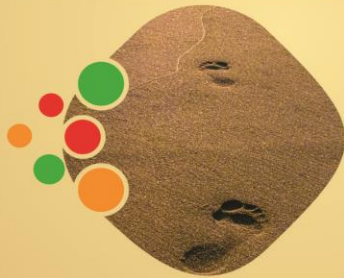


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TAMIL NADU



STATES



NATIONAL



INDIA & THE WORLD



INTERNATIONAL



SCHEMES



DEFENCE



SCIENCE &  
TECHNOLOGY



EVS



ECONOMY



COURT VERDICTS



CONFERENCES &  
SUMMITS



AWARDS



PERSONALITIES



BOOKS & AUTHORS



SPORTS



RANKS & REPORTS



DAYS



OBITUARY



NEWS OF THE MONTH



KNOWLEDGE



APPOINTMENTS



COMMITTEES



APPS / PORTALS



MISCELLANEOUS



## CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH - 2021

### TAMIL NADU

#### ➤ Tamil Nadu State Human Rights Commission Chairman

- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government - has announced the appointment of retired High Court judge S. Baskaran as the Chairperson of the TN-SHRC.
- ✓ Governor Banwarilal Purohit, Justice S Baskaran would head the Commission for a period of three years or till he attained 70 years of age.

#### ➤ Kalaichemmal Awards

- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government - has increased the number of recipients for Kalaichemmal Awards to six from the existing two.
- ✓ The awards are conferred on exemplary artists of the state in recognition of their meritorious service in the fields of paintings and sculpture in traditional and contemporary arts.
- ✓ The cash award for the honour has also been revised to Rs. 1 lakh from the existing Rs. 50,000.

#### ➤ Pazhayathu

- ✓ The State Health Department - has commissioned a research project to test the goodness of the fermented rice or 'pazhayathu' as called in Tamil.
- ✓ The project, launched at a cost of 2.7 crore involving 600 patients, aims to study the effect of probiotics in fermented rice (pazhaya soru) in treating inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD) like Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis (UC).

➤ **Flood Mitigation Project- Chennai**

- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government - has allocated ₹111 crore for phase-II of the long-term flood mitigation project that has been taken up in Chennai and neighbouring districts.
- ✓ The project aims to create an effective water management system to augment water storage capacity, restore missing links of water bodies, and avoid flood in highly vulnerable areas in Chennai, Kancheepuram, Chengalpet, Thiruvallur and Cuddalore districts.

➤ **Tamil Nadu's Unemployment Rate**

- ✓ Fell to 5-year low of 0.5% in December, 2020 from 1.1% in Nov, 2020
- ✓ The data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy.
- ✓ The unemployment rate in Tamil Nadu showed a direct correlation to the unlock guidelines

➤ **Ilakkiya Chuvadugal**

- ✓ 87-year old Tamil writer A. Madhavan, who won the Sahitya Akademi award in 2015, died in Thiruvananthapuram on Jan 5.
- ✓ The Sahitya Akademi conferred the award for his collected prose writings 'Ilakkiya Chuvadukal'.

➤ **Tamil Inscriptions**

- ✓ Two 16th Century hero stones and two slabs containing Tamil inscriptions - have been discovered in Ulipuram, 25 km from Attur in Salem.
- ✓ The inscriptions mention the old name of the region, which underwent changes in the later Nayakkar period.

➤ **Two hero stones dating back to the 16th century**

- ✓ It is found at Moolipatti near Chandrapur in Virudhunagar district.

➤ **Gundar River-Project**

- ✓ CM Edappadi K Palaniswami - inaugurated several projects in the public works department.
- ✓ An anicut will be built across Gundar River to divert water to Panthanenthal channel at Kariappati in Virudhunagar district.

➤ **Washington Sundar**

- ✓ Washington Sundar - was named Chennai district election icon by Greater Chennai Corporation.

➤ **Final Electoral Rolls- Tamil Nadu Elections 2021**

- ✓ The State Elections Department – has released the final electoral rolls of special summary revision, 2021

Tamil Nadu Electors	
Men voters	3.08 crore
Women voters	3.18 crore
Transgender voters	7200
Total number of electors in the state	6.26 crore

	Highest Number of Voters	Lowest Number of Voters
District	Chengalpattu	Chennai
Assembly	Shozhinganallur	Harbour
Voters	6,94,845	1,76,272

- ✓ Around 8,97,694 electors who belong to the age group 18 to 19 years throughout the state and Chennai has the highest number of such (49,148) Electors.
- **New Ombudsman for Local Bodies**
- ✓ M. Malik Feroze Khan as New Ombudsman for local bodies.
  - ✓ The Tamil Nadu Local Bodies Ombudsman Act, 2014, was enacted for the establishment of an Ombudsman in case of the local bodies.
  - ✓ He is responsible for conducting enquiries on allegations against elected members, officers and employees working with the local bodies.
  - ✓ He will function as per the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994, the Tamil Nadu District Municipalities Act, 1920, and other relevant Acts.
- **Two horticulture parks in Chennai on January 22 Heritage Garden in Washermentpet and Senganthal Poonga in Gopalapuram**
- ✓ The newly developed Heritage Park was set up by the Horticulture Department.
  - ✓ The open garden has around thousand varieties of ornamental and flowering plants, and palm trees
  - ✓ The Senganthal Poonga has around 34,000 varieties of palms, ornamental plants and trees
  - ✓ Senganthal Poonga has been created over an area of 6.83 acres inside the horticultural society premises

➤ **Saraswathi Rangaswamy**

- ✓ Saraswathi Rangaswamy: Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TNSCPCR).
- ✓ The appointment was made a year after the previous heads tenure ended in January 2020.
- ✓ Five new members have also taken charge and will address cases concerning child safety.
- ✓ This will be Saraswathi's second stint at the commission.
- ✓ She had previously served in the same post between 2013-15.

➤ **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal**

- ✓ The Chennai bench will hear the fresh appeals against the orders of the benches of NCLAT having jurisdiction in respect of states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Union territories of Lakshadweep and Puducherry.
- ✓ The government notified the constitution of the NCLAT, Chennai bench.
- ✓ There are more than 30 tribunals, headquartered in Delhi.

➤ **Anna Medal for Gallantry**

- ✓ P. Mullai, a school teacher who risked her life to save her 26 students from an explosion at the Pulivalam Government High School in Sholinghur, Ranipet district.
- ✓ Prakash, a forest veterinary surgeon who rescued an elephant that plunged into a 60-ft-deep well.
- ✓ J. Suresh, a loco pilot of Vaigai Express who noticed boulders on railway tracks and saved over 1,500 passengers.
- ✓ R. Pugazendiran, a cab driver from the Nilgiris, who acted swiftly to save the life of an injured policeman.

➤ **Veda Nilayam**

- ✓ CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami - inaugurated the memorial at former CM Jayalalithaa's residence 'Veda Nilayam' at Poes Garden in Chennai.

➤ **Namma Chennai Selfie Point on Marina beach**

- ✓ The project has been funded by the Smart City mission.
- ✓ Namma Chennai is part of the development of an art district in the city.
- ✓ The structure is 28 feet in width, 10 feet in height and has a thickness of 2 feet.

- ✓ The selfie point is the first one in Tamil Nadu and the fourth in the country
- **Tamil Nadu Industrial Policy 2021**
  - ✓ On Jan 29, the Tamil Nadu Cabinet - accorded approval for 34 proposals for investments to the tune of ₹52,257 crore.
  - ✓ The Cabinet meeting, chaired by CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami, also cleared the TN Industrial Policy 2021, which would be unveiled soon.
  - ✓ The investments are likely to create over 93,000 jobs in the state.
- **The State government - to infuse an additional capital of ₹1,000 crore into the Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC) over three years**
- **India's first wetland conservation centre - to come up in Chennai**
- **A 14th century inscription mentioning a temple deity - was found near Thondi in Ramanathapuram district**
  - ✓ The inscription mentioned the name of the deity as Puravuvvari Vinnakara Peruyan, where 'Puravuvvari' referring to land tax
  - ✓ Dating to 1329, the inscription was found in the sanctum sanctorum of Garudhazhvar in the Uthipootha Perumal temple
- **J.Jayalalithaa University**
  - ✓ Dr. J. Jayalalithaa University will have jurisdiction over Villupuram, Kallakurichi and Cuddalore districts, with the exception of areas specified under the provisions of the Annamalai University Act, 2013.
  - ✓ The Governor would be the Chancellor of the university.
- **The Centre - has approved tiger reserve status for the sanctuaries covering the entire forests of Meghamalai and Srivilliputhur in Tamil Nadu.**
  - ✓ The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) conveyed the approval to the Tamil Nadu government.
  - ✓ Srivilliputhur and Meghamalai sanctuaries will be notified as tiger reserves, based on a letter from the Tamil Nadu government on January 7 and a technical committee meeting on January 22
  - ✓ The last tiger reserve was notified six years ago in Arunachal Pradesh, Kamlang.
  - ✓ The Meghamalai Wildlife Sanctuary is spread across the districts of Theni and Madurai
  - ✓ The Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary lies along Kerala's Periyar Tiger Reserve.

➤ **Kaliveli Wetlands**

- ✓ Wildlife Protection Act to announce Kaliveli wetlands as a bird sanctuary.
- ✓ The first declaration was issued under the Section 18 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- ✓ The Kaliveli Wetlands is the second-largest brackish water lake in South India, after the Pulicat lake.
- ✓ It is located near to the Marakkanam on the East Coast Road of the Kaliveli Lake.
- ✓ The wetland is spread over an area of 670 square kilometer and is connected to the Bay of Bengal through the Uppukalli Creek and the Edayanthittu sanctuary

➤ **Tamil Nadu - is ranked as the best performer among bigger states with respect to the utilisation of Union government funds for smart cities**

- ✓ According to a data tabled in Parliament, Tamil Nadu had utilised 97% of the ₹3,189 crore allotted to it by the Centre.
- ✓ In comparison, Gujarat has used 95% of allotted funds, while Rajasthan has utilised 94%, Karnataka 91%, Uttar Pradesh 87% and Maharashtra 87%
- ✓ Smart city projects are underway in Chennai, Coimbatore, Erode, Madurai, Salem, Thanjavur, Tuticorin, Trichy, Tirunelveli, Tiruppur and Vellore.

➤ **New SIPCOT Industrial Park**

- ✓ The industrial parks would come up at a cost of Rs1,536 crore in more than 3,500 acres of land in Manallur in Thiruvallur district, Vallam Vadagal (phase-II) and Oragadam (phase-II) in Kancheepuram district, Manaparai in Trichy and Tindivanam in Villupuram

➤ **Tamil Nadu government - announced 'New Entrepreneur-cum-Enterprise Development Scheme - Special Initiative for Migrants (NEEDS-SIM)'**

- ✓ The new scheme will help making 3.6 lakh Tamil foreign returnees to the state during Covid-19 pandemic into entrepreneurs.
- ✓ The scheme is applicable to all those who returned to Tamil Nadu from abroad since January 1, 2020.
- ✓ It provides a capital subsidy of 25% of the project cost subject to a maximum of ₹30 lakh
- ✓ Interest subvention of 6% is also extended on the loan availed

- **A bill to modify the list of Scheduled Castes in Tamil Nadu on March 19**
  - ✓ The Bill seeks to group seven Scheduled Caste communities in certain districts of Tamil Nadu under 'Devendrakula Velalars'.
  - ✓ The draft Gazette to amend the Schedule to correct their name as Devendrakula Velalar had been approved by the Centre.
  - ✓ The demand of the seven communities – Devendrakulathan, Kadaiyan, Kalladi, Kudumban, Pallan, Pannadi and Vathiriyan – that they be known as 'Devendrakula Velalar' has been a long-pending one
  - ✓ Last December, the State CM Edappadi K Palaniswami announced that he would urge the Centre to group the seven communities as 'Devendrakula Velalars', accepting the recommendation of the Hansraj Varma Committee, which was established by the government
  
- **'Main Battle Tank Arjun Mark 1A' to the nation**
  - ✓ The Arjun Mk-1A has superior firepower, high mobility, excellent protection and crew comfort, with 14 major upgrades from Arjun Mk-1, according to the CVRDE
  
- **e-Kaiyoppam**
  - ✓ The e-Kaiyoppam platform aims to digitise non-registrable contracts like Rent Agreements, Affidavits, Bank Guarantees, Power of Attorney documents, etc., and facilitate all the parties to remotely stamp and sign these documents
  - ✓ Equipped with NeSL's e-Signing and e-Stamping features embedded within the eKaiyoppam platform, the parties can sign and stamp the contracts virtually anytime, anywhere.
  - ✓ A 'Digital India' initiative, the e-Kaiyoppam platform is set to further ease of doing business and create a transparent and unambiguous ecosystem for paperless contract executions.
  
- **Ecologically Sensitive Zone' (ESZ)-in Tamil nadu**
  - ✓ The Pulicat bird sanctuary in Tiruvallur district - has been declared an 'Ecologically Sensitive Zone' (ESZ) to ensure total protection.
  
- **Cauvery-Gundar interlink project**
  - ✓ The state has given in principle approval for Rs. 6,941 crore for the construction of canal under phase I between Cauvery (Kattalai) to South Vellar, in anticipation of NABARD assistance
  - ✓ This phase will benefit droughtprone areas of Karur, Trichy and Pudukottai districts



- ✓ The phase I is part of the Mahanadhi-Godavari-Cauvery-Gundar link under the National Perspective Plan of the Union government.
  - ✓ The linking of the Cauvery and Gundar rivers started with the commissioning of the barrage across Cauvery at Mayanur in Karur district in 2014.
- **New Industrial Policy, 2021 of Tamil nadu**
- ✓ The New Industrial Policy aims to attract ₹10 lakh crore in new investments and create 20 lakh jobs by 2025
  - ✓ The New Industrial Policy aims to attract ₹10 lakh crore in new investments and create 20 lakh jobs by 2025
  - ✓ It seeks to achieve an annual growth rate of 15% in the manufacturing sector from the current rate of 25% (as of 2019-20) and increase the contribution of the sector to the state's economy to 30% by 2030
  - ✓ After unveiling the policies, Chief Minister inaugurated eight completed projects involving an investment of ₹3,377 crore and offering employment to more than 7,000 people.
  - ✓ The state government also signed 28 MoUs that will pave way for new investments of more than ₹28,000 crore in the state
  - ✓ The sectors that bagged the investments include smartphones, electric vehicles, wind energy and auto components, city gas distribution and textiles.
  - ✓ The policy has given a special thrust to the emerging sunrise sectors, including aerospace and defence, renewable energy components, electronics (ESDM), medical devices, electric vehicles, pharmaceuticals, technical textiles and medical textiles (biotechnology)
  - ✓ Among the key investors are Tata Electronics, which will invest ₹4,684 crore and employ more than 18,000 people in its unit in Krishnagiri district
  - ✓ Further, Pegatron Corporation, Taiwan, proposed an investment of ₹1,100 crore for making smartphones and employing more than 14,000 people at Mahindra World City, Chengalpattu
  - ✓ Both the companies will make Apple products and join Foxconn and Salcomp to make Tamil Nadu the new hub in Apple products manufacturing.
- **Micro small and medium enterprises policy(MSME)- 2021**
- ✓ The new MSME policy aims to make Tamil Nadu the most vibrant ecosystem for MSMEs and startups.
  - ✓ It is aimed at attracting investments worth ₹2 lakh crore by 2025 and creating jobs for 20 lakh persons.

- ✓ The state's earlier MSME policy was released in 2008.
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu has around 23.6 lakh registered enterprises and provides employment opportunities to over 1.51 crore people.
  - ✓ The policy further aims to increase the share of exports from the MSMEs by 25%.
  - ✓ To achieve this, the state had established the MSME Trade and Investment Bureau (M-TIPB) in 2019 to provide services to prospective foreign investors in the MSME sector.
  - ✓ Under the policy, new MSMEs and start-ups will be exempted from approvals for establishment and operation for three years based on self-certification
  - ✓ However, the units should have mandatory approval within one year after the expiry of the three-year period.
  - ✓ A corpus of ₹500 crore is being created for upgradation and maintenance of Tansidco estates. Following the recommendations of the C. Rangarajan Committee looking into the impact of COVID-19 on the State's economy creation.
  - ✓ A venture capital fund will be created with a corpus of ₹500 crore to support entrepreneurs undertaking ventures in the sunrise sectors.
- **Chief Minister of T.N- inaugurated the 'Salem Mathi' mobile app to help women's self-help groups sell their products online**
- ✓ The App will ensure greater visibility and better marketing of products made by self-help groups
  - ✓ The app has been uploaded with 2,000 products manufactured by the women.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - laid the foundation for the Cauvery basin refinery in Nagapattinam through videoconferencing.**
- ✓ The PM also dedicated Indian Oil Corporation's 143-km-long natural gas pipeline from Ramanathapuram to Tuticorin to the nation
- **New State Information Commissioners in the Tamil Nadu Information Commission**
- ✓ Dhanasekaran and Sreedhar will hold office for a term of three years from the date on which they assume office or the date on which they attain 65 years of age, whichever is earlier.

➤ **Kalaimamani Awards 2021**

- ✓ The Kalaimamani Awards are given by the Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Nataka Manram, a unit of the Directorate of Art and Culture, to recognise artists in the state for their achievements
- ✓ Dancer Chitra Visweswaran is the secretary of the Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Nataka Mandram and Film music director Deva is the chairman of the institute
- ✓ Veteran cine actors B. Saroja Devi and Sowcar Janaki, noted playback singers P. Susheela and Jamuna Rani and Bharatanatyam artistes Ambika Kameshwar and Parvathi Ravi Ghantasala have been named for the Puratchi Thalaivi Dr. J. Jayalalithaa Special Kalaimamani Awards for 2019 and 2020 by the Tamil Nadu government

➤ **Godavari-Cauvery River**

- ✓ The CM said the enactment of Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act was historic, to protect the agriculture lands and safeguard the livelihood of farmers in the Cauvery delta
- ✓ He stressed the importance of rejuvenating the Cauvery and its tributaries on the lines of 'Namami Gange', an integrated Ganga conservation mission
- ✓ In this regard, the CM requested the Centre to accord sanction and extend financial assistance to Tamil Nadu at the earliest.

➤ **Cauvery Sub-basin Project**

- ✓ Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur and Mayiladuthurai districts, served by the Cauvery, and 21 of its tributaries falling in the lower Cauvery sub-basin.
- ✓ The ₹14,400 crore Cauvery-Gundar link project aims to divert excess water in Cauvery from Mayanur dam in Karur district to south Vellar river, to Vaigai and subsequently to Gundar river
- ✓ The first phase to lay a 118.45-km-long canal from Kattalai in Mayanur dam till south Vellar river will be carried out at a cost of Rs 6,491 crore.
- ✓ The project will feed 342 tanks in Karur, Trichy and Pudukottai districts alone benefiting 42,170 acres of agriculture land.

➤ **Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu- announced a frozen semen station will be set up in Karumandurai at the cost of ₹100 crore**

- ✓ The frozen semen station will involve in developing high milk yielding indigenous and cross-bred cows

- ✓ The CM made the announcement after inaugurating the Advanced Institute for Integrated Research on Livestock and Animal Sciences (AIIRLAS) on February 22.
- ✓ The Asia's biggest cattle park is spread over 1,600 acres and constructed at a cost of ₹1,023 crore near Thalaivasal in Salem district
- ✓ The CM also inaugurated a veterinary medical college and Thalaivasal revenue taluk office

➤ **Tamil Nadu Budget Details**

- ✓ As per the budget estimates, the state's fiscal deficit is expected to be 4.99% and the state's economic growth is pegged at 2.02%
- ✓ The state debt, which is currently at Rs, 4.85 lakh crore, is set to increase to Rs. 5.7 lakh crore in 2021-22
- ✓ The total revenue receipts has been projected with a 17.64% fall at Rs 1,80,700.62 crore
- ✓ Revenue deficit went up to ₹65,944 crore in the current year and will remain at ₹41,417 crore in the coming year.
- ✓ A total of Rs. 13,352 crore had been spent by the state government on COVID-19 relief operations in the state, as stated by the Finance Minister

**Highlights of the Interim budget 2021-22**

**Amma Comprehensive Accident-cum-Life Insurance scheme**

- ✓ The finance minister unveiled the Puratchi Thalaivi Amma Comprehensive Accident-cum-Life Insurance scheme during the interim budget
- ✓ It will be launched in association with LIC and United India Insurance Company to benefit 55.67 lakh families living below the poverty line
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women carried out the task of identification of beneficiaries
- ✓ Beneficiaries of life cover will be in the 18-50 age group and those under accident cover in the 18-70 group

➤ **Financial aspects of the budget**

- ✓ The government has also allotted ₹5,000 crore for ₹12,110.74-crore crop loan waiver scheme
- ✓ The overall coverage under the Tamil Nadu Government Employees' Health Insurance Scheme would be extended from ₹4 lakh to ₹5 lakh with enhanced benefits.

➤ **Health**

- ✓ The state has allocated Rs. 144 crore for the Amma mini clinics in rural and urban areas
- ✓ These clinics will function between 9am and 11am and between 4pm and 7pm with one doctor, a nurse and a health worker.
- ✓ The government has announced to set up 11 new medical colleges in 2021

➤ **Education**

- ✓ The government will offer computer science education to students from Class VI in all government high and higher secondary schools
- ✓ Computer science is so far being taught as a separate subject only in Classes XI and XII with focus on C++, Python, HTML, JAVA and problem solving skills.

➤ **Agriculture**

- ✓ The government has taken up several irrigation infrastructure projects in the Cauvery, Tamiraparani and other river basins and has fixed tight deadlines for their completion in the next two years.
- ✓ Athikadavu-Avinashi flood canal scheme, costing ₹1,652 crore is scheduled to be completed in December this year.
- ✓ Diversion of flood surplus water from Mettur dam to dry tanks in the Sarabanga basin is under implementation and would be completed shortly.
- ✓ Tamiraparani, Karumeniyar and Nambiyar linking project will be completed by March next year and it would benefit arid regions of Tirunelveli and Tuticorin districts.

➤ **Pallikaranai marshland redevelopment**

- ✓ The state has earmarked ₹816.8 crore for the redevelopment of Pallikaranai marshland, the last surviving wetland in the city.
- ✓ The Conservation Authority of Pallikaranai Marshland had been constituted and restoration activities were being implemented at a cost of ₹165.68 crore

➤ **TN increases retirement age of government employees to 60 years**

- ✓ The CM also mentioned that all those who were in service or those who will be retiring on May 31, 2021, will also be covered under the announcement.

- ✓ The order will be applicable to the employees in state government-aided schools, government sectors, legal and constitutional bodies, PSU Staff, local bodies, boards, and unions, and commissions.
- **10.5% Internal quota for - Vanniya**
  - ✓ Vanniyakula kshatriya community will get 10.5% within the 20% quota for Most Backward Classes (MBC)
  - ✓ Vanniyar, vanniya, vannia gounder, gounder, padayachi, palli and agnikula Kshatriya.
- **Ease of Living index 2020**
  - ✓ Chennai - ranked 4 th in the Ease of Living index 2020
  - ✓ The (EoLI) is an assessment tool that evaluates quality of life and impact of various initiatives for urban development.
  - ✓ The 'Quality of Life' covers aspects such as affordable housing, access to clean water, basic education, healthcare facilities, safety & security, and recreation avenues.
- **A Chola-era stone inscription - was found near Anunmozhidevanpettai village near Thanjavur recently during renovation of a village tank**
  - ✓ 11th century reign of Chola king, Rajaraja II, the inscription mentions about the land donation from a group of people to another.
  - ✓ The inscription also mentions Muvendha Velan, one of the lieutenant of Rajaraja II.
- **Uthirakosamangai in Ramanathapuram**
  - ✓ Potsherds with inscriptions similar to the Indus Valley scripts -have been discovered in Uthirakosamangai in Ramanathapuram
  - ✓ Earlier, Chinese potsherds were discovered and documented alongwith a trident symbol pertaining to the Sethupathi period in Keelakarai in Ramanathapuram district
  - ✓ At present, a total of 20 new potsherds were found near a local tank in Mariyapuram near Uthirakosamangai
- **Uppur thermal power plant in Ramanathapuram**
  - ✓ National Green Tribunal, Southern Zone - has now granted clearance to Uppur thermal power plant in Ramanathapuram.
  - ✓ Tangedco had obtained the Union environment ministry's approval to set up the 1,600MW supercritical plant and foreshore facilities.

- **Lok Sabha - passed a bill that seeks to place seven castes under Devendrakula vellalars in Tamil Nadu**
  - ✓ The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021 which amends the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 modifies the list of Scheduled Castes in Tamil Nadu by grouping seven castes into one nomenclature, Devendrakula Vellalar
  - ✓ The Tamil Nadu government had earlier accepted a recommendation of a committee set up in 2019 headed by IAS officer Hansraj Verma to reclassify the seven sub sects under the generic name 'Devendrakula Vellalar' and forwarded it to the Centre.
  - ✓ The seven communities combined have a presence in 28 of Tamil Nadu's 33 districts.
  
- **The 'Vote from Home' facility -By Election commission of India**
  - ✓ This has been offered for the first time to senior citizens (above 80 years of age) and Persons with Disabilities (PWD) to around 7,300 voters in Chennai.
  
- **A Rare 400-year-old Nayak stone inscription at Papamadai in Avaniapuram in Madurai district**
  - ✓ The first inscription had 19 lines inscribed on it with the first three lines being part of a devotional song, written in Telugu.
  - ✓ The first inscription was deciphered by retired archaeologist C Santhalingan.
  - ✓ The inscriptions paid tribute to the sixth king of the Madurai Nayak dynasty, Veerappa Nayaka Ayan, for constructing a sluice to help local farmers irrigate their farmlands
  - ✓ The second inscription was found engraved on the eastern side of the same pillar is not yet deciphered
  
- **WhatsApp-based "Chatbot"**
  - ✓ The state department of public health and preventive medicine and Unicef - have launched a Covid-19 Vaccine Beneficiary Assistance System (CVBAS)
  
- **The new chatbot has been developed to provide relevant and accurate information on Covid-19 vaccination**
  
- **'Tree Man'**
  - ✓ Yoganathan, a bus conductor in the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (TNSTC), gives a sapling along with tickets to passengers

- ✓ He had received awards including 'Eco Warrior' from the Vice-President and 'Sutru Suzal Seyal Veerar' of the state government.

## STATE

- **Delhi government sets up "Tamil Academy"**
  - ✓ Delhi government Department of Art, Culture, and Language has set-up a Tamil academy to promote the language and culture of the southern state of Tamil Nadu.
  - ✓ The Delhi government has appointed a former councillor and member of Delhi Tamil Sangam N Raja as the Vice-Chairman of the academy.
- **Cabinet approves industrial development scheme for J&K**
  - ✓ The key objective of the industrial development scheme is to generate employment leading to the socio-economic development of Jammu and Kashmir.
  - ✓ The central government had allocated Rs 30,757 crore for Jammu and Kashmir and Rs 5,958 crore for Ladakh for Fiscal Year 2021.
- **Karnataka government launches Krishi Sanjeevani Vans**
  - ✓ The 40 vans will reach out to the agriculture fields for testing water, soil and will also suggest remedies for pest control to improve yield.
  - ✓ Vans have been launched to take scientific labs to the fields so that the farmers of the state can get find hand support for their farming techniques.
- **Arunachal Pradesh likely to be India's prime producer of Vanadium**
  - ✓ It is a high-value metal that has been used in strengthening steel and titanium.
  - ✓ The largest deposits of Vanadium are in China, followed by South Africa and Russia.
- **Vanadium found in the areas of Arunachal Pradesh:**
  - ✓ The promising concentration of vanadium was found in the palaeo-proterozoic carbonaceous phyllite rocks in Tamang and Depo areas of the state's Papum pare district.
  - ✓ This was also the first report of a primary deposit of Vanadium in the country with an average grade of 0.76% Vanadium pentoxide.



- ✓ As per the specialist, the vanadium mineralization found in Arunachal Pradesh is comparable to the significant vanadium deposits of the world.
- **Gujarat Government renames dragon fruit as 'Kamalam'**
- **Union Cabinet approves 850 MW Ratle Hydropower Project in J&K**
  - ✓ It is located on river Chenab in Kishtwar district, Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Maharashtra's Jail Tourism Initiative**
  - ✓ Maharashtra CM Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray launched the jail tourism initiative on January 26, 2021 on the occasion of 72nd Republic Day.
  - ✓ This unique initiative will help the citizens, history enthusiasts and school or college students experience the "vignettes from our history".
  - ✓ The initiative was launched from an over 150 year-old Yerawada Central Prison of Pune which saw the imprisonment of various freedom fighters under the British rule including Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Lokmanya Tilak and Subhas Chandra Bose.
  - ✓ The Yerawada Central Prison is Maharashtra's largest jail that was constructed in 1866. Presently, the jail houses around 5000 inmates and is spread over 500 acres of land.
- **Kisan Kalyan mission -UP GOVT**
  - ✓ The UP Govt-has proposed to launch a new scheme, Kisan Kalyan mission.
  - ✓ The Kisan Kalyan mission aims to double the farmer income covering all the Assembly constituencies of the state of Uttar Pradesh.
- **Bird flu virus (avian influenza)**
  - ✓ On Jan 4, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan - confirmed the outbreak of bird flu (avian influenza) in the states.
  - ✓ It will also study the public health risk of H5N8.
  - ✓ Kerala is the worst affected among the four states where avian influenza has been confirmed after bird samples tested positive.
- **Madhya Pradesh - has introduced night safaris in three national parks in the state to boost the tourism industry.**
  - ✓ The three parks are - the Bandhavgarh National Park, Kanha National Park and Pench National Park.

- **100 MW floating solar Power Project**
  - ✓ NTPC Ltd's Ramagundam thermal power plant reservoir near Peddapalli in Telangana
  - ✓ The Ramagundam floating solar project is part of plans to set up a 217MW floating solar power capacity in south India
  - ✓ The world's largest floating solar power plant planned so far is the 600MW project to be set up on the Omkareshwar dam on river Narmada in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh
  
- **"Kalanamak Rice Festival"**
  - ✓ The Kala Namak Rice is grown as 'One District One Product' in some of the Eastern UP districts.
  - ✓ The 'Kalanamak' rice is a geographical indication (GI) tagged rice from Siddharth Nagar district in Uttar Pradesh
  
- **Goa first State to provide 100% Tap water**
  - ✓ Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide tap water supply to every rural home in the country by 2024
  - ✓ Recently, Prime Minister launched 'Catch the rain' campaign on World water day - 22 March, 2021 to give importance to the concept of water conservation
  
- **'Transgender Community Desk'**
  - ✓ India's 1<sup>st</sup> 'Transgender Community Desk' launched in Gachibowli Police Station, Hyderabad, Telangana by Cyberabad police Chief VC Sajjanar.
  - ✓ This desk is the first - of - its- kind gender - inclusive community policing initiative in the country
  - ✓ It is the World's first - ever help desk for the transgender community
  
- **Concept of antenatal mothers**
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu's mentoring concept of antenatal mothers - has been selected as a best practice in the entire country by the National Health Mission (NHM)
  
- **'Gender Park' in Kozhikode**
  - ✓ Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan - to inaugurate the country's first 'Gender Park' in Kozhikode in February 2021

- **Delhi launches “Switch Delhi” campaign to promote electric vehicles.**
  - ✓ The Chief Minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal on Feb 4, 2021, launched the ‘Switch Delhi’ campaign in order to promote the use of electric vehicles.
  
- **PM Modi to unveil four projects in Haldia**
  - ✓ Catalytic-Isodewaxing Unit
  - ✓ New LPG Terminal
  - ✓ Dobhi-Durgapur pipeline
  - ✓ Four-lane Road over bridge cum flyover
  
- **First Human Milk Bank (HMB)**
  - ✓ The new facility will be opened at the Ernakulam general hospital.
  
- **Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai’ mission**
  - ✓ The Jal Jeevan Mission was launched on August 15, 2019 to provide safe and adequate drinking water
  - ✓ The scheme seeks to provide tap water to the individual houses by 2024 in rural India
  
- **‘Tree Cities of the World’.**
  - ✓ The title has been conferred by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
  - ✓ Hyderabad has been selected for its commitment to growing and maintaining urban forestry
  - ✓ With the recognition, Hyderabad joins 120 others from 23 countries, including the U.S., the U.K., Canada, and Australia.
  
- **Narmadapuram, after the river Narmada**
  - ✓ The CM made the announcement while he was addressing the Narmada Jayanti programme that was held in Hoshangabad
  - ✓ Hoshangabad city was named after Hoshang Shah who was the first ruler of Malwa
  - ✓ The river is the 5th largest river across India.
  
- **20 tonnes of Kala Namak rice to Singapore from Siddharth Nagar.**
  - ✓ Buddha Rice, is one of the finest varieties of aromatic rice that are grown in India.
  - ✓ The rice was offered to the Buddhist monks so as to promote the rice in Buddhist countries.

- ✓ It is mainly cultivated in Deoria, Gorakhpur, Kushinagar, Gonda, Maharajganj, Siddharth Nagar, Balrampur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Bahraich, Shravasti districts of the State
  - ✓ The Geographical Indications (GI) claims that these regions share a similar climate
- **'Namma Cargo' services**
    - ✓ The Cargo services will be implemented across 109 bus stations in Karnataka.
    - ✓ The first phase of the "Namma Cargo Services" will operate in 88 taluks of Karnataka and at 21 inter-State locations.
    - ✓ The name 'Namma Cargo' name was chosen for the services following a contest.

## NATIONAL

- **Suriname's Indian-origin President to be Chief Guest at Republic Day 2021**
  - ✓ Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Indian-origin President of Suriname, will be the chief guest at India's Republic Day Parade on Jan 26, 2021.
- **PM Modi flags off 8 trains to boost connectivity to Statue of Unity**
  - ✓ The 8 trains will connect different parts of the country to Kevadiya in order to facilitate smooth and easier connectivity to the Statue of Unity in Gujarat.
  - ✓ Kevadiya Station in Gujarat is also the first railway station of India with a Green Build Certification.
- **The 'SAKSHAM' campaign in order to create awareness among the consumers about the fossil fuels.**
- **India's first-ever driverless metro train in Delhi**
- **Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA)**
  - ✓ On January 1, the Drugs Controller General of India - recommended emergency use authorisation (EUA) for Pune-based Serum Institute of India's 'Covishield' developed by Oxford University and pharma major Astra-Zeneca.
- **Covaxin**
  - ✓ India's first indigenous Covid-19 vaccine,

- ✓ Covaxin for emergency use authorization (EUA)
  - ✓ The SEC has approved two vaccines - Oxford-Astra Zeneca's Covishield and Bharat Biotech's home-grown Covaxin - for EUA
  - ✓ Currently, Covaxin is in a clinical trial mode with Phase 3 trials going on
  - ✓ Once approved, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, developed alongwith the Indian Council for Medical Research, will be India's first locally-developed and manufactured vaccine against the coronavirus.
  - ✓ Covaxin is also a two-dose vaccine like Covishield and can be stored at 2 to 8 degrees.
  - ✓ Covaxin is the first vaccine to be developed from scratch in India
  - ✓ India has developed Shanchol, the world's first cholera
- **Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya**
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will dedicate the 'National Atomic Timescale' and 'Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya' to the nation.
  - ✓ PM will also lay the foundation stone of the National Environmental Standards Laboratory on the day.
  - ✓ Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya will support the testing and calibration of laboratories for quality assurance, at par with international standards.
- **The INS Kiltan**
- ✓ INS KILTAN recently arrived at Sihanoukville Port, Cambodia under Mission Sagar III to deliver fifteen tonnes of HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief) for flood affected Cambodia.
- **Pravasi Rishta Portal**
- ✓ The Government of India - launched the Global Pravasi Rishta Portal and a mobile application recently
  - ✓ The application aims to connect over 3 crore Indian Diaspora spread all over the world.
- **Eighth warmest year in India**
- ✓ The India Meteorological Department (IMD) - has announced that the year 2020 was the eighth warmest year in India since nation-wide records commenced in 1901
  - ✓ Annual rainfall over India as a whole was 109% of its long period average (LPA), based on the data of 1961-2010, last year.
- **40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica**
- ✓ The first ever Indian scientific expedition to Antarctica began in 1981.

- ✓ Dakshin Gangotri was the first permanent settlement of India in Antarctica built in the year 1983.
  - ✓ Bharti was established in 2015 to collect evidence of continental break up and reveal the 120-million-year-old ancient history of Indian subcontinent.
- **Kochi - Mangalore GAIL Pipeline**
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi - inaugurated state-run gas utility GAIL's 450-km pipeline joining Kochi with Mangalore through video conference
  - ✓ According to the PM, the ₹3,000 crore project is as an important step towards creating a "One Nation, One Gas Grid".
  - ✓ The pipeline is part of the 938km cross-country KKMBPL (Kochi-KoottanadBengaluru-Mangalore) pipeline being laid across Kerala (510 km), Tamil Nadu (310km) and Karnataka (70km) to supply gas imported in ships at Kochi.
- **Waterbird Census-2020**
- ✓ The two-day Asian Waterbird Census-2020 - commenced in Andhra Pradesh on January 5 under the aegis of experts from the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)
  - ✓ The Census will cover at least two dozen sites, including Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary, Kolleru Lake and Krishna Sanctuary.
  - ✓ The first batches expected to reach Bhutan and the Maldives among several countries by special planes as a grant or gift.
  - ✓ The release of the shipments is part of the government's "Neighbourhood First" initiative, and will make India the first country to reach COVID-19 vaccines in South Asia, ahead of China.
- **'Prabuddha Bharata'**
- ✓ Prabuddha Bharata is a monthly magazine of the Ramakrishna Order.
  - ✓ It was launched in the year 1896 by P. Aiyasami, B. R. Rajam Iyer, G. G. Narasimhacharya, and B. V. Kamesvara Iyer under the guidance of Swami Vivekananda.
  - ✓ Prabuddha Bharata magazine aims to spread the message of the ancient spiritual wisdom of the country
- **Vehicle scrapping policy introduced to phase out unfit, polluting vehicles**

- ✓ The policy was first announced by Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Feb 1, 2021 during in her budget speech at the Parliament.
  - ✓ The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari introduced the **Policy** in the Lok Sabha on March 18, 2021.
- **PM Modi inaugurates Chauri Chaura centenary celebrations**
- ✓ The Chauri Chaura incident took place on Feb 4, 1922 at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of British India.
  - ✓ The Mahatma Gandhi-led Non-cooperation movement was underway then.
  - ✓ The Prime Minister also released a postal stamp dedicated to mark the beginning of centenary celebrations of the Chauri Chaura incident.
- **India's first geothermal power project**
- ✓ It will be set up at eastern Ladakh's Puga village.
- **India - sends one lakh Covid vaccine shots to Oman**
- **On February 1, the Centre - announced the sharing of 41% of tax receipts with states, as per the recommendation of 15th Finance Commission**
- **India's first CNG tractor**
- ✓ The Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Feb 12, 2021, launched the country's first CNG tractor that will be able to save about Rs. 1 lakh annually on fuel costs.
- **The PGIMER, Chandigarh - has launched the country's first ever 'PGI Amputee Clinic'**
- **"Sustainable Development of Little Andaman Island Vision Document"**
- ✓ The Little Andaman is a 680 sq km fragile Island in the Andaman and Nicobar island group.
  - ✓ In the year 2020, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi declared that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be developed as a "maritime and start-up hub".
- **1600 tonnes of lithium deposits in Mandya district of Karnataka**
- ✓ The first Lithium plant of India has been set up at Gujarat in the year 2021.

- ✓ It was established with the help of investment of Rs 1000 crore made by the Manikaran Power Limited.
  - ✓ This plant will make use of Lithium ore to produce the base battery material and make Gujarat a hub for Lithium-ion batteries.
- **Nanda Devi glacier**
- ✓ A portion of the Nanda Devi glacier - broke off near Raini village in Tapovan area of Chamoli district in the eco-sensitive Garhwal Himalayas region of Uttarakhand
  - ✓ During the 2013 Uttarakhand flash floods, the highest level at Joshimath was 1,385.54 metres.
- **The first geothermal power project of India**
- ✓ In this regard, a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ONGC Energy; LAHDC, Leh and the Power Department of UT Ladakh at Puga, Ladakh
- **The fossil of world's oldest animal**
- ✓ Bhimbetka Rock Shelters are a UNESCO World Heritage Site for Paleolithic and Mesolithic cave art
  - ✓ The discovery may have been the first ever fossil in India of a Dickinsonia - the Earth's 'oldest animal' - dating back 570 million years.
- **'Pey Jal Survekshan'**
- ✓ The pilot survey will cover 10 cities – Agra, Badlapur, Bhubaneswar, Churu, Kochi, Madurai, Patiala, Rohtak, Surat and Tumkur
  - ✓ In this survey, data on drinking water, wastewater management, non-revenue water and condition of three waterbodies in the city will be collected.
- **India - announced a gift of 2 lakh doses of Covid vaccine doses for UN peacekeeping forces**
- ✓ COVAX is a global initiative to develop, purchase and deliver vaccines worldwide
- **e- chhawani**
- ✓ e-Chhawani project was launched with the aim of providing online municipal services for more than 20 lakh citizens.



- **‘Mahabahu-Brahmaputra’ initiative**
  - ✓ The launch of the initiative is marked with the inauguration of the Ro-Pax vessel operations between the Neamatighat & Majuli, Dhubri-Hatsingimari and North-South Guwahati.
  - ✓ This initiative also includes the inauguration of the Inland Water Transport Terminal at Jogighopa
- **SWAMIH Fund**
  - ✓ SWAMIH stands for ‘Special Window for Completion of Construction of Affordable and Mid-Income Housing Projects’
  - ✓ The SWAMIH Fund is a 250-billion-rupee corpus set up by Indian government to complete the stalled housing projects.
- **National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM)**
  - ✓ The mission aims to create a digital infrastructure for various cities in the country
  - ✓ During the event, several other digital initiatives of the Ministry including India Urban Data Exchange (IUDX), SmartCode, Smart Cities 2.0 website and Geospatial Management Information System (GMIS) were also launched.
  - ✓ The IUDX has been developed in partnership between the Smart Cities Mission and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru
- **India’s foodgrain production in the 2020-21 crop year - will touch a new all-time record of around 303 million tonnes (MT)**
- **Centre Government Signs Agreement with (AIIB)**
  - ✓ The Centre - has signed a loan agreement for \$304 million with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for the Assam Power Transmission Project
- **NS Viraat**
  - ✓ Currently, the 62-year-old warship is being dismantled at the ship-breaking facility in Alang scrapyards
- **Covaxin, India’s first indigenous coronavirus vaccine**
  - ✓ 81% efficacy in preventing Covid-19 after the second dose in those without prior infection
  - ✓ Covaxin is developed by Bharat Biotech in association with the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)

- **“Sansad TV”.**
  - ✓ The Parliament of India - have merged two of the TV channels namely, Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV into an integrated channel “Sansad TV”.
  - ✓ This new TV channel will continue to ‘live telecast’ the house proceedings, provides news and the current affairs programme in Hindi as well as in English language.
  
- **Catch the Rain: “Jal Shakti Abhiyan”**
  - ✓ “The National Water Mission (NWM) – has launched a campaign called “Catch the Rain” in various states recently.
  - ✓ The campaign has the tagline “Catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls “Catch the Rain”
  - ✓ Theme- ‘Catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls’
  
- **“Mobile Train Radio Communication (MTRC) system”**
  - ✓ The Western Railway zone of the Indian Railways - has introduced the MTRC system to prevent train accidents by effective communication
  - ✓ This system has been introduced for the first time in India.
  - ✓ It will also help in providing the real time information regarding the train operation during monsoon period.
  
- **“Waste to Wealth” Mission - 2021**
  - ✓ The “waste to wealth mission” was launched with the objective of identifying, developing and deploying technologies to treat the waste to recycle materials, extract worth and generate energy.
  - ✓ This mission is one among the nine-national mission of the “Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC)” of the PM.
  - ✓ Recently, the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi has developed a zero-emission technology that will manage and recycle the e-waste into wealth.
  
- **“CSIR Floriculture Mission”**
  - ✓ The mission will focus on the commercial crops for honey bee rearing such as Gladiolus, Carnation, Canna, Marigold, Rose etc.
  - ✓ Currently, India only shares 0.6% of the global floriculture market despite having diverse agro-climatic conditions
  
- **‘Maitri Setu’**
  - ✓ To inaugurate the ‘Maitri Setu’ between India and Bangladesh via video conferencing on March 9, 2021

- ✓ The 'Maitri Setu' is a bridge that has been built in the River Feni that flows between the Indian boundary in the state of Tripura and Bangladesh.
- ✓ After this bridge is operation, the state of Tripura will become the 'Gateway of North East' with having access to Chittagong Port in Bangladesh.
- **Amrit Mahotsav - is to be launched to mark 75 years of India's Independence**
  - ✓ This festival will be organised at the 75 locations for 75 weeks across the country.
- **Vehicle scrapping policy in Lok Sabha**
  - ✓ Accordingly, personal vehicles of more than 20-years will be deregistered from June 1, 2024, if they fail in an automated fitness test or their registration certificate is not renewed.
  - ✓ The initiatives are part of government's plan for replacing old polluting vehicles with technologically advanced and greener ones across the country. Similarly, 15 year-plus commercial vehicles will be deregistered from April 1, 2023
- **National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2021**
  - ✓ The bill aims to establish a statutory body or commission that frames policies and standards, regulates professional conduct and qualifications for allied healthcare professionals
  - ✓ There will be 12 seat representations from all states and Union territories on this commission with each state can also set up state-level commissions
  - ✓ The chairman and vice-chairman of the body will be selected for two years and they would be eligible for re-nomination for further two terms.
- **Bee farming as the foundation of a 'sweet revolution'**
  - ✓ PM again pitched for bee farming as the foundation of a 'sweet revolution'
  - ✓ The farmers from Darjeeling and Sundarbans to Banaskantha in Gujarat and Yamuna Nagar in Haryana have taken to bee farming to increase their income.

- **'DSIR-PRISM' scheme**
  - ✓ DSIR-PRISM refers to 'Department of Scientific and Industrial Research - Promoting Innovations in Individuals, Startups and MSMEs'
  - ✓ It will be applicable in the core technology areas like water, affordable healthcare, green technology, sewage management, industrially utilizable smart materials, clean energy and waste to wealth.
  
- **India - to be provided the 'Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects' (GGP), which is a financial assistance scheme of Japan**
  - ✓ The GGP is extended by Japan for development projects designed to meet the diverse basic human needs in more than 100 countries, including India
  
- **Electoral Bonds**
  - ✓ The Government launches the electoral bonds as an alternative to the cash donations that are made to the political parties
  - ✓ The bonds are part of government's efforts to bring transparency in the political funding.
  - ✓ The electoral bonds for the elections can be purchased by any individual who is a citizen of India or by any agency established or incorporated in India.
  - ✓ The political parties that are registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 will be eligible to receive the electoral bonds.
  
- **Government amends Insurance Ombudsman Rules 2017**
  - ✓ The Government of India has notified comprehensive amendments to the Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017, for better resolution of policyholders' complaints regarding insurance service deficiencies, in a timely, cost-effective and impartial manner

## SCHEMES

- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0 launched**
  - ✓ Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana's third phase (PMKVY 3.0) will focus on training eight lakh candidates during the scheme period of 2020-2021 with an outlay of Rs. 948.90 crore.
  - ✓ The third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana was launched on January 15, 2021 in 600 districts across all states of India.

- ✓ The third phase will be spearheaded by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).
  - ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched Skill India Mission on July 15, 2015.
  - ✓ The mission gained momentum through the launch of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), its flagship scheme.
  - ✓ The third phase of the scheme will be launched by Union Skill Development Minister Mahendranath Pandey, in the presence of the Minister of State, Raj Kumar Singh.
- **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) SEHAT scheme**
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) SEHAT scheme.
  - ✓ The main aim behind the scheme is to extend health insurance coverage to all residents of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **PMAY-Award**
- ✓ Puducherry - has bagged the award for the 'Best Performing Union Territory in India' for Implementing the PMAY (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana) Scheme
  - ✓ This is the second time Puducherry has been selected for excellence in implementation of PMAY.
  - ✓ PMAY is an affordable housing scheme implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
  - ✓ It was launched by the Ministry in 2015 to meet the housing needs of urban poor.
  - ✓ The Government of Puducherry has been implementing PMAY-U (Urban) scheme since 2016.
  - ✓ The Town and Country Planning Department was the State-level nodal agency for implementing the "Housing for All Mission" by 2022.
- **Start-up India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS)**
- ✓ The Startup Indian Seed Fund Scheme will provide financial assistance up to Rs 20 lakhs to startups, and will be disbursed through selected incubators.
  - ✓ The Rs 945 crore schemes will be in mission mode for the year 2021-25.
  - ✓ Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0 scheme
  - ✓ This was announced by the Health Ministry in a release issued on February

- ✓ To cover children and pregnant women who missed routine immunisation during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - ✓ It is being conducted in 250 pre-identified districts/urban areas across 29 States/UTs.
  - ✓ As per the guidelines released for IMI 3.0, the districts have been classified to reflect 313 low risk, 152 medium risk and 250 high risk districts
- **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM KISAN)**
- ✓ The flagship scheme of the central government, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM KISAN) - has completed its two years on February 24, 2021
  - ✓ The **PM-KISAN Scheme** was formally launched by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, on February 24, 2019 at Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh.
  - ✓ Under this scheme, an amount of 6000 rupees per year is transferred to the bank accounts of farmers directly.
  - ✓ This scheme was first conceived and implemented by the Telangana government as “Rythu Bandhu scheme”.
- **GOBAR-DHAN scheme stands for Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources - DHAN scheme.**
- ✓ The GOBARDHAN scheme was launched by the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation
  - ✓ The scheme is an important component of Swachh Bharat Mission Phase-2, which focuses on organic solid waste management
  - ✓ Under the scheme, 3.5 lakh villages, 374 districts and 16 States or Union Territories of the country have been declared ODF till date
- **Samagra Shiksha scheme will now be renamed after Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose**
- ✓ The Ministry of Education - has decided that the schools and hostels under the Samagra Shiksha scheme will now be renamed after Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose
  - ✓ The scheme was launched after subsuming three schemes namely, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the Teacher Education (TE), the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)
- **Second phase of Vigyan Jyoti programme**
- ✓ It has commenced on February 11 on the occasion of International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

- ✓ The Vigyan Jyoti Programme will encourage the girls to take interest in science and build a career in STEM
- ✓ The programme is currently running successfully in 50 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNV).

➤ **Three Umbrella Schemes**

- ✓ The Ministry of Women & Child Development (WCD) stated that it has classified all its major programmes under 3 Umbrella schemes namely - Mission Poshan 2.0 (Prime Minister's overarching scheme for Holistic Nutrition), Mission Vatsalya & Mission Shakti for the sake of better implementation of the schemes & Programmes.

Umbrella Scheme	Scheme Included
Saksham Anganwadi & POSHAN 2.0	Umbrella ICDS (Integrated Child development services) Anganwadi Services Poshan Abhiyan Scheme for Adolescent girls National Creche Scheme
Mission Vatsalya	Child protection services Child welfare services
Mission Shakti	<u>Sambal</u> One stop Centre Mahila Police Volunteer Women's Helpine \ swadhar\ Ujjawala\ Widow Homes
	<u>Samarthya</u> Beti Bachao beti Padhao Creche Pradhan mantra Martu vandana Yojana Gender Budgeting & Research

## COURT VERDICT

- **SC-appointed committee to hold first meeting on-farm laws on Jan 19<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ The Court had suggested forming a four-member committee to resolve the deadlock between Governments and protesting farmers.
  - ✓ **About the four-member panel set up by court:**
  - ✓ The committee set up by the apex court after staying the implementation of new farm laws, comprised of Dr Pramod Kumar Joshi, Director for South Asia, International Food Policy Research Institute; Bhupinder Singh Mann, National President of Bhartiya Kisan Union; Anil Ghanwat, President of Shetkari Sanghathan.
  - ✓ The fourth member of the committee, Bhartiya Kisan Union president Bhupinder Singh Mann, recused himself from the committee last week.
  
- **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act**
  - ✓ On Jan 4, Supreme Court - ruled that there will be no seizure of animals unless owner is convicted and proved guilty under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act.
  - ✓ The Act mandated confiscation of animals from a transporter or owner only after he is convicted for causing cruelty to animals by a court of law, or had been previously convicted of such an offence
  - ✓ The 2017 Rules allow a Magistrate to forfeit the cattle of an owner facing trial under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act
  
- **Central Vista - New Parliament**
  - ✓ A Bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna pronounced the 2-1 verdict
  - ✓ Justice Khanwilkar and Justice Maheshwari have written the majority verdict, while Justice Khanna pronounced the dissenting judgment
  - ✓ The "Prime Minister's dream project" was announced by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on September 13, 2019.
  - ✓ The project includes Central Vista and new Parliament building projects that will provide a larger working space for legislators and an integrated administrative block for ministries of the Centre at New Delhi



## INTERNATIONAL

- **Dr. Harsh Vardhan chairs 148th session of WHO Executive Board, says 2021 to be Year of Global Solidarity**
- **Israel vaccinated (100 Percentage)**
  - ✓ Israel - is all set to become the first country to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19
  - ✓ Over 10% (1 million) of the country's population has already received the first of two doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine by the 12th day of a vaccination programme, which began on December 20.
- **Five Eyes intelligence alliance**
  - ✓ Japan - to join the Five Eyes intelligence alliance network, comprising of five nations namely Australia, Canada, Britain, US and New Zealand.
  - ✓ The Five Eyes network countries were created to respond against the increasing threats by China and North Korea.
  - ✓ They are parties to multilateral UK-USA Agreement, which was a treaty of joint cooperation in signals intelligence
- **Russian Covid-19 vaccine Sputnik V**
  - ✓ An efficacy of 91.6% against symptomatic Covid-19 in a two-dose regimen, as per the medical journal Lancet
  - ✓ The 91.6% efficacy was seen 21 days after the first dose of giving the vaccine, which has to be stored at 2-8°C for global distribution
  - ✓ The makers of the vaccine are planning an emergency use authorization (EUA) rollout in India in March
- **Elon Musk's SpaceX**
  - ✓ It has recently announced the plan to launch its first all civilian mission to the space.
  - ✓ The mission has been named as Inspiration4 and it will be launched on a Falcon 9 rocket
  - ✓ SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket will launch the Crew Dragon spacecraft into low Earth orbit.
  - ✓ The spacecraft scheduled to fly Inspiration4 is Resilience, the Crew Dragon spacecraft currently docked to the International Space Station in support of NASA's Crew-1 mission.
  - ✓ This would be the first all-commercial astronaut mission in the world, to be launched by October 2021

- **“Arrow-4”**
  - ✓ Arrow or Hetz refers to the family of anti-ballistic missiles
- **Loneliness minister**
  - ✓ Japan - has appointed the first ever Minister for Loneliness amidst the increasing suicide rates due to the current pandemic situation
- **South Korea plans to construct world’s largest offshore wind farm**
  - ✓ South Korea plans to build an **8.2GW offshore wind farm** in Jeonnam province by 2030.
- **US government moves to rejoin UN Human Rights Council**
  - ✓ The United States President Joe Biden has moved to rejoin the United Nations Human Rights Council-UNHRC three years after the former US President Donald Trump withdrew from the global body.
  - ✓ This move is another reversal by Biden of Trump’s administration.
- **Fossils of world’s oldest animal discovered in Bhimbetka**
  - ✓ The three fossils of the world’s earliest known living animal- the 550 million years old Dickinsonia- have been discovered by the researchers on the roof of the Bhimbetka rock shelters.
  - ✓ They are about 40 km from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- **Ghana’s President Nana Akufo-Addo - became the first recipient of a Covid vaccine under the global Covax scheme**
- **2023 as “International Year of Millets”.**
  - ✓ The resolution to declare the year was sponsored by India and was adopted by consensus with the support of over 70 nations out of 193.
- **Lunar Space Station**
  - ✓ China and Russia - have signed a planetary pact to set up a joint lunar space station
  - ✓ Under the collaboration, Russia’s first modern lunar lander called “Luna 25” has been scheduled to be launched on October 1, 2021.
  - ✓ In 2020, China has launched the Tianwen-1 probe to Mars which is currently orbiting the Red Planet.
- **Japan and Australia - have collaborated for a \$500 million pilot project that produces liquefied hydrogen from brown coal**
  - ✓ The project is located in the Brown Coal Reserves in the state of Victoria, Australia and is run by Kawasaki Heavy industries.
  - ✓ It will help Japan to meet its “net zero emission” target by 2050.

- ✓ Japan aims to boost the annual hydrogen demand by ten times amounting to 20 million tonnes by 2050
- **'Sinatra Doctrine'**
  - ✓ The "Sinatra Doctrine" as a counter to the increasing China's aggressiveness in the region
  - ✓ The name was taken from the song "My Way" which was popularized by Frank Sinatra
- **MV Ever Green'**
  - ✓ The Suez Canal blockage - ended on March 29 after the mammoth cargo ship 'MV Ever Green' has finally been freed from the shoreline and refloated.
- **Facebook - has planned to install two undersea Internet cables to connect Southeast Asia to North America**
  - ✓ The decision is aimed at increasing data capacity and to improve the internet authenticity.
  - ✓ It is planned to be completed by 2023.

## INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **Union Cabinet approves MoU between India, UAE for scientific and technical cooperation**
  - ✓ The scientific and technical cooperation between the Ministry of Earth Sciences, India and the National Centre of Meteorology, UAE.
  - ✓ The Memorandum of Understanding between UAE and India will provide for the sharing of data, knowledge, and operational products for seismological, meteorological, and oceanic services such as satellite, radar, seismic, tide gauges, and meteorological stations.
- **India and Japan sign MoU to strengthen cooperation in Information and Communications Technology**
- **Cabinet approves signing of MoU between India and Uzbekistan in field of solar energy**
  - ✓ Both the countries will work for the implementation and deployment of the pilot project in the International Solar Alliance member countries.
  - ✓ Three main areas to be explored under MoU:
  - ✓ Solar Photovoltaic

- ✓ Storage technologies
- ✓ Transfer of Technology
- **India, EU hold first virtual maritime security dialogue**
- **India, UK to strengthen international cooperation against cross-border terrorism**
- **“Vaccine Maitri Initiative” to Sri-Lanka**
  - ✓ The Vaccine Maitri or the Vaccine Friendship initiative was started on January 20, 2021.
  - ✓ Under the initiative, India will supply Made-in-India Covid-19 vaccines to its neighbouring countries and to other key partners of the Neighbourhood First Policy.
  - ✓ Bhutan and Maldives were the first country to get the vaccines.
  - ✓ They are followed by Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles.
  - ✓ Afghanistan and Mauritius will also get doses after they give necessary regulatory approvals. Pakistan has not been named as a neighbouring country by India to deliver the vaccine
- **India and Afghanistan - signed an MoU for construction of the proposed Shatoot dam in Afghanistan**
- **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**
  - ✓ The International Solar Alliance (ISA) - has planned to launch the World Solar Bank (WSB) at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP-26, in Glasgow that is scheduled for November 2021
  - ✓ The development of the WSB is significant because the green finance will be one of the priority themes at the COP-26 climate meet
- **India and Maldives - signed a \$50 million Line of Credit to fund defence projects in the island nation**
- **India - signed a free trade and investment agreement with Mauritius on February**
  - ✓ It is the first ever free trade agreement signed with any country in Africa.
  - ✓ It was also the first time since 2011 that India was signing a free trade pact with any country.
- **India - supplies Covishield vaccine to the African country, Ghana**

- **Blue Economy Policy**
  - ✓ Blue Economy Policy, India and Norway - will jointly conduct marine spatial planning (MSP) in Lakshadweep and Puducherry.
  - ✓ The marine spatial planning is globally identified as a tool for sustainable and integrated ocean management
  
- **India - opened a first-of-its-kind 'Energy Office' in Moscow**
  - ✓ The office represents five Indian government oil and engineering companies – ONGC Videsh, IndianOil, GAIL, Oil India and Engineers India
  - ✓ It aims to present a common interface for expanding cross-investments in the energy sector.
  
- **Assam-grown 'red rice' to United States**
  - ✓ Red rice is rich in iron and the variety is grown in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam without using any form of chemical fertilizer.
  - ✓ The rice was sourced by leading rice exporter called 'LT Foods'.
  
- **India - has sent a consignment of 1,000 metric tonnes of rice and 100,000 tablets of Hydroxychloroquine to the drought-hit Madagascar**
  - ✓ The humanitarian assistance will be delivered by the Indian Naval Ship Jalashwa
  
- **Yarlung Zangbo - Hydro Dam**
  - ✓ Yarlung Zangbo, is a cause of concern for both India and Bangladesh
  
- **Italy - joined International Solar Alliance (ISA)**
  - ✓ The ambassador of Italy to India, Vincenzo de Luca, signed the Italian membership to the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
  - ✓ ISA is a treaty-based intergovernmental alliance comprising of 121 countries.
  
- **India - abstained from voting on a contentious resolution on Sri Lanka at the United Nation Human Rights Council**
  - ✓ Sri Lankan authorities during the country's long civil war, which ended in 2009.
  - ✓ The resolution titled "Promotion of Reconciliation Accountability and Human Rights in Sri Lanka" was taken up by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi - to arrive in Dhaka for the 'Bangabandhu' Mujibur Rahman anniversary
  - ✓ The birth centenary of the Father of the Nation of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also marks 50 years of diplomatic relations between both the countries
  - ✓ Pandit Ajoy Chakraborty has been asked to compose a new Hindustani classical raga for the occasion.
  
- **Indus Commission Meeting**
  - ✓ The annual Permanent Indus Commission meeting - was recently held after a gap of over two years at New Delhi
  - ✓ Before the two-day meeting, Pakistan had raised objections to the designs of Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai hydropower plants which are under construction in Jammu and Kashmir, which was later justified by India in the meeting
  - ✓ In the 116th meeting of the Commission, both the sides discussed other issues under Indus Waters Treaty
  
- **India - signed five agreements with Bangladesh during the bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina on March**
  - ✓ The five MoU's include -
  - ✓ MoU on disaster management, resilience and mitigation
  - ✓ MoU between Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC) and National Cadet Corps of India (INCC)
  - ✓ MoU on the establishment of a framework of cooperation in the area of trade remedial measures between Bangladesh and India
  - ✓ Tripartite MoU on establishment of sports facilities at Rajshahi college field and surrounding areas
  
- **'Mitali Express'**
  - ✓ The 'Mitali Express' passenger train was jointly inaugurated by PM Sheikh Hasina.
  - ✓ The two countries have agreed to start a new passenger train service 'Mitali Express' between Dhaka cantonment and New Jalpaiguri on the Chilhati-Haldibari train link.
  
- **India and Bangladesh**
  - ✓ Indian companies - to develop the transmission lines of Bangladesh's first nuclear plant constructed at Rooppur

- ✓ Rooppur Nuclear power plant is an under-construction 2.4 GW electricityproducing nuclear power plant in Bangladesh
- ✓ The Rooppur nuclear power project is the first initiative under the Indo-Russian deal to undertake atomic energy projects in third countries

## CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Startup India International Summit 2021: PM Narendra Modi to address summit on January 16th**
  - ✓ The Startup India International Summit marks five years of the launch of the Startup India initiative. which has played a key role in encouraging the spirit of entrepreneurship across India.
  - ✓ The Startup India International Summit- 'Prarambh' is being organised virtually by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) between January 15-16, 2021.
  - ✓ The summit was inaugurated by Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal who stated that Prarambh' is a beginning of a new journey towards new horizons with hope, encouragement & confidence.
  - ✓ The first day of the Summit has been dedicated to host BIMSTEC Startup Conclave.
- **India-Oman Strategic Consultative Group meeting held**
- **UK government lauds India's efforts during the pandemic:**
  - ✓ While terming India as 'Pharmacy of the world' the UK government lauded the efforts of the Indian government regarding the production of the COVID-19 vaccine.
  - ✓ G7 Summit in June will be addressing shared challenges. It will include beating Coronavirus as well as tackling climate change to ensure that people all over the world can be benefitted from technological change, open trade, and scientific discovery.
  - ✓ G-7 Countries:- France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada.
- **India-Japan Act East Forum**
  - ✓ The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and the Ambassador of Japan to India, Suzuki Satoshi.
  - ✓ During the meeting, India and Japan reviewed the progress of ongoing projects in the North Eastern Region of India.

- ✓ These projects were launched in various areas ranging from the hydropower, connectivity, harnessing of water resource, sustainable development, and skill development.
  - ✓ Both the countries also discussed several on-going new projects under India-Japan bilateral cooperation
- **“Climate Adaptation Summit Online”**
- ✓ The summit was held online and it is being called “CAS Online”.
  - ✓ It highlighted the pioneering solutions of the climate emergency and sustaining momentum through UNFCCC’s COP26.
  - ✓ During the address, PM said that India will target 450 gigawatt of renewable energy capacity by the year 2030
  - ✓ He also said that India is promoting the LED lights and is also saving 38 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year
- **World Sustainable Development Summit 2021 (New Delhi)**
- ✓ The Theme of the summit is ‘Redefining Our Common Future: Safe and Secure Environment for All’.
- **QUAD Countries IUAI**
- ✓ Quad or Asian NATO is an informal strategic forum comprising of Japan, United States, Australia and India.
  - ✓ The grouping held semi-regular summits, military drills and military information exchanges between the member countries
- **‘Maritime India Summit - New Delhi**
- ✓ The PM launched the ‘Sagar Manthan’, the Mercantile Maritime Domain Awareness Centre (MM-DAC) during the inauguration of the Maritime Summit.
  - ✓ The PM also said India will invest \$82 million in the port, shipping and waterways sector by 2030 to make India a major player in the maritime sector.
  - ✓ Sagar Manthan is an information system for enhancing maritime safety, search and rescue capabilities, security and marine environment protection,” the PM said.
- **Global-Bio India-2021**
- ✓ The Global-Bio India event was marked by the participation of more than 5000 delegates, 1000 start-ups and 200 exhibitors involving 24 knowledge sessions



- ✓ Theme- 'Transforming Lives' along with the tagline 'Biosciences to Bio-economy'
- **Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI) - was held from March 9th till 11th, under India's Chairship**
  - ✓ The theme for India's Chairship for 2021 would be 'BRICS @ 15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation, and Consensus'.
  - ✓ During the meeting, India presented the calendar of events for BRICS CGETI 2021
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - held a virtual summit with his Finland counterpart Sanna Marin**
  - ✓ India and Finland agreed to expand cooperation in emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence, 5G/6G, and quantum computing.
  - ✓ They also announced digital partnership in future mobile technologies
- **"Hunar Haat" - is being organised at Kala Academy in Panaji, Goa.**
  - ✓ The Hunar Haat aims to popularise the products of indigenous artistry and crafts across the country
  - ✓ The Hunar Haat is being organised by Union Ministry of Minority Affairs

## DEFENCE

- **Sea Vigil-21: Indian Navy kick starts second edition of coastal defence exercise**
  - ✓ The exercise by the Indian Navy will be undertaken along the entire 7,516 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India.
  - ✓ It will also involve all the 13 coastal states as well as UTs along with other maritime stakeholders, which includes coastal and fishing communities.
- **Women to be appointed as pilots in Army Aviation Corps**
  - ✓ The Chief General of the Indian Army, Manoj Mukund Naravane informed, 2021, that women will be inducted as pilots in the Army Aviation Corps from 2022.
  - ✓ Till now, women have only been part of ground duties in the Army Aviation Corps.

- ✓ The Indian Air Force (IAF) has 10 women fighter pilots while in the Indian Navy women pilots have been flying the Dornier aircraft and area also observers on P81 surveillance aircraft and board helicopters.
  - ✓ Other than the 10 women fighter pilots, IAF also has 111 women pilots who fly choppers and transport planes.
- **India's first indigenous 9mm Machine Pistol jointly developed by Indian Army, DRDO**
- ✓ The machine pistol has been named 'Asmi', which means self-respect, hard work and pride.
  - ✓ DRDO said in a statement that 3D Printing process has been used in designing and prototyping of various parts of the pistol including trigger components made by metal 3D printing.
- **Bhawana Kanth to become first woman fighter pilot to participate in Republic Day parade 2021**
- ✓ Bhawana Kanth is also one of the first women fighter pilots in the Indian Air Force. Kanth, along with Mohana Singh and Avani Chaturvedi, was inducted in IAF in 2016 as the first women fighter pilots.
- **India, French Rafale fighters start Desert Knight wargames**
- ✓ The Indian Air Force on January 20, 2021, started the first major international wargames involving its Rafale fighter jets along with their French counterparts in Jodhpur.
  - ✓ The Exercise Desert Knight-21 is being held at Jodhpur Air Force Station from January 20 to 24.
  - ✓ The French have been participating with Airbase A-330 Multi-Role Tanker Transport, Rafale, A-400M Tactical Transport Aircraft, and approx. 175 personnel.
  - ✓ The Indian Air Force aircraft that have been participating in the exercise include Su-30 MKI, Mirage 2000, AWACS and AEW&C aircraft, Rafale, IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft.
- **AMPHEX -21: Indian Navy conducts Joint Exercise with Indian Army, Air Force**
- ✓ A large-scale tri-service joint amphibious exercise AMPHEX - 21 was conducted in Andaman & Nicobar Islands from January 21-25, 2021.
  - ✓ The exercise tri-service involved the participation of Indian Naval ships, Indian Army troops and different types of aircraft from the Air force.

- ✓ The exercise aimed enhances operational synergy and the joint war fighting capabilities of the three services and to validate India's capabilities to safeguard the territorial integrity of its island territories.
- **Indian Missiles exports**
  - ✓ India - has prepared a list of nations for whom the missiles will be exported in the coming years.
  - ✓ Akash missile can intercept hostile aircraft, helicopters, drones and subsonic cruise missiles at a range of 25-km.
  - ✓ Brah-Mos is now being extended to over 400-km, with India and Russia even planning to test an 800-km variant this year, the export version will be the 290-km one.
  - ✓ The second country on the list is Indonesia, while Vietnam, UAE, Saudi Arabia and South Africa have also shown an interest in acquiring the 290-km range BrahMos missile
- **STARStreak Air Defence System**
  - ✓ Bharat Dynamics Limited, a Government of India enterprise - signed an agreement with Thales, a French Multinational Company recently for mutual collaboration on STARStreak Air Defence System
  - ✓ The STARStreak is a short-range surface-to-air missile that can travel at Mach 3 speed, that is, the speed of the missile is three times the speed of sound
- **'Kavach' military exercise**
  - ✓ The Indian Army - has proposed to conduct a large scale joint military exercise 'Kavach' in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
  - ✓ It will involve Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard, alongwith the participation and deployment of Army's Amphibious Brigade
  - ✓ Along with Kavach Exercise, the Joint Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance (ISR) Exercise will also be held
  - ✓ The Heron Unmanned Vehicle of the Indian Air Force, bought from Israel, has been assigned the task of intelligence and surveillance
  - ✓ Other intelligence tools used by the services includes SATA and Black Hornet
- **Akash-NG (New Generation) Missile**
  - ✓ The missile can intercept the aerial threats from fighter jets, cruise missiles and air-to-surface missiles and is launched to boost the Indian Air Force (IAF) defence system

- ✓ Akash-NG is a medium-range mobile defence system that has been produced jointly by the Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) that developed the Missile Systems
- **Air combat exercise 'Desert Flag'**
  - ✓ India - to take part in a major multinational air combat exercise 'Desert Flag' in the United Arab Emirates with fighter jets and heavy-duty airlift aircraft this month.
  - ✓ This will be the first such exercise to be participated by India in the strategically located Persian Gulf region
  - ✓ The other exercises are the American 'Red Flag' in 2016, the Israeli 'BlueFlag' in 2017 and the Australian 'Pitch Black' wargames in 2018.
- **"Air Independent Propulsion (AIP)"**
  - ✓ The Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) is a marine propulsion technology which allows the non-nuclear submarine to operate without providing access to the atmospheric oxygen by surfacing or by using the snorkel.
  - ✓ The system is being developed by Naval Materials Research Laboratory (NMRL) of DRDO
  - ✓ This technology makes the sub-surface platform more deadly by making it quieter than a nuclear submarine
  - ✓ This is a major development which will make the Indian submarines more silent and lethal.
- **"DUSTLIK II"**
  - ✓ India-Uzbekistan joint military exercise "DUSTLIK II" - commenced on March 10 in the Foreign Training Node Chaubatia at Ranikhet, Uttarakhand.
- **Kalyani Rafael Advanced Systems (KRAS)**
  - ✓ The Kalyani Rafael Advanced Systems (KRAS) - has released the first batch of Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM) kits for Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF) from its facility located near the Hyderabad international airport
  - ✓ The KRAS is a joint venture between the Kalyani Group of India and Rafael Advanced Defence Systems of Israel The KRAS will deliver more than 1000 MRSAM missile kits to India in the coming years
  - ✓ These missile sections will then be sent for future integration to the Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).

➤ **“Pabbi-Antiterror-2021”**

- ✓ India - is yet to decide whether its troops will participate in a multi-nation counter-terrorism exercise “Pabbi-Antiterror-2021” of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
- ✓ The joint exercise will be held at Pakistan’s National Counter Terrorism Centre near the Pabbi town in Nowshera district of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province later this year

➤ **Passex**

- ✓ India and US - kicked off two-day naval exercise ‘PASSEX’ in the Bay of Bengal
- ✓ Indian Navy deployed its warship Shivalik and long-range maritime patrol aircraft P8I in the 'PASSEX' exercise while the US Navy was represented by the USS Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group.

➤ **India - is set to clear a mega indigenous project to build three nuclear powered attack submarines soon**

- ✓ INS Chakra is a nuclear-powered attack submarine presently in use.

➤ **La Perouse**

- ✓ India - to participate in a French naval exercise ‘La Perouse’ in the Bay of Bengal this March

➤ **“Aster X” its 1<sup>st</sup> Military Exercise in Space**

- ✓ France Started its 5- day long Military Exercise in Space to analyse its ability against attacks on its satellites & other defence equipment.
- ✓ Aster X” is the 1<sup>st</sup> Space Military Exercise of France & also the 1<sup>st</sup> among European Countries.
- ✓ The exercise consists of 18 simulated events that are conducted from an operations room.

➤ **Indian Naval Fast Attack Craft, IN FAC T-81, of the Super Dvora MK II**

- ✓ Rear Admiral V Srinivas, Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra Naval Area was the Chief Guest of the event held at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.
- ✓ The 25 meters long vessel with 60 tonnes displacement was built at Goa Shipyard Ltd., in collaboration with M/s Ramta of Israel.

➤ **‘Yudh Abhyas’ in Rajasthan**

- ✓ The ‘Yudh Abhyas’ exercise will be held at the Mahajan Field Firing ranges from February 8 to 21

- ✓ The US contingent for Yudh Abhyas will include a brigade headquarters and a battalion group of around 250 soldiers from a Stryker Brigade Combat Team.
- **Ka - 226T**
  - ✓ The helicopters would be manufactured by India Russia Helicopters Limited (IRHL) – a joint venture between HAL and Russian Helicopters.
  - ✓ The Ka-226T is meant to replace the obsolete Cheetah and Chetak fleet of the Army and Air Force
- **Tropex**
  - ✓ The exercise was participated by the Indian Navy, Marine Police of 13 coastal States and Union Territories and the Coast Guard, besides other stakeholders
  - ✓ It was followed by a large-scale tri-Service joint amphibious exercise called “Amphex-21”
  - ✓ It was conducted in the Andaman and Nicobar islands from Jan 21 to 25.
- **PASSEX military exercise**
  - ✓ The Indian and the Indonesian navies - held the PASSEX military exercise in the Arabian Sea
  - ✓ The exercise focused on enhancing the operational interoperability and the overall cooperation between both the navies
  - ✓ INS Talwar represented the Indian naval ship, while the Indonesian Navy was represented by the multirole corvette KRI Bung Tomo
- **Uttam Radars**
  - ✓ India-made Uttam radars – are to be installed in at least 51% of the 123 Tejas fighters that will be inducted into the Indian Air Force (IAF)
- **118 Arjun Mark-1A main-battle tanks**
  - ✓ The contract for the “improved” Arjun tanks will be the second such mega deal for home-grown weapon systems in recent times
  - ✓ The Kalyani M4 is a multi-role platform, designed for quick mobility in rough terrain and in areas affected by mine and Improved Explosive Devices (IED) threats

## ECONOMICS

- **‘One Nation One Ombudsman’**
  - ✓ The three ombudsman schemes are currently available in the banking, non-bank finance companies and digital transactions.
  - ✓ The e-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme will be rolled out in June 2021
  
- **RBI's Monetary Policy Review:**
  - ✓ Repo rate unchanged at 4%, real GDP growth projected at 10.5 per cent in 2021-22.
  - ✓ The repo rate is kept unchanged at 4 percent and the reverse repo rate at 3.35 percent.
  - ✓ While announcing the policy review the RBI governor Shaktikant Das said that the GDP growth is projected at 10.5 percent in the Financial Year 2021-22.
  
- **“SmartUp Unnati” “Mentoring Programme”**
  - ✓ It will initially target more than 3,000 women entrepreneurs who are associated with the SmartUp programme of the bank.
  - ✓ The SmartUp programme was launched by the HDFC Bank in the year 2018
  - ✓ It is an online mentoring platform which was launched for banking start-ups.
  - ✓ Under this programme, HDFC is working with the state governments, incubators and accelerators to promote entrepreneurship
  
- **(MeitY's) digital payment scorecard**
  - ✓ The SBI has achieved 54 crore transactions on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) platform and has a user base of 31.5 crore.
  - ✓ SBI has also emerged as the largest issuer of debit cards, accounting for over 290 million debit cards with a 30% market share with respect to card spends and 29% share with respect to transaction volume
  - ✓ The bank accounts for around 25% market share by the transaction volume of its mobile banking
  - ✓ Further, the internet banking service of SBI was ranked first in terms of online traffic in the category of banking credit and lending
  
- **GDP growth prediction to 10.1%**
  - ✓ The World Bank - has raised India's GDP growth prediction to 10.1% from 5.4% projected in January for the fiscal year 2021-22

- **The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**
  - ✓ It has projected India's economy to contract by 6.9 per cent in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, is forecast to record a "Stronger Recovery" in 2021 and grow by 5 per cent.
  - ✓ Further, the UNCTAD estimates the global economy to grow by 4.7 per cent in 2021
  
- **India's foreign-exchange reserves surpassed Russia's to become the world's fourth-largest reserve.**
  - ✓ The foreign currency holdings of India stood at \$580.3 billion as of March 5, as per the data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
  - ✓ The reserve of Russia was \$580.1 billion.
  - ✓ Overall, China has the largest reserves, followed by Japan and Switzerland, as on the International Monetary Fund table.

## RANKINGS

- **India Innovation Index 2020:**
  - ✓ Karnataka retained its position as the most innovative major state in the country in the India Innovation Index 2020 released by NITI Aayog on January 20, 2021.
  - ✓ The first edition of the index was released in October 2019.
  - ✓ NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar.

### States:

- ✓ Karnataka scored 42.5, followed by Maharashtra at second place with a score of 38 and Tamil Nadu at third place with 37.91 score. Bihar was ranked the last in the index with 14.5 score.

### North East / Hilly states:

- ✓ Himachal Pradesh topped among the NE/ Hilly states with a score of 25.06, followed by Uttarakhand and Manipur, while Meghalaya was ranked last with 12.15 score.

### Union Territories / City States:

- ✓ Delhi topped among the UT/ City States with a score of 46.60, followed by Chandigarh and Daman & Diu and Lakshadweep came last with 11.71 score.



- **Tesla and SpaceX**
  - ✓ Elon Musk, an entrepreneur behind Tesla and SpaceX - is now the richest person on the planet
  - ✓ As CEO of SpaceX, Musk is also a rival to Bezos, owner of Blue Origin, in the private space race
  
- **Henley Passport Index**
  - ✓ India ranked 85th in the Henley Passport Index, with a score of 58.
  - ✓ The Indian passport ranked higher in both 2020 (84th) and 2019 (82nd).
  - ✓ Japan continues to hold the number one position on the index, with passport holders able to access 191 destinations around the world visa-free.
  
- **Democracy Index 2020**
  - ✓ The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) - released the Democracy Index 2020 along with its report titled "Democracy in sickness and in health?"
  - ✓ The index classified the economies under categories such as flawed democracies, full democracies, hybrid regimes, and authoritarian regimes.
  - ✓ India - 53<sup>rd</sup> position
  - ✓ As per the report, 23 countries are categorized as full democracies, 52 as flawed democracies, 35 countries as hybrid regimes while 57 countries are authoritarian regimes, out of total 167 countries.
  
- **India Skills Report 2021**
  - ✓ Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh - remained the top three states with the highest employable talent, according to the India Skills Report 2021.
  - ✓ Karnataka takes the fourth spot followed by Andhra Pradesh at the fifth position
  - ✓ Bangalore is among the most preferred cities to work for aspiring professionals.
  - ✓ Delhi, Telangana, Gujarat, Rajasthan and West Bengal completes the Top 10 states with employable talent.
  
- **"Economic Freedom Index 2021"**
  - ✓ Singapore - has topped the "Economic Freedom Index 2021" global ranking for the second consecutive year.

- ✓ The index, prepared by the Heritage Foundation, a US Conservative think-tank, featured 184 countries for the period of July 2019 to June 2020.
  - ✓ India has been ranked 121st freest in the 2021 index with a score of 56.5, placed under the category of 'mostly unfree' and is ranked at 26th place out of 40 Asia-Pacific countries
- **Gautam Adani - has gained more wealth than any other person in the world this year, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index**
- ✓ The net worth of Adani has jumped \$16.2 billion to reach \$50 billion in the year 2021
  - ✓ This has made him the year's biggest wealth gainer, beating even Elon Musk, who has overtaken Jeff Bezos in 2021 for the title of worlds richest.
- **India ranks 139th in World Happiness Report 2021**
- MoHUA releases Rankings for Ease of Living Index 2020 & Municipal Performance Index 2020
- ✓ It is the 1<sup>st</sup> time that MPI is being undertaken in India it was launched as an accompanied to the EOL Index.

### Rankings ELI 2020

Ease of Living Index 2020				
Rank	Population million +	Score	Population less than Million	
	City		City	Score
1	Bengaluru (Karnataka)	66.7	Shimla (Himachal Pradesh)	60.9
4	Chennai (Tamil Nadu)	62.61	Salem (Tamil Nadu)	56.4

### Rankings MPI - 2020

Municipal Performance Index 2020				
Rank	Population million +	Score	Population less than Million	
	Municipality		Municipality	Score
1	Indore (Madhya Pradesh)	66.08	Salem (Tamil Nadu)	49.04

## APPOINTMENT

- PM Modi named as next Chairman of Shree Somnath Temple Trust
  - ✓ PM Modi has been appointed as a new Chairman of the Trust which manages the world-famous Somnath temple in Gujarat.
  - ✓ With this decision, Prime Minister Modi has become the second PM to hold the post after the former Prime Minister Morarji Desai.
  - ✓ The post of Somnath Temple Trust's Chairman had fallen vacant after the death of Keshubhai Patel in October 2020.
  
- **Sanjib Banerjee**
  - ✓ Justice Sanjib Banerjee - was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court
  
- **Jayati Ghosh**
  - ✓ Indian development economist Jayati Ghosh
  - ✓ Is among the 20 prominent personalities appointed by the UN to a high-level advisory board on economic and social affairs
  
- **R. S. Sharma - has been appointed recently as the new Chief Executive Officer**
  - ✓ He is also the head of the Empowered Group on Technology and Data Management to combat the Covid-19 and the Covid-19 vaccine delivery technology platform – Co-WIN
  
- **Praveen Sinha - was appointed as the interim chief of CBI**
  
- **Okonjo-Iweala**
  - ✓ Nigerian economist, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala - appointed as the first woman and first African head of the World Trade Organisation (WTO)
  - ✓ Okonjo-Iweala was named as the Director-General by the representatives of the 164 member countries of WTO.
  
- **Vijay Sampla**
  - ✓ Vijay Sampla - was appointed as the Chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes

- **Ajai Malhotra became the 1<sup>st</sup> Indian Chairperson of the Advisory Committee of UNHRC**
  - ✓ Ajai Malhotra has become the first Indian to be elected as the chairperson of the Advisory committee of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).
  - ✓ His 3 - year term on the committee will expire on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- **Indian Boxer, Mary Kom**
  - ✓ She was appointed as the chairperson of the International Boxing Association (AIBA) champions and veterans committee.
- **India's CAG Girish Chandra Murmu Re- appointed as Chairman of UN's panel of External Auditors**

## AWARDS

- **Tamil Nadu government's Anna Medal for gallantry this year.**
  - ✓ J Suresh, a loco pilot from Madurai - to receive the Tamil Nadu government's Anna Medal for gallantry this year
- **Tamil Chemmal Award**
  - ✓ Madurai Kamaraj University (MKU) professor and head of the department of Tamilology, Dr B Sathiyamoorthy - has been selected for the 'Tamil Chemmal' award
- **Director-General K Natarajan**
  - ✓ Coast Guard Director-General K Natarajan - has become the first Coast Guard officer to be awarded the Param Vishisht Seva Medal
- **Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda will be honoured with the SKOCH Challenger Award in a virtual ceremony.**
- **Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2021:**

Young Awardees	Category	State
Prasiddhi Singh	Social Service	Tamil Nadu

- **Darbhanga 'cycle girl' Jyoti Kumari gets PM's award**
- **Padma Awards 2021**

- ✓ President Ram Nath Kovind has approved the conferment of a total of 119 Padma Awards- 7 Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan, and 102 Padma Shri.
- ✓ In 2021, Shinzo Abe, the former Japanese Prime Minister has been honoured with Padma Vibhushan for his major achievements in the field of Public Affairs.
- ✓ In 2021, 29 women are among the Padma recipients. The list also includes 10 individuals from the category of foreigners- OCI, PIO, and NRI and one transgender.

#### **Padma Vibhushan - Tamil Nadu:**

SP Balasubramaniam (Posthumous)	Art
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#### **Padma Shri - Tamil Nadu:**

P. Anitha	Sports
Subbu Arumugam	Art
Solomon Pappaiah	Literature and Education- Journalism
Ms. Pappammal	Others- Agriculture
Bombay Jayashri Ramnath	Art
K C Sivasankar (Posthumous)	Art
Marachi Subburaman	Social work
P Subramanian (Posthumous)	Trade and Industry
Dr. Thiruvengadam Veeraraghavan (Posthumous)	Medicine
Sridhar Vembu	Trade and Industry

#### ➤ **French Award for Indian Physicist**

- ✓ Rohini Godbole from Centre for High Energy Physics (CHEP) at Indian Institute of Science (IISc) - has been awarded the Ordre National du Mérite or the National Order of Merit, considered among the highest distinctions bestowed by France
- ✓ A renowned Indian physicist and academic, Godbole has worked extensively on different aspects of particle phenomenology over the past three decades.

- **Michael and Sheila Held Prize**
  - ✓ Nikhil Srivastava - has been named winner of the prestigious 2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize along with two other mathematicians
- **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - conferred awards to scholars, organisations and media houses that contributed to the development of Tamil language**
  - ✓ Thiruvalluvar Award for 2021 was presented to former Minister Vaigaichelvan, while Thanthai Periyar Award for 2020 was given to A. Tamilmagan Hussain and Annal Ambedkar Award to Varagur A. Arunachalam
  - ✓ Kudiyarasu Janarthanan received the Perarignar Anna Award on behalf of his father Kadambur M.R. Janarthanan, who passed away recently.
  - ✓ S. Devaraj received the Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Award
  - ✓ Mahakavi Bharathiyar Award was conferred on poet Poovai Senguttuvan
  - ✓ Arivumathi alias Mathiyazhagan and V. N. Samy received Pavendhar Bharathidasan Award and Thamizhthendral Thiru. Vi.Ka. Award respectively.
  - ✓ Muthamizhkavalar K.A.P. Viswanathan Award was awarded to V. Sethuramalingam.
  - ✓ These awards consist of a cheque for ₹1 lakh, a sovereign of gold medal, a shawl and a citation
  - ✓ V.G.P. Ulaga Tamil Sangam received the Thamizhthai Award, which carries a cheque for ₹5 lakh, a shield, a shawl and a citation
- **'Prani Mitra' award for 2021**
  - ✓ The co-founder of Blue Cross of India - has been conferred with the 'Prani Mitra' award for 2021 by the Animal Welfare Board of India for his lifetime service to animals.
  - ✓ 'Prani Mitra' is the country's highest award for animal welfare
- **S. Theodore Baskaran - has won the Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award, 2020**
- **Anjali Bhardwaj for a newly instituted International Anticorruption Champions Award**

➤ **International Film Festival Awards 2021**

- ✓ Late Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in the 'Critic's Best Actor' category during the prestigious award ceremony held on Feb 20, 2021.

➤ **Amitabh Bachchan**

- ✓ Bollywood Actor Amitabh Bachchan – to become the first Indian actor to be bestowed with an award by the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF)

➤ **Sahitya Akademi Award - 2020**

- ✓ Mani Shankar Mukhopadhyay, known as Shankar - will be conferred the Sahitya Akademi Award 2020 for his memoir titled 'Eka Eka Ekashi'.
- ✓ In the "Novel Category", Tamil writer Imaiyam has won the award under short stories category for his novel 'Sellatha panam'
- ✓ Subramaniam have won the award for her poetry collection called "When God is a Traveller" in English.
- ✓ Veerappa Moily has been named for his epic poetry called "Sri Bahubali Ahimsa Digvijayam" in Kannada language.

➤ **Gandhi Peace Prize to two statesmen of Asian countries**

- ✓ The 2019 Prize was conferred posthumously on Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman,
- ✓ The 2020 Prize was also conferred posthumously on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, founder of Bangladesh.

➤ **International Ranger Award**

- ✓ Range Officer Mahinder Giri - has become the only ranger from Asia to win the prestigious International Ranger Award.
- ✓ Motichur range of Rajaji Tiger Reserve (RTR) for the past few years
- ✓ The award is announced by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)
- ✓ Vyas Samman-2020 Professor Sharad Pagare
- ✓ Hindi writer Professor Sharad Pagare - has been selected for the prestigious

➤ **Vyas Samman-2020 for his novel 'Patliputra ki Samragi'.**

➤ **67th National Film Awards for 2019 - were announced by the Central government**

S.No	Name	Awards	Film
1	Sanjay Pooran Singh Chauhan	Best Director Award for Hindi film	'Bhattar Hoorain'
2.	Manoj Bajpayee	Best Tamil Film award	'Bhonsle'
3	Kangana Ranaut		'Panga and Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi.'
4	Dhanush		Best Actor for Dhanush
5	Manoj Bajpayee	Best Acting Award for Manoj Bajpayee	'Pinjar' in 2003.
6	Vijay Sethupathi	Best-supporting actor award for Vijay Sethupathi	'Super Deluxe'
7	Pallavi Joshi	best-supporting actress award for Pallavi Joshi	'The Tashkent Files'
8	Sushant Singh	Best feature film in Hindi For Sushant Singh	'Chhichhore'

➤ **67th National Award Best Actor**

S.No	Name	Awards	Film
1	D Imman	Best Music Direction (Songs)	Viswasam
2	R Parthiban	Jury Award Oscar-winning Resul Pookutty Audiography award	'Oththa Seruppu Size 7'
3	Naga Vishal	Best Child Artist award	Karuppu Durai'.
4	Raju Sundaram	Choreographer award	Mahesh Babu's Telugu film Maharishi



- **Maharashtra Bhushan Award.**
  - ✓ Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle - has been selected for the prestigious Maharashtra Bhushan Award
  
- **International Woman of Courage (IWOC) Award - Judith Ravin - honoured Tamil Nadu-based anti-caste activist and human rights defender Gowsalya Shankar**
  - ✓ Gowsalya was U.S. Mission India's nominee for the 2021 U.S. Secretary of State's International Woman of Courage (IWOC) Award.
  
- **CERA Week Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award**
  - ✓ The 39<sup>th</sup> edition of annual CERA week Conference 2021 was held virtually for the first time from March 1-5, 2021 where Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi was conferred with CERA Week Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award. CERA stands for Cambridge Energy Research Associates (CERA)
  - ✓ Themes of Conference: Energy Transition Climate & ESG; Geopolitics, Economics and Markets; Investment and Financing; Technology and Innovation; Mobility and the Future Workforce.
  - ✓ CERA Week conference 2021 was organized by HIS Markit

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

- **“The Little Book of Encouragement” - Dalai Lama**

### PERSONALITIES

- **Colonel B Santosh Babu**

- ✓ On the walls of the National War Memorial in New Delhi
- ✓ The National War Memorial (NWM), which was inaugurated near the majestic India Gate in 2019, honours over 26,000 soldiers who have laid down their lives in wars and operations since Independence.

- **Zoya Agrawal**

- ✓ Nonstop flight between Bengaluru and San Francisco – to have all-women cockpit crew
- ✓ The inaugural flight is scheduled on January 9
- ✓ The airline has rostered four of its highly-experienced women pilots – Captains Zoya Agrawal, Thanmai Papagari, Sonwane Akanksha and Shivani Manhas
- ✓ The four women pilots will fly a Boeing 777-200 (long-range or LR) over the North Pole for the inaugural direct scheduled flight between South India and the US

- **Indian - Amercian Raj Iyer first Chief Information**

- ✓ Indian-American Raj Iyer - has taken over as the first Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the U.S. Army after the Pentagon created the new position in July 2020
- ✓ Arora Akanksha - has announced her candidacy to be its next UN Secretary-General
- ✓ Rashmi became the first Indian woman
- ✓ Rashmi became the first Indian woman to be elected president of the Oxford University Students' Union

- **Arindam Bagchi**

- ✓ Senior diplomat, Arindam Bagchi – is set to be the new spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs

- **‘Energy Swaraj Yatra’**

- ✓ The bus has been built by Dr Chetan Singh Solanki, a professor of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay

- ✓ The “Energy Swaraj Yatra” bus, which runs completely on the solar energy, consists of a complete work-cum-residential unit.
- ✓ Dr Solanki has been travelling on the bus to raise awareness regarding the use of solar power.
- ✓ The Energy Swaraj Yatra began in 2020 and will continue till 2030.

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **The ISRO - released the plan for the decade recently.**
  - ✓ ISRO is to complete its moon mission Chandrayaan-3,
  - ✓ The solar mission Aditya-L1 and first Indian Data Relay Satellite in the next decade 2021- 2030.
  - ✓ The Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre will help developing the Semi Cryogenic Propulsion capability.
  - ✓ The Aditya-L1 mission will become the first Indian scientific expedition to the sun.
- **India’s 1st Testbed TiHAN launched at IIT Hyderabad**
  - ✓ Union Minister of Education, Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ has virtually laid the foundation stone of –TiHAN-IIT Hyderabad, India’s first Test bed for Autonomous Navigation Systems (Terrestrial and Aerial) at IIT Hyderabad.
  - ✓ The Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation Systems (TiHAN) for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Remotely Operated Vehicles at IIT Hyderabad.
- **SpaceX launches 143 satellites on single rocket, creates new world record**
  - ✓ With the launched satellites, Musk’s SpaceX aims at providing near-global broadband internet coverage all over the world by 2021.
  - ✓ A rocket from Elon Musk’s SpaceX has created a new record by launching 143 satellites into space on January 24, 2021.
  - ✓ The Falcon 9 rocket lifted off from the Space Launch Complex 40 at Florida’s Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.
  - ✓ SpaceX, an aerospace company, has also beaten the record of the ISRO - ISRO where it deployed 104 satellites in February 2017 in a single launch.
  - ✓ The reusable rocket launched 143 satellites to space, where 133 were government and commercial spacecraft and 10 were Starlink satellites which are part of the SmallSat Rideshare program of SpaceX.

- **The researchers - have identified the mineralogy of the meteorite that hit Mukundpura village near Jaipur on June 6, 2017**
  - ✓ The bright trail of the meteorite in the sky crashed with a thunderous sound on the early morning of the day
- **Jarosite:**
  - ✓ Maritime mineral jarosite in ice cores extracted from Antarctica
  - ✓ Jarosite is very rarely found on Earth, and it is generally seen in mining waste that has been exposed to air and rain
  - ✓ The discovery supports the theory of presence of yellow-brown mineral jarosite on MARS in a similar manner because the planet is a lot dustier than Antarctica
  - ✓ Jarosite mineral was found on the surface of Mars by the Opportunity rover back in 2004
  - ✓ Jarosite is used in hydrometallurgy to control impurities
- **Japan aerospace agency to launch H3 rocket in 2021**
  - ✓ Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency will launch H3 to pave the way for the next generation of transportation technologies.
- **Wooden Satellites by 2023**
  - ✓ Japanese researchers - are planning to launch wooden satellites by 2023 to avoid the problem of space debris
  - ✓ European Space agency, there are 128 million pieces of debris in the orbit that has the potential to damage 'live' Satellites.
- **Hot Saturn**
  - ✓ For the first time, astronomers at the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre of Astrophysics - have discovered a huge planet with about half the mass of Jupiter without clouds and haze
  - ✓ Named WASP-62b, this planet was first found in 2012 through the Wide Angle Search for Planets (WASP) South survey, but was not studied in detail until now.
- **World's largest radio telescope**
  - ✓ The Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) Council - has approved the setting up of the world's largest radio telescope during its latest meeting
- **Agnikul Cosmos**
  - ✓ IIT-Madras incubated space startup Agnikul Cosmos - said that it has successfully test fired its semi-cryogenic rocket engine Agnilet

- ✓ Private sector for the first time in the last 50 years since the launch of space programme
  - ✓ UNITY sat is a combination of three satellites designed and built by Jeppiaar Institute of Technology, Sriperumbudur, GH Rasoni College of Engineering, Nagpur and Sri Shakthi Institute of Engineering and Technology, Coimbatore.
  - ✓ Further, Chennai-based IIT-M incubated Agnikul Cosmos will be allowed to test its engine at Thiruvananthapuram rocket centre while Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace's engine will be tested at Sriharikota spaceport
  - ✓ Also, MapmyIndia, which builds digital maps and offers GIS services, has approached Isro for high-resolution images
- **Chinese spacecraft 'Tianwen-1'**
    - ✓ The spacecraft will launch a lander which is carrying a 240-kilogram rover in a rapid seven-minute descent. The rover will land at the northern hemisphere of Mars called as Utopia Planitia.
    - ✓ After that, the solar-powered rover will be exploring the Martian surface for 90 days
    - ✓ Tianwen-1 is an interplanetary mission by the China National Space Administration (CNSA)
  - **United Arab Emirates - has made history as the first Arab country to reach the reddish planet, Mars**
  - **The National Informatics Centre (NIC) - has launched a new instant messaging App called Sandes**
  - **Amazonia-1 mission**
    - ✓ Isro - to launch PSLV-C 51 or Amazonia-1 mission on February 28 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh
    - ✓ In this launch, the PSLV-C51 rocket will carry Brazilian satellite Amazonia-1 as primary satellite alongwith 19 other satellites
  - **Chandrayaan-3**
    - ✓ The Chief of the ISRO K Sivan informed that India's third mission to the moon, Chandrayaan-3, to be launched in the year 2022.

➤ **Arctic-monitoring satellite**

- ✓ The Russian Space agency, Roscosmos - has successfully launched its first ever Arctic-monitoring satellite that will monitor the Arctic's climate and environment.
- ✓ Constellation of two Arktika-M satellites has also been designed to monitor the high-latitude areas of the Earth.
- ✓ The satellite will also transmit the overview images of Earth's northern polar region and the adjoining areas every 15-30 minutes.
- ✓ This satellite is one among a series of planned Russian remote-sensing and emergency communications satellites.

➤ **The Mars rover Perseverance - has successfully conducted its first test drive on the Red Planet**

- ✓ Perseverance was launched on July 30, 2020 and landed on the surface of Mars on February 18 on a mission to search for signs of past life on the Red Planet.
- ✓ During its journey, Perseverance will attempt to collect 30 rock and soil samples in sealed tubes to be sent back to Earth in the 2030s for analysis.

➤ **"space hurricane"**

- ✓ The swirling mass of plasma that emits electrons into the ionosphere instead of water is called as "Space Hurricane".
- ✓ The hurricane provides a huge, cyclone-shaped glowing green aurora that can be observed below it.
- ✓ The astronomers have spotted hurricanes in space on Mars, Saturn and Jupiter.

➤ **NISAR**

- ✓ NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) is a joint collaboration for the dual-frequency LBand and S-Band SAR for the earth observation.
- ✓ NISAR is the first satellite mission which will use two different radar frequencies called L-band and S-band.
- ✓ NASA is providing the L-band SAR for the mission, while ISRO is providing the Sband radar, spacecraft bus, launch vehicle and other launch services associated with the mission.
- ✓ S-band Synthetic Aperture Radar - (SAR)
- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) - develops an S-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) and shipped it to NASA for the world's first twin-radar satellite mission

- **Fugaku super computer**
  - ✓ The Japanese scientific research institute called RIKEN and Fujitsu started developing the “Fugaku” six years ago
  - ✓ The supercomputer has topped the top-500 list, which is a “Supercomputer benchmark index”, for the second year in line.
  - ✓ Fugaku has been named after an alternative name for Mount Fuji.
  
- **ISRO - launched a sounding rocket (Rh - 560) from Satish Dhawan Space centre Sriharikota**
  - ✓ The rocket will study altitudinal variations in the neutral winds and plasma dynamics.
  
- **GISAT-1**
  - ✓ ISRO had recently announced that it has planned to launch an earth observation satellite GISAT-1 by the “GSLV-F10 rocket” from Sriharikota spaceport, which will provide the near real-time images of borders and monitoring of natural disasters
  - ✓ Earlier, in February 2021, Isro had launched Amazonia-1 of Brazil along with the 18 co-passenger satellites with the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C51) from Sriharikota spaceport
  - ✓ This is also the first commercial mission of New Space India Limited (NSIL) which is undertaking this mission with the help of Spaceflight Inc. of United States of America (USA).
  
- **Mosquito protein AEG12**
  - ✓ A mosquito protein, called AEG12 - exhibits properties to inhibit the family of viruses that cause yellow fever, dengue, West Nile, and Zika, and also weakly inhibits coronaviruses
  
- **“TraceBioMe Project”**
  - ✓ The project, spanning 90 days involving 30 scientists, will be done onboard the research vessel RV Sindhu Sadhana
  - ✓ The expedition will be covering over 9,000 nautical miles from Visakhapatnam to Goa.
  - ✓ The data generated under the project will help in achieving the SDG14 goals, which aim at conserving and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.

➤ **NCCR - Coral bleaching**

- ✓ NCCR, which monitors the country's coastal water quality, has a field office in Mandapam, from where a research team monitors 128 coral species in the 21 islands at Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay region.

➤ **Methane Emissions Linked to New coal Mines**

- ✓ The countries with the highest amount of methane emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e<sub>20</sub>) from proposed coal mines are China (572 Million tonnes), Australia (233 Mt), Russia (125 Mt), India (45 Mt), South Africa (34 Mt), the US (28 Mt), and Canada (17 Mt).
- ✓ The report noted that the proposed coal mines in China, the US, Turkey, Poland, and Uzbekistan could emit 40-50% of their greenhouse gas emissions in the form of methane, making them among the gassiest proposed coal mines in the world.
- ✓ During mining, fractured coal seams and surrounding strata emit methane into the atmosphere.

**Methane Emissions Llinked to New Coal Mines**

No. of proposed coal mines Globally - 432	Number in India - 52	Global methane emission from proposed coal mines - 1,135 Mt*.
Top Emitters and Emission (IN MT*)		
S.No	Country	Million Tonnes
1	China	572
2	Australia	233
3	Russia	125
4	India	45
5	South Africa	34
6	US	28
7	Canada	17

➤ **FO32, the largest asteroid to pass by Earth this year**

- ✓ According to NASA, the next time 2001 FO32 will come close to Earth by 2052.

➤ **Tsunami Buoy by NIOT(National Institute of Ocean Technology)**

- ✓ CHATUR - Continuously Harming Submerged Autonomous Tsunami Underwater System



- ✓ The new Tsunami buoy will serve as an alternative to the existing surface buoys that are often damaged by man and nature.
- **Nacahuba Sinhala**
  - ✓ A butterfly species believed to be a native of Sri Lanka - has been discovered in the Western Ghats.
  - ✓ The species discovered in the Agasthiyarmalai Biosphere reserve is known as Nacaduba sinhala ramaswamii and commonly named Ramaswami's Six Lineblue.
  - ✓ The new butterfly species was discovered by Ramasamy S R K, a researcher
- **UNITY satellite**
  - ✓ The UNITYsat is designed and built by three colleges -- Sri Shakthi Institute of Engineering and Technology in Coimbatore, Jeppiar Institute of Technology in Sriperumbudur and GH Raison College of Engineering in Nagpur
- **New Asteroids**
  - ✓ The International Astronomical Union (IAU) confirmed the discovery of 18 new Asteroids by Indian Students as part of the International Asteroid Discovery Project conducted by STEM & space, an organization which works towards learning of astronomy and space science in India.

## SPORTS

- **Novak Djokovic and Naomi Osaka wins Australian Open 2021 Tennis Championship**
- **Odisha to host memorable 2023 Hockey World Cup**
  - ✓ Hockey India and the Odisha government are gearing up to host the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup in 2023 for a record fourth time.
- **Khelo India Sports School.**
  - ✓ The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Mr Kiren Rijiju - recently launched the Assam Rifles Public School as a Khelo India Sports School.
  - ✓ The Shillong-based Assam Rifles Public School will be the first Khelo India Sports School in the North East

- **World Chess Body Fide - conferred Kerala Grandmaster**
  - ✓ Nihal Sarin with its Gazprom Brilliancy Prize for playing the best game at the World Youth and Cadets Rapid Championships
- **Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, 2021 - Won by Tamilnadu**
- **Joe Root 100 in 100<sup>th</sup> Test**
  - ✓ England cricket team captain Joe Root - became the third English player to score a century in his 100th Test and joined an exclusive list of players on February 5
  - ✓ He achieved the rare feat on the first day of the first Test between India and England played at Chepauk, Chennai
- **Priyanka Goswami of Uttar Pradesh**
  - ✓ She created a new national record in the 20-km walk at the 8th open national and 4th international race walking championship in Ranchi
- **Naomi Osaka**
  - ✓ The 23-year-old Osaka becomes only the third player after Monica Seles and Roger Federer to win their first four Major finals
  - ✓ Osaka, the world's top-earning female athlete, defeated American, Jennifer Brady to win the title
- **Motera Stadium, in Ahmedabad on February 24**
  - ✓ Motera stadium was to be renamed as the Narendra Modi Stadium after the inauguration
  - ✓ The Test, which will be the first-ever international match at the venue, will be played in front of around 50,000 spectators at the newly-built stadium
  - ✓ Spread over 63 acres land, the stadium has seating capacity for 1,32,000 spectators surpassing Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) which till now had the largest capacity of 90,000 spectators
- **Ravichandran Ashwin - claimed 400 test wickets**
  - ✓ Ravichandran Ashwin - claimed 400 test wickets and became the second faster bowler to reach the milestone, after Sri Lankan Muttiah Muralitharan
  - ✓ The Tamil Nadu State Election Commission roped him in to catch the attention of citizens to create electoral awareness, where Ashwin advised voters to check whether their names are in the electoral roll

- **Khelo India Winter Games - began at Gulmarg in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir on February**
- **Novak Djokovic - equalled Roger Federer's all-time record for most weeks as ATP world No. 1**
  - ✓ Djokovic is holding the top spot continuously for the 310th week.
  - ✓ Djokovic's ninth Australian Open title last month guaranteed that he would surpass Federer's record on March 8.
- **India's Mithali Raj - has become the second woman cricketer after England's Charlotte Edwards to score 10,000 runs in international cricket**
  - ✓ Mithali became the first Indian woman cricketer to achieve the mark
  - ✓ Mithali has reached 10,001 runs at an average of 46.73 in 291 innings (311 matches), while Edwards has scored 10,273 runs (avg. 37.49) in 316 innings (309 matches).
  - ✓ She has been the captain of the Indian women's cricket team since 2005 and is the only female cricketer who have captained in more than one ICC ODI World Cup finals during the years 2005 and 2017.
- **Chennai-based fencer and eight-time National fencing champion Bhavani Devi - became the first Indian fencer to qualify for the Olympics.**
  - ✓ Bhavani is supported by the GoSports Foundation under the Rahul Dravid Athlete Mentorship Programme
- **Tamil Nadu's S Dhanalakshmi - won the most anticipated women's 100m final with a timing of 11.39 seconds**
  - ✓ Which featured prominent names such as Dutee Chand and Hima Das
  - ✓ The 22-year-old from Trichy beat seasoned campaigner Dutee – who was second with 11.58 seconds.
  - ✓ Dhanalakshmi hails from the Gundur village, which is about 10 km from Trichy.
  - ✓ Despite the win in the event, Dhanalakshmi couldn't cross the Olympic qualification mark of 11.15 seconds. She made the finals as the fastest runner with a timing of 11.38 seconds
- **Tamil Nadu's C Kanimozhi - won the women's 100m hurdles at the 24th Federation Cup athletics meet in Patiala**
  - ✓ The 23-year-old from Chennai clocked 13.63 seconds to win the race
  - ✓ Telangana's A Nandini came second with a timing of 13.88 seconds while Tamil Nadu's Nithya Ramraj came third in 14.08 seconds.

- ✓ Kanimozhi finished sixth in the women's 100m final held on March 16, which was won by S Dhanalakshmi of Tamil Nadu
- **Tamil Nadu's S Dhanalakshmi - qualified for the women's 200m final after breaking legendary athlete PT Usha's meet record of 23.26 seconds set in Chennai back in 1998.**
  - ✓ Dhanalakshmi won the race at 23.30 seconds at the ongoing Federation Cup National athletics event in Patiala
- **Four Indian Table Tennis players**
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu's G Sathiyam and Sharath Kamal qualified for the Olympics in the men's singles category
- **Sports Tokyo Olympic berth**
  - ✓ Kamalpreet Kaur - booked her Tokyo Olympics berth with a national record of 65.06m on the final day of Federation Cup in Patiala
  - ✓ Hima Das of Assam won the women's 200m race with a new meet record time of 23.21 seconds
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu's S Dhanalakshmi, who stunned Hima Das in 100m sprint, had to settle for the silver with a time of 23.39 seconds.
  - ✓ Archana Suseendran of Tamil Nadu finished third with 23.60s.
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu's Dharun Ayyasamy and Vithya Ramraj won men and women's 400m hurdles with a timing of 50.16 and 59.59 seconds.
- **Yashaswini Singh Deswal**
  - ✓ India's Yashaswini Singh Deswal - won the gold medal in the women's 10m air pistol in the ISSF Combined shooting World Cup at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi.
- **India's Sharath Kamal and Manika Batra - sealed a berth to Tokyo Olympics after winning the mixed doubles finals of the Asian Olympic qualifiers in Doha**
- **Coimbatore shooter P Shri Nivetha - partnered with Manu Bhaker and Yashaswini to win the team gold in the women's 10m air pistol event at the ISSF World Cup in New Delhi**
  - ✓ India's Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Deepak Kumar and Pankaj Kumar combined to win the silver medal in the men's team air rifle event
  - ✓ In the men's 10m air pistol team, India's Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma and Shahzar Rizvi bagged gold, comfortably beating Vietnam in the final.

- ✓ Further, on March 21, Ganemat Singh Sekhon scripted history by clinching a first ever World Cup medal for India in women's skeet
- **The 23-year-old Madhya Pradesh shooter, Chinki Yadav - won gold in the 25m sports pistol final at the shooting ISSF World Cup in New Delhi**
- **ISSF World Cup in Delhi**
  - ✓ India - has moved to the 10th position in the overall ranking of medalwinning countries in Shooting World Cups, since the event began in 1986.

## OBITUARY

- **'Bull' Kumar**
  - ✓ Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar (Retd.) (87 years)
  - ✓ Col Kumar, who was awarded the Kirti Chakra, Padma Shri, Arjun award and the McGregor medal, carried out multiple expeditions in the Siachen glacier area in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
- **Classical vocalist**
  - ✓ Classical singer Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan (89 years)
- **Dr V Shanta (94 years) - passed away on January 19 in Chennai**
  - ✓ She was then selected to the post of assistant surgeon at the Women and Children's Hospital, Madras by the Madras Public Service Commission.
  - ✓ Dr Shanta joined Adyar Cancer Institute as a resident medical officer in 1955, a year after it was founded by Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy, one of the first women graduates of medicine in India and a legislator.
  - ✓ The Institute was established by the Women's Indian Association (WIA) Cancer Relief Fund with just two doctors, two nurses and 12 beds
  - ✓ Dr. Shanta was on the World Health Organisation Advisory Committee on Cancer till March 2005.
- **D Pandian - passed away in Chennai on February**
  - ✓ A multifaceted personality, the former Lok Sabha MP and CPI state secretary was a skilled orator, writer and trade union leader, who was active in state and national politics

- ✓ He had written more than 30 books on various topics, besides hundreds of articles in many magazines
  - ✓ P Jeevanantham, Tamilnadu Kalai Ilakkiya Perumandram (Tamilnadu Art and Literature Federation) in 1961, Pandian was elected its first general secretary
  - ✓ Pandian won the North Chennai Lok Sabha constituency for two terms, 1989-1991 and 1991-1996
  - ✓ He was also editor of Janasakthi, the party's daily newspaper.
  - ✓ He served as a member of the CPI national council till the end.
- **R Krishnamurthy, Veteran editor and eminent epigraphist**
- ✓ Krishnamurthy studied inscriptions in Vatteluttu in different parts of the state and also discovered a coin with the name Peruvaluthi, a Sangam-age Pandya king, engraved in Tamil-Brahmi script in Madurai
  - ✓ This helped in changing the perception that Pandya kings were chieftains who did not mint coins and used Mauryan coins and confirmed the barter system prevalent in those days
  - ✓ Krishnamurthy published many papers and books on Tamil script, epigraphy and numismatics and has won many accolades for his research.

## REPORT

- **Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) index 50000-mark:**
- ✓ On January 21, the 30-scrip benchmark BSE index, Sensex crossed the historic 50000-mark for the first time ever to reach a lifetime high at 50,181 points.
- **Indian Sunderbans**
- ✓ The Indian Sunderbans - is home to 428 species of birds, as per a recent publication of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).
  - ✓ The publication, Birds of the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve, was released recently by the ZSI
- **India's Position downgraded to 'Partly Free' in Freedom in the World 2021 report**
- ✓ According to the 'Freedom in the world 2021: Democracy under Siege' released by US based Think Tank Freedom house, India has scored 67 and its position has been downgraded to 'partly Free' from 'Free' in 2020.
  - ✓ India's ranking has also fallen to 88 (from 83) out of 211 countries.

- ✓ The 'most free Countries' with a score of 100 are Finland, Norway & Sweden.
- ✓ Least free Countries with a score of 1 are Tibet & Syria.

## IMPORTANT DAY

- **World Braille Day on Jan 04<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ World Braille Day is celebrated since 2019, is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full consideration of the human rights of blind and partially sighted people.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on Jan 09<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ The theme of 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2021 is "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat".
  - ✓ On January 9, 1915, Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa.
  - ✓ To mark this day of *Bapu's* return, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas or Non-Resident Indian Day is celebrated.
- **National Youth Day on Jan 12<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme for 2021: 'YUVAAH - Utsah Naye Bharat Ka'
  - ✓ National Youth Day is held every year on 12<sup>th</sup> January to observe the **birth anniversary** of **Swami Vivekananda**.
- **Indian Army Day on 15<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ On 15 January 2021, India celebrated its 73rd Indian Army Day in New Delhi.
  - ✓ Indian Army Day is observed every year on January 15 to mark the day when Lt Gen K M Cariappa took over as the commander-in-chief of the Indian Army in 1949 from the last British Commander-in-Chief of India, General Francis Butcher.
- **National Road Safety Month on Jan 18<sup>th</sup> to Feb 17<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme of this year is, "Sadak Suraksha- Jeevan Raksha".
  - ✓ This year instead of "Road, Safety Week", a month-long campaign "National Road Safety Month" will be observed from 18th January 2021 to 17th February 2021.

- **Parakram Diwas on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>**
  - ✓ The centre has decided to celebrate Netaji's birth anniversary on January 23<sup>rd</sup> every year as Parakram Diwas to inspire people of the country, especially the youth, to act with fortitude when faced with adversity.
  - ✓ The centre has constituted a high-level committee under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to decide the programmes and to supervise and guide the commemoration.
  
- **National Girl Child Day on Jan 24<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ The first National Girl Child Day was celebrated in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
  - ✓ The day is celebrated to raise awareness among people about inequalities, discrimination, exploitation faced by the girls in society
  - ✓ The scheme Dheeyan Di Lohri has also been launched this year by the State this year
  
- **National Voters' Day on Jan 25<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme of NVD 2021:- Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed'.
  - ✓ India observes - National Voters'Day every year on January 25 to encourage more young voters to take part in the political process.
  - ✓ 2021 marks the 11<sup>th</sup> National Voters'Day (NVD).
  - ✓ The day has been started from January 25, 2011, to mark the Foundation day of Election Commission of India (ECI), which was established on 25th January 1950.
  
- **National Tourism Day on Jan 25<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme:- Dekho Apna Desh
  - ✓ National Tourism Day is celebrated on January 25 every year across the country.
  - ✓ The day's importance is plain and simple. It is to highlight the prominence of tourism in the country and how it impacts India's economic prospects.
  
- **The International Customs Day (ICD) on 26<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme:- "Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience for a sustainable supply chain".
  
- **Martyrs' Day (Shaheed Diwas) on Jan 30**



- ✓ In India, mainly on 2 dates, Martyr's Day or Shaheed Diwas is observed.
  - ✓ January 30 is the death anniversary of one of the founding fathers of the Indian republic, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (remembered as Mahatma Gandhi and Bapu).
  - ✓ 23rd March also Martyr's Day is celebrated to pay tribute to three extraordinary revolutionaries of India who were hanged to death by the British namely Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar.
- **World Leprosy Day on Jan 31<sup>st</sup>**
    - ✓ Theme: "Beat Leprosy, End Stigma and advocate for Mental Wellbeing".
    - ✓ The World Leprosy Day is observed every year on the last Sunday of January
    - ✓ The observance of the Day aims to raise awareness about leprosy and seeks to highlight the importance of eradicating the disease
  - **Indian Coast Guard Day on Feb 1<sup>st</sup>**
    - ✓ 1st Feb 2021 marks the 45<sup>th</sup> Raising day of the ICG, Operating under the defence ministry.
    - ✓ ICG is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest coast guard in the world.
  - **World Wetlands Day on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>**
    - ✓ This year's theme for World Wetlands Day 'Wetlands and Water,'
  - **World Cancer Day on Feb 4<sup>th</sup>**
    - ✓ 2021 theme - I am and I will
  - **International Day of Women and Girls in Science - February 11**
    - ✓ Theme 2021 - "Women Scientists at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19"
  - **World Day of Social Justice on Feb 20<sup>th</sup>**
    - ✓ Theme, "A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy."
    - ✓ This day tackle issues poverty, exclusion and unemployment.
  - **International Mother Language Day on Feb 21<sup>st</sup>**
    - ✓ Theme: "fostering multilingualism for inclusion in education and society."

- **National Science Day on Feb 28<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme: 'Future of STI (Science, Technology and Innovations): Impacts on Education, Skills, and Work'.
- **World Civil Defence Day - March 1<sup>st</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme - "Strong Civil Protection to Preserve the National Economy".
- **World Wildlife Day - March 3<sup>rd</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme - "Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet"
- **National Safety Day - March 4<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme - "Sadak Suraksha" (Road safety)
- **3rd Jan Aushadhi Diwas celebrations - March 1 to 7, 2021**
  - ✓ The 'Jan Aushadhi Scheme' was renamed as the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Yojana' (PMJAY) in September 2015.
- **Women's History Month - March 2021**
  - ✓ Theme - "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced".
- **International Women's Day - March 08<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme - "Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world"
- **World Consumer Rights Day - March 15<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme - 'Tackle Plastic Pollution'.
- **National Vaccination Day - March 16<sup>th</sup>**
  - ✓ It aims to highlight the importance of vaccination.
- **World Sparrow Day - March 20**
  - ✓ The Theme of 2021 World Sparrow Day "I Love Sparrows".
- **International Day of Forests - March 21<sup>st</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme - "Forest Restoration: a path to recovery and well-being."
- **World Water Day - March 22**
  - ✓ Theme - 'Valuing Water'
- **World Meteorological Day - March 23<sup>rd</sup>**
  - ✓ Theme - "The Ocean, Our Climate and Weather."

➤ **Shaheed Diwas Observed on March 23**

- ✓ Every year March 23 is observed as Martyrs Day (Shaheed Diwas or Sarvodaya Day) to pay tribute on the death anniversary of the freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru, who laid their lives for the freedom of India.

➤ **World Tuberculosis Day - March 24**

- ✓ Theme - "The Clock is Ticking"

