



pravahini

# Weekly Compendium

SUCCESS MANTRA (GTB Nagar)

# **PREFACE**

It gives us great pleasure to release the monthly edition of the PRAVAHINI - Monthly e-Compendium & Weekly e-Periodicals of Current Affairs. The magazine's members have shown considerable cooperation as well as devotion. We at successmantra.in work tirelessly to create this magazine and bring it to you with a great sense of gratitude.

The PRAVAHINI January-2022 eBook covers the current events that happened in the month of January. Current Affairs is a crucial component of any competitive exams including CLAT, AILET, DU-LLB, HM, CAT, IAS, PCS, SSC, Banking, MBA and various other competitive examinations.

Current Affairs play the bigger role in many competitive and government exams. It holds the power of making or breaking your chance of success. Therefore, the candidates should cover the Current Affairs thoroughly and smartly.

The PRAVAHINI January-2022 eBook is divided into different sections keeping in mind the need of various exams. The sections covered namely International, National, Economy, Ecology and Environment, Science & Technology, Legal Affairs, Sports, States News Makers and few others.

We would also be pleased to receive any suggestion that could assist us with the upcoming editions.

Success Mantra (GTB Nagar, Delhi)

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## Our Goal

Our goal at Success Mantra is to provide Quality education at rational price and thereby to create an environment that guides students towards the path of the success. Along with designing the curriculum and delivering the lectures, we work upon the ways the students think and approach problems asked.

*B.S. Shanti*



Success Mantra (Delhi) is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out, for your accomplishment. Delhi, GTB Nagar, branch of SUCCESS MANTRA Coaching is considered as the paramount choice of Law and Management aspirants, across country. Because, at the end of the day, it is our results which speak !

Since a decade, we have delivered thousands of 'Gems Students' to the nation and persistent in doing so. It is the platform where student's ideology is developed and their dreams take the face of reality. This act is splendidly demonstrable on our result chart of applicable courses. Students from numerous junctions of India come to GTB Nagar to avail best coaching classes at rational price. The vision, of making the quality education accessible to all, is furthermore augmented by the launch of EASE VIDYA Mobile application.

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# NATIONAL AFFAIRS

## IT MINISTER LAUNCHED INDIA'S SEMICONDUCTOR MISSION



**Information Technology Minister, Ashwini Vaishnaw,** launched the India Semiconductor Mission on December 29, 2021.

Under the scheme, interested companies which seek to tap the

**Rs 76,000-crore** incentives earmarked by the Central government for developing semiconductors and displaying the manufacturing ecosystem in **India will be able to start applying for it from January 1, 2022.**

A portal for the scheme has been prepared in order to receive the applications.

### About India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

ISM is a specialized and independent business division of **Digital India Corporation.**

The mission has been set up with the objective of **building a vibrant semiconductor besides displaying the ecosystem** in order for India to emerge as a global hub in electronics manufacturing and design.

It is authorized to negotiate with applicants under semiconductor fab scheme and display fab scheme.

It has also been given autonomy to decide appropriate technology mix, node generation, applications, capacity etc. The scheme was launched with the aim of attracting large investments in manufacturing **OLED-based display panels or TFT LCD.**

**Background:** This scheme was notified by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on December 21, 2021.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION IN FIVE STATES



The Election Commission of India recently announced the election dates of five states. They are **Punjab, Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Uttarakhand.**

The **Assembly Elections 2022** in these states are to be held in seven phases. In Uttar Pradesh, the elections are to be held in seven phases.

In Manipur, it is to be held in two phases. In **Goa, Uttarakhand and Punjab**, the assembly elections are to be held in a single phase.

**Parties in Power:** BJP is in power in all the five states except Punjab. The Congress party is in power in Punjab.

**Elections in India:** There are four major types of elections in India. They are Lok Sabha election, Rajya Sabha election, State Election and By Election.

There are also elections conducted for **state legislative councils, local governance bodies** (panchayat and municipal bodies).

### State Elections

The **State Elections are also called Vidhan Sabha Elections.**

The state elections are conducted by the State Election Commission.

The SEC operates under the supervision of the Central Election Commission.

The **concept of SEC** was introduced by the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments.

**Article 324** gives powers to the election commission to conduct elections at central and state level.

## MAJOR DHYAN CHAND SPORTS UNIVERSITY

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University in Meerut.**

The University will be established at Salawa and Kaili villages of Sardhana town in Meerut at an estimated cost of about 700 Crore rupees.



**The University will have the capacity of training 1080 sports persons** including 540 female and 540 male sportspersons.

**About the University:** The Sports University will be equipped with modern and state-of-the-art sports infrastructure including synthetic Hockey ground, Football ground, Basketball, Volleyball, Handball, Kabaddi ground, Lawn tennis court, Gymnasium hall, Synthetic running stadium, **Swimming pool, Multipurpose hall, and a Cycling Velodrome.**

**It will also house facilities for Shooting, Squash, Gymnastics, Weightlifting, Archery, Canoeing, and Kayaking,** among other facilities with the capacity of training.

## EDUCATION MINISTER LAUNCHED NEAT 3.0

**Union Minister of Education, Dharmendra Pradhan has launched National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT 3.0),** and regional language textbooks prescribed by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

NEAT 3.0 aims to provide the best-developed ed-tech solutions and courses to students on a single platform. **It will**

be beneficial especially among the economically disadvantaged students.



It is a Public-Private Partnership model between the Government (through its implementing agency AICTE) and the Education Technology companies.

58 global and Indian ed-tech startup companies have come together for this solution and are offering 100 courses and e-resources to enhance learning outcomes, develop employable skills as well as overcome learning loss.

The collaboration of global ed-tech companies and Indian start-ups by way of NEAT will help to build on the digital education bedrock of India.

## ONE NATION - ONE GRID - ONE FREQUENCY

**PowerGrid Corporation Limited** celebrated the anniversary of the achievement of “One Nation One Grid”, as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

On this occasion, **Free health check-up and medical camps were organized across 70 locations.**

### History of National Grid in India

In India, Grid management started in the sixties on a regional basis. Initially, grids were interconnected to form a regional grid. Following this, India was divided into 5 regions on the basis of grid-



**Northern Grid  
Eastern Grid  
Western Grid  
North Eastern Grid and  
Southern region.**

**The North Eastern and Eastern Grid were connected in October 1991. Western Grid and North Eastern Grid**

**were interconnected in March 2003. In 2006, North and East grids were interconnected.**

Thus, 4 regional grids **Northern, Eastern, Western and North Eastern grids were interconnected to form a central grid operating at one frequency.**

The Southern Region was connected to the Central Grid in 2013, with the commissioning of the 765kV Raichur-Sholapur Transmission line.

With this, ‘ONE NATION’-‘ONE GRID’-‘ONE FREQUENCY’ objective was achieved.

Synchronization of all regional grids will help in utilizing the natural resources optimally, by transferring Power from Resource centric regions to Load centric regions.

It will also lead to the establishment of a vibrant Electricity market facilitating trading of power in India.

## Power Grid Corporation of India Limited

**Power Grid** is an Indian statutory corporation, working under the parent head of the Ministry of Power.

**It is headquartered in Gurugram.** The organization engages mainly in transmission of bulk power across India. Power Grid transmits around 50% of the total power generated in India.

## 50TH STATEHOOD DAY OF MANIPUR, TRIPURA & MEGHALAYA

Every year, the states of **Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura** celebrate their **statehood day** on January 21. These states were formed under the North Eastern Region (Reorganization) Act, 1971.



The princely states of **Manipur and Tripura** were joined with India in 1949. They were then granted union territory status.

In 1972, **Meghalaya and Tripura were granted complete statehood.** The states were formed under the North Eastern Region (Re-organization) Act, 1971.

**Formation:** In 1947, the north eastern region of India comprised Assam plains, North Eastern Frontier Tracts and hill districts.

Later in 1949, the princely states merged with India. **They were made as union territories.** The state of Nagaland was formed in 1963.

In 1969, the **Assam Reorganization (Meghalaya) Act was enacted.** Under the act, Meghalaya was carved out of Assam and was made an autonomous state. This was done **under the sixth schedule of the Indian constitution.**

In 1972, the **North Eastern Reorganization Act was enacted.** It granted full statehood to Meghalaya and Tripura. Also, under the act, the NEFA and Mizo hills of Assam were made the union territories.

The **Mizo Accord was signed in 1986.** The state of Mizoram was created in 1987. In 1987, NEFA, that is, Arunachal Pradesh was granted full statehood.

**Tripura: The Hindu Bengali people are the major ethno – linguistic people in Tripura.** 30% of the Tripura population is made of scheduled tribes.

**Kokborok is the major ethnic language of Tripura.** Around 19 tribes speak the language. Climate of Tripura is tropical savannah.

**Manipur:** The other names of Manipur are Sanaleibak and Kangleipak. Manipur holds three million populations. This includes Kuki, Meetei, Pangal and Naga.

In 1949, the **Maharaja of Manipur Budhachandra signed the Treaty of Accession and merged Manipur with India**. The main language of Manipur is Meiteilon. It is also called Manipuri. They also speak Sino – Tibetan languages.

**Meghalaya: Meghalaya means “Abode of Clouds”.** The districts of Assam namely Garo, Khasi and Jaintia hills joined together to form Meghalaya. 70% of the state is covered by forest. The state is the wettest region in India

## ASSAM-MEGHALAYA BORDER DISPUTE



**Ahead of Meghalaya’s 50th Statehood Day celebration on 21st January**, the Home Minister is expected to seal the final agreement to end the dispute in six areas of the Assam-Meghalaya boundary.

**Assam and Meghalaya share an 885-km-long border.** As of now, there are 12 points of dispute along their borders.

**The Assam-Meghalaya border dispute are the areas of Upper Tarabari, Gazang reserve forest, Hahim, Langpih, Borduar, Boklapara, Nongwah, Matamur, Khanapara-Pilangkata, Deshdemoreah Block I and Block II, Khanduli and Retacherra.**

Meghalaya was carved out of Assam under **the Assam Reorganisation Act, 1971**, a law that it challenged, leading to disputes.

**A major point of contention between Assam and Meghalaya is the district of Langpih in West Garo Hills bordering the Kamrup district of Assam.**

**Langpih was part of the Kamrup district during the British colonial period but post-Independence, it became part of the Garo Hills and Meghalaya.**

**Assam considers it to be part of the Mikir Hills in Assam.** Meghalaya has questioned Blocks I and II of the Mikir Hills - now Karbi Anglong region - being part of Assam.

Meghalaya says these were parts of erstwhile **United Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts.**

### Assam and Border Issues:

The states of the Northeast were largely carved out of Assam, which has border disputes with several states. **Assam's border disputes with Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland are pending in the Supreme Court.**

**Assam's border disputes with Mizoram are currently in the phase of resolution through negotiations.**

## NATIONAL TECHNICAL TEXTILES MISSION

Recently, the **Ministry of Textiles cleared 20 strategic research projects worth Rs 30 crores** in the areas of Specialty fibers and Geotextiles under the Programme ‘**National Technical Textiles Mission.**’

Technical textiles are functional fabrics that have applications across various industries including automobiles, civil engineering and construction, agriculture, healthcare, industrial safety, personal protection etc.

**Technical Textile products derive their demand from development and industrialization in a country.**

Based on usage, there are 12 technical textile segments: **Agrotech, Meditech, Buildtech, Mobitech, Clothtech, Oekotech, Geotech, Packtech, Homotech, Protech, Indutech and Sportech.**

For example, ‘**mobitech**’ refers to **products in vehicles** such as seat belts and airbags, airplane seats; **geotech**, which is incidentally the fastest growing sub-segment, used to hold back soil, etc.

**It was approved in 2020 by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** with the aim to position the country as a global leader in technical textiles and increase the use of technical textiles in the domestic market.

It aims at taking the domestic market size from **USD 40 billion to USD 50 billion by 2024.**

**Ministry: A Mission Directorate is operational in the Ministry of Textiles.**

## SC EXPANDED MEANING OF VULNERABLE WITNESSES

Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) expanded the meaning of vulnerable witnesses to also include among others **sexual assault victims, those with mental illness and people with speech or hearing impairment.**

**The SC referred to a verdict of 1996 in which it had passed similar directions, then in 2004 and in 2017**, when it had asked all the High Courts of the country to adopt the guidelines prepared by the Delhi High Court in 2017 for vulnerable witnesses.

**Vulnerable Witnesses: Vulnerable witnesses will not be limited to mean only child witnesses.** It will also include

Age-neutral victims of sexual assault.

Gender-neutral victims of sexual assault, under section 377 IPC (unnatural offences).

**Witnesses suffering from mental illness as defined in Mental Healthcare Act, 2017.** Witnesses with threat perception and any speech or hearing impaired individual or person suffering from any other disability.





**Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre (VWDC):** The SC directed that all High Court's (HC) adopt and notify a Vulnerable Witness Deposition Centre (VWDC) scheme within a period of two months.

**VWDC will provide a safe and barrier-free environment for recording the evidence of vulnerable witnesses.**

The SC asked HC's to ensure that there is one VWDC in each district. These VWDC should be established in close proximity to **Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) centres.**

### *Witness Protection in India*

**In 2018, the SC approved the Witness Protection Scheme 2018** which aimed at enabling a witness to depose fearlessly and truthfully. Under the Judgement, SC held that:

**Right of witnesses to testify freely in courts is part of Article 21 (Right to Life).** The scheme will be the law under Article 141/142 of the Constitution of India.

**The bench has also asked all States and UTs to set up vulnerable witness deposition complexes.**

While the scheme is pending in the Parliament, the SC had ordered to implement the scheme immediately in all the states and the scheme would be the law of the land.

### **CHHATTISGARH GOVT. LAUNCHED ROZGAR MISSION**



The Chhattisgarh Government is to launch an employment mission called the **Rozgar Mission**. The mission aims to create 15 lakh job opportunities in the state in the next five years.

The mission will leverage experts from IITs, IIITs, IIMs. It is to be headed by the Chief

Minister of the state. The others taking active roles in the mission are chief secretary and principal secretary of the state.

**The Chief Minister is the chairman. The Chief Secretary of the state is the vice chairman and the principal secretary will act as Chief Executive Officer.**

The committee will also include the managing director of the minor forest produce federation of the state.

**Unemployment in Chhattisgarh:** According to a report released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) in 2022, the unemployment rate in Chhattisgarh is 2.1%. The state ranks fourth among the states with lowest unemployment rate.

### **AIR INDIA HANDED OVER TO TATA GROUP**

On January 27, 2022, the **Union government transferred its shares in Air India to Tata Sons subsidiary, Talace.**

Apart from Shares, its control and management were also transferred to Talace. With this, the disinvestment process

ended five years ago. **Air India has been a public sector undertaking from 1953.**

The transaction covers Air India Express, Air India, and the entire 50% stake of the government in a **joint-venture ground handling company named AI SATS.**

Government's disinvestment target

Government has set a **total disinvestment target of Rs 1.75 lakh crore for financial year 2021-2022.**



**Tata Group owns three airlines.** In Vistara, Tata has 51% stake while in AirAsia India, it has 84% stake. These three airlines together account for 24% of the market share in the aviation sector.

**History of disinvestment of Air India:** The Union Cabinet gave in principle a nod for disinvestment of Air India, in June 2017. In 2018, the government invited bids for a 76% stake in the airline.

However, it failed to attract any buyers. In January 2020, the government launched a fresh effort to sell off its 100% stake in Air India. In 2000-2001, **Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government also attempted to sell 40% stake in Air India, but the attempt failed.**

### **AP GOVT. ANNOUNCED FORMATION OF 13 DISTRICTS**

The **Jagan Mohan Reddy Government of Andhra Pradesh** recently created 13 new districts. The districts were created based on Parliamentary constituencies.

With this the total number of **districts in Andhra Pradesh has increased to 26.**



The **Araku Lok Sabha constituency** in Visakhapatnam was divided into two districts.

**The 26 districts are:** Srikulam, Vizianagaram, Manyam, Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Visakhapatnam, Sri Balaji district, Chittoor, Annamayya, YSR Kadapa, Sri Sathya Sai district, Ananthapuram, Nandyal, Kurnool, SPS Nellore, Prakasam, Palnadu, Bapatla, Guntur, NTR district, Krishna, Eluru, West Godavari, East Godavari, Kona Seema, Kakinada, Anakapalli.

Before this, a **new district was created in 1979 in an undivided Andhra Pradesh.** It was in Vizianagaram district.

The **power to create a new district is in the hands of the state government.** This is either done by passing a law in the state assembly or through an executive order. The State Governments can also pass a notification in the office gazette.



## SUPREME COURT VERDICT ON INHERITANCE OF DAUGHTERS



Recently, the **Supreme Court (SC)** has ruled that **daughters** will have equal rights to their father's property even prior to the enactment of the **Hindu Succession Act (HSA) of 1956**.

The **case involved a dispute over the property of a person who died in 1949** leaving

behind a daughter who also died in 1967.

Earlier, the trial court held that since the person had **died prior to the enforcement of HSA, 1956** therefore the petitioner and her other sisters were not the heirs as on the date of his death and was not entitled to partition of share in the suit properties. **Later, the High Court, too, dismissed the appeal against the trial court.**

**Daughters Inheritance:** It ruled that the property of a man who had died without executing a will and is survived only by a daughter will **devolve upon the daughter and not others such as his brother.**

**Earlier in 2020,** the SC has already expanded the **Hindu women's right to be the coparcener (joint legal heir)** and inherit ancestral property on terms equal to male heirs.

**Ancient Texts & Judicial Pronouncements:** The SC referred to ancient texts (smritis), commentaries by various renowned learned persons and even judicial pronouncements which have recognised the rights of several female heirs, the wives and the daughter's being the foremost of them.

Tracing the sources of customary Hindu law on inheritance, **the SC discussed Mitakshara law.**

**SC also looked into Vyavastha Chandrika,** a digest of Hindu Law by Shyama Charan Sarkar Vidya Bhushan which quoted 'Vrihaspati' as saying 'the wife is pronounced successor to the wealth of her husband, in her default, the daughter.

As a son, so does the daughter of a man proceed from his several limbs. The SC also noted that the book quoted Manu as saying **"the son of a man is even as himself, and the daughter is equal to the son.**

How then can any other inherit his property, notwithstanding the survival of her, **who is, as it were, himself**".

**Old Law:** Right of a widow or daughter to inherit the self-acquired property or share received in partition of a coparcenary property of a **Hindu male dying intestate is well recognised not only under the old customary Hindu Law.**

If a **property of a male Hindu dying intestate is a self-acquired property or obtained in partition of a coparcenary** or a family property, the same would devolve by inheritance and not by survivorship, and a daughter of such a male Hindu would be entitled to inherit such property in preference to other collaterals".

**Property After Woman's Death:** The court also said that if a female Hindu dies intestate without leaving any issue, then the property inherited by her from her father or mother would go to the heirs of her father whereas the property inherited from her husband or father-in-law would go to the heirs of the husband.

In case a **female Hindu dies leaving behind her husband or any issue, then Section 15(1)(a) of the HSA 1956** will come into operation and the properties left behind including the properties which she inherited from her parents would devolve simultaneously upon her husband and her issues.

## GOVT. TIES UP FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ADI BADRI DAM

**Governments of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana have signed an MoU at Panchkula,** for the construction of Adi Badri Dam that would come upon 77 acres in Himachal Pradesh near **the Adi Badri area of Yamuna Nagar district of Haryana.**

**The proposed dam aims for the rejuvenation of the Saraswati river** with an estimated cost of Rs 215.35 crore.

**About the Dam:** The Dam would get 224-hectare metre water from Himachal Pradesh's Somb River that falls in the Yamuna near Adi Badri in Yamuna Nagar district.



**The executing agency for the construction of Adi Badri Dam would be Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited.** Adi Badri, also Sri Sarasvati Udgam Tirath, is located in the foothills of the Shivalik Hills in the Bhabar area. It is situated in the northern part of **Haryana's Yamunanagar district.**

# ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

## DEMAND OF PUDUCHERRY FOR STATEHOOD

**Chief Minister N. Rangasamy** expressed confidence that the Center would grant Statehood for the **Union Territory of Puducherry**. Addressing the inauguration of the Puducherry Print and Television Journalists' Association, Mr. Rangasamy, who heads the **AINRC-BJP coalition government in Puducherry**, said Statehood status had been a long-standing demand of the Union Territory.



The *Chief Minister said the government was implementing several schemes* for the betterment of journalists and promised to consider the proposals submitted by the office-bearers of the Association.

### *Promise of full statehood for Puducherry*

**All India N.R. Congress (AINRC)** ahead of the polls in Puducherry in 2021 had promised a full statehood for the Union Territory in its election manifesto. The AINRC along with BJP has won the elections, in which, **AINRC bagged 10 seats out of the 16 it contested in the legislative polls**, while the Bharatiya Janata Party had won 6 seats out of 9 seats it contested. The demand for Statehood is a long pending issue for Puducherry making it unable to exercise any powers for creating employment potential by inviting more industries to Puducherry and **also creating infrastructure facilities for tourism**.

## WHAT IS A UNION TERRITORY?

UT refers to those federal territories that are too small to be independent or are too different (**economically, culturally and geographically**) to be merged with the surrounding states or are financially weak or are politically unstable. Due to these reasons, they couldn't survive as separate administrative units and needed to be **administered by the Union Government**.

UTs are administered by the President. In the **UTs Lieutenant Governors are appointed by the President of India as their administrators**. However, Puducherry, Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi are the exception in this regard and have an elected legislature and government due to the status of partial statehood.

**At present, India has 8 UTs--** Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry.

## BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE

When the Constitution of India was adopted in 1949, **the Indian federal structure included:**

- **Part A:** Former British India provinces that had a Governor and a legislature.
- **Part B:** The former Princely States that were governed by a Rajpramukh.
- **Part C:** Chief Commissioners' provinces and some princely states that were governed by Chief Commissioner.
- **Part D:** Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands that was governed by a Lieutenant Governor who was appointed by the Central Government.

After the **States Reorganisation Act of 1956**, **Part C and Part D** states were combined into a single category of 'Union Territory'. The concept of the UT was added by the **Constitution (Seventh Amendment) Act, 1956**.

### *Other factors are:*

- Competition for local resources.
- Government negligence towards certain regions
- Improper allocation of the resources,
- Difference in culture, language, religion, etc.
- **The economy's failure to create enough employment opportunities**
- Popular mobilization and the democratic political process is also one of the reasons.
- **'The sons of the soil'** sentiments.



## ISSUES ARISING DUE TO CREATION OF NEW STATES

Different statehood may lead to the hegemony of the dominant community/ caste/ tribe over their power structures. This **can lead to emergence of intra-regional rivalries** among the sub-regions. The creation of new states may also lead to certain negative political consequences like a small group of legislators could make or break a government at will. There is also a possibility of

**increase in the inter-State water, power and boundary disputes.** The division of states would require huge funds for building new capitals and maintaining a large number of **administrators as was the case in the division of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.** Creation of smaller states only transfers power from the old state capital to new state capital without empowering already **existing institutions like Gram Panchayat, District Collector, etc. rather diffusion of development in the backward areas of the states.**

**Constitutional Provisions:** The Indian constitution empowers the Union government to create new states out of existing states or to merge one state with another. **This process is called reorganization of the states.** As per **Article 2 of the Indian Constitution**, Parliament may by law admit into the Union, or establish, new States on such terms and conditions. As per Article 3 of the Indian Constitution, the Union Government has the power to form a State, increase or decrease the size of any State, and alter the boundaries or name of any State.

#### *Puducherry*

- Puducherry city is capital of Puducherry UT in southeastern India. **UT was formed in 1962 out of the four former colonies of French India:**
- **Pondicherry (now Puducherry) and Karaikal** along India's southeastern Coromandel Coast, Yanam, farther north along the eastern coast, and Mahe, lying on the western Malabar Coast, surrounded by Kerala state. **It originated as a French trade center in 1674**, when it was purchased from a local ruler. The colony of Pondicherry was the scene of frequent fighting between the French and Dutch in the **late 17th century**, and it was **occupied several times by British troops.** However, it remained a French colonial possession until it was transferred to India in 1962

#### *Other announcements for Puducherry*

The **Chief Minister announced in the legislative assembly** that the monthly assistance given to the freedom fighters under the state government scheme as pension will be raised to Rs. 10,000 from the present Rs. 9,000. The Puducherry government has decided to exempt the students selected **through the Centralized Admission Committee** for engineering and medical students from paying tuition fees. The Chief Minister informed that the monthly assistance given to the aged press persons will be hiked to Rs. 8,000 from present Rs. 7,500. The internship allowance by the government to the medical residents will be raised from the present Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 20,000. All the vacancies in different posts of jobs in the Puducherry government will also be filled and police personnel will be recruited soon. The **Chief Minister also said that the loans borrowed from the Backward Welfare Corporation** by the students belonging to Backward Class for their education will also be waived.

#### *Sanction of central grants to Puducherry budget:*

**Chief Minister N Rangasamy** informed that he has requested PM Modi to sanction the central grants to the Puducherry budget under 90:10 ratio, with the Central Government's contribution at 90% of the total requirements and the **territorial government's share being 10%. Currently, the ratio is 60:40.**



An advertisement banner with a dark blue background. On the left, there is a logo for 'EASE VIDYA' with the tagline 'YOUR ONLINE KNOWLEDGE MENTOR'. To its right is a yellow logo for 'SUCCESS MANTRA GTB NAGAR'. Below these logos, the text reads 'EASE VIDYA App - Online Podium of SUCCESS MANTRA'. At the bottom center, there is a green button with the Android logo and the text 'Available on the Android App Store'. On the right side, there is an illustration of a laptop on a stand, a small screen displaying a graph, and several pink chairs arranged in a row, suggesting a virtual classroom or presentation environment.



## 50TH STATEHOOD DAY OF MANIPUR, MEGHALAYA & TRIPURA

India every year on **January 21** observes the **Statehood Day of Tripura, Manipur, and Meghalaya** signifying the beauty of cultural diversity that India has. The 50th Statehood Day of Tripura, Manipur, and Meghalaya is also an opportunity to remember India of what it was and how we know it today. **January 21 marks an important historical event as on this day North East Reorganisation Act, 1971** was implemented providing statehood to Tripura, Meghalaya, and Manipur **which is also known as the foundation day of these three states of India.**



### 50TH STATEHOOD DAY OF TRIPURA, MANIPUR, MEGHALAYA: HISTORY

**Manipur & Tripura, which were the former Princely states,** were merged into the Indian Union in October 1949 and they became full states on January 21, 1972, under the **North Eastern Region (ReOrganisation) Act, 1971**. Meghalaya, which was part of Assam, also received its statehood under the same act. Soon after the country gained independence from British Rule, the **princely states that had blended into the Indian Union had started receiving statehood.** On one hand, where Tripura and Manipur were granted the status of Union Territories in 1949, Meghalaya was still a part of Assam. **Later, in 1969, through Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act, 1969,** the state successfully received autonomous state recognition. It was finally on January 21, 1972, that Tripura, Meghalaya, and Manipur, with the introduction of the **North Eastern Region (Reorganization) Act, 1971, attained complete statehood.**

### 50th Statehood Day of Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura: Facts about the three states

Tripura in the North East shares its borders **with Bangladesh to the North, South, and West.** It also borders the states of Mizoram and Assam to the East. The **Hindu-Bengali population forms the majority in the state.** Meghalaya is the wettest region of India. The state shares its border to the South with the Bangladesh divisions of Sylhet and Mymensingh. **Manipur borders Mizoram in the South, Nagaland in the North, Myanmar in the East, and Assam in the West.** The state is home to the Kuki, Meitei, Pangal, and Naga ethnic people who speak Sino-Tibetan languages.

## RECENT ONGOING ISSUES IN NORTH-EAST

### DEMAND FOR GREATER TIPRALAND

- Recently, **several tribal outfits in Tripura have joined hands to push their demand for a separate state, Greater Tipraland** for indigenous communities in the region. Among the political parties that have come together for the cause are TIPRA Motha (Tipraha Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance) and IPFT (**Indigenous People's Front of Tripura**).
- **The Demand:** The parties are demanding a separate state of 'Greater Tipraland' for the indigenous communities of the north-eastern state. They want the Centre to carve out the separate state **under Article 2 and 3 of the Constitution.** Among the 19 notified Scheduled Tribes in Tripura, Tripuris (aka Tipra and Tiprasas) are the largest. According to the 2011 census, there are at least 5.92 lakh Tripuris in the state, followed by Bru or Reang (1.88 lakh) and Jamatias (83,000).



### Article 2 & 3 of the Indian Constitution

- **Article 2:** Parliament may by law admit into the Union, or establish, new States on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit. However, Parliament cannot establish a new union territory by passing a law that can only be done through a constitutional amendment. **States like Sikkim (previously not within India) became a part of the country under Article**
- **Article 3:** It empowered the Parliament to make law relating to the formation of new states and alteration of existing states.

## ASSAM-MEGHALAYA BORDER DISPUTE

**Assam and Meghalaya share an 885-km-long border.** As of now, there are 12 points of dispute along their borders. The Assam-Meghalaya border dispute are the areas of Upper Tarabari, Gazang reserve forest, Hahim, Langpih, Borduar, Boklapara, Nongwah, Matamur, Khanapara-Pilangkata, Deshdemoreah Block I and Block II, Khanduli and Retacherra. **Meghalaya was carved out of Assam under the Assam Reorganisation Act, 1971,** a law that it challenged, leading to disputes.

### Major Point of Contention:

A **major point of contention between Assam and Meghalaya** is the district of Langpih in West Garo Hills bordering the Kamrup district of Assam. Langpih was part of the Kamrup district during the British colonial period but post-Independence, **it became part of the Garo Hills and Meghalaya.** Assam considers it to be part of the Mikir Hills in Assam. Meghalaya has



questioned Blocks I and II of the Mikir Hills -now Karbi Anglong region - being part of Assam. Meghalaya says these were parts of erstwhile United Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts.

### ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958

- A **reincarnation of the British-era legislation** that was enacted to quell the protests during the Quit India movement, the AFSPA was issued by way of four ordinances in 1947. **The ordinances were replaced by an Act in 1948** and the present law effective in the Northeast was introduced in Parliament in 1958 by the then **Home Minister, G.B. Pant**. It was known initially as the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958. After the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland came into being, **the Act was adapted to apply to these States as well**.
- **About:** The AFSPA gives unfettered powers to the armed forces and the Central armed police forces deployed in “**disturbed areas**” to **kill anyone acting in contravention of law** and arrest and search any premises without a warrant and with protection from prosecution and legal suits. The law first came into effect in 1958 to deal with the **uprising in the Naga Hills, followed by the insurgency in Assam**.
- **Disturbed Areas:** The Act was amended in 1972 and the powers to declare an area as “disturbed” were conferred concurrently upon the **Central government along with the States**. Currently, the Union Home Ministry issues periodic “disturbed area” notification to extend AFSPA only for Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. The **notification for Manipur and Assam is issued by the State governments**. Tripura revoked the Act in 2015 and Meghalaya was under AFSPA for 27 years, until it was revoked by the MHA from 1st April 2018. The **Act was implemented in a 20-km area along the border with Assam**. Jammu and Kashmir has a separate J&K Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1990.



### UPHEAVAL IN MEGHALAYA - HNLC CRISIS

After the **death of Cherishterfield Thangkhiew**, a former militant of the outlawed **Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC)**, during a police operation, Shillong witnessed arson, stone pelting, and vandalism on August 15, 2021, and has been put under curfew till August 18, 2021. **Meghalaya's Home Minister Lahkmen Rymbui** on August 15, 2021, resigned and called for a judicial probe to uncover the truth behind the killing of Thangkhiew of the HNLC during a police operation on August 13. Amid the unrest, the Meghalaya government has suspended internet services for 72 hours in four districts, **East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, South-West Khasi Hills, and Ri-Bhoi district** beginning from 6 pm on August 15, 2021.

**Important Update regarding the recent IED explosion in Laitumkhrah:** An operation was launched in the early hours of 13th August to arrest one **Cherishterfield Thangkhiew** and his associates, who attacked the Police team in an attempt to escape.

### WHO WAS CHERISHTERFIELD THANGKHIW?

**Thangkhiew was the founding General Secretary** of the separatist **Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC)**. Thangkhiew had entered militancy in 1987 and was the co-founder of the first prominent separatist militant tribal organization Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC) in Meghalaya. He surrendered to the government in October 2018. Thangkhiew was gunned down at his residence in Shillong during a police encounter on August 13. **The encounter was reportedly carried out by the police team of East Khasi Hills and East Jaintia Hills**. The Police team in their statement said that Thangkhiew came upon the team with a knife to which the police team in their defense fired a single shot at him. Meghalaya police further stated that they had strong incriminating evidence of Thangkhiew's involvement in the IED blasts in the past two months.



### BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE

**Meghalaya shares a border with Bangladesh** and has seen decades of migration from the neighbouring country as well as from other parts of India - Bengal, Punjab and Bihar. This has sparked anxieties of indigenous communities who feared becoming a “**minority in their own homeland**” because of the influx of “**outsiders**”. It was a culmination of these “anti-outsider sentiments” that led to the formation of Meghalaya's first militant group, the **Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALP)**, in 1992. Hynniewtrep represented the Khasi and Jaintia communities and Achik represented the Garo community. HALC was later divided and HNLC came into being that represented the Khasi and Jaintia communities and the Achik Matgrik Liberation Army that represented the Garo community. The Achik Matgrik Liberation Army was later replaced by the Achik National Volunteers Council (ANVC). HNLC claimed to represent only the interest of Khasi Communities, whereas, the Achik Matgrik Liberation Army demanded a separate state for the Garo community.

**Present Status of militancy in Meghalaya:** The ANVC since 2004 has been under an extended ceasefire agreement with the government while the **HNLC has been trying to talk peace with the government but on a conditional basis**. Over the last several years, militancy in Meghalaya was seen as declining. In 2018, the Centre withdrew the **Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from Meghalaya** after almost 27 years of witnessing a decline by 80% in insurgency-related incidents.



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Hard work and smart work, when both come together, will definitely get you success.

*“A wise person knows that there is something to be learned from everyone and everywhere.”*

### Insurgencies in other North East states:

- **Nagaland:** Naga Insurgency
- **Mizoram:** Mizo Movement.
- **Assam Insurgency:** United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A.) was formed in 1979 for the deportation of illegal migrants, Bodoland Statehood Movement.
- **Manipur:** United National Liberation Front formed in 1964, with an objective of ending the discrimination against Manipur.
- **Arunachal Pradesh:** The only case of indigenous insurgency movement in Arunachal Pradesh was the rise of the **Arunachal Dragon Force (ADF)**, which was rechristened as **East India Liberation Front (EALF)** in 2001.





# INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

## FRANCE ASSUMED PRESIDENCY OF EU



France has assumed the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union with effect from January 01, 2022. **The country will continue to hold the EU presidency for the next six months till June 30, 2022.**

This is the 13th time that France has taken over the rotating presidency. **The motto of France as EU President is "recovery, strength, belonging."**

France will work to place the continent's digitization and climate protection at the forefront. **The presidency of the EU rotates every six months among the member states of the 27-nation bloc.**

Upon the completion of the six months presidency, **France will be replaced by the Czech Republic.**

## INDIA TO HOST 46 NATIONS IN 'EXERCISE MILAN'

**India will host 46 nations in mega naval wargames in 2022, known as Exercise Milan.**



India has invited 46 foreign government countries to take part in the transnational naval exercise Milan, **which will take place in Visakhapatnam from February 25 to February 25, 2022.**

**Camaraderie, cohesion, and collaboration are the themes of the 11th edition of exercise Milan.** This exercise, which began in 1995 and is held every two years, is performed with friendly navies.

**During this phase, competent competitions and conferences will help to set the operational tone for the Sea Phase, which will take place from March 1-4.**

This step would be used to consolidate the lessons learned during the harbor interplay and to expand on the experience of working together at sea.

According to an official, **India has increased its bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral naval interaction with friendly nations since 2018.**

## SUDAN'S PM ABDALLA HAMDOK RESIGNED

**Following mass protests in the capital city Khartoum, Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok announced his resignation on January 2, 2022.**

**Protests are being held against a recent deal that the Prime Minister had made to share power with the army.**

Before this deal, the army had staged a coup in October, 2021. **Protesters called for a return to full civilian rule.**



But the army staged another violent crackdown on them. It left two people dead. **Resignation of Hamdok has now left the army in full control of the government.**

**Resignation of Hamdok is another blow to fragile attempts by Sudan in transitioning to democratic rule, following a popular uprising which led to the overthrow of long-term authoritarian President of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir in 2019.**

**Background: Sudan's army had staged a coup on October 25, 2021.** This coup had placed Prime Minister Hamdok under house arrest initially. Following this, **the civilian and military leaders had signed a power-sharing agreement.**

**About power-sharing agreement: Prime Minister Hamdok had reached a power-sharing agreement with the Army in November 2021.**

Under the agreement, the reinstated prime minister was supposed to lead **the cabinet of technocrats until new elections were held.**

However, it was not clear how much power the new civilian government would have. **Meanwhile, protesters showed distrust towards the military.**

**About Sudan:** Sudan is a Northeast African country. It was declared an independent state on January 1, 1956. It shares borders with countries of **the Central African Republic, Egypt, Chad, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Libya, and the Red Sea.**

**As of 2021, Sudan has a population of 44.91 million people.** Sudan is the third-largest country by area in Africa as well as in the Arab League.

**Until the secession of South Sudan in 2011, it was the largest country by area in Africa & Arab League.** Khartoum is the capital city of Sudan while Omdurman is the most populated city.

## ANTIGUA & BARBUDA JOINED INT. SOLAR ALLIANCE

The Caribbean nation of Antigua and Barbuda **joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA)** as the 102nd member by signing the **International Solar Alliance Framework**



**Agreement**, the India-led global green energy initiative.

The **Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne** signed the framework agreement in the presence of Indian High Commissioner Dr K. J. Srinivasa to catalyze global energy transition through a solar-led approach.

**ISA was jointly launched by India and France in 2015** during the 21st session of the United Nations Climate Change COP-21 in Paris, France to promote solar energy.

Antigua and Barbuda Capital: **Saint John's**.  
Antigua and Barbuda Currency: **East Caribbean Dollar**.  
Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister: **Gaston Browne**.

**Economy of Sudan:** Sudan's economy is described as **lower-middle income**. The economy relies on oil production irrespective of long-term international sanctions and isolation.

The country is also a member of the United Nations, African Union, the **Arab League**, **COMESA**, **Organization of Islamic Co-operation** and **Non-Aligned Movement**.

## WORLD LONGEST METRO LINE OPENED IN CHINA



Shanghai has opened two new metro lines, upholding its rank as the city with the largest Metro network in the world.

With the new lines, the total length of Shanghai's metro network has extended to 831 km, continuing to be the longest in the world. **China's Shanghai opened two new metro lines – Line 14 and Phase One of Line 18.**

The opening of the two new lines will bring the total number of fully automatic metro lines in Shanghai to five, **with an operating length of 167 km, ranking first in the world for the first time.**

**The city will now enjoy 20 metro lines with 508 stations, 83 of which are transfer ones.**

## CHILD MARRIAGE BANNED IN PHILIPPINES



The **President of Philippines Rodrigo Duterte** signed a law prohibiting Child Marriage and it came into force on January 6, 2022, making child marriage illegal in the country.

The **law that bans child marriage in Philippines states that the State** views child marriage as a practice constituting child abuse because it debases, degrades, and demeans the intrinsic worth and dignity of children.

As per the Britain-based rights organization Plan International, the Philippines has the **world's 12th highest rate of child marriage.**

The latest law banning child marriage in the Philippines complies with the **international accords on women's and children's rights.**

**Philippines bans child marriage: 5 things to know about new law**

The law banning child marriage in Philippines stipulates that marrying or cohabiting with **anybody under the age of 18 years can result in a 12-years prison sentence.**

The same punishment will also apply to those who will organize or solemnize the underage unions.

**According to the Philippines Government, the law banning child marriage** is consistent with the international conventions on the rights of women and children.

Some portions of the latest law have been suspended for one year in order to allow the transition period for Muslims and indigenous communities in which child marriage is relatively common.

**One in every six girls in the Southeast Asian Country** marries before the age of 18.

## UNSC COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE FOR 2022

India's **Permanent Representative** to the UN, T S Tirumurti has been appointed as the Chair of the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee for 2022.



India has assumed the chairmanship of the **United Nations Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNSC-CTC)** for one year, beginning from January 01, 2022.

**Being the Chair of Counter-Terrorism Committee 2022,** India will work to further enhance the role of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in strengthening the multilateral response to counter-terrorism, and ensure that global response to the threat of **terrorism remains unambiguous, undivided and effective.**

India is currently a **non-permanent member of the 15-nation UNSC**. Its two-year term will end on December 31, 2022.

## EXERCISE SEA DRAGON 22 HELD B/W SIX COUNTRIES

The **Sea Dragon 22** exercise is a multinational exercise.

The countries that are participating in the exercise are **India, Australia, Canada, US, South Korea and Japan**. It is held at Andersen Air Force base, Guam. It is a US air force base.



**It is a US – led exercise.** It will focus on anti – submarine warfare training. During the exercise the countries will discuss **traditional maritime security challenges in the Indo – Pacific region.** The exercise includes 270 hours of in – flight training.

During the exercise, the different events are to be **held among the military forces of the participating countries.**

And the country scoring the highest points will be **awarded the Dragon Belt Award.** In 2021, the Dragon Belt Award was won by the Royal Canadian Air Force.

The **exercise is important as some of the participating countries have strained relations with China.** In the last 2 decades Chinese interests in the Indian Ocean Region have increased.

This is mainly because 80% of Chinese oil **imports pass through the Malacca strait and Indian Ocean.** China is expanding its presence in the Indian Ocean under its Look West Policy.

It has made significant infrastructural **developments in Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar and Seychelles.** China is also looking for opportunities to increase its ties with the western African Indian Ocean states.

China is supplying weapons to **Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh,** in a way trying to colonise the countries.

**Why is the Indo – Pacific Region in the centre stage?**

The **main reason is the sea routes and oil trade.** Before the cold war the centre stage was taken by the Atlantic Ocean. India sees the Indo – Pacific as open, inclusive and balanced space.

The US sees the Indo – Pacific as free and open. The **ASEAN sees Indo Pacific as a consociational model.** Consociationalism is stable democracy, especially in deeply divided states.

## JAPAN & AUSTRALIA SIGNED DEFENCE AGREEMENT



The **leaders of Japan and Australia signed a “landmark” defence agreement** that allows closer cooperation between their militaries and stands as a rebuke to **China’s growing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.**

**Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida** met in a virtual summit to sign the Reciprocal Access Agreement, the first such defence pact signed by Japan with any country other than the United States.

*About the agreements:*

The agreement follows more than a year of talks between Japan and Australia aimed at breaking down legal barriers to allow the troops of one country to enter the other for training and other purposes.

**Morrison called the pact a “pivotal moment for Australia and Japan** and (for) the security of our two nations and our people.”

The pact builds on the strategic dialogue known as “the Quad,” which includes **Japan, Australia, the United States and India.**

Australia last year also signed the Aukus agreement with the **United States and Britain, both of which have pledged** to help Australia acquire nuclear-powered submarines.

## ZHANG MING TAKEN CHARGE AS SECY. GENERAL OF SCO

China’s senior diplomat **Zhang Ming** has taken charge as the new Secretary-General of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** in which India is a member.



He has taken charge from **Vladimir Norov, former Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan** for a three-year term. He was until recently China’s ambassador to the European Union.

The SCO comprises eight member states: **India, Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.**

It also comprises four countries with **“observer” status and six more as “dialogue partners”.** India joined SCO at the Astana summit in 2017.

**2022 will be an important year for India at SCO as,** for the first time, it will assume the presidency of SCO, after Uzbekistan, for the period 2022-2023 which will culminate with the SCO Summit to be hosted by the Indian side in 2023.

The **SCO Summit is the meeting of the Council of Heads of States (HOS)** and along with the Council of Heads of Government (HOG) makes two most important dialogue mechanisms among SCO member states.

## ALIKHAN SMAILOV AS NEW PM OF KAZAKHSTAN

The parliament of Kazakhstan has unanimously approved the appointment of **Alikhan Smailov as the new Prime Minister of the country.**

His name was nominated by **Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev** on January 11, 2022.





Prior to this, the 49-year-old **Smailov served as the country's finance minister from 2018 to 2020**. He became the first deputy prime minister in the Cabinet in 2019.

Kazakhstan Capital: **Nur-Sultan**.

Kazakhstan Currency: **Kazakhstani tenge**.

## NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL TALKS OVER UKRAINE



Recently, the **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Russia** discussed the ongoing situation in Ukraine and its implications for security in Europe at the **NATO-Russia Council (NRC) in Brussels**.

Talks between representatives of NATO and Russia concluded without a clear outcome.

**NATO-Russia Council:** NRC was established at the NATO-Russia Summit in Rome (Rome Declaration) on 28 May 2002.

It replaced the Permanent Joint Council (PJC), a forum for consultation and cooperation created by the **1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations**.

The **NRC is a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action**, in which the individual NATO member states and Russia work as equal partners on a wide spectrum of security issues of common interest.

**Highlights of the Meet:** NATO rejected Russia's demand for a new security settlement in Europe, challenging Russia to withdraw troops deployed near Ukraine and join talks on **reducing the threat of open conflict**.

**For the US and EU, Ukraine** acts as a significant buffer with Russia. Ukraine is also building a naval base in Ochakiv and another in **Berdyansk, which Russia is not happy about**.

The Western allies received no promise that Russia will stand down its forces — which Moscow insists pose no threat to its already partially occupied neighbour — despite the threat of economic sanctions

## INDIA & PHILIPPINES BRAHMOS EXPORT ORDER



**India and Philippines are expected to sign a \$374.9 million deal** in the last week of January 2022, for 'BrahMos shore-based supersonic cruise missile systems' supply.

This deal will be signed as part of Philippines' plan to strengthen its defence amid

territorial conflict with China. **The deal would involve an unspecified number of missiles & launchers, payment schedule, spare parts, and delivery & training schedule.**

**Prior to this, the Philippines' Department of National Defence** published a 'Notice of Award', asking BrahMos to sign the contract.

This means, the Philippines has accepted the Indian proposal and is now looking to sign the contract. To sign the deal, an Indian delegation is scheduled to visit Manila. With this deal, **first export order for the BrahMos cruise missile will be made, which has a range of 290 km.**

This deal is for a shore-based variant of the anti-ship missile system. It **will help in boosting Philippines' defence capability**, in the backdrop of increasing Chinese aggression.

## INDIAN & RUSSIAN NAVY UNDERTOOK PASSEX EXERCISE

**Indian Navy and Russian Navy** undertook PASSEX exercises at the port of Cochin, in the Arabian Sea.



The Indian Navy's indigenously designed and built guided-missile destroyer, **INS Kochi**, took part in the exercise. **The Russian Federation Navy was represented by RFS Admiral Tributs.**

**Two other Russian naval ships**, Russian Naval Missile Cruiser Varyag, and Russian Tanker Boris Butoma were also accompanied.

The exercise showcased cohesiveness and interoperability between the two navies and **included tactical manoeuvres, cross-deck helicopter operations and seamanship activities.**

**About the exercises:** These exercises are aimed at enhancing interoperability, improving understanding and imbibing best practices between both the friendly navies, and this will involve advanced surface and anti-submarine warfare exercises, weapon firings, seamanship exercises and helicopter operations, Navy officials said, adding that these exercises are conducted regularly with units of friendly foreign navies, whilst visiting each other's ports or during a rendezvous at sea.

## PM MODI ADDRESSED WEF'S DAVOS AGENDA SUMMIT

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the **World Economic Forum's (WEF's) Davos Agenda Summit 2022**, through video-conferencing.

The **"Davos Agenda 2022" summit** is being held digitally



from January 17 to January 21, 2022, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The theme of the event is **“The State of the World.”**

The week-long digital summit will begin with a special address by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The **‘Davos Agenda 2022’** will be the first global platform for Heads of state and government as well as CEOs and other leaders to share their visions for 2022 on critical collective challenges and how to address them.

This is the second consecutive year that the event is being held virtually.

## INDONESIA TO MOVE ITS CAPITAL TO NUSANTARA

Indonesia will move its capital to mineral-rich **East Kalimantan**, an Indonesian province on the island of Borneo.



The name of the new capital will be **Nusantara**, which means **“archipelago”** in Javanese. It will be based in the regions of North Penajam Paser and Kutai Kartanegara. The new project is likely to cost around 466 trillion rupiah (\$32 billion).

The heavily populated city of **Jakarta** is home to **10 million people** (30 million if you include the greater metropolitan area) and has been facing the growing issue with the overuse of groundwater by home drilling due to large-scale city developments.

The problem is worsened when combined with rising sea levels. **This shift of development is set to slow down the rate at which Jakarta sinks into the Java Sea.**

## PM MODI HOSTS FIRST INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA SUMMIT



**Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi** has hosted the first **India-Central Asia Summit**, through the virtual platform. It was the first of its kind engagement between **India and the Central Asian countries** at the level of leaders.

The central Asian region has five recognized countries. The Summit was attended by the **Presidents of these five Central Asian countries.**

These are the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzstan), Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan.

The **first India-Central Asia Summit** coincided with the **30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations** between India and Central Asian countries.

During the summit, the Leaders agreed to hold the Summit every 2 years (biennial). The summit is symbolic of the importance attached by the leaders of both sides to a comprehensive and enduring India-Central Asia partnership.

*During the summit, PM Modi outlines 3 goals:*

**Elaborating on the first goal, the Prime Minister** said the mutual cooperation between India and central Asia was necessary for regional security and prosperity.

Outlining the second goal, Modi said, **“Today’s meeting is to give an effective structure to our cooperation, which will pave the way for the establishment of a platform for regular interaction among all stakeholders.”**

For the third goal, **Modi said it was crucial to prepare an ambitious roadmap for the cooperation between India and Central Asian countries** which, he added, will enable the nations to adopt an integrated approach for regional connectivity and cooperation

## XIOMARA CASTRO AS 1ST WOMAN PRESIDENT OF HONDURAS

**Xiomara Castro** was sworn in as the first female President of Honduras on January 27, 2022.

The inauguration of the 62-years old leftist former first lady will put an end to the 12 years of right-wing National Party rule in the **Central American country** which has also been grappling with poverty, drug trafficking, migration, and corruption.



*Who is Xiomara Castro?*

**Xiomara Castro** is a Honduran politician. She became the first female president of Honduras on January 27, 2022.

She is also the **first President of the country who is not a member of either the Liberal Party or the National Party** since democracy was restored in the Central American country in 1982.

## NATO PARTNERS TO HOLD MARITIME DRILL IN MEDITERRANEAN

The **NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)** member countries will be conducting a 12-day maritime exercise in the **Mediterranean Sea from January 24, 2022.**

The name of the maritime exercise is **“Neptune Strike ’22”**. The naval drill will end



on February 04, 2022.

**The main purpose of this exercise will be to demonstrate and test NATO's wide range of maritime capabilities.**

**The US announced the decision to hold NATO naval drills, which will involve the participation of the USS Harry Truman aircraft carrier, a day after Russia said it would demonstrate its own naval capabilities for two months, January and February, from the Pacific to the Atlantic Sea.**

**NATO Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium.

**NATO Chairman of the NATO Military Committee:** Admiral Rob Bauer.

**Member countries of NATO:** 30; **Founded:** 4 April 1949.

## CHINA BUILDS BRIDGE AT PANGONG TSO

Amid the ongoing standoff between India and China in eastern Ladakh, China is building another bridge on the Pangong Tso. Construction of the new bridge was spotted in satellite images.



China is building the bridge near to friction points on the north bank of Pangong Tso and the Chushul sub-sector on south bank.

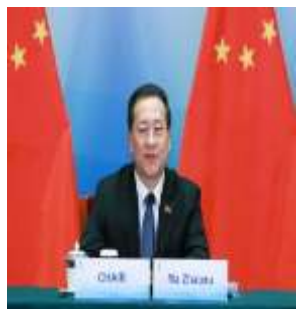
In India's perception, the Line of Actual Control lies at Finger 8. Site of the bridge is within India's claim line. However, this area has been under Chinese control since 1958.

**Pangong Tso is a 135-km-long landlocked lake.** Around two-thirds of the lake is under Chinese control.

Finger 4 was one among the first friction areas in the current standoff. It has seen frequent clashes.

Furthermore, the banks of Pangong Tso lake were among the most sensitive friction points in May 2020. Troops and tanks faced each other a few hundred meters closer in some places, until their disengagement in February 2021.

## FIRST BRICS SHERPAS MEETING OF 2022



On January 18-19, 2022, the first BRICS Sherpas meeting of 2022 was conducted virtually, with participants praising India for its BRICS chairship in 2021.

On January 18-19, 2022, the first BRICS Sherpas meeting of 2022 was conducted virtually, with participants praising India for

its BRICS chairship in 2021.

In 2022, China will assume the rotational presidency of the BRICS. BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, and it is a grouping of five key emerging economies.

Meanwhile, India's BRICS Sherpa, Sanjay Bhattacharyya, stated that Last year, they saw a big achievement that the delegations brought about in conditions provided on the strengthening and reform of multilateral systems.

These global governance challenges, particularly the UN system and other institutions, are crucial.

## RUSSIA-CHINA-IRAN CONDUCTED NAVAL EXERCISE

The Russian, Chinese and Iranian navies undertook naval exercises CHIRU-2Q22 in the Gulf of Oman.



The maritime drills conducted in the northern parts of the Indian Ocean aimed at deepening practical cooperation among the navies of the three countries.

The participants practised various tactics and operations, such as rescuing ablaze vessels, saving hijacked vessels, shooting at targets, nocturnal shooting at aerial targets, and other tactical manoeuvres as a part of the drill.

At least 140 warships and over 60 aircraft with nearly 10,000 military personnel would be taking part in the military exercises.

## CHINA TARGETING LITHUANIA, EU ACTION AGAINST CHINA

Recently, the European Union launched action against China at the World Trade Organization (WTO) for targeting Lithuania over its stance on Taiwan.

In November 2021, a Taiwanese Representative Office was opened in Lithuania, notable because it is for the first time that Taiwan was allowed to use its own name to open an office within the EU.



Following this, China has downgraded its diplomatic relations with Lithuania, calling it a violation of the "One China Policy".

China has also unofficially boycotted products from Lithuania, whether it is sourced directly or indirectly from the country.

China alleges that Lithuania is acting in concert with the American efforts of containment by using the Taiwan card, and to spread discord between China and Europe.

'One China Policy' means that countries seeking diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China



(PRC, Mainland China) must break official relations with the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) and vice versa.

**Action at WTO:** By going to the WTO, the EU lent support to accusations by Lithuanian business leaders and officials that the row **has resulted in China blocking imports from Lithuania and other economic restrictions.**

**China's crackdown on Lithuanian imports affects other European nations as well.** The country has also imposed trade restrictions on goods from countries like **France, Germany and Sweden**, which include parts from Lithuanian supply chains.

The EU is currently China's largest trading partner, and about 80-90% of Lithuania's exports are based on manufacturing contracts with the rest of the EU.



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# ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

## CONTROVERSY OVER CHINA'S NEW LAND BORDER LAW

China's new law on land borders came into effect from 1st January, 2022. It comes at a time when **border standoff in eastern Ladakh** remains unresolved and several places in Arunachal Pradesh have been renamed recently by **China as part of its claim on the Indian state**.

### *Delimitation and Survey of Land Borders:*

The new law lies down that the **People's Republic of China (PRC)** shall set up boundary markers on all its land borders to clearly mark the border.



**Management and Defense of Border Areas:** The People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Chinese People's Armed Police Force are assigned with the responsibility of maintaining security along the border.

This responsibility includes cooperating with local authorities in combating illegal border crossings. The law prohibits any party from indulging in any activity in the border area which would **"endanger national security or affect China's friendly relations with neighboring countries"**. Even citizens and local organizations are mandated to protect and defend the border infrastructure. Finally, the law provides for the border to be sealed in the event of a war, armed conflict, incidents which threaten the security of border residents such as biological and chemical accidents, natural disasters, and public health incidents.

**International Cooperation:** On the topic of its border-sharing countries, the law lays down that the relation with these countries is to be based on principles of **"equality and mutual benefit"**. Further, the law provides for provisions for formation of joint committees, both civil and military, with the said countries to negotiate land border management and resolve border-related issues. The law also stipulates that PRC should abide by the treaties on land borders that it has signed with the **respective countries and all border issues are to be settled through negotiations**.

## ABOUT THE NEW LAND BORDER LAW

- The **Land Border Law** was approved October 23, 2021, by the members of the **National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee** at the closing meeting of the 31st session of the 13th NPC Standing Committee. The meeting was presided over by the NPC Standing Committee's Chairman Li Zhanshu. President Xi Jinping signed orders to promulgate the law.
- Significance:** The Land Border Law reflects the growing confidence of China in its capability to manage its 22,000-km land border with 14 countries **including Russia, North Korea, Mongolia, India, and Bhutan**. China has land border disputes with **India (3,488-km along LAC) and Bhutan (400-km)** while it has resolved boundary disputes with 12 countries. The Law comprises **62 Articles** that stipulate measures to strengthen border defence, improve public services and infrastructure, support economic and social development in border areas, promote coordination between border defence and social, economic development, and encourage and support people's life and work in border areas. The Law also stipulates establishing trade areas and border economic cooperation zones at the borders. **It also states to improve the ecological environment in addition to maintaining flood and fire control and epidemic control along the border.**
- The **Law states that China shall follow the principle of equality, mutual trust, and friendly consultation**. It will conduct negotiations with neighbouring countries to manage land border-related affairs and resolve longstanding border issues and disputes. Though the law also states that China can close its border if it recognizes a war or any armed conflict as a threat to its border security. The Law states the **responsibilities of the military, state governments, and the State Council or Cabinet for the management of the economic and security issues in border areas**. The law does not stipulate how to handle border security though the law stipulates that the Chinese military and military police will take measures to safeguard territorial integrity and land boundaries and guard against and combat any act that undermines territorial sovereignty and land boundaries.
- The People's Liberation Army and the People's Armed Police Force will guard against any "invasion, encroachment, infiltration, and provocation."** As per Article 22 of the Land Borders Law, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) shall be responsible for 'carrying out border duties' including 'organizing drills' and 'resolutely prevent, stop, and combat invasion, encroachment, provocation, and other acts.'

## INDIA-CHINA BORDER DISPUTE

China has a **22,100-kilometer land border with 14 countries**. It has resolved the boundary disputes with 12 neighbours. India and Bhutan are the two countries with which China is yet to finalise the border agreements. China and Bhutan signed an MOU firming up a three-step roadmap for expediting the boundary negotiations. **India-China border disputes run 3,488-km along the Line of Actual**



**Control (LAC).** On June 15, 2020, the India-China border witnessed the worst violence since 1967 that killed 20 Indian soldiers. The clash occurred in the Galwan Valley which is strategically located between Ladakh on the Indian side of LAC and **Aksai Chin on China's side of the LAC**. Following the clash in Galwan Valley, China claimed that the entire valley belongs to China while India termed the claim as exaggerated. As per experts and scholars, the LAC claims and territorial claims are different. **The LAC claims refer to the territory which is under the effective control of each country.** India refers to China's claim to the entire Galwan Valley as unilaterally altering the LAC.

### RECENT DISENGAGEMENT B/W TWO NATIONS

The **agreement on Patrolling Point (PP) 17A (Gogra post)** was reached but China is not inclined to move back from PP15 (Hot Springs area); it continues to insist that it is holding its own side of the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**. The disengagement at PP17A is likely to follow the process that **was adopted for PP14 in the Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso** where a time-frame was set for withdrawal. Both sides agreed to resolve these remaining issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols and maintain the momentum of dialogue and negotiations. They also agreed that in the interim they will continue their effective efforts in ensuring stability along the **LAC in the Western sector and jointly maintain peace and tranquility.**

### PATROLLING POINT 15 AND 17A

**Along the LAC between India and China,** Indian Army has been given certain locations that its troops have access to patrol the area under its control. These points are known as patrolling points, or PPs, and are **decided by the China Study Group (CSG)**. CSG was set-up in 1976, when Indira Gandhi was the prime minister, and is the **apex decision-making body on China**. Barring certain areas, like Depsang Plains, these patrolling points are on the LAC, and troops access these points to assert their control over the territory. It is an important exercise since the **boundary between India and China** is not yet officially demarcated. LAC is the demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory. **PP15 and PP17A are two of the 65 patrolling points in Ladakh** along the LAC. Both these points are in an area where India and China largely agree on the alignment of the LAC. PP15 is located in an area known as the Hot Springs, **while PP17A is near an area called the Gogra post.**



### LOCATION OF HOT SPRINGS AND GOGRA POST

**Hot Springs is just north of the Chang Chenmo river and Gogra Post** is east of the point where the river takes a hairpin bend coming southeast from Galwan Valley and turning southwest. The area is **north of the Karakoram Range of mountains**, which lies north of the Pangong Tso lake, and south east of Galwan Valley.



**Importance of Hot Springs and Gogra Post :** The area lies close to Kongka Pass, one of the main passes, which, according to China, marks the boundary between India and China. India's claim of the international boundary lies significantly east, as it includes the entire Aksai Chin area as well. **Hot Springs and Gogra Post are close to the boundary between two of the most historically disturbed provinces (Xinjiang and Tibet) of China.**

### RELATED CONCERNS

- **Formalize the Chinese Military's Transgressions:** The broader aim of the land border law is to give legal cover and formalize the Chinese military's transgressions across the **LAC (Line of Actual Control) in 2020.**
- **Fresh Impetus to Civilian Agencies:** The law calls for increased settlement of the civilian population and improved infrastructure along the border area. China has previously used the strategy of moving its **"civil" population along the contested part of the LAC** on the basis of which it claims rightful ownership. The new law might increase such instances and create further problems between the two countries.
- **Limiting the Water Flow:** There is also the possibility of limiting the water flow in the **Brahmaputra or Yarlung Zangbo river which flows from China** into India as the law calls for "measures to protect the stability of cross-border rivers and lakes". China might cite this provision in case of hydropower projects which may cause **ecological disaster in India and call it a lawful action on its part.**

### China's Border Disputes:

- China has a 22,100-kilometer land border with 14 countries.
- It has resolved the boundary disputes with 12 neighbors.
- **India and Bhutan** are the two countries with which China is yet to finalize the border agreements.
- **China and Bhutan signed an MOU** firming up a three-step roadmap for expediting the boundary negotiations.



- India-China border disputes cover **3,488-km along the Line of Actual Control**, China-Bhutan dispute covers about 400 km.

### MAJOR FRICTION POINTS

- Apart from PP15 and PP17A, PP14 in Galwan Valley**, and Finger 4 on the north bank of Pangong Tso and Rezang La and Rechin La on the south bank of Chang Chenmo river, were identified as friction points.
- Pangong Tso lake:** Pangong Lake is located in the **Union Territory of Ladakh**. It is situated at a height of almost 4,350m and is the world's highest saltwater lake. Extending to almost 160km, one-third of the Pangong Lake lies in India and the other two-thirds in China.
- Galwan Valley:** The valley refers to the land that sits between steep mountains that buffet the **Galwan River**. The river has its source in Aksai Chin, on China's side of the LAC, and it flows from the east to Ladakh, **where it meets the Shyok River on India's side of the LAC**. The valley is strategically located between Ladakh in the west and Aksai Chin in the east, which is currently controlled by China as part of its **Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region**.
- Chang Chenmo River:** **Chang Chenmo River or Changchenmo River** is a tributary of the Shyok River, part of the Indus River system. It is at the southern edge of the disputed Aksai Chin region and north of the Pangong Lake basin. The source of Chang Chenmo is near the Lanak Pass.
- Kongka Pass:** The Kongka Pass or Kongka La is a low mountain pass over a hill that intrudes into the **Chang Chenmo Valley**. It is in the disputed **India-China border area in Ladakh**.
- Karakoram Range:** It is also known as Krishnagiri which is situated in the northernmost range of the Trans-Himalayan ranges. It forms **India's frontiers with Afghanistan and China**. It extends eastwards from the Pamir for about 800 km. It is a range with lofty peaks [elevation 5,500 m and above]. Some of the peaks are more than 8,000 metre above sea level. K2 (8,611 m) Godwin Austen or Qogir] is the **second highest peak in the world and the highest peak in the Indian Union**. The Ladakh Plateau lies to the north-east of the Karakoram Range.

### WHAT IS LINE OF ACTUAL CONTROL?

**Demarcation Line:** The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory.

*LAC is different from the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan:*

The LoC emerged from the 1948 ceasefire line negotiated by the **United Nations (UN)** after the Kashmir War. It was designated as the LoC in 1972, following the **Shimla Agreement between the two countries**. It is delineated on a map signed by the **Director General of Military Operations (DGMO)** of both armies and has the international sanctity of a legal agreement. The LAC, in contrast, is only a concept – it is not agreed upon by the two countries, either delineated on a map or demarcated on the ground.

**Length of the LAC:** India considers the LAC to be 3,488 km long, while the **Chinese consider it to be only around 2,000 km**.

### CHINA BUILDS NEW BRIDGES ACROSS PANGONG LAKE

Recently, it was found that China is building a new bridge on Pangong Tso which will provide an additional axis to deploy troops faster **between the north and south banks of the lake, and closer to the LAC (Line of Actual Control)**. Earlier, China's new law on land borders came into effect from 1st January, 2022, at a time when border standoff in eastern Ladakh remains unresolved and several places in Arunachal Pradesh have been renamed recently by China as part of its claim on the Indian state. India too has been improving its infrastructure in the border areas. In **2021, the Border Roads Organization** completed more than 100 projects in border areas, the majority of which were close to the border with China.



**Background:** Since the military standoff began in May 2020, India and China have not only worked to improve existing infrastructure, but have also built several new roads, bridges, landing strips along the entire frontier. **Towards the end of August 2020**, India outmaneuvered China to capture the previously unoccupied heights of the Kailash Range on the south **bank of Pangong Tso lake**. Indian troops positioned themselves on the peaks there, including Magar Hill, Gurung Hill, Rezang La, Rechin La, and this allowed them to dominate the strategic Spanggur Gap — it can be used for launching an offensive, as China had done in 1962 — and also gave them a view of the **PLA garrison at Moldo**. Indian troops had also positioned themselves above the Chinese troops in the Fingers area on the north bank. During this scramble for the heights, shots had **been fired by both sides, a first in over four decades**.

## #Reading Corner

When you read, you exercise your comprehension abilities and your analytical abilities. It fires up your imagination and stimulates the memory centers of your mind. It helps recall information as well as stabilize your emotions.

The importance of a reading habit is that it strengthens mental muscles. Reading is one of the best mental workouts there is.

And to ace CLAT, reading is the key. So dear aspirants, solve the passage based questions regularly and keep reading.

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Troops from the two countries remained on these heights through the harsh winter months. The **significance of these positions was one of the main factors** that compelled China to negotiate a pullback. Both countries agreed to a pullback from the north bank of the lake, and positions on the **Kailash Range in the Chushul sub-sector south of Pangong Tso.**

**About:** The bridge is being constructed more than 20 km east of Finger 8 on the lake's north bank – **India says Finger 8 denotes the LAC.** The Lake is overlooked by the Finger Area - a set of eight cliffs extending out of the Sirijap range (on the northern bank of Lake). **Pangong Tso, an endorheic lake,** is 135 km long, of which more than two-thirds is under Chinese control. The north and south banks of the lake were among the several friction points that surfaced after the start of the standoff. Before India and China pulled back troops from the north and south banks in February 2021, the area had seen massive mobilization and the two sides even deployed tanks, **barely a few hundred meters apart in some locations.**

The bridge site is just east of Khurnak Fort in Rutog county where the PLA (People's Liberation Army) has frontier bases. Historically a part of India, **Khurnak Fort has been under Chinese control** since 1958. From Khurnak Fort, the LAC is considerably west, with India claiming it at Finger 8 and China claiming it at Finger 4.



### SIGNIFICANCE FOR CHINA

The **bridge will cut a 180-kilometer loop from Khurnak** to the south banks through Rudok reducing the distance between **Khurnak and Rudok to 40-50 kilometers**, rather than approximately 200 kilometers as previously stated. The building of the bridge will allow it to mobilize its troops faster in this area, hoping to prevent a repeat of what happened in August 2020.

**Implication for India:** The bridge is in their territory, and the Indian Army will have to factor this in its operational plans. The widening of roads, building of new roads and bridges, new bases, airstrips, advance landing bases, etc are not restricted to the eastern Ladakh region, but are happening across the three sectors of the **India-China boundary (Eastern, Middle and Western).**

### CONCLUSION

The **naming of 15 places in Arunachal Pradesh** as its own territory by China came as India and China remain engaged at both diplomatic and military levels to complete the **stalled disengagement process along the LAC.** Restoring relations, as well as the status quo along the borders, will require mutual sensitivity and an adherence to **past agreements that helped keep the peace**, rather than needless provocations that expand an already long list of differences.

# ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

## EGYPT AS 4TH MEMBER OF NDB



Egypt was added as the fourth new member of BRICS New Development Bank. Bangladesh, UAE, and Uruguay joined BRICS New Development Bank in September 2021.

Membership expansion enables New Development Bank to position itself as a premier development institution for emerging economies.

**BRICS New Development Bank is a multilateral bank that was established by Brazil, Russia, China, India, and South Africa to finance sustainable development and infrastructure projects.**

*The new list of New Development Bank member countries:*

**Member Countries:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Uruguay.

**New Development Bank Headquarter:** Shanghai, China.

**New Development Bank President:** Marcos Prado Troyjo.

**New Development Bank Founder:** BRICS;

**New Development Bank Founded:** 15 July 2014.

## WORLD'S 1ST COMPANY TO TOUCH \$3 TRILLION MARKET CAP



The stock market value of Apple Inc. hit \$3 trillion and became the world's first company to do so.

The market cap of Apple hit \$182.86 per share, which made it the world's first company to touch the \$3 trillion mark.

However shortly after hitting the mark, the share value dipped below it and did not rise again until the market closed. The iPhone maker passed \$2 trillion in 2020 and over \$1 trillion in 2018.

The world's most valuable company reached the milestone as investors bet that consumers will continue to shell out top dollar for iPhones, MacBooks and services such as Apple TV and Apple Music.

In China, the world's largest smartphone market, Apple continued to lead for the second straight month, beating rivals such as Vivo and Xiaomi, recent data from CounterPoint Research showed.

Apple Inc. CEO: **Tim Cook**

Apple Inc. Headquarters: **Cupertino, California, United States**

## INDIA AS ASIA'S SECOND LARGEST ECONOMY

According to the **Information Handling Services (IHS) Markit report**, India is likely to overtake Japan as Asia's second-largest economy by 2030.

Currently, India is the sixth-largest economy, behind the U.S., China, Japan, Germany and the U.K. IHS Markit is a global leader in information, analytics and solutions for the major industries and markets that drive economies worldwide.



Note: The size of a nation's overall economy is typically measured by its **Gross Domestic Product**, or GDP, which is the value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given year.

**GDP Projection:** In terms of value, the size of the Indian economy stood at USD 2.7 trillion in 2021, which is projected to grow to USD 8.4 trillion by 2030.

This boom is enough to overtake Japan, making India the second largest economy in the Asia-Pacific region by 2030. India's growth rate is projected to be 8.2% in 2021-22, compared to a decline of 7.3% in the previous fiscal.

## INDIA-UK FREE TRADE DEAL TALKS

On January 13, 2022, the UK government announced the launch of **free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with India.**

This move is being described as a **golden opportunity, of putting British businesses at the front of the Indian economy.**



FTA is likely to take UK's historic partnership with India to the next level.

**With this FTA, sectors like Scotch whisky, financial services and cutting-edge renewable technology are set to benefit.**

India-UK FTA is believed to create huge benefits for both countries. **It has the potential to boost bilateral trade by GBP 28 billion a year by 2035.**

The deal will also help in **increasing the wages by GBP 3 billion across the UK.**

Under the FTA, two trading partners significantly **reduce or eliminate the import duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them.**



India has a strong historical tie with the UK. Presently, **the UK is one of the most important trading partners of India. The UK is significant for India as an FDI investor, after Mauritius and Singapore** which have been ranked second and first respectively.

Among G20 countries, the UK is also one among the largest investors in India. **Bilateral trade between both the countries was 15.5 billion USD in 2019-20 as opposed to 16.87 USD billion in 2018-19.**

India engages with the UK in sectors including **textiles, pharma, leather, furniture, industrial machinery, and toys.** India is further looking to the UK to support it with technology-based products like medical devices, automobiles and high-quality cameras.

## PIERRE OLIVIER REPLACED GOPINATH AS IMF ECONOMIST



**French-born economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas** has been named as the next chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

He will succeed Gita Gopinath, the first woman to serve as the Fund's chief economist.

**He will take over as first deputy managing director of IMF from January 21 2022.**

Initially, Gourinchas will join the IMF on a part-time basis from January 24, 2022. He will take upon a role on a full-time basis from April 1, 2022.

International Monetary Fund Formed: **27 December 1945.**

International Monetary Fund Headquarters: **Washington D.C., USA.**

International Monetary Fund Member countries: **190.**

International Monetary Fund Managing Director: **Kristalina Georgieva.**

## TRADE VALUE B/W INDIA & CHINA



In 2021, the **trade value between India and China** was estimated to be over 125 billion dollars. India imported 100 billion dollars from China.

The majority of the import requests were for machinery. In 2021, **India's trade deficit with China was 69.4 billion dollars.**

This represents a **22 percent increase over the trade deficit in 2019.** In 2021, overall imports from China outstripped total trade between the two countries.

**India's imports from China increased by 20% in 2019** compared to the previous year. On either hand, India's exports to China surged by 56% between 2019 and 2021.

In 2021, India's exports to China totaled USD 28.1 billion. **Nonetheless, India imports 100 billion dollars from China.**

Though exports have increased significantly, they still appear to be insufficient. **Cotton, iron ore, and raw material-based commodities were the top Indian exports to China in 2021.**

Supplies such as air concentrators, active medicinal components, semiconductor devices, and electrical batteries are electrical and mechanical machinery examples.

The **China General Administration of Customs has provided data on commerce between India and China (GAC).** Chinese officials warned of global supply chain disruptions. This could be caused by Omicron.

## FDI FLOWS TO INDIA FALLS BY 26% IN 2021: UNCTAD

**Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** flows to India fell by 26 per cent in 2021, compared to 2020, as per the **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** Investment Trends Monitor published.

In 2020, **FDI to India was recorded at USD 64 billion.**

This was 27 per cent more compared to USD 51 billion in FDI in 2019.



UNCTAD said that low FDI in India was mainly because **large cross-border mergers & acquisitions (M&A) deals recorded in 2020 were not repeated.**

The global FDI flows increased by 77 per cent to an **estimated USD 1.65 trillion in 2021**, from USD 929 billion in 2020.

## NIRMALA SITHARAMAN PRESENTS UNION BUDGET 2022

**Nirmala Sitharaman, the Union Finance Minister,** presents the Union Budget 2022 for the fourth time.

Nirmala Sitharaman, the Union Finance Minister, presents the Union Budget 2022 for the fourth time. She will give the **fiscal year 2022-23 financial results and tax suggestions** (April 2022 to March 2023).



As Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman departs the Finance Ministry to present the Budget in Parliament, a Made

in India **tablet has taken the place of the customary 'Bahi Khata.'**

**V Anantha Nageswaran, India's Chief Economic Advisor,** released the Economic Survey 2021-22 on January 31, 2022.

The Indian economy is expected to develop at an annual rate of 8-8.5 percent in the fiscal year 2022-23, according to the government (FY23).

### *Constitutional Provisions of Budget:*

The Union Budget is a yearly financial report that estimates the **government's income and expenditures to propose future long-term growth and development strategies.**

The Annual Financial Statement refers to the year's Union Budget, **defined by Article 112 of the Indian Constitution (AFS).**

It is a statement of the government's expected receipts and expenditures for a given fiscal year (**which begins on April 1 of the current year and ends on March 31 of the following year**).

The Budget Division of the **Ministry of Finance's Department of Economic Affairs** is the nodal entity in charge of budget preparation.

In 1947, the first budget of an independent India was presented.

### **RUSSIA'S BAN ON CRYPTOCURRENCY**



On January 20, 2022, the Russian central bank proposed to crack down the cryptocurrencies.

If this move is adopted, it could disrupt the burgeoning virtual money sector because Russia is one of the largest crypto-mining nations worldwide.

This proposal was made as Russian authorities have been criticising the cryptocurrencies for years, as these can be used for illegal activities. Authorities also called for regulation.

The **Bank of Russia called to reinforce the ban on cryptocurrency payments,** put ban on cryptocurrency mining, as well as to tight laws on trading virtual money.

**Legal status to cryptocurrencies in Russia:** In Russia, authorities granted legal status to cryptocurrencies in 2020. However, their use in payments was never authorised.

Using cryptocurrencies creates significant threats to the well-being of Russian citizens as well as to the stability of the financial system.

Swift growth of cryptocurrencies is driven by **“speculative demand”, which ultimately leads to formation of a “bubble”.**

Cryptos resemble financial **“pyramid schemes”,** since their value increases with the emergence of new players in the market.

**Cryptocurrency is a collection of binary data,** working as a medium of exchange. Records of individual coin ownership are stored in a digital ledger.

Digital ledger is a computerized database using strong cryptography for securing transaction records. In general, cryptocurrencies **are fiat currencies, because they are not backed by or convertible into commodities.**

### **RBI'S APPROVAL FOR PROPOSAL OF 'BAD BANK'**

The **Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's)** approval for the implementation of the proposal for **setting up a 'Bad Bank'** is still pending.

In September 2021, the Union Cabinet approved the Rs. 30,600 crore guarantee to back Security Receipts issued by National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) for acquiring stressed loan assets.



**NARCL & IDRCL:** The NARCL has been set up and issued a license by the RBI to conduct business as an **Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC).**

**NARCL will acquire stressed assets worth about Rs 2 lakh crore** from various commercial banks in different phases. Public Sector Banks (PSBs) will maintain 51% ownership in NARCL.

Simultaneously, a separate company has been set up to function as an Asset Management Company, named **India Debt Resolution Company Limited (IDRCL),** which will provide management and resolution of assets and also help in the operational aspects, relating to price discovery and aim at evolving the best possible recovery and the resolution process.

**PSBs and Public Financial Institutes (FIs)** will hold a maximum of 49% stake in IDRCL. The remaining 51% stake will be with private-sector lenders.

The NARCL is majorly owned by public sector banks with **51% ownership but in the case of the IDRCL, 51% shares are in private hands.**

# APPOINTMENTS

## VS PATHANIA TOOK CHARGE AS DG OF ICG



**V.S. Pathania took over as the 24th Director General (DG) of the Indian Coast Guard from Krishnaswamy Natarajan who retired from service.**

**He is an alumnus of Defense Services Staff College, Wellington and National**

**Defense College, New Delhi. He was elevated to the rank of Additional Director General in Nov 2019 and took over the reins as Coast Guard Commander (Eastern Seaboard) at Visakhapatnam.**

### *About the V.S. Pathania:*

**In a career of over 36 years, Pathania has held several key appointments afloat and ashore and has also commanded all classes of Coast Guard ships namely Inshore Patrol Vessel 'Ranijindan', Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) 'Vigraha' and advanced OPV 'Sarang', it said.**

**He was elevated to the rank of Additional Director General in November 2019 and took over as Coast Guard Commander (Eastern Seaboard) at Visakhapatnam.**

**Pathania is the recipient of the President's Tatrakshak Medal for Distinguished Service, Tatrakshak Medal for gallantry and DG Coast Guard Commendation.**

## ALKA MITTAL TOOK CHARGE AS MD, CHAIRMAN OF ONGC



**Dr. Alka Mittal took additional charge as the Interim Chairperson and Managing Director of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on January 4, 2022.**

**She has become the first woman to hold the post. She succeeds Subhash Kumar who**

**retired on December 31.**

**Mittal will hold office as ONGC's first woman Chairperson and Managing Director till a period of six months from January 1 or till the appointment of a regular incumbent, whichever is earlier.**

**The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the Petroleum Ministry's proposal to entrust additional charge of the post of ONGC's Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) to Alka Mittal for a period of six months with effect from January 1, 2022, or till the appointment of a regular incumbent to the post, or until further order, whichever is earliest.**

**ONGC's last full-time director was Shashi Shanker, who had retired from the post on March 31, 2021. No full-time replacement was selected at that time.**

**Subhash Kumar, former Director (Finance), was given the additional charge of chairman and managing director on the basis of seniority in the PSU's board of directors.**

### *Who is Alka Mittal?*

**Dr Alka Mittal has been serving as ONGC Director (HR) since November 27, 2018. She is the senior-most Director on the Board of the energy company.**

**She has a postgraduate in Economics, MBA (HRM) and Doctorate in Commerce and Business Studies. She had joined ONGC as a Graduate Trainee in 1985.**

**She became the first woman to join the company's board on November 27, 2018 and the first woman to hold the charge of a full-time Director in ONGC's history.**

**She has been on the board of ONGC Mangalore Petrochemicals Limited (OMPL) since August 2015. She is also on the board of National HRD Network (NHRDN) and IIM Tiruchirappalli.**

**She has a rich experience spanning over three and a half decades. She brought sustainability in the talent acquisition process by adopting Green Recruitment practice in ONGC through the online application process, saving time, cost and resources.**

## RBI'S URJIT PATEL APPOINTED IN AIIB

**Mr. Patel will serve three-year tenure as one of the multilateral development bank's five vice presidents, succeeding former Gujarat Chief Secretary D.J. Pandian, who led the AIIB's investment operations as well as all sovereign and non-sovereign loans in South and Southeast Asia as Vice President.**

**Since its establishment in Beijing in 2015, the AIIB has granted more loans for India than any other member.**

**China is the company's largest stakeholder, followed by India. Its 104 members do not include the United States or Japan.**

**The AIIB has invested \$6.7 billion in 28 projects in India. Apart from infrastructure, it has recently emphasised green projects and assisting public health activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**Under the ADB's Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility (APVAX) project, India asked for loans from the AIIB and the ADB in October to purchase 667 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, with the ADB likely to lend \$1.5 billion and the AIIB roughly \$500 million.**



## RAGHUVENDRA TANWAR APPOINTED AS CHAIRMAN OF ICHR



Professor emeritus, Kurukshetra University, **Raghuvendra Tanwar has been appointed as chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR).**

Tanwar appointment is for a period of three years from the day he assumes the office of the Chairman of the Council or until further order.

Tanwar, who joined Kurukshetra University as a lecturer in August 1977, has an **outstanding academic record, with two gold medals in MA History.**

About the ICHR: **The primary aim and objective of the Indian Council of Historical Research is to promote and give directions to historical research and to encourage and foster objective and scientific writing of history.**

**Enhancing the academic standard of the output of ICHR activities has been the foremost objective in its agenda.**

Indian Council of Historical Research Founded: **27 March 1972.**

Indian Council of Historical Research Headquarters: **New Delhi.**

## V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN AS CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

**Dr. V Anantha Nageswaran** has been named the **new Chief Economic Adviser by the Indian government.**

The statement came just days before the Union Budget for 2022 on February 1 and the filing of the Economic Survey for 2021-22 on January 31.

This position has been **vacant since December 17, 2021, when KV Subramanian resigned.** Previously, he served on the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (PMEAC).

**Dr V Anantha Nageswaran:**

Dr. Nageswaran, a well-known writer, author, teacher, and economic consultant, has lectured at several business schools and management colleges in India and overseas.

He was Dean of the IFMR Graduate School of Business and a guest professor of Economics at Andhra Pradesh's Krea University before being named Chief Economic Adviser.



## GOVT. APPOINTED VIKRAM DEV AS CMD OF AIR OF INDIA

Senior bureaucrat **Vikram Dev Dutt** has been appointed as the **chairman and managing director (CMD) of Air India Ltd.**

Dutt is a 1993-batch IAS officer of **AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre.**

He has been appointed as the **Air India chief in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary**, an order issued by the Personnel Ministry. Prior to this, he was the Principal Secretary (Tourism) in Delhi government.



The Centre had in October last year accepted Tata Son's bid of Rs 18,000 crore to acquire 100 per cent of the debt-laden state-run carrier.

The takeover has not been completed yet. Talace Pvt Ltd, a unit of the holding company of the salt-to-software conglomerate, **had made the winning bid of Rs 2,700 crore cash and Rs 15,300 crore debt takeove**

# AWARDS & HONOR

## NATIONAL BREED CONSERVATION AWARD FOR 2021



The All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on poultry breeding, Mannuthy, under the Kerala Veterinary and Animal Science University (KVASU), bagged the national breed conservation award for 2021.

The center received the prestigious award from ICAR – The National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR) for the conservation and research activities on the Tellicherry breed, the only registered native chicken breed from the State.

The center started conservation of the Tellicherry breed in 2014. Through scientific selection and management, the breed began laying eggs as early as five months and the annual egg production increased to 160-170 eggs.

**About the awards:** The award carries a citation and a purse of Rs 10,000.

The award was established by ICAR – NBAGR for their contribution towards the conservation and improvement of registered Indian breeds of domestic livestock and poultry.

## NATIONAL WATER AWARDS PRESENTED BY JAL SHAKTI

The National Water Awards is presented annually by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti. The third round of the awards, for the year 2020 was recently announced.



**State Awards:** Uttar Pradesh was awarded the first prize. Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu were awarded the second and third prizes.

### District Awards

Muzaffarnagar of Uttar Pradesh was presented the "Best District".

In the North Zone, Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar of Punjab was awarded the best district.

**Thiruvananthapuram:** South Zone

Indore, Madhya Pradesh: West Zone

East Champaran, Bihar: East Zone

Goalpara, Assam and Siang, Arunachal Pradesh: North East Zone

**Purpose of the Awards:** To encourage organizations doing exemplary work in the field of water resource management. To provide good opportunities for startups to engage with senior policy makers of water resource management.

It encourages stakeholders to step towards water management

It motivates the stakeholders to adopt better water usage techniques

It creates awareness about efficient and minimal use of water

The awards are presented by the Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Jal Shakti. **The ministry presents 57 awards. They are presented in 11 different categories.**

They are the best district, best state, best village panchayat, best industry, best urban local body, best institution, best NGO, best water user association, best industry for Corporate Social Responsibility.

**Significance of the Awards:** It encourages people to focus on water management. This is essential because, according to the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the water requirement of India is to increase to 1,100 billion cubic metres per year by 2050.

India holds more than 18% of world population. However, the renewable energy of India is only 4% of the world.

## 1ST BLACK MAN TO WIN BEST ACTOR OSCAR

**Bahamian-American actor Sidney Poitier**, who won an Academy Award for Best Actor in 1964, has died at the age of 94.

In 1963, Poitier had made a film in Arizona, Lilies of the Field. The performance led to a huge milestone making him the first black winner of a lead-acting Oscar.

He was awarded the **US Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009** by President Obama for his work.

Sidney Poitier started his career as an actor in theatre in the 1940s before his breakthrough film role in the 1950 release No Way Out.

Over a five-decade career in films, he worked both as an actor and director. **His last appearance on screen was in the 1997 film Jackal.**



## GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS 2022 ANNOUNCED

The **Golden Globe Awards 2022** ceremony was held to recognise excellence in film, both American and international, and American television.

This was the **79th edition of the annual event**, which honoured the best in American television, as well as film in 2021 as chosen by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.



Two of the films namely **The Power of the Dog** and the **West Side Story**, won the most number of awards with 3 each.

#### *List of winners in the Motion Picture category:*

Best Film (Drama): **The Power of the Dog**  
 Best Film (Musical or Comedy): **West Side Story**  
 Best Actor (Drama): **Will Smith for King Richard** as **Richard Williams**  
 Best Actress (Drama): **Nicole Kidman for Being the Ricardos** as **Lucille Ball**

## NATIONAL STARTUP AWARDS 2021

**National Startup Awards 2021** is the second edition of the award ceremony, conceived by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.



A total of 46 Startups have been recognized as winners of the National Startup Awards 2021 along with 1 incubator and 1 accelerator, by the Government of India. **They have been felicitated for their contribution in their respective sectors.**

#### *Some winners in the list:*

State-wise, Karnataka bagged the highest number of awards, which included **14 out of 46 national startup awards**.

In the fintech category's financial inclusion sub-sector, Bengaluru-based **Naffa Innovations Private Limited (ToneTag)** was declared the winner.

In the fintech category's insurance sub-sector, Umbo Id Tech Private Limited won the award. In the Robotics sub-sector, Sagar Defence was declared the winner.

In the women-led start-up category, **Jaipur-headquartered Frontier Markets** was honoured.

**Key points of the award:** Over 2,177 applications were invited across 15 sectors and 49 sub-sectors for the award.

These applicants were evaluated against six broad parameters namely **Innovation, Scalability, Economic Impact, Social Impact, Environmental Impact, and Inclusiveness and Diversity**.

The **National Startup Awards** recognize and reward outstanding **Startups and ecosystem enablers** that are building innovative products or solutions and scalable enterprises.

## PADMA AWARDS ANNOUNCED BY HOME MINISTRY

The **Union ministry of home affairs** announced the **Padma awards** on the eve of the country's 73rd Republic Day.

The Awards are given in three categories: **Padma Vibhushan** (for exceptional and distinguished service), **Padma Bhushan** (distinguished service of higher-order) and **Padma Shri** (distinguished service).

The award seeks to recognize achievements in **all fields of activities or disciplines** where an element of public service is involved.

These awards are conferred by the President of India at ceremonial functions which are held at **Rashtrapati Bhawan** usually around March/ April every year.



This year the **President has approved conferment of 128 Padma Awards including 2 duo cases (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one)** as per list below.

The list comprises 4 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 107 Padma Shri Awards. 34 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 10 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 13 Posthumous awardees.

#### **Padma Vibhushan**

**Ms. Prabha Atre** ---- Art ---- Maharashtra  
**Shri Radheyshyam Khemka** (Posthumous) ---- Literature and Education ---- U.P.  
**General Bipin Rawat** (Posthumous) ---- Civil Service  
**Shri Kalyan Singh** (Posthumous) ---- Public Affairs ---- Uttar Pradesh

## ASSAM BAIBHAV CONFERRED TO RATAN TATA

Government of Assam conferred its highest civilian award '**Assam Baibhav**' on **Ratan Tata**, on **January 24, 2022**.

**Chief Minister of Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma** announced on January 23 to confer **Assam Baibhav, Assam Saurav and Assam Gaurav Awards**, for the year 2021.



**Assam Baibhav:** It is the highest civilian award in the State of Assam. **This award was officially declared by chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on December 2, 2021.**

**It was declared on the occasion of "Asom divas" (Assam Day).** The Award carries a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh.

Furthermore, the recipient can avail medical treatment at government expense, throughout his life. Obverse of the award has an image of Jaapi and words "**Assam Baibhav**" has been inscribed in Assamese script, on the leaf of Hollong tree.



**Ratan Naval Tata:** He is a philanthropist, Indian industrialist, and former chairman of Tata Sons.

From 1990 to 2012, he was also the chairman of Tata Group as well as an interim chairman, from October 2016 to February 2017. **He received Padma Vibhushan in 2008 and Padma Bhushan in 2000.**

## PRADHAN MANTRI RASHTRIYA BAL PURASKAR



Ahead of Republic Day, PM Modi virtually interacted with **Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP)** awardees on January 24, 2022, amid a covid-19 pandemic.

The Prime Minister also presented them with certificates digitally via blockchain

technology. The technology was used to present certificates to awardees for the first time.

He referred to these children as "**inspiration for the entire society**" and asked them to work while considering how they could benefit the country.

**The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar was given to 29 children, 14 girls (PMRBP).**

### *Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar*

**The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar**, the Prime Minister's National Award for Children, is an Indian civilian honor.

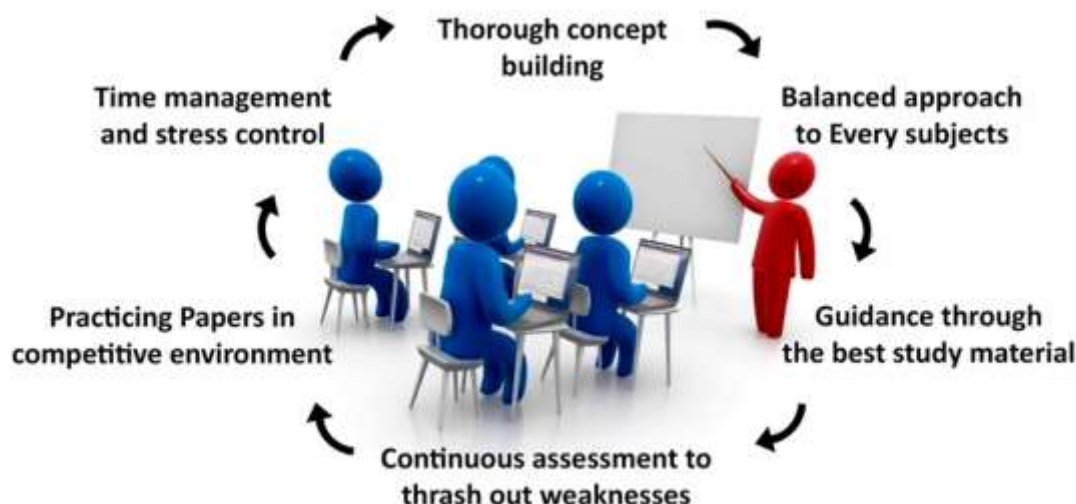
It is divided into two categories.

In 2018, the awards were changed its name and combined to form the "**Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar.**"

It is overseen by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**. The President of India bestows the award during the week preceding India's Republic Day.

# PRAVAHINI

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# SPORTS

## KHELO INDIA GAMES 2022



The Khelo India Games were introduced to revive the sports culture in India. **The 2021 Khelo India Games were postponed due to COVID crisis.**

**It is now to be conducted in Haryana in January 2022.**

The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur is to attend the games.

**The Khelo India Youth Games 2022-23 is to be held in Madhya Pradesh.** The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet recently approved to host the games from Bhopal.

The cabinet also approved land allocation of 50 – acre land to establish an international sports complex.

Funds allocated: **The Government of Madhya Pradesh allocated Rs 176.59 crores for the first phase.** Rs 15.56 crores is to be spent on operation and maintenance of the International Sports Complex. Separate Funds are to be allocated for second and third phases.

**Around 25 sports events are to be organized.**

**This includes five traditional games such as Yoga, Malkhamb, Thang – Ta, Kalariyapattu and Gatka.** It is to be held in five venues. They are Ambala, Panchkula, Chandigarh, Shahabad and Delhi. More than 8,500 players are to participate in the games.

**Mallakhamb or Malkhamb: It is a traditional sport and the athlete performs gymnastic postures and aerial yoga.** He or she also performs wrestling grips on a hinging wooden pole. The pole is made of Indian rosewood, called Sheesham and is polished with castor oil. It is played widely in Madhya Pradesh.

**Thang Ta Games: It is martial arts of Manipur. It is dedicated to worship and fighting. It integrates weapons such as dagger, sword.** Thang Ta is also called Huyen Lallong. It means the method of safeguarding. It also includes controlling the physical through worship.

**Kalaripayattu: It is widely practiced in Kerala.** It is also a kind of martial arts just like Thang Ta. **It is also called Kalari.** It is the oldest surviving martial art in the country. It is 3000 years old. **It includes yoga and dance forms.** Kalaripayattu includes kicks, strikes, grappling and healing methods.

**Gatka: Gatka is a martial art. It is mostly associated with the Sikhs in Punjab.** It is very popular among the Hindkowans. **It includes stick fighting. Gatka means “wooden stick” in Punjabi.**

## VIRAT KOHLI STEPPED DOWN AS TEST CAPTAIN

**Virat Kohli has stepped down as the Test captain** of the Indian national cricket team after seven years. He first led the national side in Test cricket in 2014 against Australia.



He guided the team to an unprecedented **back-to-back Test series** wins Down Under.

In 2021, India also finished as the runners-up in the **inaugural ICC World Test Championship.**

Kohli had recently stepped down as India's T20I captain and was subsequently removed as the ODI captain ahead of the South Africa tour. **India also became a top-ranked Test side in the world.**

## TATA REPLACES VIVO AS IPL SPONSOR

**The Chairman of the Indian Premier League (IPL) Brijesh Patel confirmed on January 11, 2022, that Tata will replace Vivo as the title sponsor of ipl 2022** which will be an upcoming edition of the tournament.

Vivo still has two years left in its sponsorship deal with IPL and as a result, during this period, **Tata Group will remain the main sponsor.**

**The rights of IPL title sponsorship were transferred to Vivo, the Chinese Smartphone manufacturer, for Rs. 200 crores in 2016** after Pepsi terminated its deal of sponsorship with BCCI in October 2015.

In 2020, Vivo got out of the sponsorship rights because of the military standoff between India and China. **In 2021, Vivo bagged the sponsorship rights of IPL again for Rs. 439.8 crores.**



The two new teams of the Indian Premier League- **CVC Capital's Ahmedabad Team and Sanjiv Goenka's RPSG Group for the Lucknow Franchise** on January 11, 2022, received formal clearance from the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).**

The formal clearance to the two new IPL teams was given after a meeting of the IPL Governing Council.

IPL 15 will see the expansion of the league with an addition of two new franchises which will make it the second season to have 10 teams, after the 2011 tournament.

**Chennai Super Kings (CSK) are the defending Champions having won their fourth title in IPL 2021.**

## PV SINDHU WON SYED MODI INT. TOURNAMENT



**PV Sindhu, an ace Indian shuttler, has won the women's singles title at the Syed Modi International Tournament in Lucknow.**

**PV Sindhu, an ace Indian shuttler, has won the women's singles title at the Syed Modi International Tournament in Lucknow.**

### Winners

**Men's singles: The final between Arnaud Merkle and Lucas Claerbout was declared a 'No Match' after one of the finals tested positive for Covid-19.**

**Man Wei Chong and Tee Kai Wun won the men's doubles (Malaysia)**

**Anna Cheong and Teoh Mei Xing won the women's doubles (Malaysia)**

**Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Castro in Mixed Doubles (India).**

## NEERAJ CHOPRA: PARAM VISHISHT SEVA MEDAL

**Olympian Neeraj Chopra will be honoured with the Param Vishisht Seva Medal on the eve of Republic Day by President Ram Nath Kovind.**

He is the first track and field athlete to win a gold medal for India at the Olympics. **Neeraj is a Subedar in the Indian Army.** He had enrolled in 4 Rajputana Rifles as a direct entry to Naib Subedar in 2016.

He was chosen for training at the Mission Olympics Wing and Army Sports Institute in Pune.

**Other honour of Neeraj Chopra:** Chopra was conferred with the Arjuna Award in 2018 and Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) in 2020 for his excellence in sports.



**Gallantry awards:** President Ram Nath Kovind will honour **384 defence personnel with Gallantry and other awards** at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

## LUCKNOW TEAM TO BE KNOWN AS LUCKNOW SUPERGIANTS'

Lucknow's IPL franchise, which is owned by **Sanjiv Goenka (RPSG Group)**, has been renamed **Lucknow SuperGiants** ahead of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022 mega auction.

The **Lucknow team roped in KL Rahul as their captain** and also roped in Australia all-rounder Marcus Stoinis and leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi.

The official IPL team of Lucknow crowdsourced its name from fans and a consumer engagement campaign was launched on social media on 3rd Jan 2022.



Last year, the franchise was **purchased by the Sanjiv Goenka-owned RPSG group** for an amount of Rs 7090

Crores. The other new team to enter the competition is from Ahmedabad who were bought by the Irelia Company Pte Ltd. (CVC Capital Partners) for Rs 5635 Crores.

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# DATES & DAYS

## DRDO CELEBRATED 64TH FOUNDATION DAY



On January 1, 2022, the "Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO)" celebrated its 64th anniversary.

In 63 years, the DRDO has changed India's defense research and development landscape.

The DRDO was also instrumental in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. With the help of the PM CARES Fund, it was able to set up around 850 oxygen plants and Covid hospitals.

It also created a drug called 2DG to combat covid-19. In India, synergy with the defense industry in terms of development and production has reached new heights, with more than 175 technology transfers occurring in 2021 alone.

### Defense Research and Development Organization

DRDO is the highest-ranking agency within the Ministry of Defense's Department of Defense Research and Development.

It is in charge of research and development for the military. The headquarters of the organization are in Delhi.

The Defense Science Organization was formed on January 1, 1958, when the Directorate of Technical Development & Production of Indian Ordnance Factories and the Technical Development Establishment merged.

The Defense Research and Development Service (DRDS) was established in 1979 as a service for Group 'A' Officers/Scientists.

## WORLD BRAILLE DAY OBSERVED ON 4TH JANUARY



World Braille Day, observed on 4 January, highlights the importance of Braille as a means of communication for partially sighted and blind people. The day has been marked by the United Nations since 2019.

World Braille Day also marks the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, who was born on 4 January, 1809. The French educator invented the Braille system, after being blinded at a young age.

*What is Braille?*

According to the UN, Braille "is a tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using six dots to represent each letter and number, and even musical, mathematical and scientific symbols".

The language is used by partially sighted and blind people to read books and periodicals.

People use their fingers to touch and figure out the Braille code and understand the information being given through the language. The invention of the code helped visually impaired people communicate more easily and also made a wider range of reading materials available to them.

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of People With Disabilities, Braille is seen as necessary for social inclusion, education, freedom of expression and opinion.

**Significance of Braille:** According to the World Health Organization, about one billion people have a distance or near vision impairment that was either preventable, or is yet to be addressed.

Due to the coronavirus lockdowns across the globe, people with visual disabilities have faced several issues in terms of isolation and independence.

The pandemic has highlighted the necessity of providing essential information in accessible formats including Braille and audio, as many people with disabilities can face a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 due to lack of guidelines available to them.

## PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIWAS OBSERVED ON 9TH JAN

The Non-Resident Indian Day or also known as the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas is celebrated every year on 9th January every year.



The aim of the event is to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots.

On the occasion of 2022 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD), Union Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan will speak at a virtual youth PBD conference on the "role of Indian diaspora" in innovation and new technology.

**History and Significance:** On 9 January 1915, Mahatma Gandhi came to India from South Africa and became the greatest Pravasi who led India's Freedom Struggle and made India free from British or colonial rule.

As a **Non-Resident Indian or Pravasi**, he is presented as a symbol of a change and development that could bring into India.

According to the Indian Government, NRIs have global exposure in terms of business and development strategies around the world. If some opportunity is provided to them, they will contribute to the developmental process by infusing their ideas and experiences on their motherland i.e. India.

#### *Some Key Facts of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:*

Its objective is to provide an open platform for NRIs to express their feelings, outlooks and perceptions about India.

To create a network of NRIs in all the countries of the world and connect the younger generation with immigrants.

On this day, the government puts a focus on **reconnecting overseas Indians with their roots** so that they can contribute significantly to the development of the country.

**Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention** is held in New Delhi.

**Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** is organised outside India.

2015 marked **100 years of the return of Mahatma Gandhi**.

At the convention of PBD, awards are given to the deserving ones.

PBD's main aim is to connect the Indian Diaspora.

#### **74TH INDIA ARMY DAY: 15TH JANUARY**



**74th Indian Army Day** is being celebrated in India on January 15, 2022.

Indian Army Day is celebrated to honour soldiers of the armed forces in India, for their selfless service. The day is celebrated at all army command offices across India as well as the headquarters in New Delhi.

The day is marked on January 15, every year because on this day Lieutenant General KM Cariappa was appointed to the post in 1949.

He became the first Indian to head the forces. Since then, this day has become a significant day for Indian history. It was the first time an Indian soldier took the reins of the armed forces.

#### *How is the day celebrated?*

Indian Army Day marks the celebration of not only the brave soldiers, but also marks the transfer of power from British rule to India.

Apart from this, the Day also involves a showcase of all the weapons in the Indian Army arsenal. The latest kind of weapons, helicopters, drones, etc are displayed with great pride.

The Indian Army is professionally headed by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Indian Army in its current form was founded on February 26, 1950.

#### **NATIONAL START-UP DAY DECLARED ON 16TH JANUARY**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared **16th January** as 'National Start-up Day'.



The announcement was made by PM Modi on January 15, 2022, via video conferencing during a week-long event "Celebrating Innovation Ecosystem" as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Prime Minister interacted with more than 150 startups across different sectors, during the event.

The startups, categorised under six groups, gave presentations to the Prime Minister on six themes — 'growing from roots', 'nudging the DNA', 'from local to global', 'technology of future', 'building champions in manufacturing' and 'sustainable development'.

The Prime Minister was of the view that Indian startups can easily make it to the global stage and reach other countries and told the young entrepreneurs: "Don't just keep your dreams local, make them global. Remember this mantra — let's Innovate for India, innovate from India".

#### **23RD JANUARY TO BE OBSERVED AS 'PARAKRAM DIWAS'**

The Indian government has decided to celebrate January 23rd as 'Parakram Diwas' to commemorate the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.



This year is the **125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose**. Netaji was born on January 23, 1897. The day is celebrated to honour and remember Netaji's indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation.

Netaji joined the **Indian National Congress in 1921**. Netaji started a newspaper called "Swaraj". He had written a book called "The Indian Struggle". The book covers the Indian Independence movement between 1920 and 1942.

The term "Jai Hind" was coined by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. With the slogan "Give me blood and I will give you freedom", he awakened the country towards fighting against the British.

#### Netaji in the Indian independence struggle

Netaji was prisoned in 1925 for his nationalist activities. Later released in 1927.

After his release, he became the **general secretary of the Indian National Congress**. He formed the All India Forward Bloc as a part of the Indian National Congress in 1939.

During the second world war, Netaji protested the British Raj for not consulting the Indians before pulling them into the war. He was arrested for his protests. Later he was released and was kept under surveillance.

In 1941, Bose escaped to Germany via Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. In Germany, Netaji met German leaders and other Indian students and European political leaders.

Netaji built a force known as the **Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army)** giving the slogan of **"Dilli Chalo"**. Thousands of soldiers of his 60,000-strong army sacrificed their lives for the country.

The Indian National Army supported the Japanese army in their invasion of Northeast India. They together took control of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

## NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY OBSERVED ON 24TH JAN

Every year the **National Girl Child Day** is celebrated on **January 24**. The day is celebrated to promote the rights of girl children in the country. Also the day aims to spread the **importance of education, health and nutrition of the girl child**.



The Government of India did not announce any theme in 2022.

**The first national girl child day was celebrated in 2008.** It is an initiative of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

**International girl child day:**

**The International Girl Child Day** is celebrated on October 11.

It is celebrated by the United Nations and several other international organisations. **The United Nations celebrated the first International Day of Girl Child in 2012.**

**Objectives of National Girl Child Day:** The **National Girl Child Day** is celebrated to spread the importance of inequalities faced by the girl children in the country.

**The day also promotes the educational rights of girl children.** It also spreads the importance of the health and nutrition of girl children.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION

**The International Day of Education** is observed on January 24, annually.

**Year 2022 marks the fourth year** of celebration. The day was observed with the theme— **'Changing Course, Transforming Education'**.

Celebration took place at the UN Headquarters in New York, **Expo 2022 in Dubai, Global Minnesota and Harvard University Graduate School of Education.**

**History of the day:** The **International Education Day** was proclaimed by **"United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)"** in December 2018. It was proclaimed to mark the significance of education in ensuring peace and development.



**National Education Day:** India celebrates National Education Day on November 11, every year. **The day marks the birth anniversary of first Education Minister of India, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.**

## INDIA CELEBRATING 73RD REPUBLIC DAY

India is celebrating the **73rd Republic Day on 26 January 2022**. The celebrations this year are special as India is in the 75th year of Independence – being celebrated as 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

Republic Day marks the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect on 26 January 1950. It **replaced the Government of India Act (1935) as the governing document of India.**

**Republic Day Of India: Importance**



India became independent on 15th of August, 1947. **Even after independence, the country did not have a sound constitution.**

The laws, before the enactment of the constitution, were running on the **basis of Government of India Act 1935.**

Having realized the need for a permanent constitution and its own governing body, the government of India appointed a **Drafting Committee on 28th of August 1947 to draft it and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee.**

After almost 3 years, the 308 members of the Assembly, after many consultations and a few modifications, finally signed a constitution on 24th of January 1950, which came into effect on 26th of January 1950.

And, **that day has been celebrated as Republic Day** in India ever since then. This day defines the importance of having a proper constitution that all the citizens must abide by.



## NATIONAL VOTERS' DAY OBSERVED ON JAN 25TH



Every year, **National Voters Day** is celebrated on **January 25**. The day is celebrated to increase the enrolment of new voters in the country.

Theme of National Voters Day 2022: **Making elections Inclusive, Accessible and Participative**

Every year, the National Awards for the Best Electoral Practices are conferred at state and district level on the **National Voters Day**.

The awards are presented for election management, security management, IT initiatives and accessible elections. Also, the awards are presented for **Election Commission of India icons, media groups and other important stakeholders**. The awards are presented by the Election Commission of India.

**National Voters Day** has been celebrated in the country since 2011. The then broadcasting minister Ambika Soni (during Manmohan Singh government) announced that the participation of youths reaching the eligible age of 18 years were showing less interest towards electoral rolls.

The day was launched to increase their interest. Thus, the day targets the young population.

## DATA PRIVACY DAY OBSERVED ON 28TH JAN



**Data Privacy Day** is celebrated on **January 28**, every year across the world. The objective of the day is to sensitize individuals and disseminate privacy practices and principles.

It encourages everyone to own their **privacy responsibilities** to create a culture of privacy.

Observance of the day is “an international effort of creating awareness on the importance of respecting privacy, enabling trust and safeguarding data”.

The theme for this year is ‘Privacy Matters’. It instills a sense of accountability that Privacy is integral to every individual’s life. Data privacy has been one of the hot topics of discussion in a digitally connected world.

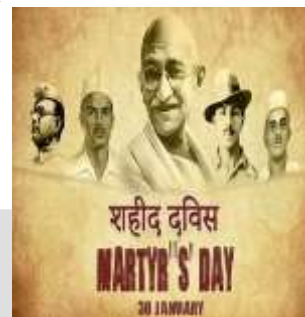
The issue has become pertinent at the time of the **coronavirus disease (Covid-19)** pandemic when more and more people are forced to spend time in the online world.

## MARTYR'S DAY OR SHAHEED DIWAS OBSERVED ON 30TH JAN

**Martyr’s Day or Shaheed Diwas** is observed every year on **January 30** in the memory of Mahatma Gandhi, who was assassinated at Gandhi Smriti in the Birla House by Nathuram Godse in 1948.

This year the nation observed the **74th Martyrs’ Day or Shaheed Diwas**. The day is observed to remember the sacrifices made by freedom fighters in the struggle for India’s independence and to pay our respects to them.

Martyrs' Day is also observed in India on March 23 to pay respect to **Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar**, who were hanged to death on this day in 1931.’



**Significance of the Day:** The President, the Vice President, the Prime Minister, and the **Defense Minister on 30 January get together at the Rajghat to the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi** to pay honour by putting a garland of flowers to the statue of the Bapu.

An honourable salute is also given by the armed forces personnel and inter-services contingent to pay respect to the martyrs.

**History of the Day:** The Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by **Nathuram Godse in the Birla House** during his evening prayers on 30 January 1948.

**Nathuram Godse was trying to justify his crime by holding Gandhiji** and saying that he is responsible for the partition of the country and the killing of thousands during the freedom struggle. He called Gandhiji a pretender and in no way felt guilty for his crime.

On 8th November, Godse was sentenced to death. So, on this day i.e. 30 January **Bapu breathed his last and was martyred**. The Government of India announced the day as **Shaheed Diwas or Martyr’s Day**.

# ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION: 24TH JAN

- The **International Day of Education** is observed on **January 24**, annually. Year 2022 marks the fourth year of celebration. The day was observed with the theme– ‘**Changing Course, Transforming Education**’.
- **History of the day:** The International Education Day was proclaimed by “**United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**” in December 2018. It was proclaimed to mark the significance of education in ensuring peace and development.
- **UNGA resolution:** The resolution to observe ‘**International Day of Education**’ was authored by 59 member states. It demonstrated the unwavering political will for supporting transformative actions for equitable, inclusive, and quality education for all.



## NATIONAL EDUCATION DAY

It has been **observed every year on 11th November, since 2008 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was the first Union Education Minister of India. He was a freedom fighter, scholar and eminent educationist. He was a key architect of Independent India who was responsible for setting up apex education bodies like **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and University Grants Commission (UGC)**. He was posthumously awarded Bharat Ratna, India’s highest civilian award in 1992. Azad supported the **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22) started by Gandhiji** and entered the Indian National Congress in 1920. In 1923, he was elected as the president of Indian National Congress. At an age of 35, he became the youngest person to serve as the President of the Indian National Congress. In 1947, **he became the first education minister of free India** and remained at this post till his death in 1958. In his tenure, he did tremendous work for the upliftment of the country. The first IIT, IISc, School of Planning and Architecture and the University Grants Commission were established under his tenure as the education minister.

**United Nations General Assembly (UNGA):** UNGA is one among the **six principal organs of the United Nations (UN)**, serving as the main policymaking, and representative organ of the UN. The powers, composition, procedures and functions of UNGA are set out in Chapter IV of the United Nations Charter. It is responsible for the UN budget. UNGA is the only UN organ, **where all the member states have equal representation**.

**Members of UNGA:** All the 193 members of UN are members of UNGA, besides Holy See and Palestine as observer states. **UNGA may grant observer status to an entity or international organization**. Observer status entitles them to participate in work of UNGA, though with limitations.

## GOVT. INITIATIVES FOR SMOOTH CONDUCT OF E-LEARNING

Several initiatives have been taken to enable online education in India, such as:

- **E-PG Pathshala:** An initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development to provide e-content for studies.
- **SWAYAM:** it provides for an integrated platform for online courses.
- **NEAT:** It aims to use Artificial Intelligence to make learning more personalized and customized as per the requirements of the learner

*Other initiatives include:*

- **National Project on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL)**, National Knowledge Network (NKN), and National Academic Depository (NAD), among others. **PRAGYATA:** The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) released guidelines on digital education titled PRAGYATA.
- **Under the PRAGYATA guidelines**, only 30 minutes of screen time per day for interacting with parents is recommended for kindergarten, nursery and pre-school. Schools can hold live online classes for a maximum of 1.5 hours per day for Classes 1-8, and 3 hours per day for Classes 9-12.



## EDUCATION IN INDIA: CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

**Part IV of Indian Constitution, Article 45 and Article 39 (f) of Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)**, has a provision for state-funded as well as equitable and accessible education. **The 42nd Amendment to the Constitution** in 1976 moved

education from the State to the Concurrent List. The education policies by the Central government provide a broad direction and state governments are expected to follow it. However, it is not mandatory, for instance TamilNadu does not follow the three language formula prescribed by the first education policy in 1968. **The 86th Amendment in 2002 made education an enforceable right under Article 21-A.**

#### RELATED LAWS

**Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009** aims to provide primary education to all children **aged 6 to 14 years and enforces education as a Fundamental Right.** It also mandates 25% reservation for disadvantaged sections of the society.

#### OTHER IMPORTANT DAY OBSERVED ON 24TH JANUARY

#### NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY

**National Girl Child Day is observed every year on January 24th.** The day is observed to spread awareness regarding the inequalities faced by girl children in Indian society and also to promote the rights of the girl child and the importance of **female education, health and nutrition.** National Girl Child Day is an initiative taken by the **Union Ministry of Women and Child Development.** The day is commemorated by different ministries and organisations by organising different events to raise awareness on the inequalities faced by girls and importance of their empowerment. **The National Girl Child Day 2022 theme is yet to be announced.** The National Girl Child Day 2021 Theme was 'Digital Generation, Our Generation' and the 2020 theme was 'My voice, our common future. National Girl Child Day 2022 celebration will be observed under the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

#### *National Girl Child Day History*

**The National Girl Child Day was first observed on January 24, 2008** by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. It was decided to observe the day to tackle issues related to inequalities that girls face in society. The day is in line with all the campaigns and programmes launched by the Indian government for female children like **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Save the Girl Child and other programmes** like free and subsidised education and reservation in colleges and universities.

#### RELATED TOPICS TO BE READ

#### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD 2021

**International Girl Child Day** is observed every year on October 11. It is an observance day by the United Nations that aims at amplifying the voices of the young girls all around the world as well as increasing awareness about the issues that are faced by them. **Girl Child Day provides an opportunity** to take note of day-to-day discrimination and how it impacts the growth of young girls, particularly in underdeveloped and developing nations. **World Girl Child Day 2021 supports more opportunities** for the girls as well as increases awareness about gender equality in various areas **including, nutrition, education, medical care, legal rights, and protection from discrimination.** The theme for international Girls Day 2021 is 'Digital Generation, Our Generation'. The theme for Girl Child Day focuses on the gender digital divide in devices, connectivity, and their skills, use, and jobs.

#### *International Girls Child Day History*

At the **World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995**, the countries unanimously adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which was the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing the rights of not only women but girls. The **Beijing Declaration is known to be the first to specifically call out the girls' rights.** Later, the United Nations General Assembly on December 19, 2011, adopted the resolution to declare **October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child** in order to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges that the girls face all around the world.

#### ABOUT GENDER DIGITAL DIVIDE

The **theme of International Day of the Girl Child 2021** highlights the gender digital divide which has been affecting the major population of young girls all over the world. As per the United Nations, while the pandemic has accelerated the digital platforms for learning, connecting, and earning, some 2.2 billion people below 25 still do not have internet access at home. However, the **gender digital divide is much more about connectivity.** According to the UN, girls are also less likely than boys to use their own devices as well as gain access to tech-related jobs and skills.

#### *Young Girls changing the world*

- **Malala Yousafzai** - Shot in the head on a school bus by the Taliban, Malala Yousafzai was just 15-years old when she faced the tragic incident. Raising the voice for supporting young girls' education in Pakistan, **Malala came on Taliban's radar** after daring to speak against the ban on girl education. Her story is known across the world.





- **Great Thunberg** - A teenage climate activist from Sweden, **Greta Thunberg** is known for not mincing her words and opinions on world leaders and their take on climate change. She came into the limelight after starting a school strike for the climate outside the Swedish Parliament and eventually became a global phenomenon which further helped in bringing the problem of climate change and global warming to the UN table.
- **Thandiwe Abdullah** - Thandiwe Abdullah, by her 17th birthday, already had an impressive list of achievements. She co-founded the Black Lives Matter Youth Vanguard and helped in creating the Black Lives Matter in-school program, which was subsequently adopted by the National Education Association.
- **Licpriya Kangujam** - She is a child environment activist from India and is one of the youngest climate activists globally. Licpriya Kangujam addressed the World Leaders at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2019 and asked them to take immediate climate action.

#### RELATED SCHEME: BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO

It was launched in January 2015 with the aim to address sex selective abortion and the declining child sex ratio which was at 918 girls for every 1,000 boys in 2011. This is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resource Development. The programme is being implemented across 405 districts in the country.

#### Other Initiatives for Girl Children

- **UJJAWALA**: To tackle the problem of trafficking, it is a Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-Integration of Victims of Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation.
- **Kishore Health Card**: To record the information about the weight, height, Body Mass Index (BMI) of Adolescent Girls (AGs). These health cards for AGs are maintained at the AnganWadi centres (AWCs).
- Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG).
- Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, etc.

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# REPORT & INDEXES

## DEATH OF TIGERS IN INDIA: NTCA



According to the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**, in 2021 India reported the death of around 126 tigers.

Recently, a tiger was **found dead in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh**, taking the toll to 44 in MP in 2021. NTCA is investigating the cause of the recent death of Tiger in Madhya Pradesh.

Before that, a tigress died in the Dindori area of Madhya Pradesh, allegedly due to poisoning. **Madhya Pradesh with 44 tiger deaths, is followed by Maharashtra (26) and Karnataka (14).**

**Status of Tiger:** The tiger is globally listed as “endangered” on the **International Union for the conservation of Nature (IUCN)** Red List. As of 2015, the global wild tiger population was estimated between 3,062 and 3,948 mature individuals.

Most of the population are living in small isolated pockets. Presently, India hosts the largest population of tigers.

### National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)

NTCA was established in December 2005 on the recommendation of the Tiger Task Force. It was constituted by the Prime Minister of India to manage the Project Tiger and many Tiger Reserves in India.

**Project Tiger:** Project Tiger, a tiger conservation programme, was launched in April 1973. It was launched with the aim of ensuring a viable population of the Bengal tiger in its natural habitats, preserving areas of biological importance and protecting tigers from extinction.

## DISTRICT LEVEL GOOD GOVERNANCE INDEX



The Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory is to get a district – level Good Governance Index. **The index is modeled on the Good Governance Index 2021.**

The index will assess the governance in different districts of Jammu and Kashmir. **It is to**

**be calculated considering 58 indicators in ten different sectors.**

**The Center for Good Governance (CGG) provided the technical support to create the framework of the index.** The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) is to prepare the index.

The index is to be calculated based on the performance of the districts in 10 sectors **such as citizen centric governance, public safety and judiciary, welfare and development, economic governance, public infrastructure and utilities, public health, human resource development, commerce and industry and agriculture and allied sector.**

**Significance:** The index will help Jammu and Kashmir increase its district governance to the level of other best administered districts in the country.

The next step is to take good governance to block levels and tehsil levels. **The index aims to change the work culture in government organizations.**

It will help the Union Territory march towards “**Maximum governance and minimum government**”. Also, the index will help in time bound disposal of office files, Increased citizen participation, increased accountability and transparency.

**It was first announced at the regional conference organized by DARPG (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances) in Uttar Pradesh.**

**The DARPG operates under the Ministry of Personnel, public grievances and pension.** It is the nodal agency for administrative reforms and public grievance redressal.

**Good Governance Index: It was released by DARPG on Good Governance Day (December 25).** Gujarat topped the ranking and was followed by Maharashtra and Goa. **It is essential to release these indices in order to assess the governance in the state.**

## HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX 2022

**Henley Passport Index 2022 was recently released.** The latest edition shows record-breaking levels of travel freedom for the top-ranking countries, Japan and Singapore.

The report also reveals that there was the widest recorded global mobility gap **since the index was created 17 years ago.**



**Passport holders of two Asian nations, Japan and Singapore, can now enter 192 destinations worldwide visa-free.** It is 166 more than Afghanistan.

**Afghanistan has been listed** at the bottom of this index.

**As per the Index, in the first quarter of 2022,** India has improved its passport power. India has climbed seven places

up and has been ranked at 83rd position. **In 2021, it was ranked at 90th position.**

**Now, India has access to 60 countries without a prior visa.** In 2021, visa free scope was valid for just 58 countries. Oman and Armenia have been recently added to the list of prior visa requirements.

**Japan and Singapore have been ranked 1st**, with passport holders having access to 192 destinations visa-free.

**Germany and South Korea have been placed at 2nd position**, with passport holders able to access 190 destinations visa-free.

**Finland, Italy, Spain and Luxembourg shared 3rd place with a score of 189.** Austria, Denmark, Sweden, France and Netherlands are in 4th place, with a visa-free score of 188.

**Passports of US and UK regained their previous strength and now placed at the 6th place** with visa-free or visa-on-arrival score of 186. In 2020, they had slipped to 8th place, lowest in the 17-year history of the index.

**Worst passports to hold in 2022:** North Korea has been ranked at 104th spot with access to 39 destinations. **Nepal and Palestinian territories are at 105th spot, with the score of 37.**

**Pakistan has been ranked at 108th position with a score of 31.** Afghanistan with access to just 26 countries, emerged as the worst performer.

**The Henley Passport Index: The index provides ranking to 199 passports** in accordance with the number of destinations their holders can access **visa-free or visa-on-arrival.**

The index is updated in real time throughout the year. It is prepared on the basis of exclusive data provided by **the International Air Transport Association (IATA).**

## GLOBAL RISKS REPORT 2022 BY WEF



**The World Economic Forum recently released the Global Risks Report 2022.** Cybersecurity, pandemic, climate change and space advancements are the emerging risks to the global economy.

**The global economy is to shrink by 2.3% by 2024.**

However, in developing countries this is to be 5.5%. In rich countries, it will be 0.9%

**Digital security: The online platforms have increased tremendously during the pandemic.** The COVID has brought in major work shifts. People are now attending classes online. This has increased the security risks.

**Cyber Threats: The cyber threats are growing at insanely uncontrollable rates.** The criminals are using tougher tactics

and therefore, the cyber threats are becoming more aggressive day by day.

**Cryptocurrencies are creating an easy path of escape for the cyber criminals.** Today 90% of the ransomware attacks are paid in cryptocurrencies.

**Space: The costs of rocket launching technologies are falling.** This has led to a new space race, not between countries, but between government and private companies.

**While private launchers such as Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos are launching satellites and astronauts,** governments are focusing on military satellites.

This is creating friction in the orbit. **The risks of debris collision, congestion are increasing.**

**Climate change:** The three top climate risks are loss of biodiversity, extreme weather and failure to act on climate change.

**While economies are trying to move towards zero emissions, rapid actions are required.** The report calls the climate actions by world countries as “Disorderly”. **Faster shift from the intense carbon polluters is the need of the moment.**

## INDIA STATE OF FOREST REPORT 2021

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** released the India State of Forest Report-2021.



In October, 2021 an amendment was proposed by **MoEFCC to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980** to bring significant changes to forest governance in India.

It is an assessment of India's forest and tree cover, published every two years by the Forest Survey of India. **The first survey was published in 1987, and ISFR 2021 is the 17th.**

India is one of the few countries in the world that brings out such a survey every two years, and this is widely considered comprehensive and robust.

**The ISFR is used in planning and formulation of policies in forest management** as well as forestry and agroforestry sectors.

Three categories of forests are surveyed – very dense forests (**canopy density over 70%**), moderately dense forests (40-70%) and open forests (10-40%). Scrubs (canopy density less than 10%) are also surveyed but not categorised as forests.

**New Features of ISFR 2021:** It has for the first time assessed forest cover in tiger reserves, tiger corridors and the Gir forest which houses the Asiatic lion.



The forest cover in tiger corridors has increased by 37.15 sq km (0.32%) between 2011-2021, but decreased by 22.6 sq km (0.04%) in tiger reserves.

Forest cover has **increased in 20 tiger reserves in these 10 years**, and decreased in 32.

Buxa (West Bengal), Anamalai (Tamil Nadu) and Indravati reserves (Chhattisgarh) have shown an increase in forest cover while the highest losses have been found in Kawal (Telangana), Bhadra (Karnataka) and the Sundarbans reserves (West Bengal).

**Pakke Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh** has the highest forest cover, at nearly 97%.

## RBI'S RELEASED DIGITAL PAYMENT INDEX



The **RBI's Digital Payment Index**, which shows the deepening of payments through digital modes in India, rose by 39.64 per cent to 304.06 in September 2021 against 217.74 in the year-ago month.

The RBI-DPI Index continues to demonstrate significant growth in **adoption and deepening of digital payments across the country**.

RBI has introduced **Digital Payments Index in January 2021** with March 2018 as the base year to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country. This means that the DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100.

RBI has started publishing the **Digital Payments Index (DPI)** on a semi-annual basis from March 2021 onwards with a lag of 4 months.

This means that the DPI will be released by RBI for March and September every year in the months of July and January respectively.

**About the RBI-DPI:** The RBI-DPI comprises five broad parameters that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods, viz. payment enablers (**with 25 per cent weight**), **payment infrastructure—demand-side factors (10 per cent)**, **payment infrastructure—supply-side factors (15 per cent)**, payment performance (45 per cent) and consumer centricity (5 per cent). These parameters have sub-parameters which, in turn, consist of various measurable indicators.

## HUNGER IN INDIA: REPORTS



Recently, the Union government informed the **Supreme Court (SC)** that **no starvation death (Death by Hunger)** has been reported by any state or Union territory (UT) in recent years.

The court is hearing a petition that highlights how starvation deaths continue to eat into the right **to life and dignity of social fabric and a “radical” new measure like community kitchens** need to be set up across the country to feed the poor and the hungry.

The petition also referred to **Rajasthan's Annapurna Rasoi, Indira Canteens in Karnataka, Delhi's Aam Aadmi Canteen, Anna Canteen of Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand Mukhyamantri Dal Bhat and Odisha's Ahaa Centre**.

**SC's Ruling:** The SC asked the Centre to explore the possibility of a “model” community kitchen scheme by which it could support the States to ensure food security for the poor.

It asked the Centre to make a model scheme and leave it to the States to **follow the guidelines depending on their individual food habits**.

## CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX (CPI) 2021

The **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2021** was announced by Transparency International, and **India was rated 85th (Score of 40)**.

The **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2021** was announced by Transparency International, and India was rated 85th (Score of 40).

Three countries, **Denmark, Finland, and New Zealand** shared first place in the ranking (Score of 88).

India was placed 86th with a score of 40 last year (for 2020). The **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)** for this year shows that corruption is at an all-time low around the world.

For the tenth year in a row, the global average remains steady at 43 out of 100 points.



### *Different Index Ranks of India 2020-2021:*

Global Health Security Index 2021: 66th  
5th Truecaller's Global Spam & Scam Report 2021: 4th  
Hurun's Global Unicorn Index 2021: 3rd  
“2019 Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) Report: 3rd  
Henley Passport index 2022: 83rd  
Global Drug Policy Index 2021: 18th  
Climate Change Performance Index 2022: 10th  
2021 TRACE global Bribery Risk Rankings: 82nd  
World Talent Ranking report 2021: 56<sup>th</sup>

## IMF PUBLISHED WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

On January 25, 2022, the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** published its **World Economic Outlook**.

According to the analysis, **global economic growth** will be



half a percentage point lower than previously projected. The rate of growth will slow from 5.9% in 2021 to 4.4 percent in 2022. In 2023, it will drop even lower to 3.8 percent.

**According to the IMF, the reduction in global growth predictions** is mostly due to the IMF's assessment of economic prospects in China and the United States.

In the United States, **the removal of Joe Biden's Build Back Better strategy** from the baseline, early withdrawal of monetary support, and supply constraints resulted in a 1.2 percentage point downward revision for growth in 2022.

**Disruptions connected to China's zero-tolerance** Covid policy and persistent financial hardship among property developers resulted in a 0.8 percentage point negative revision.

**India:** India will grow at a rate of 9% in 2021-2022, according to the IMF. India's growth prospects were assessed by the IMF to be **9.5 percent for the year in October 2021.**

**India's GDP is expected to grow at 9% in 2022-23, according to the IMF.** According to the October prediction,

growth will be 8.5 percent in 2022-23 and 7.1 percent in 2023-24.

**India's prospects for 2023 are predicted based on expected credit growth increases.** Furthermore, the financial sector's improved performance is boosting investment and consumption.

The **World Bank recently predicted a decline in global growth, with the rate remaining at 4.1 percent in 2022.**

**Omicron Variant Impact:** According to the IMF, governments have reimposed mobility restrictions in response to the introduction of the Omicron Covid-19 strain.

In the **United States and other developing countries and emerging markets**, rising energy prices and supply interruptions have resulted in increased and much more broad-based inflation than predicted.

China's ongoing real estate contraction, as well as a delayed rebound in private spending, have hampered economic forecasts.

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# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## PLANNED MISSIONS OF ISRO IN 2022



*Missions planned for 2022*

The Indian Space Research Organization Chairman K Sivan recently announced plans for 2022. He also provided details about the missions accomplished in 2021.

Earth Observation Satellites 4 and 6 are to be launched on PSLV.

ISRO will also launch Aditya L1, Chandrayaan 3, XpoSat, Technology demonstration missions and IRNSS in 2022.

The other 2022 plans are DISHA, Venus Mission, ISROCNES, TRISHNA

### *Missions accomplished in 2021*

**NISAR Mission:** S – Band SAR Payload delivered to NASA

**Aditya L1 Mission:** Hardware loop test completed  
GSLV F-10 mission failed because of issues that occurred during cryogenic stage

**Gaganyaan:** Tests are in progress for cryogenic stage, L-IIO Vikas Engine, service module propulsion system and crew escape system motors. The astronauts have completed the spaceflight training. Parachute drop test has commenced.

**TRISHNA:** The satellite aims to map the surface temperature of land. It is jointly developed by India and France. TRISHNA will also monitor water use.

**Similar India – France operations include Megha – Tropiques and SARAL – AltiKa.** The SARAL mission will study the ocean from space using ARGOS. ARGOS is a data collecting system. Megha – Tropiques will study the energy exchanges in the tropical region and water cycle.

**It will also study the natural resources using thermal infrared imaging.** Currently, the earth temperature from space is obtained at a resolution of 100 meters.

**TRISHNA aims to increase the resolution to 57 meters.** With this, scientists can understand the physical, biological and climatic phenomena of the water cycle.

**NISAR Mission:** It is a joint mission of NASA and ISRO. NISAR means NASA – ISRO – SAR. SAR is Synthetic Aperture Radar.

The radar is to be used to measure the changes occurring on the earth surface. NISAR will carry the largest reflector antenna (designed by NASA).

**The main objective of the NISAR Mission is to scan the earth every 12 days** for three years. It will send images of sea ice and ice sheets.

**DISHA:** DISHA is a twin satellite system. It will study the aeronomy of the earth. That is, the uppermost layer of the earth's atmosphere.

## CHINA & ELON MUSK SPACE TUSSE

Recently, Chinese citizens lashed out against Elon Musk's space programme, after China complained that its space station had to take evasive action in order to avoid collision with satellites launched by Musk's Starlink programme.



As per China, satellites from Starlink Internet Services had two close encounters with the Chinese Space Station on July 1 and October 21.

To prevent collision and for safety reasons, Space Station of China implemented preventive collision avoidance control.

**Increasing risk of space collisions:** About 30,000 satellites and other debris are believed to be orbiting the planet. So, scientists have urged governments to share data for reducing the risk of space collisions.

**SpaceX has deployed around 1,900 satellites for serving its Starlink** broadband network and has planned more such launches.

**About Starlink:** Starlink is a satellite internet constellation. It is operated by SpaceX. The satellite provides Internet access, covering most of the Earth.

The constellation has grown to around 1900 satellites as of 2021. It will eventually comprise more of mass-produced small satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO). As of November 2021, beta service offering is available across 21 countries.

**Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX):** SpaceX is an American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation services. It is headquartered in Hawthorne, California.

The company was started by Elon Musk in 2002, with the objectives of reducing space transportation costs.

## CHINA SUCCESSFULLY TESTED 'ARTIFICIAL SUN'

China has been experimenting with its 'artificial sun' to facilitate a way for clean energy in the future.

In a recent successful test of China's artificial sun, the fusion reactor ran successfully for almost 20





**minutes at a stunning 70 million degrees Celsius.**

The machine strives at utilizing the power of nuclear fusion which is a less explored way of harnessing nuclear energy.

**The steps during a test of China's artificial sun imitated the nuclear reactions that take place inside the sun, where hydrogen and deuterium gasses are used as a fuel.**

**China's artificial sun is dubbed EAST- Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak.** EAST, which is designed and built by the Chinese, has been used for nuclear fusion experiments since 2006, however, it was only recently that the researchers came up with a significant milestone.

**The fusion reactor is being tested by Chinese researchers so that its auxiliary heating system becomes more 'hot' and 'durable'.**

**Gong Xianzu, in charge of this EAST experiment,** informed that the recent operation lays a solid experimental and scientific foundation towards the running of a fusion reactor.

Reportedly, **more than 10,000 Chinese and foreign scientific researchers were part of this \$948 million project** and the experiments that started in early December 2021 are expected to last until June 2022.

## S. SOMANATH BECOMES NEW CHAIRMAN OF ISRO



**Dr S Somnath is to become the new chairman of ISRO.** He is to succeed K Sivan. **He is the fourth Keralite to occupy the top most places in ISRO.** The previous Keralites were **K Radhakrishnan, Madhavan Nair and K Kasturirangan.**

Somnath was nominated way back in 2019. He was nominated based on his seniority. However, the term of Sivan was extended for one year.

Somnath completed his college pre – degree in Maharaja College, Ernakulam. He studied his engineering in TKM College of Engineering.

**He was associated with the PSLV project in its early phases.** Under his leadership, the experimental test flight of LVM3-X/CARE was completed. In 2010, he became the Associate Director of ISRO.

**He was the project director of GSLV Mk – III.** In 2014, he acted as the Deputy Director of Propulsion and space Ordinance Entity

**Chairman of ISRO:** The chairman of ISRO is the secretary to the Government of India. **He is an executive of the Department of Space.** The Department reports to the prime minister directly. **Vikram Sarabhai is the longest serving chairman of ISRO.**

He served for 12 years. In 1962, he urged Nehru to establish INCOSPAR (**Indian National Committee for Space Research**) under the Department of Atomic Energy. **INCOSPAR became ISRO in 1969.**

## DRDO TEST-FIRED MPATG MISSILE

**The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** flight tested the Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM), successfully.

During the flight test, final deliverable configuration of the MPATGM was tested. **MPATGM is an indigenously developed anti-tank missile,** a low weight and a 'fire and forget' missile.



**It was launched from a launcher, which was man portable.** It was integrated with thermal sight.

**During the test, the missile impacted designated target with precision and destroyed it.**

**In the modern-day battlefields, since World War I,** development of ammunition which can beat the armours of tanks is an ongoing race, **because of strategic importance of tanks and armoured vehicles.**

**Background:** Indian Army has been mainly using several imported anti-tank guided missiles in the past while **DRDO has been working on ATGMs,** which can be launched from different platforms under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.

**In the recent past, indigenously developed MPATGM,** Helicopter launched ATGM Nag or Helina and ATGM Nag have been successfully tested.

### What is MPATGM?

**The MPATGM, dubbed as "Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile",** is a third-generation fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile. It has been derived from Nag ATGM.

**It has been developed by DRDO in association with Indian defence contractor VEM Technologies Private Limited.** It is a low weight, long cylindrical missile, comprising of four fins across its mid-section.

**The missile is fitted with high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT) warhead.** It has a length of 1,300 mm and diameter of 120 mm. It has a weight of 14.5 kg. **Command launch unit (CLU) of the missile is of 14.25 kg.** Missile can cover a minimum range of 200-300 m and maximum range of 4 km.

## CHINESE ARTIFICIAL MOON AFTER ARTIFICIAL SUN

**After China's artificial Sun** reached temperatures five times hotter than the Sun, China is ready with its first artificial

moon. Scientists have built an “artificial moon” research facility.



The facility will help them in conducting low-gravity environments using magnetism.

The artificial moon research facility is scheduled for official launch in the year 2022.

It will use powerful magnetic fields inside a vacuum chamber of 2-foot-diameter, for making gravity disappear. To develop this research facility, scientists were inspired by a previous experiment, in which magnets were used to levitate a frog.

The research facility will be filled with rocks and dust to resemble it with the lunar surface.

Chinese scientists got inspired to develop this facility from Andre Geim, who is a physicist at University of Manchester in the U.K. He won “satirical Ig Nobel Prize in 2000” for conducting an experiment in which a frog was made to float with a magnet.

The levitation trick used in his experiment comes from an effect dubbed as “diamagnetic levitation”. Same trick is being used in the “Artificial Moon research facility”.

## SOUTH AFRICA LAUNCHES 1ST 'MADE IN AFRICA' SATELLITE

South Africa has launched its first satellite constellation developed entirely in the continent of Africa.

Three locally produced nanosatellites, which made up the country's first Maritime Domain Awareness Satellite (MDASat) constellation, were launched from Cape Canaveral in the United States, as part of American aerospace company SpaceX's Transporter-3 mission.



Transporter-3, SpaceX's third dedicated rideshare mission, carried a total of 105 spacecraft for various organisations and governments, including CubeSats, microsats, Pocket Cubes and orbital transfer vehicles.

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# ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

## S. SOMANATH AS NEW CHAIRMAN OF ISRO

**Eminent rocket scientist S Somanath** has been appointed as the chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as well as the Space Secretary. Somanath, **who is at present Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC)**, will succeed K Sivan who completes his extended tenure. Sivan was in January 2018 appointed as the **ISRO chief, Secretary of the Department of Space and Chairman Space Commission**. He was in December 2020 given a one-year extension till January 14, 2022. Somanath's appointment as the Space Secretary and the Space Commission Chairman is for a combined tenure of three years from the date of joining of the post, inclusive of an extension in tenure beyond the age of superannuation in public interest, the order said. The post of the ISRO chairman, the **Space Secretary and the Space Commission chief** is usually held by one person only. Somanath, who will be the 10th chairman of the premier space organisation, took charge as the VSSC's head on January 22, 2018, after a two and a half years stint as the Director of Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), Valiamala, Thiruvananthapuram.

### Major Contribution of Dr. Somanath

He has played a major role in the development of the **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)** and the **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mk-III (GSLV Mk-III)**. He joined the **GSLV Mk-III** project in 2003, and served as Project Director from 2010 to 2014. **He is an expert in the area of system engineering of launch vehicles**. Later on, he contributed to the development of the indigenous cryogenic stages for the **GSLV**.



**ISRO:** It is the pioneer space exploration agency of India, headquartered at Bengaluru. ISRO was formed in 1969 with a vision to develop and harness space technology in national development, while pursuing planetary exploration and space science research. **ISRO replaced its predecessor, INCOSPAR (Indian National Committee for Space Research)**, established in 1962 by India's first Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and scientist Vikram Sarabhai, considered amongst the founding fathers of the Indian space program.

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF ISRO

The **first Indian satellite, Aryabhata**, was built by the **ISRO** and launched with the help of the Soviet Union on 19th April 1975. The year 1980 marked the launch of Rohini, which was the first satellite to be **successfully placed in orbit by SLV-3, an Indian made launch vehicle**.

*Subsequently with more efforts, two other rockets were developed by ISRO:* the **PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle)** for placing satellites into polar orbits and the **GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle)** for placing satellites into geostationary orbits. Both the rockets have successfully launched several earth observation and communication satellites for India as well as other countries.

**Indigenous satellite navigation systems like IRNSS and GAGAN** have also been deployed. Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System is designed to provide accurate position information service to assist in the navigation of ships in the Indian Ocean waters. **GAGAN is India's first satellite-based global positioning system** that relies on ISRO's **GSAT** satellites. In January 2014, ISRO used an indigenously built cryogenic engine for a **GSLV-D5** launch of the **GSAT-14 satellite** making it one of the only six countries in the world to develop a cryogenic technology. Some remarkable space **probes of ISRO include Chandrayaan-1 lunar orbiter**, Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan-1) and **ASTROSAT** space observatory. The success of the Mars Orbiter Mission made India only the fourth country in the world to reach Martian orbit.

**India launched Chandrayaan-2**, its second lunar exploration mission after Chandrayaan-1 on 22nd July 2019.

## MAJOR ISRO ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2021

- **Amazonia-1:** The 53rd flight of PSLV-C51 marked the first dedicated mission for **New Space India Ltd (NSIL)**, the commercial arm of ISRO. Amazonia-1, the optical earth observation satellite of **National Institute for Space Research (INPE)**, would provide remote sensing data to users for monitoring deforestation in the Amazon region and **analysis of diversified agriculture across the Brazilian territory**.
- **UNITYsat (three satellites):** They have been deployed to provide Radio relay services.
- **SDSAT:** Satish Dhawan Satellite (SDSAT) is a nano satellite intended to study the radiation levels/space weather and demonstrate long range communication technologies.

## UPCOMING MISSIONS OF ISRO



- **Gaganyaan Mission:** India's maiden space mission, Gaganyaan, will be launched in 2023.
- **Chandrayaan-3 Mission:** Chandrayaan-3 is likely to be launched during the third quarter of 2022.
- **Three Earth Observation Satellites (EOSs):** EOS-4 (Risat-1A) and EOS-6 (Oceansat-3) — will be launched using Isro's workhorse PSLV, the third one, EOS-2 (Microsat), will be launched in the first developmental flight of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV).

*These satellites will be launched in the first quarter of 2022.*

Other:

- **Shukrayaan Mission:** The ISRO is also planning a mission to Venus, tentatively called Shukrayaan.
- **Own Space Station:** India is planning to launch its own space station by 2030, joining the league of US, Russia, and China to an elite space club.

### CHALLENGES FOR ISRO

Mere contribution in **Global Space Economy:** India accounts for only 2% of the global space economy. The two key reasons for the same are lack of space specific laws and effective monopoly **enjoyed by ISRO over all space-related activities.**

**International Treaties:** India's current space activities are currently governed by a few international treaties along with two national policies which are Satellite Communication Policy (SATCOM) and Remote Sensing Data Policy (RSDP). SATCOM policy was introduced in 1997 and is aimed at developing the space and satellite communications industry within India. **In 2000, norms for the implementation of the 1997 policy** were introduced. The RSDP was introduced in 2001 and revised in 2011. It lays down clear guidelines for the distribution of satellite remote sensing data within India and states that the **GOI is the exclusive owner of all data received from Indian Remote Sensing Satellites (IRS)** to which private entities can only acquire a license through the nodal agency.



**Not having Domestic Space Law:** Up until recently, the need for a domestic space law was not felt as space was seen more of an international issue rather than a domestic one. Furthermore, the private sector has only recently shown willingness to invest and play a bigger role in India's space sector after realising the potential of commercial space activity.

### STEPS TAKEN FOR SPACE REVOLUTION

- National Space Transportation Policy (NSTP)
- IN-SPACE
- NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)
- Indian Space Association (ISpA)

### CONCLUSION

Activities such as asteroid mining, **Earth observation, space tourism, satellite launches**, deep space exploration, and satellite internet will be the drivers of the new space economy. With its mixture of cost-effective technology, budding start-up culture, abundance of youth, technological know-how, and with **ISRO already acting as a springboard**, India has the potential to become a world leader in the global space economy. The government need only be careful while **framing the domestic space law** as it has the potential to **change India's future for better or for worse.**

# MISCELLANEOUS

## 'ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE' GREATEST CAUSE OF DEATH



**Antimicrobial resistance is now the greatest cause of death**, according to a new Lancet study. It has overtaken both HIV and malaria in terms of prevalence.

According to the study, **antimicrobial resistance affected more than 1.27 million individuals worldwide in 2019.**

This is higher than the number of people who died from malaria or HIV.

Antimicrobial resistance is particularly prevalent in low and middle-income nations.

**Antimicrobial resistance was responsible for 1.27 million of the world's 4.95 million fatalities in 2019.** Malaria claimed the lives of 640,000 people. AIDS claimed the lives of 860,000 people.

The researchers looked at 23 distinct types of bacteria that cause sickness. Only six of these caused 3.57 million deaths. Antibiotics, **which are used as the first line of defense, failed in 70% of the cases, resulting in death.**

Fluoroquinolones were among them. Lactams, for example, is a type of beta. Antibiotics are commonly used to treat infections such as bone infections, lung infections, and urinary tract infections.

**Anti-Microbial Resistance:** It is a condition wherein the disease-causing microbes such as bacteria, the virus becomes resistant to drugs.

The drugs and antibiotics taken are no longer killing them. The microbial resistances are life-threatening. As the microbes are gaining resistance, doctors increase the dosage. Powerful doses do kill the microbes.

**But they also affect the human body cells.** And organs begin to defunct. Human bodies cannot take antibiotics after a certain level.

## OMICRON DETECTION KIT NAMED 'OM'



**CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI)** has developed an indigenous RT-PCR diagnostic kit, 'Om', for the testing of the Omicron variant of coronavirus.

It is the first kit made by any government institution, and the third to be made indigenously,

**for specific testing of Omicron.**

Currently, two more such kits developed by private players are available in the market. The kit will give test results in around two hours.

**About "Om":** Om enables quick and cost-effective detection of omicron variants over genome sequencing for a large population.

It was **made within two months and will cost around Rs 150.** Further, it will give the test results in around two hours. According to the scientists, it can also be aligned for the detection of other emerging variants of Covid infection and other respiratory infections.

Once the **kit gets approval from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, it will be launched by mid-February. The kit has been referred to the **ICMR-National Institute of Virology (NIV)** and is yet to be validated.

## WORLD'S FASTEST AI SUPERCOMPUTER BY META

**Meta, Facebook parent company**, has said that its newly unveiled **artificial intelligence supercomputer will be the fastest in the world by mid-2022.**

In an official statement on January 24, 2022, Meta said that the company is introducing **AI Research SuperCluster (RSC)**, which is believed to be among the fastest AI Supercomputers running today. It will be the fastest in the world once fully built out in mid-2022.



Earlier in October 2021, the social media company had changed its name to Meta to reflect its focus on metaverse, which will be the successor to the mobile internet.

### Meta's AI Research SuperCluster (RSC): Significance

**AI Research SuperCluster (RSC)** will help the company in building better AI models that will be able to learn from the trillions of examples, and work across hundreds of languages.

It will be able to analyze images, texts, and videos together to determine if the content was harmful.

RSC will also help in building the technologies for the next major computing platform- the metaverse, **where AI-driven applications and products will play a significant role.**

### What is Metaverse?

Facebook in October 2021 had announced that it is **changing the company name to Meta.** The change was announced by **Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg at the company's Connect Virtual Reality Conference.**

## INDIA'S FIRST FEMALE RAFALE PILOT



**India's first female Rafale pilot is Shivangi Singh.** At the Republic Day celebrations, she was a part of the Indian Air Force Tableau. In 2017, she enlisted in the Indian Air Force.

She is only the second woman pilot to take part in the **Tableau of the Indian Air Force.**

Bhawna Kanth, a fighter jet pilot, was the first woman to take part in the IAF tableau.

**Shivangi Singh** was part of the second group of female fighter pilots to be commissioned. Before Rafale, she was a MiG-21 pilot.

**She is a member of the squadron known as the Golden Arrows.** Shivangi Singh was born in the Indian state of Bihar. Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology was where she earned her bachelor's degree in technology.

She continued her education at Jaipur's **Malaviya National Institute of Technology.** "Indian Air Force Transforming for the Future" was the theme of the 2022 IAF Tableau.

The tableau included the Aslesha radar and indigenously produced Light Combat Helicopters. The Gnat aircraft was also displayed by the IAF.

## FIRST GEOLOGICAL PARK TO BE BUILT IN MP



**The first geological park of India will be built in Lamheta, Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh.** Approval for the park was given by the Geological Survey of India, under the ministry of mining.

Park will be constructed with an investment of Rs 35 crores, over five-acre land. The

geological park will be built in **Lamheta, because this place is among significant places in the world, from the geological point of view.**

In 1928, William Henry Sleeman had discovered a **Dinosaur fossil from this area.** UNESCO has also recognised Lamheta as a geo heritage site.

Lameta Formation is also called Infratrappean Beds. It is a sedimentary geological formation found in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

It is associated with the Deccan Traps. It is of the Maastrichtian age and is known for dinosaur fossils.

**What is geopark?**

**Geopark is a unified area,** which advances the protection and use of geological heritage in a sustainable manner. It also promotes the economic well-being of the people living there.

## JHANSI RLY. STATION RENAMED AS VEERANGANA LAXMIBAI

The Government of Uttar Pradesh has renamed the Jhansi Railway Station as '**Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station**'. Jhansi station's new name has been decided after Rani Laxmibai.



The **Chief Minister of UP**

**Yogi Adityanath** made the announcement regarding the new name of Jhansi station on December 29, 2021, via a tweet.

The Uttar Pradesh Government also issued a notification and the Railways has also started preparations to implement the change in the name of Jhansi Railway Station.

**The decision by Uttar Pradesh behind announcing a new name for Jhansi Railway Station** has been taken to boost the tourism in the area and as per the state government, it is also likely to benefit the Bundelkhand area in the state.

**Who was Rani Laxmibai?**

**Rani Laxmibai or Jhansi ki Rani** was an Indian queen. She was the Maharani consort of the **Maratha Princely State of Jhansi** from 1843 to 1853 as the wife of Maharaja Gangadhar Rao.

Rani Laxmibai was one of the leading figures of the 1857 Indian Rebellion and she also became a symbol of resistance to the British Raj for the Indian Nationalists.

## WHAT IS DEVAS CASE?

**Devas is a multimedia company.** It offers satellite-based services. Antrix is an Indian Government owned company. It is the commercial arm of ISRO.



That is, ISRO launches satellites and provides technological assistance for private firms through Antrix. **It is operated by the Department of Space.**

**In 2005, Antrix and Devas signed an agreement.** Under the agreement, Devas was to provide multimedia services to mobile users. The services were to be provided using the S – band satellite leased from Antrix.

**In 2011, this agreement was cancelled by the UPA government.** The UPA government wanted the S – band for national security.

Devas went to the International Chambers of Commerce and also to two BIT (Bilateral Investment Treaty) arbitrations. Devas also filed a case in the Permanent Court of Arbitration. **The PCA ruled that Antrix has to pay 1.6 billion USD as compensation.**

**Why was the deal cancelled in 2011?**



It was cancelled because of non – compliance of rules, conflict of interest, favoritism and financial mismanagement.

On January 3, 2022, **Devas announced that it had won an order.** The order allows Devas to seize 30 million USD worth of properties of Air India. The order was generated by a Canadian court.

*How can a Canadian court issue an order?*

**Canadian jurisdiction** follows restrictive immunity. (India also follows restrictive immunity).

**Restrictive immunity** means a state is immune from the jurisdiction of other state (or country) courts to a certain extent. That is, it need not listen or look upon other country's rules and regulations to a certain extent.

Immune in relation to those actions where the sovereign power shall be excised. On the other hand, absolute immunity means total immunity. **Other countries or foreign firms cannot sue or seize the country's assets.**

*What options do India have?*

India can either challenge the decision in an **appellate court of Canada or it can comply.** It is highly unlikely that India will comply with the judgement.

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# ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

## WHAT IS ANTRIX-DEVAS DEAL?

The **Supreme Court upheld the September 2021 NCLAT order** on 17 January 2022 to wind up Devas on a petition filed by Antrix Corporation Ltd and dismissed the appeal filed by **Devas Multimedia and its shareholder Devas Employees Mauritius Pvt Ltd**. Devas is a multimedia company. It offers satellite based services. Antrix is an Indian Government owned company. **It is the commercial arm of ISRO**. That is, ISRO launches satellites and provides technological assistance for private firms through Antrix. **It is operated by the Department of Space**.



## KEY POINTS ANTRIX-DEVAS – DEAL

In **2005, Antrix and Devas signed an agreement**. Under the agreement, Devas was to provide multimedia services to mobile users. The services were to be provided using the **S – band satellite leased from Antrix**. In 2011, this agreement was cancelled by the UPA government. The UPA government wanted the S – band for national security. Devas went to the International Chambers of Commerce and also to **two BIT (Bilateral Investment Treaty) arbitrations**. Devas also filed a case in the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The PCA ruled that Antrix has to pay 1.6 billion USD as compensation.

## WHY DID INDIA CANCEL THE DEAL?

The **scandal first came to light in 2011**; the news reported that there were some irregularities in the agreement between Antrix and Devas. They reported the findings of a draft audit report and pointed out discrepancies **including financial mismanagement, conflict of interest, non-compliance of rules, and favoritism**. This revelation came at the heel of the **2G spectrum scam** which was condemned for the high level of corruption.

### *How can a Canadian court order the attachment of Indian assets?*

**State immunity** — a well-established principle of international law — shields a state and its property against legal proceedings in the courts of other countries. This **covers immunity from both jurisdiction and execution**. However, there is no international legal instrument in force dealing with state immunity in the municipal legal systems of different countries, which has created an international void. **Consequently, countries have filled this void through their national legislations and domestic judicial practices on state immunity**. Typically, prominent jurisdictions such as Canada follow the concept of restrictive immunity (**a foreign State is immune only for sovereign functions**) and not absolute immunity.

## WHAT IS S-BAND SPECTRUM?

The **S-band spectrum, which is part of the Devas-ISRO deal**, is extremely valuable for mobile broadband services, in terms of usage as well as money. The frequency, also known as 2.5 Ghz band, is globally used for providing mobile broadband services **using fourth generation technologies such as WiMax and Long Term Evolution (LTE)**. This frequency band is unique because it has a substantial amount of spectrum (190 MHz) that can be put to use for mobile services.

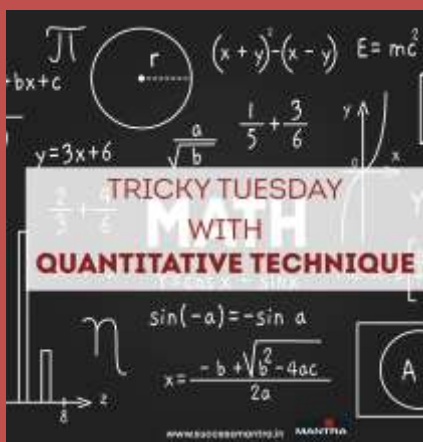


## ANTRIX CORPORATION LIMITED

**Antrix Corporation Limited (ACL), Bengaluru** is a wholly owned Government of India Company under the **administrative control of the Department of Space**. It was incorporated as a private limited company owned by the Government of India in September 1992. It is a **marketing arm of ISRO for promotion and commercial exploitation of space products**, technical consultancy services and transfer of technologies developed by ISRO.



## TELEGRAM



### NATIONAL COMPANY LAW APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

The NCLAT was constituted under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013 to hear appeals against the orders of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). NCLT is a quasi-judicial body that adjudicates issues relating to companies. It is also the appellate tribunal for orders passed by the NCLT(s) under Section 61 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016, and for orders passed by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) under Sections 202 and 211 of the IBC. Any person aggrieved by any order of the NCLAT may file an appeal to the Supreme Court.

### RELATED: PM MODI LAUNCHED INDIAN SPACE ASSOCIATION



ISpA aspires to be the collective voice of the Indian Space industry. ISpA will be represented by leading domestic and global corporations that have advanced capabilities in space and satellite technologies. ISpA will undertake Policy Advocacy and engage with all stakeholders in the Indian Space domain, including the Government and its Agencies, to make India self-reliant, technologically advanced and a leading player in the space arena. ISpA will also work towards building global linkages for the Indian space industry to bring in critical technology and investments into the country to create more high skill jobs.

**Other Related Organisations:** IN-SPACE: Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) was approved in 2020 to provide a level playing field for private companies to use Indian space infrastructure.

**NSIL:** In the 2019 Budget, the government had announced the setting up of a New Space India Limited (NSIL), a public sector company that would serve as a marketing arm of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation). Its main purpose is to market the technologies developed by ISRO and bring it more clients that need space-based services. That role, incidentally, was already being performed by Antrix Corporation, another public sector undertaking working under the Department of Space, and which still exists.

### TOPICS TO BE READ IN CONNECTION:

- CAIRN ENERGY V. GOVT. OF INDIA DISPUTE
- VODAFONE ARBITRATION CASE RECENT MISSIONS OF ISRO





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### Mahesh H Singh

Faculty - Constitutional Law (Polity)

I am a commerce graduate and belong to Mumbai. I have been teaching constitution and PSIR to Law and CSE aspirants for the last 4 years.

My role at Success Mantra is to mentor students to understand the constitution through flow charts and fine examples. I believe in 3 C's (i.e. CONTENT, CLARITY of topics and CONNECTION between students and teacher) are the key elements of effective teaching, what I ensure at success mantra.



### Shivendra Pratik

Faculty - Logical Reasoning

I'm a Post Graduate Diploma in Management and a Gold Medalist in Finance and Banking. I have a comprehensive experience of around 8 years in the Corporate & Education Industry. For the last 6 years, I have been teaching Logical Reasoning to various competitive entrance exam aspirants majority CLAT, AILET, DU LLB, HM, BBA, Banking, UPSC, DSSSB etc.



### Richa Jha

Faculty - Legal Aptitude

I am Advocate Richa Jha. I'm LLB, LLM from Law Faculty, University of Delhi. Law, as a subject, can be taught with the help of legal theories, their practices and applications which can be substantiated with the help of case studies.

I sincerely believe in imparting a legal education which a candidate can relate to his exam and could become a means to achieve success.



### Ankit Jha

Faculty - General Knowledge | Service Aptitude

I'm a hospitality professional and a qualified manager. I've diversified experience of more than six years in different industries. I graduated from the prestigious IHM Pusa Delhi.

I mentor the aspirants of Success Mantra as a Faculty for General Awareness & Service Aptitude. I'm dedicated towards providing the best content in terms of quality & relevancy and always eager to assist the students.



### Vipin Sharma

Faculty - Quantitative Techniques

I'm an MBA, LL.B. and B.Com (AMU). I have been in association with Success Mantra since 2013. Extensive knowledge of arithmetic mathematics, algebra, geometry, statistics and other areas of mathematics allows me to confidently explain concepts and processes to my students. My lesson plans engage students and help them feel confident in their mathematical abilities.



### Deepak Chauhan

Faculty - English Language & Usage

I'm Deepak Chauhan. I'm PG in English. I've more than fifteen years of Experience including teaching experience of eight years. I'm committed to creating a classroom which is stimulating and highly motivated.

I'm highly professional and dedicated towards my work. I've created a huge library of competitive english which I share with my students as and when required. I've passion for English Language and my ultimate goal is to help my students to achieve their goal in life.



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