olympics Games in the 53 kg category

## Odisha to host Indian Women's League this year

- The **All India Football Federation** confirmed **Odisha** as the venue for the **2020-21** edition of the **Indian Women's League**.
- This is the fifth edition of the IWL, which began in 2016 and was held in Delhi. The current champions of the tournament are Gokulam Kerala FC, beating Kryphsa FC 3-2 in the final on February 14, 2020 in Bengaluru.
- The inaugural edition of the tournament was also held in Odisha at Cuttack in 2016.

## About All India Football Federation :

- President : Praful Patel
- Vice-President: Subrata Dutta
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Founded: 23 June 1937

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : DAYS

### Central Excise Day: 24 February 2021

- **Central Excise Day** is observed **every year on '24 February'**.
- On this day in the year **1944**, the **Central Excise and Salt Law** was created.
- The Central Excise Department has an important role in the industrial development of the country.
- **Objective:** to encourage the employees of the excise department in carrying out the central excise duty in a better way.
- This Ministry has reformed the tax system to make payment of taxes easier and has also increased the use of techniques.

## About Customs and Central Excise :

- The Customs & Central Excise department was established in the year 1855 by the then British Governor General of India, to administer customs laws in India and collection of import duties / land revenue.
- It is one of the oldest government departments of India.

### World NGO Day: 27 February 2021

- **World NGO Day** is commemorated on **27th February every year** across the world.
- This commemoration is specifically important **to boost the social work that has been organised by every country and to honour the activists and social workers who are diligently working for the betterment of the society.**
- The celebration was embarked in the **UN in 2014**, but after then World NGO Day was officially recognised and declared by the **12 member countries of the IX Baltic Sea NGO Forum of the Council of the Baltic Sea States in 2010.**
- World NGO Day gives an opportunity for these people to take time and make an effort by attributing the best they can provide within a given period of time.
- World NGO Day was established by Mārcis Liors Skadmanis as an effort to recognise, appreciate and celebrate the great contributions that NGOs have made and the impact they have on the entire world.

## About NGO :

- NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) is also called Non Government Organization (NGO), Non Profit Organisation (NPO). In general, it is a type of social welfare organisation that works for common welfare and development.
- NGO help and support people for their rights and legal powers in society.

## Rare Disease Day: February 28, 2021

- **Rare Disease Day** is held on the **last day of February every year to raise awareness of rare diseases.**
- Rare Disease Day was first launched by **EURORDIS and its Council of National Alliances in 2008.**
- The **main objective** of Rare Disease Day is to raise awareness amongst the general public and decision-makers about rare diseases and their impact on patients' lives.

### About Rare Disease :

- A rare disease, also referred to as an **orphan disease**, is any disorder that affects a small percentage of the population. Although the disease may be rare, patients and families share a common struggle.
- Rare diseases currently affect 3.5% – 5.9% of the worldwide population.
- 72% of rare diseases are genetic whilst others are the result of infections (bacterial or viral), allergies and environmental causes, or are degenerative and proliferative.

## National Science Day being observed On Feb 28 2021

- **Every year, National Science Day** is celebrated on **February 28, to mark the discovery of the Raman effect by Indian physicist Sir CV Raman, back in 1928**
- The theme for this year's National Science Day celebration is **"Future of STI: Impacts on Education, Skills and Work"**.
- The day is aimed at **spreading the message of the importance of science and its application in human life.**
- On this day, Physicist CV Raman announced the discovery of the 'Raman Effect' for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930.

### History of National Science Day

- In 1986, the **National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC)** asked the Government of India to designate February 28 as National Science Day.
- The event is now celebrated all over India across schools, colleges, universities and other academic, scientific, technical, medical and research institutions.

### About National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC) :

- The National Council for Science and Technology Communication is a scientific programme of the Government of India for the popularisation of science, dissemination of scientific knowledge and inculcation of scientific temper.
- Headquarters : New Delhi

## India observes Second Protein Day on February 27, 2021

- **Protein Day** is an annual awareness day observed on **February 27th, that aims to rally towards the mission of protein awareness and sufficiency in India.**
- Theme for 2021: **Powering with Plant Protein.**
- This year's theme shines the spotlight on plant-based sources of protein and encourages Indian citizens at large to learn and know more about different types of sources available and their importance in daily meals for better nutrition and health.
- **2021 marks the second year for this nutritional awareness milestone in India by 'Right to Protein'.**

## Zero Discrimination Day: 01 March

- The **Zero Discrimination Day** is held **every year on 1 March.**
- Zero Discrimination Day is an annual day celebrated by the **United Nations (UN)** and other international organisations.

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- The day was **first celebrated on March 1, 2014**, and was launched by UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé on 27 February of that year with a major event in Beijing
- The day aims to **promote equality before the law and in practice throughout all of the member countries of the UN.**
- Theme of Zero Discrimination Day 2021: **End Inequalities**

## Civil Accounts Day – Observed on Mar 01

- The **45th Civil Accounts Day** was celebrated in New Delhi.
- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** was the Chief Guest of the event.
- **Comptroller and Auditor General G.C. Murmu, Expenditure Secretary Dr T. V. Somanathan and Controller General of Accounts Soma Roy Burman were present on the occasion among others.**
- This annual event was celebrated for the first time by virtual mode and was enthusiastically attended by Indian Civil Accounts Service ICAS officers and staff of the Civil Accounts Organization.
- Ms Sitharaman expressed her appreciation for the service for keeping government expenditure going even during the most challenging time.

## 3rd Jan Aushadhi Diwas celebrations began Mar 01

- The **Third Jan Aushadhi Diwas** celebrations began **Mar 01**.
- The week-long celebrations will go on **till 7th of March**.
- **Jan Aushadhi Kendras** conducted Health Check-up Camps across the country.
- The health check-up activities include Blood Pressure check-up, Sugar level check-up, free doctor consultation and free medicine distribution.
- General public who visited these health camps were informed and educated about the price, benefits and quality of the medicines being sold at Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS : OBITUARIES

### Former TRAI chief Rahul Khullar passes away

- **Former chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Rahul Khullar** passed away.

### About Rahul Khullar :

- Khullar, a **1975-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer**, was appointed as TRAI chief in May 2012.
- He served at TRAI for three years.
- Before being appointed as TRAI chief, he was a secretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Trade.
- He had topped MA Economics in 1974 from Delhi School of Economics and then taught briefly at Hansaraj College, Delhi University, before joining the IAS in 1975.

### Malayalam poet Vishnunarayanan Namboothiri passes away

- **Renowned Malayalam poet, priest and academician Vishnu Narayanan Namboothiri** died on. He was 81 years old.
- He is a winner of prestigious literary awards like the **Ezhuthachan Award, the highest literary award instituted by the Kerala government and the Vayalar Award (instituted in the name of the late poet and lyricist Vayalar Rama Varma), the poet was an eminent presence in the world of Malayalam literature for decades.**
- He was honoured with the **Padma Shri in 2014**.
- He also won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award, Kendra Sahitya Akademi Fellowship, Vallathol Award, Odakkuzhal Award and the Mathrubhumi Literary Award, among others.
- Some of his noted works are 'Swaathandhryathe- Kurich Oru Geetham', 'Bhoomigeethangal', 'India Enna Vikaram', 'Aparaajitha', 'Aranyakam', 'Pranayageethangal' and 'Ujjayiniyile Rappakalukal', among others.
- He was also a noted scholar of language and the Vedas, as well as an orator.

## Papua New Guinea's first Prime Minister, Michael Somare, passes away at 84

- **Michael Somare, Papua New Guinea's first prime minister**, who played a major role in leading the country to independence from Australia, died in **Port Moresby**, the capital. He was 84.
- Michael Somare was known as the **"father of the nation"** because he led the Pacific archipelago to independence from Australia in 1975.
- Somare was Papua New Guinea's longest-serving prime minister, over three separate terms, for 17 of the country's 45 years of independence.
- He held the office from 1975 to 1980; from 1982 to 1985; and from 2002 to 2011.
- Somare played a pivotal role in navigating the challenges raised by the country's disparate tribal groups, Australian expatriates and Australia's government in the lead-up to independence.

## About Papua New Guinea :

- Capital : Port Moresby
- Currency: Papua New Guinean kina



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