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THE HINDU REVIEW

JANUARY 2022

- **Monthly**
Capsule
- **Current**
Affairs



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The Most Important Current Affairs January 2022

Union Budget 2022-23: Key highlights of Union Budget

Union Finance Minister, **Nirmala Sitharaman** is presenting the **Union Budget 2022** for the **4th** time in a row. She will be presenting the financial statements and tax proposals for the fiscal year **2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023)**. A Made in India tablet has replaced the traditional 'Bahi Khata' as Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman leaves the Finance Ministry's office to go to the Parliament to present the Budget.

Introduction of the Budget:

- **The total size of the budget 2022-23 is Rs 39.45 Lakh Crore.** This figure also represents Total Receipt and Total expenditure as per the Budgeted Estimates for 2022-23. Total receipts other than borrowings in 2022-23 estimated at Rs. 22.84 lakh crore
- The total expenditure was projected at Rs. 34.83 lakh crore in the Budget Estimates 2021-22, which as per the Revised Estimate is now Rs. 37.70 lakh crore.

Here are the key highlights from the Union Budget 2022-23:

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Budget, said that the country is expected to grow at **9.27 per cent**.
- Two parallel tracks for the next **25 years**: public investments in infrastructure and a budget that is inclusive and futuristic.
- **7 focus areas**: PM Gati Shakti, Inclusive Development, Productivity Enhancement, Sunrise Opportunities, Energy Transition, Climate Action and Financing of investments.
- This Union Budget seeks to lay the foundation & give a blueprint of the economy over 'Amrit Kal' of next 25 years – from India at 75 to India at 100.
- **Production Linked Incentive schemes in 14 sectors** with the potential to create **60 lakh new jobs**, and the additional new production of **Rs 30 lakh crore**.
- Startups will be promoted to facilitate **Drone Shakti** to make drone a service. In select ITIs in all states, courses will be started.
- **Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme** to be extended up to **March 2023**, guaranteed cover extended by another **Rs 50,000 crore**. The total cover under the scheme is now **Rs 5 lakh crore**. An additional amount has been earmarked for the hospitality sector.

- Announcement of **Ken Betwa river linking project** worth **Rs 44,605 crore** to be beneficial for capital goods players.
- Govt continuously encouraging digital banking. Taking forward, **75 digital banking units will be set up in 75 districts**.
- PM Modi's development initiatives for the **North East** will be implemented by the **North Eastern Council**. This will enable livelihood activities for the youth and women. This scheme is not a substitute for the existing Centre or state schemes.
- Issuance of **e-passports** will be rolled out in **2022-23** to make it easier for citizens. Ease of business 2.0 will be launched.
- **5G spectrum auctions** to be carried out in **calendar 2022** to enable the launch of services within FY22-23.
- **Animation, visual effects, gaming and comics sector** offers immense potential to employ youth. An **AVGC promotion task force** with all stakeholders will be set up to recommend ways to realise this and build domestic capacity for serving our markets and the global demand.
- **Special Economic Zones Act** will be replaced with new legislation for the development of enterprises and hubs. It will cover the existing industrial enclaves and enhance the competitiveness of exports.
- Effective capital expenditure of the Central government is estimated at **Rs 10.68 lakh crore** in 2022-23, about **4.1% of GDP**.
- To facilitate domestic manufacturing of **280 gigawatts of installed solar capacity by 2030**, an additional allocation of **Rs 19,500 crore** for PLI for manufacturing of high-efficiency modules with priority to fully integrate manufacturing units to solar PV modules will be made.
- **Digital rupee** to be issued using blockchain and other technologies and will be issued by **RBI starting 2022-23**. This will give a big boost to the economy. This will give a big boost to the economy. Introduction of central bank digital currency to boost digital economy, and lays down a solid plan of the government to have a public digital currency.
- For 2022-23, an allocation of **Rs 1 lakh crore** has been made to assist the states in catalysing overall investments in the economy. These **50-year interest-free loans** are over and above normal borrowings allowed to states. It'll be used for PM Gati Shakti-related and other productive capital investments of states.
- Aims to lower the winding up of companies to **6 months from 2 years currently**.

Tax Proposals:

- Nirmala Sitharaman announced a **new tax rule for taxpayers** where a taxpayer can file an updated return on payment of taxes within **two years** from the end of the relevant assessment year.
- Both Centre and States govt employees' tax deduction limit to be increased from **10% to 14%** to help the social security benefits of state government employees and bring them at par with the Central govt employees.
- Income from transfer of digital assets (**Cryptocurrency**) to be charged **30% tax, plus 1% tax** on the transaction.
- Existing tax benefits for startups, which were offered redemption of taxes for **3 consecutive years, to be extended by 1 more year.**
- Income from Long Term Capital Gains will be **taxed at 15%**, the Finance Minister said.
- The gross **GST collections for the month of January 2022** are **Rs 1,40,986 crore** –the highest since the inception of the tax.
- Duty concessions are being given to promote electronics manufacturing, wearables and hearables devices included. Duty concessions to [parts of mobile phones including camera modules etc.
- Customs on polished **diamonds, gemstones** cut to **5%**. Simply sawn diamonds will be exempted. To facilitate the export of jewellery through e-commerce, simplified regulations will be in place by June this year.
- Deduction for employer contribution to NPS increased to **14% from 10%** earlier for State govt employees on par with central govt employees.
- No set off permitted against other income.
- Alternate Minimum Tax for **cooperative societies** to be cut to **15%**. The proposal will reduce the surcharge on cooperative societies to be reduced from **12% to 7%**, for those whose income is between **Rs 1 crore and Rs 10 crore.**
- Unblended fuel to get an additional duty of **2 rupees per litre** from October 2022.
- Finance Minister announced a reduction of surcharge on unlisted shares from **28.5 per cent to 23 per cent.**

Deficit/Expenditure:

- Proposes fiscal deficit of 4.5% of GDP by 2025/26
- Projects fiscal deficit of 6.4% of GDP in 2022/23
- Revised fiscal deficit for 2021/22 at 6.9% of GDP
- Total expenditure in 2022/23 seen at 39.45 trillion rupees

- States will be allowed 4% fiscal deficit to GDP in FY23
- 50 year interest free loans over and above normal borrowing allocated to states
- Scheme for financial assistance to states for capital investment outlay to be 1 trillion rupees in 2022/23

Financial inclusion:

- 100% of **1.5 lakh post offices** will come on the core banking system, enabling financial inclusion and access to accounts through net banking, mobile banking, ATMs, and also providing online transfer of funds between post office accounts and bank accounts.
- This will be helpful especially for farmers and senior citizens in rural areas, enabling interoperability, and financial inclusion.

Fiscal Deficit target set at 6.4% for FY23:

- FY23 total expenditure seen at Rs 39.45 lakh crore.
- Total Receipts other than borrowing seen at Rs 22.84 lakh crore.
- Revised Fiscal Deficit 6.9% of GDP in FY22 as against 6.8% in Budget estimates.
- Fiscal Deficit target set at 6.4% for FY23.

National Telehealth programme:

- Sitharaman announced a **National telehealth programme** in Budget 2022. An open platform for the National Digital Health Ecosystem will be rolled out. It will consist of digital registries of health providers and health facilities, unique health identity and universal access to health facilities The pandemic has accentuated mental health problems in people of all ages.



Education sector:

- States will be encouraged to revise syllabi of agricultural universities to meet needs of natural, zero-budget & organic farming, modern-day agriculture. One class, one TV channel' program of **PM eVIDYA** will be expanded from **12 to 200 TV channels**. This will enable all states to provide supplementary education in regional languages for classes **1 to 12**.

Indian Railways:

- PM Gati Shakti plans one of the four pillars of growth. **25,000 km** of national highways to be built in **2022-23**.
- 400 new-generation Vande Bharat trains** with higher efficiency and better facilities for passengers will be developed in the next three years. Over 2,000 km of the rail network to be brought under the indigenous world-class technology **KAWACH**, for safety and capacity augmentation.

India's farmers

- Procurement of wheat in Rabi season 2021-22 and the estimated procurement of paddy in Kharif season 2021-22 will cover **1,208 lakh metric tonnes** of wheat and paddy from 163 lakh farmers & **Rs 2.37 lakh crores** will be the direct payment of MSP value to their accounts.
- Chemical-free natural farming to be promoted in India
- Use of drones** to be promoted for crop assessment, digitization of land records, spraying of insecticides and nutrients. Fund to be facilitated through **NABARD** to finance start-ups for agriculture and rural enterprise which are relevant for the farm produce value chain.

Infrastructure: PM Awas Yojana

- In 2022-23, **80 lakh houses** will be completed for identified beneficiaries of **PM Awas Yojana**; 60,000 houses will be identified as beneficiaries for PM Awas Yojana in rural & urban areas.
- 60,000 crore** allocated for providing access to tap water to 3.8 crore households. In 2022-23, 80 lakh households will be identified for the affordable housing scheme.

Defence:

- 68%** of the capital procurement budget for Defence to be earmarked for domestic industry to promote Aatmanirbharta and reduce dependence on imports.

- This is up from **58%** last fiscal. Defense R&D will be opened up for industry, startups and academia with **25% of the defence R&D budget**.

National Ropeways Development Program:

- National Ropeways Development Program, **Parvatmala** to be taken up on PPP mode.
- Contracts to be awarded in 2022-23 for **8 ropeway projects of 60 Km length**.

Skill Development:

- Digital Ecosystem for Skilling and Livelihood (DESH-Stack e-portal)** will be launched to empower citizens to skill, reskill or upskill through on-line training.
- Startups will be promoted to facilitate '**Drone Shakti**' and for **Drone-As-A-Service (DrAAS)**.

Budget Allocation to Major Scheme:

| Scheme | Budget Allocation (2022-23 BE) |
|---|--------------------------------|
| National Health Mission | Rs. 37,800 Crore |
| Jal Jeevan Mission | Rs. 60,000 Crore |
| National Education Mission | Rs. 39,553 Crore |
| Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana | Rs. 19,000 Crore |
| PM Kisan | Rs. 68,000 Crore |
| Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana | Rs. 6,400 Crore |
| Pardhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana | Rs. 10,000 Crore |
| PLI for Large Scale Electronics and IT Hardware | Rs. 528 Crore |
| PLI for Large Scale Electronics and IT Hardware | Rs. 5,300 Crore |

Top 5 Ministry in terms of Budget Allocation for 2022-23

| Ministry | Budget |
|--|-----------------------|
| Ministry of Defence | Rs. 5,25,166.15 Crore |
| Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution | Rs. 2,17,684.46 Crore |
| Ministry of Road Transport and Highways | Rs. 1,99,107.71 Crore |
| Ministry of Home Affairs | Rs. 1,85,776.55 Crore |
| Ministry of Railways | Rs. 1,40,367.13 Crore |

Economic Survey 2022: Key highlights of Economic Survey

Finance Minister, **Nirmala Sitharaman** has presented **Economic Survey 2021-22** in the Parliament on 31st January 2022. The pre-budget Economic Survey, which is tabled in Parliament ahead of the Union Budget to present the state of the economy and suggest policy prescriptions. The pre-Budget Economic Survey is authored by a team led by **Chief Economic Advisor (CEA)**. Days before the presentation, the Centre appointed economist **V Anantha Nageswaran** as the new CEA.

What is the Economic Survey ?

- Economic Survey is an annual document of the Ministry of Finance. It reviews the economic progress of the country and issues in the last 12 months.
- The survey provides information related to the performance of key developmental schemes launched by the government. The document also explains the performance of major government policies and their impact.
- The Economic Survey discusses major fiscal developments, macroeconomic factors, inflation, and other economic factors. The document also highlights the impact of agriculture, climate change, and employment on the economy of the country.
- The 1st Economic Survey was tabled in **1950-51**. However, till the year **1964**, it was presented along with the budget.

Theme of Economic Survey 2021-22 is the "Agile approach"

Here are the key highlights from the Economic Survey 2021-22:

- As per first advanced estimates by NSO, Indian economy estimated to grow by **9.2 percent in real terms in 2021-22** (current fiscal).
- Real term GDP in **2022-23 (FY23) projected to grow by 8- 8.5 percent.**
- Economy had **contracted by 7.3% in 2020-21** due to impact of pandemic and subsequent nationwide lock-downs.
- Agriculture least hit by pandemic. **Agriculture and allied sectors expected to grow by 3.9 percent in 2021-22;**
- Industry sector to grow by 11.8 percent and services sector by 8.2 percent in 2021-22.
- Service Sector GVA expected to grow by 8.2 percent in 2021-22.
- India's consumption estimated to grow by 7.0 percent, Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) by 15 percent, exports by 16.5 percent and imports by 29.4 percent in 2021-22.

- **Between April to November, 2021**
- Revenue receipts from the Central Government gone up by 67.2 percent (YoY) as against an expected growth of 9.6 percent in the 2021-22
- Index of Industrial Production (IIP) grew at 17.4 percent (YoY) as compared to (-)15.3 percent in 2020.
- Capital Expenditure (Capex) grown by 13.5 percent (YoY) with focus on infrastructure-intensive sectors.
- Central Government debt gone up from 49.1 percent of GDP in 2019-20 to 59.3 percent of GDP in 2020-21, due to enhanced borrowings on account of COVID-19.
- Government has set up a **National Land Monetisation Corporation (NLMC)**, as a 100 percent Government of India owned entity, to fast track monetisation of land and non-core assets of public sector entities. NLMC will have an initial authorised share capital of Rs 5,000 crore and subscribed share capital of Rs 150 crore.
- Foreign Exchange Reserves crossed US\$ 600 billion in the first half of 2021-22 and touched **US \$633.6 billion as of December 31, 2021.**
- **India was the fourth largest forex reserves holder in the world** after China, Japan and Switzerland, as of end-November 2021.
- To achieve **\$5 trillion GDP by FY25, India needs to spend about \$1.4 trillion.**
- **Startup ecosystem:**
- **India has third largest startup ecosystem in the world** after US and China. Number of new recognized start-ups increased to over 14000 in 2021-22 from 733 in 2016-17.
- 44 Indian start-ups achieved unicorn status in 2021 taking overall tally of unicorns to 83.
- Delhi has replaced Bengaluru as the startup capital of India.
- India climbed 35 notches in the **Global Innovation Index**, from 81st in 2015-16 to 46th in 2021.
- India's overall score on the **NITI Aayog SDG India Index and Dashboard** improved to 66 in 2020-21 from 60 in 2019-20 and 57 in 2018-19.
- India has the **tenth largest forest area in the world.**
- 157.94 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines administered as on 16th January 2022; 91.39 crore first dose and 66.05 crore second dose.
- **National Family Health Survey-5 data**
- Total Fertility Rate (TFR) came down to 2 in 2019-21 from 2.2 in 2015-16
- Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), under-five mortality rate and institutional births have improved in 2019-21 over year 2015-16
- Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), 83 districts have become 'Har Ghar Jal' districts.

Ministry of Home Affairs Padma Awards 2022 announced

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**.

Padma Vibhushan (4)

| S. No | Name | Field | State / Country |
|-------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Ms. Prabha Atre | Art | Maharashtra |
| 2 | Shri Radheyshyam Khemka (Posthumous) | Literature and Education | U.P. |
| 3 | General Bipin Rawat (Posthumous) | Civil Service | Uttarakhand |
| 4 | Shri Kalyan Singh (Posthumous) | Public Affairs | Uttar Pradesh |

Padma Bhushan (17)

| S. No | Name | Field | State / Country |
|-------|---|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad | Public Affairs | Jammu and Kashmir |
| 2 | Shri Victor Banerjee | Art | West Bengal |
| 3 | Ms. Gurmeet Bawa (Posthumous) | Art | Punjab |
| 4 | Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee | Public Affairs | West Bengal |
| 5 | Shri Natarajan Chandrasekaran | Trade and Industry | Maharashtra |
| 6 | Shri Krishna Ella and Smt. Suchitra Ella* (Duo) | Trade and Industry | Telangana |
| 7 | Ms. Madhur Jaffery | Others-Culinary | USA |
| 8 | Shri Devendra Jhajharia | Sports | Rajasthan |
| 9 | Shri Rashid Khan | Art | Uttar Pradesh |
| 10 | Shri Rajiv Mehrishi | Civil Service | Rajasthan |
| 11 | Shri Satya Narayana Nadella | Trade and Industry | USA |
| 12 | Shri Sundararajan Pichai | Trade and Industry | USA |
| 13 | Shri Cyrus Poonawalla | Trade and Industry | Maharashtra |
| 14 | Shri Sanjaya Rajaram (Posthumous) | Sci and Engg | Mexico |
| 15 | Ms. Pratibha Ray | Literature and Education | Odisha |
| 16 | Swami Sachidanand | Literature and Education | Gujarat |
| 17 | Shri Vashishth Tripathi | Literature and Education | Uttar Pradesh |

Padma Shri (107)

| S. No | Name | Field | State / Country |
|-------|---|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Shri Prahlad Rai Agarwala | Trade and Industry | West Bengal |
| 2 | Prof. Najma Akhtar | Literature and Education | Delhi |
| 3 | Shri Sumit Antil | Sports | Haryana |
| 4 | Shri T Senka Ao | Literature and Education | Nagaland |
| 5 | Ms. Kamalini Asthana and Ms. Nalini Asthana* (Duo) | Art | Uttar Pradesh |
| 6 | Shri Subbanna Ayyappan | Science and Engineering | Karnataka |
| 7 | Shri J K Bajaj | Literature and Education | Delhi |
| 8 | Shri Sirpi Balasubramaniam | Literature and Education | Tamil Nadu |
| 9 | Srimad Baba Balia | Social Work | Odisha |
| 10 | Ms. Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay | Science and Engineering | West Bengal |
| 11 | Ms. Madhuri Barthwal | Art | Uttarakhand |
| 12 | Shri Akhone Asgar Ali Basharat | Literature and Education | Ladakh |
| 13 | Dr. Himmatrao Bawaskar | Medicine | Maharashtra |
| 14 | Shri Harmohinder Singh Bedi | Literature and Education | Punjab |
| 15 | Shri Pramod Bhagat | Sports | Odisha |
| 16 | Shri S Balleash Bhajantri | Art | Tamil Nadu |
| 17 | Shri Khandu Wangchuk Bhutia | Art | Sikkim |
| 18 | Shri Maria Christopher Byrski | Literature and Education | Poland |
| 19 | Acharya Chandanaji | Social Work | Bihar |
| 20 | Ms. Sulochana Chavan | Art | Maharashtra |
| 21 | Shri Neeraj Chopra | Sports | Haryana |
| 22 | Ms. Shakuntala Choudhary | Social Work | Assam |
| 23 | Shri Sankaranarayana Menon Chundayil | Sports | Kerala |
| 24 | Shri S Damodaran | Social Work | Tamil Nadu |
| 25 | Shri Faisal Ali Dar | Sports | J&K |
| 26 | Shri Jagjit Singh Dardi | Trade and Industry | Chandigarh |
| 27 | Dr. Prokar Dasgupta | Medicine | U.K. |
| 28 | Shri Aditya Prasad Dash | Science and Engineering | Odisha |
| 29 | Dr. Lata Desa | Medicine | Gujarat |
| 30 | Shri Malji bhai Desai | Public Affairs | Gujarat |
| 31 | Ms. Basanti Devi | Social Work | Uttarakhand |
| 32 | Ms. Lourembam Bino Devi | Art | Manipur |
| 33 | Ms. Muktamani Devi | Trade and Industry | Manipur |
| 34 | Ms. Shyamamani Devi | Art | Odisha |
| 35 | Shri Khalil Dhantejvi (Posthumous) | Lit. and Education | Gujarat |

| S. No | Name | Field | State / Country |
|-------|--|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 36 | Shri Savaji Bhai Dholakia | Social Work | Gujarat |
| 37 | Shri Arjun Singh Dhurve | Art | Madhya Pradesh |
| 38 | Dr. Vijaykumar Vinayak Dongre | Medicine | Maharashtra |
| 39 | Shri Chandraprakash Dwivedi | Art | Rajasthan |
| 40 | Shri Dhaneswar Engti | Lit. and Education | Assam |
| 41 | Shri Om Prakash Gandhi | Social Work | Haryana |
| 42 | Shri Narasimha Rao Garikapati | Lit. and Education | Andhra Pradesh |
| 43 | Shri Girdhari Ram Ghonju (Posthumous) | Lit. and Education | Jharkhand |
| 44 | Shri Shaibal Gupta (Posthumous) | Lit. and Education | Bihar |
| 45 | Shri Narasingha Prasad Guru | Lit. and Education | Odisha |
| 46 | Shri Gosaveedu Shaik Hassan (Posthumous) | Art | Andhra Pradesh |
| 47 | Shri Ryuko Hira | Trade and Industry | Japan |
| 48 | Ms. Sosamma Iype | Animal Husbandry | Kerala |
| 49 | Shri Avadh Kishore Jadia | Lit. and Education | Madhya Pradesh |
| 50 | Ms. Sowcar Janaki | Art | Tamil Nadu |
| 51 | Ms. Tara Jauhar | Lit and Education | Delhi |
| 52 | Ms. Vandana Kataria | Sports | Uttarakhand |
| 53 | Shri H R Keshavamurthy | Art | Karnataka |
| 54 | Shri Rutger Kortenhurst | Lit and Education | Ireland |
| 55 | Shri P Narayana Kurup | Lit and Education | Kerala |
| 56 | Ms. Avani Lekhara | Sports | Rajasthan |
| 57 | Shri Moti Lal Madan | Sci and Engineering | Haryana |
| 58 | Shri Shivnath Mishra | Art | Uttar Pradesh |
| 59 | Dr. Narendra Prasad Misra (Posthumous) | Medicine | Madhya Pradesh |
| 60 | Shri Darshanam Mogilaiah | Art | Telangana |
| 61 | Shri Guruprasad Mohapatra (Posthumous) | Civil Service | Delhi |
| 62 | Shri Thavil Kongampattu A V Murugaiyan | Art | Puducherry |
| 63 | Ms. R Muthukannammal | Art | Tamil Nadu |
| 64 | Shri Abdul Khader Nadakattin | Grassroots Innovation | Karnataka |
| 65 | Shri Amai Mahalinga Naik | Agriculture | Karnataka |
| 66 | Shri Tsering Namgyal | Art | Ladakh |
| 67 | Shri A K C Natarajan | Art | Tamil Nadu |
| 68 | Shri V L Nghaka | Lit. and Education | Mizoram |
| 69 | Shri Sonu Nigam | Art | Maharashtra |
| 70 | Shri Ram Sahay Panday | Art | Madhya Pradesh |
| 71 | Shri Chirapat Prapandavidya | Lit and Education | Thailand |
| 72 | Ms. K V Rabiya | Social Work | Kerala |

| S. No | Name | Field | State / Country |
|-------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| 73 | Shri Anil Kumar Rajvanshi | Sci and Engineering | Maharashtra |
| 74 | Shri Sheesh Ram | Art | Uttar Pradesh |
| 75 | Shri Ramachandraiah | Art | Telangana |
| 76 | Dr. Sunkara Venkata Adinarayana Rao | Medicine | Andhra Pradesh |
| 77 | Ms. Gamit Ramilaben Raysingbhai | Social Work | Gujarat |
| 78 | Ms. Padmaja Reddy | Art | Telangana |
| 79 | Guru Tulku Rinpoche | Spiritualism | Arunachal Pradesh |
| 80 | Shri Brahmanand Sankhwalkar | Sports | Goa |
| 81 | Shri Vidyanand Sarek | Lit and Education | Himachal Pradesh |
| 82 | Shri Kali Pada Saren | Lit. and Education | West Bengal |
| 83 | Dr. Veeraswamy Seshiah | Medicine | Tamil Nadu |
| 84 | Ms. Prabhaben Shah | Social Work | Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu |
| 85 | Shri Dilip Shahani | Lit and Education | Delhi |
| 86 | Shri Ram Dayal Sharma | Art | Rajasthan |
| 87 | Shri Vishwamurti Shastri | Lit. and Education | J&K |
| 88 | Ms. Tatiana Lvovna Shaumyan | Lit. and Education | Russia |
| 89 | Shri Siddhalingaiah (Posthumous) | Lit. and Education | Karnataka |
| 90 | Shri Kaajee Singh | Art | West Bengal |
| 91 | Shri Konsam Ibomcha Singh | Art | Manipur |
| 92 | Shri Prem Singh | Social Work | Punjab |
| 93 | Shri Seth Pal Singh | Agriculture | Uttar Pradesh |
| 94 | Ms. Vidya Vindu Singh | Lit. and Education | Uttar Pradesh |
| 95 | Baba Iqbal Singh Ji | Social Work | Punjab |
| 96 | Dr. Bhimsen Singhal | Medicine | Maharashtra |
| 97 | Shri Sivananda | Yoga | Uttar Pradesh |
| 98 | Shri Ajay Kumar Sonkar | Sci and Engineering | Uttar Pradesh |
| 99 | Ms. Ajita Srivastava | Art | Uttar Pradesh |
| 100 | Sadguru Brahmeshanand Acharya Swami | Spiritualism | Goa |
| 101 | Dr. Balaji Tambe (Posthumous) | Medicine | Maharashtra |
| 102 | Shri Raghuvendra Tanwar | Lit and Education | Haryana |
| 103 | Dr. Kamlakar Tripathi | Medicine | Uttar Pradesh |
| 104 | Ms. Lalita Vakil | Art | Himachal Pradesh |
| 105 | Ms. Durga Bai Vyam | Art | Madhya Pradesh |
| 106 | Shri Jyantkumar Maganlal Vyas | Sci and Engineering | Gujarat |
| 107 | Ms. Badaplin War | Lit and Education | Meghalaya |

Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism awards announced

The **Indian Express Group** has announced the **Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards (RNG Awards)** for journalists across the country, for their work done in 2019. RNG awards are one the most prestigious awards in India in the field of journalism, held annually since **2006**. The photo stories of our winners appeared in our print and digital editions between **December 24, 2021, and January 4, 2022**.

List of winners:

- Hindi (Print): Anand Choudhary, Dainik Bhaskar
- Hindi (Broadcast): Sushil Kumar Mohapatra, NDTV India
- Regional Languages (Print): Aniket Vasant Sathe, LokSatta
- Regional Languages (Broadcast): Sunil Baby, Media One TV
- Environment, Science And Technology Reporting (Print): Team Pari (People's Archive Of Rural India)
- Environment, Science And Technology Reporting (Broadcast): Team Scroll
- Uncovering India Invisible (Print): Shiv Sahay Singh, The Hindu
- Uncovering India Invisible (Broadcast): Tridip K Mandal, The Quint
- Business And Economic Journalism (Print): Sumant Banerji, Business Today
- Business And Economic Journalism (Broadcast): Ayushi Jindal, India Today TV
- Reporting On Politics And Government (Digital): Dheeraj Mishra, The Wire
- Reporting On Politics And Government (Broadcast): Seemi Pasha, Thewire.in
- Sports journalism (Print): Nihal Koshie, The Indian Express
- Sports journalism (Broadcast): Team NewsX
- Investigative Reporting (Print): Kaunain Sheriff M, The Indian Express

- Investigative Reporting (Broadcast): S Mahesh Kumar, Manorama News
- Reporting On Arts, Culture And Entertainment: Uday Bhatia, Mint
- Prakash Kardaley Memorial Award for Civic Journalism: Chaitanya Marpakwar, Mumbai Mirror
- Photojournalism: Zishaan A Latif, The Caravan
- Books (Non-Fiction): Arun Mohan Sukumar

About the Awards:

The award is given to honour journalists across the country from print, broadcast and digital media who have maintained the highest standards of their profession and, despite immense challenges, produced work that sustains public trust in the media and impacts the lives of people. The award is named after Ramnath Goenka, the founder of "**The Indian Express**" and Indian Express Group in **1932**.

3rd National Water Awards for 2020

Union Minister of Jal Shakti, **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** has declared the winners of the third **National Water Awards for the year 2020**. **Uttar Pradesh** has been adjudged as the Best State in water conservation efforts in the National Water Awards 2020. It is followed by **Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu** respectively. The award comes with a citation, trophy and cash prize. **Muzaffarnagar** in Uttar Pradesh received the best district award in the northern zone followed by Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar in Punjab.



3rd National Water Awards 2020 list is given below:

| Category | Winners |
|---|--|
| "Best State" | Uttar Pradesh |
| "Best District" - North Zone | Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh |
| "Best District"- South Zone | Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala |
| "Best District"- East Zone | East Champaran, Bihar and Godda, Jharkhand |
| "Best District"- West Zone | Indore, Madhya Pradesh |
| "Best District"- North-East Zone | Goalpara, Assam |
| "Best Village Panchayat"- North Zone | Dhaspad, Almora, Uttarakhand |
| "Best Village Panchayat"- South Zone | Yelerapura Panchayat, Tumakuru District, Karnataka |
| "Best Village Panchayat"- East Zone | Telari Panchayat, Gaya District, Bihar |
| "Best Village Panchayat"- West Zone | Takhatgadh, Sabarkantha, Gujarat |
| "Best Village Panchayat"- North-East Zone | Sialsir, Sirchip, Mizoram |
| "Best Urban Local Body" | Vapi Urban Local Body, Gujarat |
| "Best Media (Print & Electronic)" | Mission Paani (Network 18) |
| "Best School" | Govt. Girls Hr. Secondary School, Kaveripattinam, Tamil Nadu |
| "Best Industry" | Welspun India Textile Ltd., Gujarat |
| "Best Water User Association" | Panchgachiya MDTW WUA, Hooghly, West Beng |
| "Best Industry for CSR activities" | ITC Limited, Kolkata, West Bengal |

About the Award:

- The National Water Award was launched by the Jal Shakti Ministry in 2018 to recognise and motivate individuals and organizations doing exemplary work in the field of water resources management.

- Overall 57 awards have been announced in 11 categories. These include: Best State, Best District, Best Village Panchayat, Best Urban Local Body, Best Media (Print & Electronic), Best School, Best Institution/RWA/Religious organization for Campus usage, Best Industry, Best NGO, Best Water User Association, and Best Industry for CSR Activity.

Election Commission hikes expenditure limit for candidates in polls

The Election Commission of India has increased the existing election expenditure limit for candidates in Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies, due to the rise in inflation. The new limits will be applicable in all upcoming elections in the country. The previous major revision in the election expenditure limit was done in 2014. It was further increased by 10% in 2020. EC had formed a Committee to study the cost factors and other related issues, and make suitable recommendations.

Parliamentary constituencies poll expenditure ceiling:

- The ceiling on parliamentary poll expenditure has been raised from 70 lakh to 95 lakh rupees in bigger states and 54 lakh to 75 lakhs in smaller states.
- The bigger states include Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka.
- The smaller states include Goa, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and UTs.
- The ceiling on poll expenditure in UT of Jammu and Kashmir has been raised to 95 lakhs.

Assembly constituencies poll expenditure limits:

- For Assembly constituencies, expenditure limits have been enhanced from 28 lakh rupees to 40 lakh rupees in bigger states and from 20 lakhs to 28 lakhs in smaller states.

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:

| Category | Winners |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 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 |
| Best Actor (Musical or Comedy) | Andrew Garfield for tick, tick... BOOM! as Jonathan Larson |
| Best Actress (Musical or Comedy) | Rachel Zegler for West Side Story as María Vasquez |
| Best Supporting Actor | Kodi Smit-McPhee for The Power of the Dog as Peter Gordon |
| Best Supporting Actress | Ariana DeBose for West Side Story as Anita |
| Best Director | Jane Campion for The Power of the Dog |
| Best Screenplay | Kenneth Branagh for Belfast |
| Best Original Score | Hans Zimmer for Dune |
| Best Original Song | "No Time to Die" (Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell) - No Time to Die |
| Best Animated Feature | Encanto |
| Best Non-English Film | Drive My Car (Japan) |

Other Awardee's:

| Category of the award | Winners |
|--|--|
| Craft Icon of the Year | Chandramali Liyangane of the National Crafts Council, Sri Lanka. |
| Sustainable Development & Social Inclusion in the Handicrafts Sector | Malaysian Prison Department |
| Craft Persons of the Year | Shahrbanoo Arabian (Iran) and Dalavayi Kullayappa (India) |
| Craft Designers of the Year | Zohra Said (Morocco) and Ismario Ismael (Mexico) |
| Next Generation Craft Designers of the year | Qiling Zhang (China) and Mubin Khatri (India) |
| The Master Artisans | Amita Sachdeva (India) and Mubarik Khatri (India) |

New Zealand spinner Ajaz Patel wins ICC Player of the Month Award

India-born New Zealand cricketer **Ajaz Patel** has won the **ICC Player of the Month** award for **December** following his stupendous 10-wicket haul against Virat Kohli and Co. in the second Test in Mumbai. The left-arm spinner was nominated for the award alongside India opener **Mayank Agarwal** and Australian pacer **Mitchell Starc** but beat them to it on the back of his incredibly rare feat.

Ajaz picked up 14 wickets in the Mumbai Test match in early December against India, including all 10 in the first innings, to become only the third player in Test history, after **Jim Laker** and **Anil Kumble**, to achieve the remarkable milestone.

RBI released Annual Report of Ombudsman Schemes, 2020-21

Reserve Bank of India has released the **Annual Report of the Ombudsman Schemes** for 2020-21, which has been prepared for the 9-month period (**July 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021**) in alignment with the change in the Financial Year of RBI from 'July - June' to 'April - March' with effect from July 1, 2020. The Annual Report covers the activities under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 (BOS), the Ombudsman Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies, 2018 (OSNBFC) and the Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions, 2019 (OSDT).

'Kerala Arts and Crafts Village Organization' won 'International Craft Award 2021'

Kerala Arts and Crafts Village Organization (KACV) from Kovalam, Kerala was awarded the **'International Craft Award for 2021'** for the best craft village in the world by the **World Crafts Council International**. It is the only award India received in the non-individual category. The KACV was established by the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society (UL CCS) for the State Tourism Department of Kerala. In 2021, the **Village of the Year** award was won by **'Kraf Komuniti Ku'** in Malaysia.

Key Findings:

- The volume of complaints received under all the 3 Ombudsman Schemes increased by **22.27 percent** on an annualized basis and stood at 3,03,107.
- The complaints received at BOS from July 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021, stood at 2,73,204
- The complaints received at OSNBFCs stood at 26,957 during July 1, 2020-March 31, 2021
- The number of complaints received at the OSDT rose to 2,946 during July 1, 2020-March 31, 2021.

Major areas of complaints:

- Under the scheme, major areas of complaints are related to **ATM or debit cards, mobile or electronic banking and credit cards**. This area collectively accounted for **42.74 per cent** of the total complaints. This year, RBI changed the reporting period to **April-March**.

The city with maximum complaints:

- RBI data further highlights that, **Chandigarh** received the maximum complaints during the same period. Total number of complaints stand at 28019. It accounts for 10.26 per cent of the total complaints.
- Chandigarh is followed by **Kanpur** with 21,168 complaints and **New Delhi** with 18,767 complaints. Kanpur accounts for 7.75 per cent and Delhi accounts for 6.87 per cent of the total complaints.

National Startup Awards 2021 announced

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

The Best FIFA Football Awards 2021 announced

The **Best FIFA Football Awards 2021** ceremony was held virtually in **Zurich, Switzerland** to crown outstanding players for excellent achievement in football. Spain midfielder **Alexia Putellas** and Poland/Bayern Munich striker **Robert Lewandowski** were awarded the Best FIFA Players in women's and men's football respectively. **Lewandowski** won the Best FIFA Men's Player Award for the second straight year, after getting the first one in 2020.

Here is the Complete List of Winners:

| Category | Winner |
|---|---|
| Best FIFA Men's Player | Robert Lewandowski (Bayern Munich, Poland) |
| Best FIFA Women's Player | Alexia Putellas (Barcelona, Spain) |
| Best FIFA Men's Goalkeeper | Édouard Mendy (Chelsea, Senegal) |
| Best FIFA Women's Goalkeeper | Christiane Endler (Paris Saint-Germain and Lyon, Chile) |
| Best FIFA Men's Coach | Thomas Tuchel (Chelsea, Germany) |
| Best FIFA Women's Coach | Emma Hayes (Chelsea, England) |
| FIFA Fair Play Award | Denmark national football team and medical staff |
| FIFA Special Award for an Outstanding Career Achievement | Christine Sinclair (Female) & Cristiano Ronaldo (Male) |

GoI merges eternal flame of Amar Jawan Jyoti with National War Memorial flame

The government of India has merged the flame of the **Amar Jawan Jyoti** at **Delhi's India Gate** with the flame at the adjoining National War Memorial on **January 21, 2022**, ahead of **Republic Day**. The ceremony was led by the Integrated Defence Staff chief, **Air Marshal Balabadhra Radha Krishna**.

Why this decision was taken?

The decision to merge the two flames was taken keeping in mind that flame at Amar Jawan Jyoti payed homage to the martyrs of 1971 but none of their names are present there, while names of all Indian martyrs from all the wars, including 1971 and wars before and after it are housed at the National War Memorial. So housing the flame at the same place along with the names will serve as a true tribute to martyrs. This will also do away with upkeeping two flames for the same purpose. This means that after 50 years of continuous lightning, the flame at Amar Jawan Jyoti will no longer be present there.

About Amar Jawan Jyoti

The Amar Jawan Jyoti was inaugurated on the Republic Day of 1972 by the then Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi**. The eternal flame of Amar Jawan Jyoti was lit in memory of soldiers who laid their lives during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war.

About National War Memorial

The National War Memorial was inaugurated by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on February 25, 2019. The eternal torch of this memorial burns at the heart of the **Smarak Stambh**, the main pillar of the memorial, inside the **Amar Chakra**. The names of 25,942 soldiers have been inscribed in golden letters on granite tablets.



India Celebrating 73rd Republic Day on 26 January 2022

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.

According to the Ministry of Defence, for the first time, an Indian Air Force (IAF) will show grand flypast by 75 aircraft or helicopters. A drone show by 1,000 indigenously developed drones has been planned for the '**Beating the Retreat**' ceremony, along with projection mapping will be shown for the first time. In another first, 480 dancers will perform during the cultural programme at the parade have been selected through a nationwide Vande Bharatam dance competition.

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, is being 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.

International Cricket Council announced ICC Awards 2021

The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** has announced the winners of the **17th** edition of **ICC Awards for the year 2021** to recognise and honour the best international cricket players of the previous 12 months, between **January 01, 2021, and December 31, 2021**. Notably, these awards honour players for their performances for their respective national side in a year. The apex international cricket governing body has named the winners in the different categories such as: Emerging Cricketer of the Year, T20I Cricketer of the Year and Associate Cricketer of the Year for both men's and women's cricket.

Winners are listed below:

| Category | Winners |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year | Smriti Mandhana (India) |
| Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year | Shaheen Afridi (Pakistan) |
| ICC Umpire of the Year | Marais Erasmus |
| ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year | Mohammad Rizwan (Pakistan) |
| ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year | Tammy Beaumont (England) |
| ICC Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year | Janneman Malan (South Africa) |
| ICC Emerging Women's Cricketer of the Year | Fatima Sana (Pakistan) |
| ICC Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year | Zeeshan Maqsood (Oman) |
| ICC Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year | Andrea-Mae Zepeda (Austria) |
| ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year | Babar Azam (Pakistan) |
| ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year | Lizelle Lee (South Africa) |
| ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year | Joe Root (England) |

Australian Open 2022: Rafael Nadal beats Daniil Medvedev

Rafael Nadal (Spain) has defeated **Daniil Medvedev (Russia)** 2-6,6-7,6-4,6-4,7-5 to win the Men's Singles title at the **Australian Open 2022**. This is his 21st Major title, becoming the first male player to do so. In women's tennis, Margaret Court (Australian) has 24 singles majors, an all-time record. In women's, World Number 1 **Ashleigh Barty of Australia** defeated Danielle Collins of the US, 6-3 7-6, to win women's singles final title at the **Australian Open 2022**.

The winners list of Australian Open Tennis Title 2022:

| Events | Winners |
|-----------------|---|
| Men's Singles | Rafael Nadal |
| Women's Singles | Ashleigh Barty |
| Men's Doubles | Thanasi Kokkinakis and Nick Kyrgios |
| Women's Doubles | Barbora Krejčíková and Kateřina Siniaková |
| Mixed Doubles | Kristina Mladenovic and Ivan Dodig |

Banking and Financial Current Affairs

- **SBI Cards and Payment Services** has tied up with **Paytm** for card tokenisation to protect the data of the cardholders. SBI Card has collaborated with Paytm to enable cardholders to tokenise their cards on devices and make payments through Paytm. Tokenisation refers to masking the original card number by replacing it with a set of unique characters, termed as token, which secures the customer's card details when a transaction is under process.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has announced that it has extended the deadline for periodic KYC updates by **3 months till March 31, 2022**. Extension in view of prevalent uncertainty due to a new variant of **COVID-19 - Omicron**. Earlier the deadline for periodic KYC updates was December 31.
- **Reserve Bank of India** has retained **State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank** as **Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)**. These three banks have continued to be on the D-SIBs list published by RBI, since Sep 04, 2017. Domestic Systemically Important Banks are those banks which if fail would have a significant impact on the economy.

- **Reserve Bank of India** has approved **Fino Payments Bank** for commencing international (Cross Border) remittance business under the **Money Transfer Service Scheme (MTSS)**. The approval will enable the customers of Fino Payments Bank to receive money sent from foreign countries. The Bank plans to implement the service in its mobile applications as well and it also plans to partner with more leading **money transfer operators (MTOs)** to improve its cross-border remittance.
- **Airtel Payments Bank** has been categorised as a scheduled bank by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** in the second schedule of the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**. With this, Airtel Payments Bank can now pitch for the government. Airtel Payments Bank is among the fastest-growing digital banks in the country, with a base of **115 million users**. It offers a suite of digital solutions through the Airtel Thanks app and a retail network of over 500,000 neighbourhood banking points. The bank turned profitable in the quarter ended September 2021.
- **Reserve Bank of India** has issued a framework for facilitating small-value digital payments in offline mode using cards, wallets, mobile devices, etc, to push digital transactions in rural and semi-urban areas. The upper limit of an offline payment transaction was fixed at **Rs 200, with a total limit of Rs 2,000** at any point in time. The framework will enable the **Authorised Payment System Operators (PSOs)** and **Payment System Participants (PSPs)**, Acquirers and Issuers (banks and non-banks) to conduct small value offline digital payments.
- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has cancelled the Certificate of Authorisation (CoA) of two Payment System Operators (PSOs): **Muthoot Vehicle and Asset Finance Limited** and **Eko India Financial Services Private Limited**, citing non-compliance with regulatory requirements under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. Both Muthoot Vehicle and Asset Finance Limited and Eko India Financial Services Private Limited had the certificate of authorisation issued by the RBI for issuance and operation of prepaid payment instruments.
- **State Bank of India General Insurance Company Ltd** has launched a campaign titled **'#BahaneChhodoTaxBachao'** to increase awareness around the need to buy health insurance to save tax. It will also highlight the other benefits of opting for health insurance. The campaign aims to increase the awareness of how buying health insurance can help people save tax which is crucial and seasonal in the last quarter of the financial year for all Indians. The campaign will also underline the other benefits of opting for health insurance.
- **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** issued eligibility criteria for entities that harness data from **credit information companies (CICs)** or credit bureaus. These newly-formed guidelines said that a company's net worth must be at least **Rs 2 crore** and owned and controlled by resident Indian citizens to become a designated user with a credit bureau, which comes amid accusations of lending applications with Chinese ties functioning in India.
- The **Reserve Bank of India** has increased the threshold limit for Banks to maintain the **Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR)** on deposits and other 'extension of funds' received from non-financial small business customers from **Rs 5 crore to Rs 7.5 crore**. This is applicable on all Commercial Banks other than **Regional Rural Banks, Local Area Banks, and Payments Banks**. To better align RBI's guidelines with the **Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS)** standard and enable banks to manage liquidity risk more effectively.
- **RBL Bank and Google** announced a strategic collaboration to fuel the **Bank's customer experience strategy**. Through this, the bank will expand its value proposition to serve its rapidly growing customer base through the digital platform, **Abacus 2.0**.
- **Reserve Bank of India** has set up a separate internal department for **fintech (Financial technology)**. The new department has been created with effect from January 04, 2022, by subsuming the FinTech Division of Department of Payment and Settlement Systems, Central Office (DPSS, CO). The department will not only promote innovation in the sector but also identify the challenges and opportunities associated with it and address them in a timely manner. **Ajay Kumar Choudhary**, who was recently promoted as the Executive Director of RBI was appointed as head of the department.
- As per the weekly **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data**, the foreign exchange reserves of India declined by **\$878 million to USD 632.736 billion** in the week ended January 7, 2022. In the previous week ended December 31, India's reserves dropped by **\$1.466 billion to \$633.614 billion**. The decline was mainly due to a fall in gold reserves and foreign currency assets (FCA). In the reporting week, FCAs decreased by \$497 million to \$569.392 billion

- 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.
- The name of YES Asset Management has been rechristened as **WhiteOak Capital Asset Management** and therefore the name of **YES Mutual Fund** has been changed to **WhiteOak Capital Mutual Fund**. The change in the names are effective from **January 12, 2022**. White Oak got the license to run a mutual fund. White Oak Capital group provides investment management and advisory services for equity assets of over **Rs 42,000 crore**.
- **Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL)** has set up 'new banknote printing lines' at its **Currency Note Press, Nashik** and **Bank Note Press, Dewas**. In India, four printing presses for printing and supply of Banknotes. These are at **Dewas** in Madhya Pradesh, **Nasik** in Maharashtra (owned by SPMCIL), **Mysore** in Karnataka, and **Salboni** in West Bengal (owned by Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Private Limited (BRBNMPL)).
- **State Bank of India (SBI)** has issued **\$300 million Formosa bonds** and listed the issuance on **India INX GIFT IFSC**. The lender is the first Indian entity to raise money through Formosa Bond, which is a bond issued in Taiwan. SBI was the first issuer whose Green bonds were dually listed in November 2021 on Luxembourg Stock Exchange through an MOU that has been entered into by both Exchanges.
- According to a **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Working Paper**, the optimal hedge ratio for the **External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs)** raised by firms in India is estimated at **63 per cent** for the periods of high volatility in the foreign exchange (forex/FX) market. An optimal hedge ratio is a ratio that implies the percentage of total asset or liability exposure that an entity ought to hedge against exchange rate fluctuations.
- **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (SFB)** has launched '**Platina Fixed Deposit**', offering interest of 15 basis points (bps) higher than the regular term deposit rates provided by Ujjivan SFB. The Platina FD is a non-callable deposit, where partial & premature withdrawal is not applicable. While the interest amount can be received on monthly, quarterly or at the end of the maturity period.
- The **Government of India** has sanctioned and notified the Scheme for the amalgamation of the **Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative Bank Ltd** with **Unity Small Finance Bank Ltd**. This means that from January 25, 2022 all the branches of the PMC Bank will function as branches of Unity Small Finance Bank Ltd.
- **City Union Bank** in association with smart-tech-enabled preventive healthcare platform **GOQii** and powered by the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**, has launched a wearable payment solution called **CUB fitness watch debit card**. Customers need to hold this wristwatch in front of the PoS device during payment like tapping the card on PoS.

Economy Current Affairs

- The rating agency **India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)** has downgraded the GDP of India for the current fiscal **FY 2021-2022**. Ind-Ra expects the GDP to clock a growth rate of **9.3% y-o-y** in FY22. Earlier this estimate was **9.4%**. Meanwhile, Brickworks Ratings has also revised India's GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal (FY22) to **8.5-9%**. Earlier this was estimated at **10%**. The rapid spread of the Omicron variant is the main driver to downgrade GDP growth projections.
- Total assets managed under NPS and APY, the two flagship pension schemes of the **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)**, have crossed **₹6.99 lakh crore**. Total assets under management (AUM) as on January 1, 2022, stood at **Rs 6,99,172 crore**. Total AUM under the National Pension System and Atal Pension Yojana was at **Rs 5,78,025 crore as of March 31, 2021**.
- The economic research team of the **State Bank of India (SBI)** released its **Ecowrap report**. In the report, SBI researchers have revised upwards the real GDP of India to around **9.5 per cent** in 2021-22 (FY22) on a year-on-year (YoY).

- As per the latest **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data**, the foreign currency reserves of India declined by **\$1.466 billion to \$633.614 billion**, in the last week of 2021, which ended December 31, 2021. Gold reserves rose by **USD 14 million to USD 39.405 billion**. India's forex touched a lifetime high of USD 642.453 billion in the week ended September 03, 2021.
- **National Statistical Office (NSO)** has estimated India's GDP to grow at **9.2 per cent** in the current fiscal, 2021-22. NSO released its first advance estimates of economic output on January 07, 2022. The GDP estimate for the 2020-21 fiscal was projected at a contraction of **7.3 per cent** by NSO.
- According to the finance ministry, the deposits in bank accounts opened under the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) scheme** have crossed **Rs 1.5 lakh crore mark**. The total balance in accounts under the Jan Dhan scheme was recorded at Rs 1,50,939.36 crore as of December-end 2021. The data revealed that over 44.23 crore accounts have been opened under the scheme.
- Swiss brokerage **UBS Securities** has lowered the growth forecast of the Indian economy for the current financial year (FY22) to **9.1 per cent** due to a massive surge in Omicron infections. Earlier this was estimated at **9.5 per cent**. However, UBS Securities has revised upwards the real GDP forecast of India in **FY23 to 8.2 per cent**. This was projected at 7.7 per cent earlier.
- The **World Bank** has projected the Indian economy to grow at the following rate in its '**Global Economic Prospects**' report released on January 11, 2022. The World Bank retained its FY22 growth forecast for India at **8.3 per cent** but upgraded it to **8.7 per cent** for FY23, from 7.5 per cent estimated earlier, citing improving growth prospects, especially a reviving private capex cycle.
- **Retail inflation in December 2021** rose to a six-month high of **5.59 per cent** from **4.91 per cent** in **November 2021**, mainly due to a sharp rise in food prices as food inflation for the period under review also rose steeply to 4.05 per cent against 1.87 per cent in November 2021.
- The GDP growth forecast of India in fiscal 2022 is estimated to grow at **6.5 per cent** as per the **United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2022 report**. Earlier this was estimated at 8.4%. The WESP is a flagship report produced by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA). UN has projected the growth rate for fiscal 2023 (FY 2022-2023) at 5.9 per cent.
- **India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)** has projected the real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of the Indian economy to grow at **7.6 per cent** year-on-year in 2022-23 (FY23). Ind-Ra is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the **Fitch Group**.
- **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**.
- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has cut India's economic growth forecast for the current fiscal 2021-22 (FY22) to **9 per cent**, in its latest world economic outlook report. Earlier this was estimated at **9.5%**. IMF has projected the growth forecast for India in 2022-23 (FY23) at **7.1%** IMF has projected the global growth rate in **2022 to 4.4%, and in 2023 to 3.8%**.
- According to the **World Gold Council (WGC)** report '**Gold Demand Trends 2021**' has informed that the global gold demand rose **10 per cent** in 2021 to **4,021.3 tonnes**. The overall gold demand during 2020, which was impacted following Covid-19 related disruptions, stood at **3,658.8 tonnes**. India's gold consumption surged to **797.3 tonnes in 2021**, on the back of the recovery in consumer sentiments and pent-up demand post Covid-19-related disruptions and the bullish trend is set to continue this year as well.



Business Current Affairs

- Insurance regulator, **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai)** has stated that **LIC, GIC Re and New India** continue to be identified as **Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs)** for 2021-22. D-SIIs refer to insurers of such size, market importance and domestic and global interconnectedness, whose distress or failure would cause significant dislocation in the domestic financial system.
- **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India** has inaugurated “**Digi Zone**”, at **Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai**, as part of its effort to enhance its digital footprint. LIC’s Digi Zone can be used by the customers to purchase policies online, pay the premium and avail of other services. As a part of its efforts to become a tech-driven life insurer, LIC will offer information related to its products and services through kiosks installed on the Digi Zone premises.
- **Tech Mahindra** has approved a proposal for the acquisition of a **100 per cent stake in Allyis India and Green Investments**, for a total consideration of up to **USD 125 million**. The acquisition will bolster Tech Mahindra’s capabilities in Digital Experience Solutions, Learning & Development, Marketing, Instructional Design; Engineering; Cloud & Automation, BI & Analytics, Technical support services.
- State-owned power generation company **NTPC Ltd.** is set to acquire a **5 per cent equity stake in Power Exchange of India Ltd (PXIL)**. It must be noted that the government is planning to expand the share of the spot power market in the total electricity supply in India to **25 per cent** by 2023-24. At present, the size of short-term power trading is about **5 per cent**.
- **Nippon Life India Asset Management Limited**, asset manager of **Nippon India Mutual Fund (NIMF)**, has announced the launch of **India’s First Auto sector ETF - Nippon India Nifty Auto ETF**.
- Alphabet Inc-owned, **Google** has acquired Israeli cybersecurity startup **Siemplify**, in a deal worth **\$500 million**. This acquisition will expand the U.S. tech giant’s security offerings in the country amid rising cyber-attacks. Siemplify will be integrated into Google Cloud’s Chronicle operation. As a part of Google Cloud’s security team, Siemplify will help companies better manage their threat response.
- **NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd. (NBBL)**, the wholly-owned subsidiary of **National Payments Corporation of India** has introduced a functionality called ‘**Unified Presentment Management System (UPMS)**’.
- **Mukesh Ambani’s Reliance Retail** has invested **\$200 million** or around **Rs 1,488 crore** in Bengaluru-based quick commerce player **Dunzo** for a **25.8 per cent stake** on a fully diluted basis. The move will help Reliance get a foothold in the country’s growing quick delivery market. Dunzo raised a total of \$240 million in this latest round led by the Reliance Industries Ltd arm. The other existing investors were **Lightbox, Ligthrock, 3L Capital and Alteria Capital**, who participated in the round.
- **Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)** has announced the acquisition of a controlling stake of **73.37%** in **Mandarin Oriental New York**, a premium luxury hotel in midtown Manhattan. RIL through its wholly-owned arm Reliance Industrial Investments and Holdings Limited has acquired the entire share capital of Cayman Islands-based **Columbus Centre Corporation (Cayman)**, for an equity value of approximately **\$98.15 million (Rs 735 crore)**.
- The **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** has signed an agreement with **Tata Consultancy Services Limited (TCS)** for the second phase of the **Passport Seva Programme (PSP-V2.0)**. TCS will be the service provider for the Passport Seva Project, which it has been for over 10 years.
- The **Central Government of India** is set to become the largest shareholder in **Vodafone Idea**. The company’s board approved the conversion of **Rs 16,000 crores** in interest into equity. India’s third-largest network **Vi or Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL)** has approved the interest on the spectrum and **Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR)** dues into government equity.
- **Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL)** became the largest and fastest-growing **UPI beneficiary bank in India**. It becomes the first beneficiary bank in the country to achieve the landmark of over **926 million UPI transactions** in a single month.
- The Union Cabinet approved infusion of **1500 crore rupees** in **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited**. It will help generate **10,200 jobs** a year and reduce carbon emissions equivalent to approximately **7.49 million tonnes** per year. The IREDA played a big role in the field of renewable energy and its portfolio had increased from **₹8,800 crore** to **₹28,000 crore** in the past **six years**. IREDA is a **Non-Banking Financial Institution** engaged in promoting, developing, and extending financial assistance for setting up projects relating to new and renewable sources of energy.

- **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** and **Reliance Jio** have announced that **UPI AUTOPAY** has now been introduced for the telecom industry with Jio. Jio's integration with UPI AUTOPAY has made it the **first player in the telecom industry** to go live with the unique e-mandate feature that was launched by NPCI.
- **MobiKwik**, one of India's largest mobile wallets and **Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL)** Fintech companies launched '**ClickPay**' for its customers, in collaboration with **NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd. (NBBL)**. This feature enables MobiKwik customers to pay recurring online bills (such as mobile, gas, water, electricity, DTH, insurance, and loan EMIs) with ease by eliminating the need to remember individual bill details and due dates.
- The new app aims to **empower investors** with accurate knowledge about the securities market. The app will cater largely to **individual investors**, who have recently entered the markets and carry out trading via their mobile phones. The app will be helpful in easily accessing all the relevant information like the **basic concepts** of Securities Market, KYC Process, trading and settlement, mutual funds, recent market developments, investor grievances redressal mechanism, etc. It is currently available in **Hindi** and **English**.
- **Microsoft Corp.** is set to acquire game making company, **Activision Blizzard Inc.**, in an all-cash transaction for **\$68.7 billion. (\$95.00 per share)**. This acquisition will boost the competitiveness of Microsoft in the mobile gaming business and virtual-reality technology, across mobile, PC, console and cloud and will provide building blocks for the metaverse.
- **Tata Group** has chosen **State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and HDFC Bank** as preferred bankers for **Air India**. Recently Tata Group has taken over Air India from the government. Air India is the largest international carrier out of India with an **18.6%** market share. Tata Sons have availed of a **Rs 10,000-crore loan** from SBI and a **Rs 5,000-crore loan** from BoB. The loan from HDFC Bank is not known yet. The loans are unrated, unsecured, and pegged at 4.25% [interest rate] annually.
- **Paytm Money** has introduced "India's first" intelligent messenger called '**Pops**'. The company has launched 'Pops', with which users can receive specific information related to their **stocks, analysis about their portfolio, market news, and important market movements** in an easy to consume format, all in one place. The platform will also serve as a marketplace to offer sophisticated stock recommendations, news insights, and other services.
- Food-ordering and instant grocery delivery platform, **Swiggy** has signed a **\$700 million** funding round led by asset manager **Invesco**. With this, the total valuation of Swiggy has reached to **\$10.7 billion i.e. it is now a decacorn**. A decacorn is a startup with a valuation of more than **\$10 billion**.
- **Fullerton India** and One97 Communications Limited, which owns the brand **Paytm**, have announced a partnership to provide **lending products to merchant partners and consumers**. With the partnership, the two established institutions will leverage data-driven insights and wide reach to bring credit to new-to-credit users. They aim to co-create innovative merchant loan products using customer payment behaviour and Fullerton's years of experience of understanding of this segment.
- The **government of India** officially handed over India's flag carrier, **Air India** to the **Tata Group** on January 27, 2022, almost 69 years after acquiring the conglomerate. The total value of the deal is **Rs 18,000 crore (US\$2.4 billion)**. The strategic disinvestment transaction of Air India includes the transfer of a 100 per cent stake of GoI in Air India to Tata Sons, along with management control.
- A teen-focused Fintech startup based in India, **Pencilton** has recently launched **PencilCard**, a debit card that is compliant with **National Common Mobility Card standards**. It has been launched in partnership with **Transcorp**. The National Common Mobility Card was developed by India's Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in early 2019. It allows the user to pay for travel, toll duties, retail shopping and withdraw money.

International Current Affairs

- **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.
- **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."**
- **Russia** successfully test-fired around **10 new Tsirkon (Zircon) hypersonic cruise missiles** from a frigate and other two missiles from a submarine. The Zircon missile would be capable of flying at nine times the speed of sound and have a range of **1,000 kilometres (620 miles)**. The Tsirkon Cruise Missile will join Avangard glide vehicles and the air-launched Kinzhal (Dagger) missiles in Russia's hypersonic arsenal.
- Former British Prime Minister **Tony Blair**, the **Duchess of Cornwall**, and **Baroness Amos** are to be appointed as members of the Order of the Garter, England's oldest and most senior order of chivalry. The former prime minister now will be known as **'Sir Tony'**. The appointments are the personal choice of the Queen, who has up to 24 **"knight and lady companions"**.
- 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.
- Prime Minister of Sudan, **Abdalla Hamdok** has announced his resignation on January 02, 2022. The decision follows a military coup that caused political deadlock and widespread pro-democracy protests in the country. The 66-year-old Hamdok served as the **15th Prime Minister of Sudan** from 2019 to 2022.
- 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.
- 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.
- **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** has appointed Kuwaiti oil executive **Haitham Al Ghais** as its new secretary-general, as demand for oil continues to improve amid a mild recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.
- **Pakistan** has moved closer to appointing the **first woman judge of the Supreme Court**, after a high-power panel approved the elevation of Lahore High Court judge **Ayesha Malik** to the apex court. The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), headed by Chief Justice **Gulzar Ahmed**, approved Malik's elevation by a majority of five votes against four.
- 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.
- 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.

- **Cyprus** has detected a new variant dubbed as “**Deltacron**”, that has a similar genetic background to the Delta variant, coupled with 10 mutations from **Omicron**. The variant has already affected 25 people in Cyprus. According to **Dr Leondios Kostrikis**, the head of the laboratory of biotechnology and molecular virology at the University of Cyprus, of the 25 samples taken in Cyprus, 11 were hospitalised due to the virus, while 14 were from the general population.
- **India** has announced financial assistance of **USD 900 million loans** to **Sri Lanka** to help the island nation in building up its depleted foreign reserves and for food imports. It must be noted that Sri Lanka is currently facing a shortage of almost all essential commodities due to a shortage of dollars to pay for the imports.
- **Philippines** has become the first foreign country to place an order for the purchase of the **BrahMos** Shore-Based cruise Missile System for its navy. This agreement will give a big boost to India’s defence manufacturing system. The estimated deal cost is worth **\$374.9 million**.
- **Nicaraguan** President **José Daniel Ortega Saavedra**, leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), was sworn in for a new presidential term. This marks his **5th** term and **4th consecutive term** as the President of **Nicaragua**.
- The US Treasury has minted coins featuring poet **Maya Angelou** – the first black woman ever featured on the **US 25-cent coin** known as a quarter. Angelou, a poet and activist, was the first black woman to write and perform a poem at a presidential inauguration. In 2010, she was given a Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest US civilian award by President **Barack Obama**.
- **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.
- **Israel** has completed a successful flight test of the **Arrow-3** which is designed to intercept ballistic missiles outside of the earth’s atmosphere. The test was performed at a test site in **central Israel**, and led by **Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)**. It was developed in a joint project between the Defense Ministry’s Missile Defense Organization and the **American Missile Defense Agency**.
- Iconic ‘**Infinity Bridge**’ in **Dubai, United Arab Emirates** has been formally opened to traffic for the first time on 16th January 2022. Its design resembles a mathematical sign for **infinity** (∞). It represents the limitless, infinite goals of Dubai. It consists of six lanes in each direction and a combined 3-metre track for pedestrians and cyclists. **It is 300 meters long and 22 meters wide**.
- **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 **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.
- **Barbados** Prime Minister **Mia Mottley** was sworn in for a second term in office on **20 January 2022**, following a landslide victory by her party in the 2022 election.
- **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)**, a multilateral development bank has committed **USD 150 million** to invest in the development of data centres that mostly **serve emerging Asia**. This project is being AIIB’s 1st data centre project. India is a key founding member of AIIB. AIIB’s investment of **USD 100 million** through a parallel fund structure and **USD 50 million** through co-investments mark the final close of KDCF II, a development fund making strategic investments in the fast-growing data center sector with a focus on the Asia Pacific.
- 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 world’s largest canal lock has been inaugurated at **Ijmuiden**, a small port city, in the **Port of Amsterdam, The Netherlands**. The sea lock was inaugurated by **Dutch King Willen-Alexander**. The Ijmuiden sea lock is 500-meter (1,640-feet) long and 70-meter wide. Construction on the massive infrastructure project began in 2016 and was meant to be done by 2019. It also went over the initially planned budget by around €300 million (\$338 million).

National Current Affairs

- The government has approved the issuance of the **19th tranche of electoral bonds**, which will be open for sale from **January 1 to 10, 2022**, ahead of assembly elections in five states **Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Goa**. In the 19th tranche of sale, the **State Bank of India (SBI)**, has been authorised to issue and encash electoral bonds through its 29 specialised branches. There is no limit on the number of bonds an individual or company can purchase. An electoral bond will be valid for 15 days.
- Union Education Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** has launched a 100-day reading campaign '**Padhe Bharat**'. The launch of the 100 Days Reading Campaign is in alignment with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** which lays emphasis on the promotion of joyful reading culture for children by ensuring the availability of age-appropriate reading books for children in local/mother tongue/regional/tribal language.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will lay the foundation stone of **Major Dhyani 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 sportspersons including 540 female and 540 male sportspersons.
- Information Technology Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw** has launched the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** to attract large investments for setting up semiconductor wafer fabrication facilities in India.
- 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.
- Union Ayush Minister, **Sarbananda Sonowal** has laid the foundation stone of the **Heartfulness International Yoga Academy in Hyderabad, Telangana**. He also launched 75 crores suryanamaskar initiative as part of the **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**". The academy tries to reach all levels of society through training programmes and these will be overseen by an international team.
- Power and new and renewable energy minister, **Raj Kumar Singh** has dedicated **Automatic Generation Control (AGC)** to the nation. The AGC sends signals to power plants every four seconds to maintain the frequency and thereby reliability of India's power system. It will help in achieving the government's target of 500 GW non-fossil fuel-based generation capacity by 2030.
- **Puducherry** has been handpicked by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** to host the **25th National Youth Festival**. The 25th National Youth Festival is going to be held in Puducherry from 12th to 16th January 2022. The festival has been organised as part of the **Azadi ki Amrit Mahotsav** marking the 75th year of Independence, said Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports and Information and Broadcasting **Anurag Thakur**.
- 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**.
- Prime Minister of India, **Narendra Modi** has declared that starting from the year 2022, **December 26** will be observed as '**Veer Baal Diwas**' every year. The day will be commemorated as a tribute to the courage of the 4 Sahibzades (the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh Ji), who attained martyrdom in the 17th century.
- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** has inaugurated **Kalpna Chawla Centre for Research in Space Science and Technology (KCCRSST)** at **Chandigarh University**. The Union Minister also launched Chandigarh University's Defence Scholarship Scheme, worth **Rs 10 Crore**, for the wards of Defence Personnel of the three services. Kalpna Chawla was the first woman of Indian origin to go to space.
- **India Skills 2021 national competition** concluded with more than 200 participants who were felicitated by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. As many as 270 winners of the Competition felicitated with **61 gold, 77 silver, 53 bronze and 79 medallions** of excellence. Odisha finished first out of 26 states and union territories of this year in the 'IndiaSkills 2021' contest with 51 medals. Odisha won 10 gold, 18 silver, 9 bronze, and 14 medallions.

- On the occasion of the National Youth Day 2022, Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** virtually inaugurated an '**MSME Technology Centre**', which will function under the Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), in **Puducherry**. The technology centre was built at a cost of **Rs 122 crore** with a focus on the Electronic System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) Sector.
- Minister of State for Culture, **Meenakshi Lekhi** has launched the '**North East on Wheels Expedition**' in New Delhi to promote the **Culture of Northeastern States**. The Bike Expedition is scheduled between **8th to 16th April** this year to mark the celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has declared to mark **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 world's largest national flag, made of **Khadi fabric** was put to display to celebrate the "**Army Day**" on January 15, 2022. It was displayed at **Longewala**, along the **India - Pakistan Border in Jaisalmer**. Longewala was the centre stage of the historic battle of 1971 between India and Pakistan. The Monumental National Flag is 225 feet long and 150 feet wide. It is approximately 1400 kgs in weight.
- The government of India has released a **commemorative postal stamp** on the Covid-19 vaccination on Sunday to mark the first anniversary of the country's national immunization programme against the virus. The commemorative stamp design features a healthcare worker inoculating a senior citizen with COVID-19 vaccine, along with an image of '**COVAXIN**' vial.
- Minister of State for Education, **Subhas Sarkar** has launched the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) 2021 - 2022 virtually. The Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar recognises, inspires and awards schools that have undertaken exemplary work in the field of water, sanitation and hygiene while also providing a benchmark and a roadmap for schools to make further improvements in future.
- **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** has virtually organised the 1st-ever '**Startup India Innovation Week**' from **10th -16th of January 2022**. The week commemorates the **75th** year of India's independence '**Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**' and showcase the spread and depth of entrepreneurship across India.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will inaugurate a 216-foot statue of **Ramanujacharya** in a sitting position in **Hyderabad on February 5, 2022**, to celebrate the **1,000th birth anniversary** of the saint. Ramanujacharya was an 11th-century saint and a revolutionary social reformer. The statue will be called as the '**Statue of Equality**'. It is located in a 45-acre complex at Shamshabad on the outskirts of Hyderabad in Telangana.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has inaugurated '**Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav se Swarnim Bharat Ki Ore**' programme via video conferencing. The national-level program includes seven yearlong initiatives dedicated to the celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav by the **Brahma Kumaris**. More than 30 campaigns and over 15000 programs and events will be conducted under these initiatives by the **Brahma Kumaris**. Brahma Kumaris is organising the event on the occasion of the 53rd Ascension Anniversary of Pitashree Prajapita Brahma, Founding Father of Brahma Kumaris.
- Union Agriculture Ministry has amended the guidelines of **Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)** to provide **40-100 per cent subsidy** until March 2023 in purchasing drones for farm mechanization. After the amendment, a grant for the purchase of drones up to 100 per cent of the cost of agriculture drones or **Rs 10 lakhs**, whichever is less, can be given.
- The Union Minister of Home and Cooperation **Amit Shah** has virtually released India's First "**District Good Governance Index**" for 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. The top 5 districts in the District Good Governance Index" are **(1) Jammu, (2) Doda, (3) Samba, (4) Pulwama and (5) Srinagar**.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has unveiled a hologram statue of **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** at **India Gate on Parakram Divas**. The size of the hologram statue is 28 feet in height and 6 feet in width. A grand statue, which will be made of granite, will replace the hologram statue once it is completed.

- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has released a 5-year roadmap and Vision Document 2.0 for the electronics sector. The Vision Document 2.0 titled “\$300 bn Sustainable Electronics Manufacturing & Exports by 2026” has been prepared by MeitY in association with the India Cellular & Electronics Association (ICEA).
- India has paid USD 29.9 million in UN regular budget assessments for the year 2022. As of January 21, 2022, 24 Member States have paid their regular budget assessments in full. India is currently a non-permanent member of the 15-nation Security Council and its two-year term will end on December 31, 2022.
- Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) for the year 2022 has been conferred to 29 children. These winners include 15 Boys and 14 Girls, belonging to 21 States and UTs. The PMRBP award is given by the Government of India to children with exceptional abilities and outstanding accomplishments in 6 categories. The award carries a cash prize of Rs.1,00,000/-.
- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has launched the official mobile application of the Parliament named ‘Digital Sansad App’ on January 27, 2022, to allow citizens to access live proceedings of the House, including the Union Budget 2022 live. The app will make the Parliament and Parliamentary proceedings accessible not only to the members but also to the public of the country.



States Current Affairs

- Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has announced that the government of UP has renamed the Jhansi Railway Station, in Jhansi, UP as “Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station” after Rani Laxmibai.
- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched an online service for the verification of identity and submission of life certificates for pensioners of the state government. The chief minister virtually launched the new initiative while attending the orientation programme for newly recruited 153 officers of Odisha Civil Services.
- Telangana stood first in the country in the list of the highest number of open defecation free (ODF Plus) villages under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase-II programme till December 31, 2021. As many as 13,737 out of 14,200 villages in the State are on the ODF Plus list, which is 96.74%. This was followed by Tamil Nadu with 4,432 villages (35.39%) and Karnataka with 1,511 villages (5.59%). Gujarat took the 17th position with only 83 villages (0.45%).
- Odisha’s Ganjam has declared itself a child marriage free district, the first in the State. The district administration has been able to stop as many as 450 child marriages and video-record 48,383 marriages in two years – 2020 and 2021.
- Himachal Pradesh became the first LPG enables, also, smoke-free state. This milestone was achieved due to the Ujjwala Scheme and Grahini Suvidha Yojana by Centre. The Ujjwala scheme was introduced by the government to get rid of the smoke. The Grahini Suvidha Scheme was introduced to assist the women of rural areas.
- The Kerala High Court is all set to become India’s first paperless court. Supreme Court judge Justice DY Chandrachud inaugurated the smart courtrooms on 1 January 2022. In the 1st phase six courtrooms, including the Chief Justice’s room, will be converted into smart courts. Also, case files will be made available to the lawyers on the computer screen.
- Gujarat Chief Minister, Bhupendra Patel has been launched “Student Start-ups and Innovation Policy 2.0 (SSIP-2.0)” for the next five years. The policy contains provisions for the establishment of active innovation and incubation centres in all universities in the state.

- In **Kerala**, the first battery-powered electric boat built for the **Kochi Water Metro Project** was handed over to the **Kochi Metro Rail Limited**. The fully air-conditioned boat is among the 23 boats being built by the Cochin Shipyard for the 747-crore rupee Kochi Water Metro project. Kochi Water Metro system will have 78 ferries, linking 38 terminals spread over 76 route kilometres.
- **Losoong (Namsoong)** is annually celebrated across the **Indian State of Sikkim** on the **18th day of the 10th month of the Tibetan Lunar Calendar**, which also marks the beginning of the harvest season. The Namsoong festival begins on the 1st day of the new moon phase Kurneet Lovo, as per the Lepcha lunisolar Calendar known as Dungkit Karchu.
- **Uttar Pradesh** government declared four villages located near the Nepal border in the district as **revenue villages**. District Magistrate of Bahraich, Dinesh Chandra Singh said the decision was taken before the announcement of the general elections to the UP Legislative Assembly. These four villages are **Bhavanipur, Tedhia, Dhakia and Bichhia** located in Mihinpurwa tehsil of the district.
- The **18th edition** of the two days long **Kachai Lemon Festival** began in **Manipur** at the Local Ground of Kachai Village in **Ukhrul district**. The Kachai Lemon Festival is organised annually to promote this unique kind of lemon fruit and to encourage lemon farmers. This year, altogether 260 stalls are put up at the festival showcasing the rich reap of lemon this year. This year the festival is being organised under the theme '**Organic Kachai Lemon for Safe Environment and Rural Transformation**'. A training program for lemon farmers will be held tomorrow as part of the festival.
- In **Himachal Pradesh**, the **9th women National Ice Hockey Championship-2022** was inaugurated at **Ice Skating Rink, Kaza** in Lahaul Spiti district. For the first time in the state, Ice Hockey competition & development camp is being organized at the national level. Teams from **Himachal Pradesh, Telengana, Ladakh, ITBP Ladakh, Chandigarh & Delhi** are participating in this mega event.
- **Kokborok Day**, also known as the **Tripuri Language Day** is annually celebrated across the Indian State of Tripura on **19th January** with an aim to develop the Kokborok Language. The day commemorates the initial recognition of **Kokborok as the official language in 1979**. 19th January 2022 marks the observance of the **44th Kokborok Day**.
- Chief Minister of **Himachal Pradesh, Jai Ram Thakur** has launched the '**Apna Kangra**' app and hampers handcrafted by self-help groups (SHGs) at **Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh**. The app aims to provide a hassle-free experience for tourists and to boost sales of local handicrafts.
- The **government of Karnataka** has launched India's first AVGC Center of Excellence (CoE) (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics) in **Mahadevapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka**. AVGC CoE was launched with pioneering high technology digital media hub under its Innovate Karnataka initiative. It is funded by the Department of Electronics Information Technology Biotechnology and Science & Technology.
- 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**.
- **Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary in Rajasthan**, which is among the proposed five sites in the country, is expected to be formally notified as tiger reserve (TR) soon before the **Global Tiger Summit**, which is to be held at **Vladivostok, Russia**.
- **Kerala Bird Atlas (KBA)**, the first-of-its-kind State-level bird atlas in India, has created solid baseline data about the distribution and abundance of bird species across all major habitats, giving an impetus to futuristic studies. It is being conducted as a citizen science-driven exercise with the participation of over 1,000 volunteers of the birdwatching community KBA has been prepared based on systematic surveys held twice over 60 days a year.
- India's first innovation centre for **graphene** will be set up in **Kerala** by the **Digital University Kerala (DUK)**, along with the **Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET)** in Thrissur, for **Rs 86.41 crore**. This will be the first graphene Research and Development (R&D) incubation centre in the country. Tata Steel Limited is set to be the industrial partner of the centre.

Schemes/Committees

- Capital markets regulator, **Securities and Exchange Board of India** has restructured its primary **market advisory committee on data**. The committee aims to measure pertaining to areas such as securities market data access and privacy. Sebi has appointed Professor at National Law University, Delhi and former chairperson, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India **S Sahoo** as Panel Head. Earlier this panel was headed by Madhabi Puri Buch, an ex-whole time member of Sebi.
- The parliamentary standing committee constituted to examine "**The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021**" comprise of a total of 31 members, including only one women representative. Out of the total 31 members, TMC MP **Sushmita Dev** is the sole woman representative in the committee. The Bill seeks to raise the legal age of marriage for women in India from 18 to 21 to bring it at par with men.
- The flagship **UJALA programme** of the **Ministry of Power** has successfully completed seven years of distributing and selling LED lights on **January 05, 2022**. Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme was launched by Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi on **January 05, 2015**.
- **Ministry of Home Affairs** has constituted a committee to enquire into the serious lapses in the security arrangements during Prime Minister **Narendra Modi's visit to Punjab**. It is a three-member committee and will be headed by **Sudhir Kumar Saxena**, Secretary (Security), Cabinet Secretariat. It also comprises **Balbir Singh**, Joint Director, IB and **Suresh**, IG, SPG.
- The **Supreme Court of India** has constituted a five-member committee to probe the security breach during the recent visit of Prime Minister **Narendra Modi to Punjab**. The committee will be headed by former apex court judge Justice **Indu Malhotra**. Other members of the panel include the Inspector General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the Director-General of Police of Chandigarh, the Registrar General of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and the Additional DGP (Security) of Punjab.

Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- United Nations' **World Food Programme (WFP)** in India, has partnered with **The Akshaya Patra Foundation (TAPF)**, a not-for-profit organization, to enhance the effectiveness of the **Pradhan Mantri - Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) scheme** (earlier known as National Programme for Mid-Day Meal in Schools). The partnership aims to enhance food safety and hygiene projects, capacity building of cooks-cum-helpers and nutritional quality of school meals.
- **AIC STPINEXT Initiatives (STPINEXT)**, a special purpose vehicle of Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), has signed two memorandums of understanding (MoUs), one with **HDFC Bank** and another with Excel point Systems India Pvt Ltd, a niche technology player, for fostering entrepreneurship and nurturing tech startups in the country.
- **Airtel Payments Bank** and **Park+** have collaborated to offer **FASTag-based smart parking solutions** to marquee commercial and residential properties across India. This partnership will utilize the reach of Airtel Payments Bank to digitize the parking ecosystem using FASTag associated with the vehicle. Park+ is backed by **Sequoia Capital and Matrix Partners** and is engaged in automating parking spaces through FASTag.
- **Adani Group** and **South Korea's largest steelmaker POSCO** have signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MoU) to explore business opportunities in India. This includes the establishment of a green, environment-friendly integrated steel mill at Mundra, Gujarat. The estimated investment of the project is up to **\$5 billion (approx. Rs 37,000 crore)**.
- **LazyPay**, a Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) solution by **PayU Finance**, announced its partnership with **SBM Bank India** to launch **LazyCard**, a prepaid payment instrument backed by a credit line that works on the Visa payment network. To empower financially underserved Indians with easy access to credit as their card has limited credit options.
- **Axis Bank** has tied up with **MinkasuPay** to offer a biometric authentication solution for net banking payments in merchant apps using Fingerprint or Face ID, without the need for usernames, passwords, and One-Time Passwords (OTPs). This Solution will reduce the time of payment from 50-60 seconds to just 2-3 seconds and also increase the transaction success rate.

- Small businesses-focused online lending platform **Indifi Technologies** has collaborated with **Google Pay** to provide instant loans to eligible **medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs)** merchants through the Google Pay platform.
- The United Nations World Food Programme and the Odisha Government joined hands to improve the food security of small and marginal farmers in India by strengthening their resilience to climate change.
- **Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode's (IIMK) Business incubator Laboratory for Innovation Venturing and Entrepreneurship (LIVE)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Bank** to financially support early-stage startups. Under the MoU, a startup funding scheme, '**IndSpring Board**' has been launched. Under this scheme loans up to **Rs, 50 Crore** will be disbursed to the startups.
- **Jio Platforms (JPL)** has signed a pact with the **University of Oulu, Finland**, to accelerate research and standardization in **6G technology**. JPL and the University of Oulu will collaborate in Research and Development (R&D) of aerial and space communication, holographic beamforming, 3D-connected intelligence in cybersecurity, microelectronics, and photonics.
- **Bharti Airtel and Google** have announced a long-term partnership agreement, to accelerate the growth of **India's digital ecosystem**. Under the deal, Google will invest USD 1 billion in Airtel. From the total investment, Google will invest USD 700 million to acquire a 1.28 per cent stake in Bharti Airtel Ltd. The remaining USD 300 million will go toward multi-year commercial agreements with Airtel, including devices built together by the two tech giants.
- **TerraPay** has signed MoU with **NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL)** to allow Indian customers with an active UPI ID to receive real-time, international payments into their bank accounts via TerraPay's secure payments technology. It will enable a seamless and convenient cross-border remittances experience. NIPL is an international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- Social media giant **Meta** has partnered with industry body the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)** to support five lakh women-led small businesses across India. Meta will undertake this initiative under its **#SheMeansBusiness** programme, in partnership with FICCI's '**Empowering the Greater 50%**' initiative.

- **The Government of India** has joined hands with the **Government of Israel** to create 150 '**Villages of Excellence**' in 12 States of the country, to help farmers to adopt the latest technology in the farm sector. Israel would provide Technical assistance and other expertise to make agriculture a more profitable business.

Appointments/Resignations (National & International)

- **Baldev Prakash** has been appointed as the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of **Jammu & Kashmir Bank** for three years. His appointment will be effective from the date of taking charge or April 10, 2022, whichever is earlier. Apart from him, **R K Chhibber** has been appointed as an additional director on the board of the bank.
- 1983 Batch of Indian Railway Service, **Vinay Kumar Tripathi** has been appointed as new **Chairman and Chief Executive Officer** of Railway Board. He is presently working as General Manager, Northeastern Railway to the post of Chairman of Railway Board.
- **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 Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and National Defence College, New Delhi.
- **Vinod Kannan** took over as the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Vistara Airlines**. He replaced **Leslie Thng** who was the CEO from July 16, 2017, to December 31, 2021. It added that **Deepak Rajawat** has been elevated to take up the role of Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer. Vistara, is a 51:49 joint venture between Tata Sons Private Limited and Singapore Airlines.
- Tesla founder and CEO **Elon Musk**, who has been using social media to recruit people, has disclosed that Indian-origin **Ashok Elluswamy** was the first employee to be hired for his electric vehicle company's Autopilot team. Before joining Tesla, **Mr Elluswamy** was associated with Volkswagen Electronic Research Lab and WABCO Vehicle Control System.
- Director HR in ONGC, **Alka Mittal** has been given the additional charge as the new interim chairman and managing director (CMD) of **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)**, the largest oil and gas producer in India. She is the first woman to head the top post at the Maharatna company. She replaces **Subhash Kumar** who superannuated on December 31. He was also serving as an interim head.

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed **Deepak Kumar and Ajay Kumar Choudhary** as new **executive directors (ED)** with effect from 03 January. Prior to being promoted as ED, Deepak Kumar was heading the department of information technology of RBI, while Ajay Choudhary was Chief General Manager-in-Charge, Department of Supervision.
- Indian-origin American diplomat **Atul Keshap** has been appointed as the President of the **U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC)** by the US Chambers of Commerce. His term is effective from January 05, 2022. The US Chambers of Commerce is the parent body of USIBC. Atul Keshap replaces **Nisha Desai Biswal**.
- Additional Secretary under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, **G Asok Kumar** was appointed as the new **Director-General** of the **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** under the Ministry of Jal Shakti. He succeeded Director-General, **Rajiv Ranjan Mishra**. Kumar is popularly known as 'the Rain Man of India' for his excellent work in rainwater harvesting under the "Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain" campaign.
- State-owned **Bank of Baroda** has signed cricketer **Shafali Verma** as its brand endorser. The Bank continuously supports the youth of the country through its various banking and non-banking initiatives and this announcement reflects the bank's ethos of adding value to its customer experience by choosing youth-icons like Shafali to inspire them."
- The Centre has re-appointed **Vijay Paul Sharma** as the chairman of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP)** after he relinquished the post in May last year following completion of the five-year tenure.
- The Government of India has extended the tenure of **Navrang Saini** as interim Chairperson of **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** for three more months till March 05, 2022.
- Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor, **Urjit Patel** has been appointed as **Vice President** of the multilateral funding institution **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** for a period of three years. He will be one of the five Vice Presidents of the AIIB.
- 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.
- **RenewBuy**, an online insurance platform, has appointed **Rajkummar Rao** as the brand ambassador for its 1st 360-degree consumer advertising campaign that highlights consumers' insurance needs.
- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has announced the appointment of the eminent rocket scientist **Dr S Somanath** as its new **chairman and Space Secretary**.
- **Reserve Bank of India** has approved the appointment of **Ittira Davis** as managing director & chief executive officer of (MD & CEO) of **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank** for one tenure
- 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.
- The **Board of Directors of Adani Power Limited (APL)**, a subsidiary of Adani Group, approved the appointment of **Shersingh B Khyalia** as the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of **Adani Powers** with effect from 11th January 2022.
- **Narendra Kumar Goenka** has been appointed as the new chairman of the **Apparel Export Promotion Council, AEPC**. Former chairman **Padma Dr A Sakthivel** handed over the charge to him. Mr. Goenka has been associated with the Council for more than two decades. He was the Vice Chairman of the apex body of Indian apparel exporters before taking charge as Chairman of AEPC.
- **Roberta Metsola**, a Christian Democrat from Malta, was elected president of the **European Union's parliament**. Her election comes a week after the shock death of outgoing parliament president **David Sassoli**, who was due to step down as part of a power-sharing pact. She is only the third woman elected to the post.
- The Government approved the proposal for appointment of Eastern Army Commander Lieutenant General **Manoj Pande** as the next Vice Chief of Army Staff. General Pande would be the successor to Lt Gen **CP Mohanty** who is scheduled to superannuate on January 31. General Pande was commissioned into the Corps of Engineers (The Bombay Sappers) in December 1982. He was Director-General at Army Headquarters dealing with subjects of discipline, ceremonial and welfare.

Ranks and Reports

- 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.
- The board of directors of the **Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO)** has unanimously elected **Dileep Sanghani** as the **17th Chairman of the Cooperative.** He succeeds **Balvinder Singh Nakai**, who passed away earlier on October 11, 2021. Prior to this, Sanghani was serving as vice-chairman of IFFCO since 2019.
- Paytm founder **Vijay Shekhar Sharma** has been roped in as the Ambassador of **Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG)**, a community-based team of industry leaders supported by global internet body ICANN.
- **Chanchal Kumar** has been appointed as the **Managing Director, National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL)**, under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH). He is appointed in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary. He is a 1992 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, presently Principal Secretary of Bihar's Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.
- Plant-based meat company **GoodDot** has roped in **Neeraj Chopra** as its brand ambassador. With this association, the company wants to create awareness about the new category of plant-based meats. It also wants to send out a message that small changes in lifestyle and food choices can go a long way in making the world a better place.
- **Vinodanand Jha** has been appointed as the **Chairperson of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) Adjudicating Authority**, for a period of 5 years. Jha is a 1983-batch retired IRS officer, who was serving as the Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax in Pune before this.
- The Government of India has appointed **Dr V Anantha Nageswaran** as the new **Chief Economic Adviser.** The announcement came days ahead of the presentation of the 2022 Union Budget on February 1 and the tabling of the 2021-22 Economic Survey on January 31.
- **Pushp Kumar Joshi** has been named to be the new chairman and managing director of **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL)**, the nation's third-largest oil refining and fuel marketing company.
- The **Chennai International Airport** is one of the top 10 large international airports in the world that ensures 'on-time' departures. In a review conducted by Cirium, an organisation that specialises in offering aviation data to travel, finance, aerospace, and aviation industries, the airport has been **ranked 8th for 'on-time performance' for the year 2021.** Besides that, Chennai airport is the only Indian airport to figure in the top 10 positions of the list. The first three positions have been bagged by United State's Miami Airport, Fukuoka Airport, and Haneda Airport in Japan.
- **India** has improved its position by seven places to rank at **83rd** place among 111 countries in the latest **Henley Passport Index**, released for Q1 of 2022. **Oman and Armenia** are the latest destinations where Indian passport holders can visit without obtaining a visa. **Japan and Singapore** have retained the joint top position in the Henley Global Mobility Report 2022 Q1. Their passports holders are allowed to travel visa-free to 192 countries. **Afghanistan** has the world's least powerful passports, with a visa-free score of 26.
- Union Environment Minister, **Bhupender Yadav** has launched the **17th edition** of the biennial '**India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2021.** ISFR is released by the **Forest Survey of India (FSI)**, every two years since 1987 to assess the country's forest resources. India's forest and tree cover rose by 2,261 square kilometres in ISFR 2021 as compared to the assessment of 2019. This includes an increase of **1,540 square kilometres** in forest cover and a **721 sq km** increase in tree cover.
- According to Oxfam India, "**Inequality Kills**" report, the wealth of India's richest families reached to a record high in 2021. In the report, India was described as a '**very unequal**,' country, as the top 10 people in India holds **57 per cent** of the wealth. On the other hand, the share of the bottom half is 13 per cent. The report states that **84% of Indian** households witnessed an income decline amid the covid-19 pandemic. The richest 98 Indians own the same wealth as the bottom 552 million people. The number of Indian billionaires increased from 102 to 142, during 2021. The wealth of the top 100 families is Rs 57.3 trillion.
- The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** has released its **World Employment and Social Outlook - Trends 2022 (WESO Trends)** report. The report analyses comprehensive labour market projections for 2022 and 2023 and assesses how labour market recovery has unfolded worldwide. In the WESO 2022, ILO has downgraded its forecast for labour market recovery in 2022.

- NITI Aayog has released a report titled 'Banking on Electric Vehicles in India' on January 22, 2022, which outlines the need and importance of the inclusion of Electric Vehicles in RBI priority-sector lending guidelines. The report has been developed by NITI Aayog in collaboration with US-based non-profit organisations Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), and RMI India.
- Transparency International has released the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2021 in which India has been ranked at 85th spot (Score of 40). The ranking has been topped jointly by three countries- Denmark, Finland and New Zealand (Score of 88). This ranking measures how corrupt each country's public sector is perceived to be. The results are given on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). 180 countries are ranked in it.
- Apple has retained its position as the most valuable brand in 2022 as well, according to the Brand Finance 2022 Global 500 report. The brand valuation of Apple was recorded at \$355.1 billion in 2022, which is an increase of 35% from last year. This is the highest brand value ever recorded in the Brand Finance Global 500 ranking history. The Indian conglomerate Tata Group has emerged as the most valuable brand from India and also in South Asia. It is the only brand from the country in the top 100. The Global Rank of Tata Group 78. The brand value of Tata Group is US\$23.9 billion.
- Maharashtra has topped India's list in the number of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) owned by entrepreneurs from the Scheduled Castes with as many as 96,805 enterprises. Tamil Nadu with 42,997 enterprises and Rajasthan with 38,517 units occupy the second and third slots, according to the data furnished by the Office of the Development Commissioner in the Union Ministry of MSME.



Sports Current Affairs

- Veteran New Zealand batter, **Ross Taylor** has announced retirement from international cricket at the end of the ongoing domestic season.
- **South Africa's** wicketkeeper-batter **Quinton de Kock** has announced his retirement from Test cricket with immediate effect late. His announcement came just hours after South Africa's 113-run defeat to India in the first Test of the three-match series.
- **India** has lifted the **under-19 Asia cricket Cup** by defeating **Sri Lanka** by nine wickets in a rain-interrupted One-Day International final in **Dubai** through the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method. In the match, Sri Lanka opted to bat first and scored 106 for nine in the stipulated 38 overs. India, who have won a record seven Asia Cup titles, looked a far superior team.
- Pakistani all-rounder, **Mohammad Hafeez** has announced his retirement from international cricket on January 03, 2022, to end his career spanning more than 18 years. The 41-year-old Hafeez retired from Test cricket in December 2018. He has played 55 Tests, 218 ODIs and 119 T20Is for Pakistan, scoring 12,780 runs across formats. He is nicknamed "The Professor".
- Olympic champion **Neeraj Chopra** will continue to train with his German coach **Klaus Bartonietz**, whose contract has been extended till the 2024 Paris Games, the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) confirmed. Bartonietz took charge as Chopra's coach from compatriot and former world record holder javelin thrower Uwe Hohn.
- Sports Ministry's **Mission Olympic Cell (MOC)** of India has approved the inclusion of Alpine Skiing athlete **Md Arif Khan** in the **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)** Core group, until the Winter Olympics, scheduled this February in Beijing, China. The feat earned Khan the unique distinction of becoming the first Indian to win direct quota spots in two different Winter Olympics events, besides being the first athlete from the country to seal a berth at the Winter Olympic games 2022.
- **Legends League Cricket (LLC)** has appointed **Jhulan Goswami** as an ambassador to its **All Women Match Official Team** to promote Women's Empowerment initiatives of the LLC and to increase participation of women in cricket.

- **Nodirbek Abdusattorov** (Uzbekistan), won the **World Rapid Chess Championship 2021** by defeating **Ian Nepomniachtchi** (Russia) in a tiebreaker and dethroning **Magnus Carlsen**, the current World Number 1. 2020 FIDE Championship was won by Magnus Carlsen.
- French tennis player **Gael Monfils** beat Russia's **Karen Khachanov** in the men's singles event of the **2022 Adelaide International 1** to claim the 11th ATP title of his career. In the women's category, World number one Australian star **Ashleigh Barty** beat **Elena Rybakina** of Kazakhstan to win her second Adelaide International title.
- World number six **Rafael Nadal** won the men's singles tennis title at **2022 Melbourne Summer Set 1**. Nadal beat American qualifier Maxime Cressy 7-6(6), 6-3 to earn his 89th career ATP title. In the **women's singles**, **Simona Halep** beat Russia's Veronika Kudermetova 6-2, 6-3 to win her 23rd career WTA title.
- Tamil Nadu's **Bharath Subramaniam** became **India's 73rd chess Grandmaster**. He secured the third and final Grandmaster norm at an event at **Cattolica in Italy**. He scored 6.5 points from nine rounds along with four others and finish seventh in the event.
- South African all-rounder **Chris Morris** has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. Morris has played in four Tests, 42 ODIs and 23 T20Is for South Africa.
- The **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** has informed that **Tata group** has replaced Chinese mobile phone manufacturer **Vivo** as the title sponsor of the **Indian Premier League (IPL)** for the **2022 and 2023 seasons**. The multinational conglomerate will pay Rs. 300 crore per year.
- The **All India Sports Council of the Deaf** has got approval from the **International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD)** to host the first **World Deaf T20 Cricket Championship** in Kerala from January 10-20, 2023.
- Indian badminton player **Lakshya Sen** has defeated World Champion **Loh Kean Yew** of Singapore, in the men's singles final of **India Open 2022** to secure his maiden **Super 500 title**.
- **Tasnim Mir** became the **first Indian** to grab **World no 1 in Under-19 (U-19) Girls Singles** category with 10,810 points in the latest **Badminton World Federation (BWF) Junior rankings**.
- Goalkeeper **Savita Punia** will lead India at the upcoming **women's Asia Cup in Muscat as Hockey India** named a strong 18-member squad for the event, including 16 players that featured at the Tokyo Olympics.
- In tennis, **Aslan Karatsev** defeated **Andy Murray** by 6-3, 6-3, to win men's single title at the Sydney Tennis Classic final, to claim his third ATP Tour title. The women's single title was claimed by Spanish world number nine **Paula Badosa**, who defeated **Barbora Krejickova** 6-3 4-6 7-6(4), to capture her third career title.
- **India** is all set to host **AFC Women's football Asian Cup India 2022** from 20th January 2022 in **Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, and Pune**. The tournament will witness 12 teams competing for the trophy. AFC Women's Asian Cup India will also be the final stage of Asian qualification for the **2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand**. Five teams will qualify for the main event directly while two of them will progress to the inter-confederation play-offs.
- TCS has partnered with Canada Running Series (CRS) to become the new title sponsor and official technology consulting partner of the Toronto Waterfront Marathon and Virtual Race through November 2026. Tata Consultancy Services and Canada Running Series aim to modernize marathon running in Canada through a new official **race app**.
- The 35-year-old had already bowed out of singles competitions **in 2013**. Sania has **six Grand Slam titles** in women's doubles and mixed doubles to her name. Her last headline-grabbing win came with Chinese partner **Shuai Zhang** in women's doubles at the **Ostrava Open** on September 26, 2021.
- Pakistani skipper **Babar Azam** has been named as the captain of the **ICC Men's T20I team of the year for 2021**. However, in ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year for 2021, **Smriti Mandhana** is the only Indian women player named in the 11 member team. Smriti has made in the list for third time in the T20I team of the year after 2018 (opener) and 2019 (number three). England's **Nat Sciver** has been made the captain of ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year for 2021.
- Ace Indian shuttler, **PV Sindhu** has bagged the women's singles title at the **Syed Modi International Tournament** in Lucknow. Sindhu beat fellow Indian **Malvika Bansod** 21-13 21-16 to win her second Syed Modi title after 2017. The 2022 Syed Modi International badminton tournament was held at Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh from 18 to 23 January 2022.

- India's first para-badminton academy has been set up in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. It has all the advanced equipment and facilities. The set-up will improve India's medal prospects at the 2024 Paralympics to be held in Paris, France at Stade de France stadium.
- The women's team from Ladakh has lifted the 9th National Women's Ice Hockey Championship in Himachal Pradesh. The championship was organised by the Ice Hockey Association of India at Kaza area in the Lahaul-Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh.
- Lucknow's IPL franchise, which is owned by Sanjiv Goenka (RPSG Group), has been renamed Lucknow Super Giants ahead of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022 mega auction. Lucknow team roped in KL Rahul as their captain and also roped in Australia all-rounder Marcus Stoinis and leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi.
- India defeated China, 2-0 to win the bronze medal at the 2022 Women's Hockey Asia Cup tournament. Japan defeated South Korea 4-2 in the final to win their third title at the Women's Hockey Asia Cup tournament.
- Argentina defeated Chile, 4-2 to win its 6th women's field hockey championship title at the 2022 Women's Pan American Cup.
- The 19th meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was held under the chairmanship of the union minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change Bhupender Yadav. Currently, there are 51 Tiger Reserves in India and more than 35 rivers originate from those areas which are crucial for water security.
- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Piyush Goyal virtually addressed the 16th India Digital Summit, 2022. The two-day virtual event was organised on January 11 and 12, 2022 by the Internet And Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). The theme of the summit was "Supercharging Startups". India Digital Summit is the oldest event of the digital industry in India. During the event, the Minister unveiled 'LEAP' as the way forward to further strengthen our Startups ecosystem. LEAP stands for "Leverage, Encourage, Access & Promote".
- 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 first BRICS Sherpas meeting of 2022 was held virtually on January 18-19 2022, with the members thanking India for its BRICS chairship in 2021. China has taken on the rotating chairmanship of BRICS in 2022. BRICS is a grouping of five major emerging economies – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

Summits And Conferences

- The GST Council's 46th meeting was held in New Delhi under the chairmanship of Union Finance & Corporate Affairs Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman. The GST Council has recommended deferring the decision to change the rates in textiles recommended in the 45th GST Council meeting. Consequently, the existing GST rates of 5 % instead of 12% in textile sector would continue.
- Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh has inaugurated the 24th National Conference on e-Governance in Hyderabad, Telangana. The theme of the two-day Conference is 'India's Techade: Digital Governance in a Post Pandemic World'.
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- 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.
- India and ASEAN nations have approved a work plan titled India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2022, during the second ASEAN Digital Ministers' (ADGMIN) Meeting held virtually. The ADGMIN meeting was co-chaired by Devusinh Chauhan, Minister of State for Communications, Government of India, and Admiral Tin Aung San, Myanmar's Minister of Transport and Communications.

Awards & Recognition

- Photojournalist **Danish Siddiqui**, who died during an assignment in Afghanistan, has been posthumously awarded as the '**Journalist of the Year**' for 2020 by the **Mumbai Press Club**. **CJI N V Ramana** presented the annual '**RedInk Awards for Excellence in Journalism**'. Senior journalist **Prem Shankar Jha**, 83, was bestowed with the **lifetime achievement award** "for his long and distinguished career of incisive and analytical writing".
- **Zishaan A Latif** won **Ramnath Goenka Award** in the **Photo Journalism** category. He won the award for his photo essay, **The arduous struggle for inclusion in the NRC**, which was published in **The Caravan** in October 2019. He documented the plight of people who were dropped from the **National Register of Citizens (NRC)** and put a face to an untold human story.
- India's one of the top numerologists, **JC Chaudhry** has achieved the first-ever **Guinness World Record in Numerology** and the **first world record of 2022** by educating about ancient science to around 6000 participants, enthusiasts of numerology joined from the **United States, the United Kingdom, Middle East, and India**. The Guinness World Record London office has opened a new category, "**Numerology**" for this achievement.
- **South Indian Bank (SIB)** won the **UiPath Automation Excellence Awards 2021** for Best Automation under '**Crisis for Business Continuity**'. The 2021 edition of the award recognises the contribution of the individuals and organizations across India and South Asia (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal) for bringing change through transformative automation projects.
- **HDFC Bank** was named as the '**Best Private Bank in India**' at the '**Global Private Banking Awards 2021**' which was organised by **Professional Wealth Management (PWM)** in a virtual ceremony. PWM is a wealth management Magazine, published by the **Financial Times Group**. The award was given for contributing to accelerate key trends, including digitalisation, communication and investment in environmental, social and governance (ESG) strategies.
- A professor in the clinical embryology department at **Kasturba Medical College (KMC)**, under **Manipal Academy of Higher education (MAHE)**, **Dr Satish Adiga** has been selected by the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** for its national award. He will receive **Dr Subhas Mukherjee Award** from ICMR in recognition for his outstanding contribution to the field of **in-vitro fertilization (IVF)**. He has contributed significantly to both clinical IVF and fertility research.
- The **Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL)** won **SKOCH Award** in the Silver category for its work towards **combating Crime and Violence against Children**. The award was given out at the 78 SKOCH Summit. The "**State of Governance**" was the theme of the summit.
- The 2015 film **Bajrangi Bhaijaan** fame actress, **Harshaali Malhotra** has been awarded the **12th Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar Award 2022**. She received the award from **Shri Bhagat Singh Koshiyari**, Governor of Maharashtra, for her commendable performance in the movie and contribution in the field of Indian Cinema.
- **DBT-BIRAC** supported start-ups, **NIRAMAI Health Analytix Pvt Ltd**, and **InnAccel Technologies Pvt Ltd** have received **World Bank Group and Consumer Technology Association's Global Women's Health Tech Awards**.
- Former West Indies **Captain Clive Lloyd** received **Knighthood** from **Prince William**, the Duke of Cambridge at Windsor Castle, for his services towards the game of cricket. On the same day, England's world cup-winning captain **Eoin Morgan** was awarded with **CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire)** by Prince William for his services towards the game of cricket.
- India's **Navdeep Kaur** has won the award for the **Best National Costume** at the prestigious **Mrs World 2022 pageant** in Nevada, Las Vegas. She is the winner of **Mrs India World 2021**, was representing the country at **Mrs World 2022**. Navdeep hails from a small town near **Odisha's Steel City, Rourkela**. The "**avant garde**" outfit was inspired by **Kundalini Chakra**, which "symbolises the movement of energy in chakras of the body from the base to the spine up through the crown".
- 37 Years old **Shaylyn Ford** was crowned as the winner of **Mrs World 2022**. She was crowned by the outgoing queen **Kate Schneider** from Ireland. **Mrs Jordan Jaclyn Stapp** & **Mrs UAE Debanjali Kamstra** were the runner up. **Shaylyn Ford** represented America in the pageant and battled out 57 other contestants from across the globe to claim the title. This is the 8th time an American representative won the title of Mrs. World.

- Lavni artist from Maharashtra, **Sumit Bhale** of Fulbari taluka has won a **gold medal** at the **International Folk Art Festival in Dubai**. With his splendid performance, Maharashtra's splendour has been widely appreciated at the international platform.
- **Axis Bank & CRMNEXT Solution** won the **IBS Intelligence (IBSi) Global FinTech Innovation Awards 2021** for the "**Best CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System Implementation**". It is one of the most prominent awards for global bankers and IT (Information Technology) consultants across the world.
- The global pharmaceutical giant Pfizer Inc.'s Chairman and Chief Executive, **Albert Bourla**, has been awarded with the **prestigious Genesis Prize 2022** on January 19, 2022. He has been awarded for his efforts in leading the development of a **COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine)**. The award comes with a cash prize of \$1 million.
- Bollywood actress **Sushmita Sen** has been conferred with the **International Association of Working Women Award** at the **Washington DC South Asian Film Festival (DCSAFF) 2021**. The former Miss Universe has been felicitated for outstanding performance by a female actor in a TV series for her show '**Aarya 2**'.
- Former Japan Prime Minister **Shinzo Abe** was conferred with the **Netaji Award 2022** by **Netaji Research Bureau**. Consul General of Japan in Kolkata Nakamura Yutaka received the honour on behalf of Mr. Abe at a function at the Elgin Road residence of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his 125th birth anniversary.
- **Prajakta Koli** has become **India's first UN Development Programme (UNDP) Youth Climate Champion**. She is a content creator on various online platforms like youtube, Instagram, etc. She has been conferred the title for her contribution towards mental health, women's rights and girl child education through various global social campaigns.
- **P S Vinodraj** directed film **Koozhangal** from India won the best film award in the Asian Film Competition section at the **20th Dhaka International Film Festival**. Information and Broadcasting Minister of Bangladesh Hasan Mahmud gave away the awards as Chief Guest during the concluding session organised at the **National Museum auditorium in Dhaka**.
- Olympian **Neeraj Chopra** will be honoured with **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.
- The government of **Assam** has conferred its highest civilian award '**Assam Baibhav**' on Industrialist **Ratan Tata**. Assam governor Jagdish Mukhi conferred the award to the former chairman of Tata Sons. The Assam government conferred '**Asom Baibhav**' to Ratan Tata for his contribution to setting up cancer treatment facilities in the state.
- **Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve** (Erode district, Tamil Nadu) has been given the prestigious **TX2 award** after its tiger numbers doubled to **80 since 2010**. Apart from the STR, the **Bardia National Park in Nepal** has won this year's TX2 award for doubling the population of wild tigers.

Important Days

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has observed the **64th Foundation Day** of its establishment on **January 01, 2022**. DRDO was established in 1958 with just 10 laboratories to enhance the research work in the Defence sector. At that time, it was tasked with designing and developing cutting edge defence technologies for the Indian Armed Forces.
- **World Braille Day** is observed globally on **4th January** since **2019**. The day aims to recognize the **right of access** to braille by blind people and raise awareness of the importance of braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people. The day is marked remembering the birth anniversary of **Louis Braille**, the inventor of Braille - for people with visual disabilities. Louis Braille was born on **4th January 1809** in the town of Coupvray in northern France.
- **World Day of War Orphans** is marked on **6 January** to create awareness about the plight of children who have lost their parents due to conflict. In any conflict, children are one of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups present. Children who have been injured in a gunfight or separated from their families require particular care in order to heal the mental wounds of war, begin school, and restart normal life.

- The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** and the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry** have decided to organise a week-long virtual innovation celebration called '**Startup India Innovation Week**' to showcase the spread and depth of entrepreneurship across India. The virtual event will be organised from **January 10 to January 16, 2022**. The event also aims to commemorate the **75th** year of India's independence '**Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**'.
- **World Hindi Day** is celebrated on **January 10** since **2006** to promote the language at the global stage. The day marks the anniversary of the first **World Hindi Conference** which was inaugurated on January 10, 1975, by the then prime minister **Indira Gandhi**.
- This year **National Human Trafficking Awareness Day** is observed on **January 11, 2022**, which is on Tuesday. The day aims at raising awareness of the plight of human trafficking victims, and promoting and protecting their rights.
- In India, the **National Youth Day** is celebrated on **12 January** annually to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Swami Vivekananda**. The main aim behind this is to make sure that the students across the country can be encouraged to learn about the life, the ideas and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda and apply them in their lives.
- In India, the **Armed Forces Veterans Day** is observed each year on **14 January since 2017**. The day aims to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation. **2022 marks the 6th** Armed Forces Veterans Day.
- The **Army Day in India** is celebrated on **15 January** every year, to salute the valiant soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country and its citizens. This year marks the **74th Indian Army Day**.
- **National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)** celebrates its Raising Day every year on **January 19**, since it came into existence on January 19, 2006. In 2022, the NDRF is observing its **17th** Raising Day. There are 12 NDRF battalions located in different parts of the country and comprises as many as 13,000 NDRF personnel who work to build a safer country.
- **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's**, 126th birth anniversary on **23 January 2022** is observed as **Parakram Diwas**. The day is celebrated to honour and remember Netaji's indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation.
- In India, the **National Girl Child Day (NGCD)** is observed annually on **January 24**. The day aims to focus on the inequalities faced by girls, to promote the education, health & nutrition of the girl child, and to spread awareness about the rights of a girl child.
- The **International Day of Education** is marked every year on **24 January** globally to celebrate the role of education in bringing global peace and sustainable development.
- The **Indian government** established **January 25** as the **National Tourism Day** to raise awareness about the importance of tourism for the country's economy. The day is observed to cultivate awareness among the global community on the importance of tourism and its social, political, financial and cultural worth.
- India observes "**National Voters' Day**" every year on **January 25** to encourage more young voters to take part in the political process. Election Commission of India is celebrating **12th** National Voters Day on **25th January 2022**. The theme for this year's NVD, '**Making Elections Inclusive, Accessible and Participative**'.
- **International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust (International Holocaust Remembrance Day)** is observed on **27 January**. In 2022, the theme guiding the United Nations Holocaust remembrance and education is "**Memory, Dignity and Justice**".
- The **International Customs Day (ICD)** is observed on **26 January** every year. The day is celebrated to recognise the role of customs officials and agencies and focus on the working conditions and challenges that customs officers face in their jobs. This year, the theme chosen by WCO for ICD is '**Scaling up Customs Digital Transformation by Embracing a Data Culture and Building a Data Ecosystem**'.
- **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.
- **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 nation observed **74th** Martyrs' Day or Shaheed Diwas.

- **World Leprosy Day** is observed globally on the last Sunday of January every year. In 2022, the World Leprosy Day falls on **January 30, 2022**. This year theme of World Leprosy Day 2022 is “**United for Dignity**”.
- **World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day (World NTD Day)** is observed on January 30 every year to raise awareness about neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) as a critical public health challenge so that we can progress towards their elimination. 2022 theme is ‘**Achieving health equity to end the neglect of poverty-related diseases**’.

Defence Current Affairs

- **India** has invited a total of 46 friendly foreign countries to participate in the multinational naval exercise **Milan in Visakhapatnam**, scheduled from February 25, 2022. The theme of this 11th edition of exercise Milan is **camaraderie, cohesion and collaboration**. This exercise was initiated in 1995 and held biennially and conducted with friendly navies.
- **India** and its partners in the **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or Quad** along with **Canada and South Korea** are participating in the multinational exercise **Sea Dragon 2022 at Guam in the Western Pacific**. The six nations that are participating in the exercise are the **United States, Australia, Canada, India, Japan and South Korea**.
- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully test-fired an extended range sea-to-sea variant of the **BrahMos supersonic cruise missile** for the **Indian Navy**. This advanced sea to sea variant of BrahMos Supersonic Cruise missile was launched from **INS Visakhapatnam**, a stealth guided-missile destroyer of the Indian Navy.
- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully flight tested the **Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM)**, in its final “deliverable configuration”. MPATGM will be manufactured by **Bharat Dynamics Limited** at its facility in **Bhanoor, Telangana**.
- **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. Russian Federation Navy was represented by **RFS Admiral Tributs**.
- The Defence Minister, **Rajnath Singh** has set up an online **Raksha Pension Shikayat Nivaran Portal** to resolve pension-related grievances of ex-servicemen (ESM) and their dependents. The portal will allow them to lodge grievances directly with the **Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW)**, he stated on the occasion of **Armed Forces Veterans Day**.
- A Maritime Partnership Exercise was held between the **Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF)** in the **Bay of Bengal** in a non-contact mode amid COVID-19. The Indian side was represented by **Indian Naval Ships (INS) Shivalik and INS Kadmatt** while JMSDF Ships **Uruga and Hirado** participated from the Japanese side. Strengthening bilateral relations, promoting defence cooperation, enhancing mutual understanding and interoperability, and sharing best practices between IN and JMSDF.
- The launch was conducted by **Brahmos Aerospace** in close coordination with **Defence Research and Development Organisation**. This flight test was monitored by all the sensors of the range instrumentation including telemetry, radar and electro-optical tracking systems deployed across the eastern coast and the down range ships.
- Swedish defence company ‘**Saab**’ had been selected by the **Indian Armed Force** through a competitive programme for the supply of **single-shot anti-armour weapon AT4**. AT4 will be used by the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force. The order includes the **AT4CS AST**, which can be fired from confined spaces such as from inside buildings, bunkers and other urban environments. Carl-Gustaf system of Saab is being already used by the Indian Armed Forces.
- **Russia** delivered all the contracted **70,000 AK-203 Kalashnikov assault rifles** to the Indian Armed Forces. The Indian Armed Forces had placed an order for 670,000 rifles, for which the contract was signed on December 06, 2021, between India and Kalashnikov (Russian defence manufacturing unit). The total cost of the contract is around **Rs 5,124 crore**. The contract included procuring 70,000 rifles off the shelf.
- **Western Naval Command of the Indian Navy** conducted a joint maritime exercise **Paschim Lehar (XPL-2022)** off the West Coast which concluded. The exercise continued for 20 days and was conducted with an aim to enhance Inter-Service synergy among the Indian Navy, IAF, Indian Army and Coast Guard.

Science and Technology

- Scientists and experts in **France** have reportedly identified a new variant of **COVID-19** termed '**IHU**'. The new variant is said to be a more mutated strain than **Omicron**. The **B.1.640.2** or **IHU** variant was first identified by the academics at institute **IHU Mediterranean Infection** and contains 46 mutations, which is more than **Omicron**. Nearly 12 cases of this new variant have been reported near **Marseilles** and has been linked to the African country **Cameroon**. But, the **Omicron** strain is still dominating in most parts of the world.
- **CryptoWire**, a global crypto super app that is a special business unit of **TickerPlant**, announced the launch of **India's first index of Cryptocurrencies - IC15**, which is a rule-based broad market index by market capitalisation. The **IC15** tracks and measures the performance of the top 15 widely traded liquid cryptocurrencies listed on leading crypto exchanges of the world, the company stated.
- The **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has approved a testing kit for detecting the **Omicron** variant of the **SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus**. The covid kit developed by **Tata** is called '**OmiSure**' and will be an enhancement for the detection of the **Omicron** variant. The kit is manufactured by **Tata Medical and Diagnostics**. The tests have been performed as per the manufacturer's instructions. Responsibility for batch-to-batch consistency lies with the manufacturer.
- **Jahnvi Dangeti**, a young girl from **Andhra Pradesh**, has just completed **NASA's International Air and Space Program (iasp nasa)** at the **Kennedy Space Centre** in **Alabama, US**, making her the first **Indian** to accomplish this feat.
- Union Minister of State (I/C) **Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh** has launched **Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Start-Up by Indian Institute Technology (IIT) alumni** for water purification through innovative technology with financial support from **Technology Development Board (TDB)**. The facility aims to provide clean drinking water at a price much lesser than the market price.
- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** successfully test-fired the **Vikas engine** that would power **India's first human-carry rocket (Gaganyaan human space mission)**. This qualification test of the **Vikas Engine** for the **Gaganyaan human space mission** was conducted by **ISRO** at **Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu**. More such tests on **Vikas Engine** will be conducted in the future by **ISRO**.

- **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.

Books & Authors

- **HarperCollins Publishers India** is set to publish a new book titled "**Mamata: Beyond 2021**", authored by political journalist **Jayanta Ghosal** and translated by **Arunava Sinha**. The announcement about the release of the book was made on 5th January 2022, the birthday of **Mamata Banerjee**, the Chief Minister (CM) of **West Bengal** and the leader of the **Trinamool Congress (TMC)** party. The book explores and examines why the **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)** lost the 2021 **West Bengal Election**.
- **Dhirendra K. Jha**, a **Delhi-based** journalist, has authored a new book titled "**Gandhi's Assassin: The Making of Nathuram Godse and His Idea of India**". The book explores **Godse's** relationship with the organizations that influenced his view and gave him a sense of purpose and draws out the gradual hardening of **Godse's** resolve that led to **Mahatma Gandhi's assassination**.
- **Tata Sons** emeritus Chairman, veteran industrialist and philanthropist **Ratan Tata's** authorized biography titled '**Ratan N. Tata: The Authorized Biography**' is set to hit the stands in **November 2022**. The biography is penned by a former senior bureaucrat and retired **IAS officer Dr Thomas Matthew**. It will be published by **HarperCollins**. The book chronicles around the 84-year-old **Ratan Tata's** childhood, college years, and early influences, among other things.
- **HarperCollins** is set to publish "**Indomitable: A Working Woman's Notes on Life, Work and Leadership**" the autobiography of **Arundhati Bhattacharya**, retired **Indian banker** and former first-ever **woman Chairperson of the State Bank of India**.
- A new biography titled "**Bose: The Untold Story of An Inconvenient Nationalist**" authored by **Chandrachur Ghose** will be released in **February 2022**. The book contains the thoughts and opinions of **Subhas Chandra Bose** about the development of independent **India**, communalism, geopolitics and political ideology. It also marked the untold and unknown stories of **Netaji (Subhas Chandra Bose)**.

Miscellaneous Current Affairs

- Maharashtra Governor **Bhagat Singh Koshyari** has released a book titled '**The Legend of Birsa Munda**', authored by **Tuhin A Sinha** and co-authored by **Ankita Verma**. The Book is the story of a lesser-known tribal hero, Birsa Munda, who courageously fought against the oppressive British Raj for the rights of his tribal community.
- Union Minister of State for Culture, **Meenakashi Lekhi** has released a pictorial comic book titled '**India's Women Unsung Heroes**', as a tribute to the forgotten women freedom fighters of the country. The book has been prepared by the **Ministry of Culture** in partnership with **Amar Chitra Katha**, an Indian publisher of Indian comics and graphic novels. India will be celebrating 75 years of independence this August 15.
- The former finance secretary of India, **Subhash Chandra Garg** has announced his debut book named "**The \$10 Trillion Dream**". The book is scheduled to hit stands towards the end of February 2022. The new book explores the critical policy issues that India faces today and suggests reforms for it to become a **USD 10 trillion** economy by the mid-2030s. It is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI).
- A new book titled "**A Little Book of India: Celebrating 75 years of Independence**" authored by **Ruskin Bond** was released, marking 75 years of India's Independence. The book is the blend of "physical and spiritual" attributes of India and also highlights the last 75 years of India's progress as a nation. It is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI).
- The book titled '**Fearless Governance**' authored by **Dr Kiran Bedi** has been released. She is the former Lt Governor of Puducherry and IPS (retd). This book is based on the ground realities of nearly five years of service of Dr Bedi as Lt. Governor of Puducherry and her vast experience of 40 years in the Indian Police Service.



- Governor of Sikkim, **Ganga Prasad**, has named a new road **Narendra Modi Marg**. The Governor viewed the road under Kabi Lungchok from Kyongsala, 4th mile. This is an alternative to **Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg**. The National Monument at National Highway 310 was built by Border Roads Organization. It will be easier for Indian tourists to reach Nathula Border. The stretch, constructed by Border Roads Organisation, has reduced the distance between **Gangtok and Tsomgo lake by 15 km**.
- **The Losar Festival in Ladakh** is celebrated at the onset of the New Year in the traditional schedule of **Tibetan Buddhism**. It is celebrated by the Buddhist Community in the Ladakh region. The Losar is a 15 days festival, from the start of the Tibetan Lunar calendar, marking the 1st day of the 11 months in the Tibetan Calendar. Losar is a Tibetan word that means 'New Year'.
- **Captain Harpreet Chandi**, Indian-origin British Sikh Army officer and physiotherapist, also known as **Polar Preet**, has created history by becoming the first woman of colour to complete a solo unsupported trek to the **South Pole**. Capt. Chandi announced her history-making feat at the end of Day 40 after travelling 700 miles (1,127 kilometres) while pulling a pulk or sledge with all of her kit and battling temperatures of minus 50 degrees Celsius and wind speeds of around 60mph.
- Union Minister of State for Science and Technology, **Dr Jitendra Singh** has inaugurated India's first **Open Rock Museum in Hyderabad, Telangana**. Museum displays around 35 different types of rocks from different parts of India with ages ranging from 3.3 billion years to around 55 million years of the Earth's history.
- Government-promoted CSC SPV, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, will undertake the first-ever cultural survey of India's villages through a mobile application. The survey, titled '**Mera Gaon, Meri Dharohar**', will document the cultural identity at the village level by involving citizens to share what makes their village, block or district unique.

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Chairman, **Vinai Kumar Saxena** has launched the country's **first Mobile Honey Processing Van at Village Sirora in Ghaziabad**. The Mobile Van has been designed in-house by KVIC at its Multi-disciplinary Training Centre, Panjokehra, at a cost of Rs 15 lakh. This mobile honey processing unit can process up to 300 KG of honey in 8 hours. The van is also equipped with a testing laboratory, that would instantly examine the quality of honey.
- The **Ministry of Railways** has approved the renaming of the **Kevadiya railway station** in the Narmada district of Gujarat, as **Ekta Nagar railway station**. The Statue of Unity's Kevadiya railway station falls under the Vadodara division. The station code of Ekta Nagar railway station will be EKNR. The numerical code of the station will be 08224620.
- The **Railway Protection Force (RPF)** of the **Western Railways zone of Indian Railways** has launched a new initiative called "**Mission Amanat**" to make it easier for railway passengers to get back their lost luggage.
- **Kochi, Kerala** has become India's first city to have a **Water Metro Project** after the launch of its first boat in **December 2021, namely 'Muziris,'** among the 23 battery-powered electric boats being manufactured by **Cochin Shipyard Limited**. This launch is a part of the Rs 747-crore project which is operated by **Kochi Water Metro Ltd (KWML)**. The boats will be called Water Metros.
- Haryana Deputy CM **Dushyant Chautala** announced that Gurugram will get **India's 1st heli-hub** with all aviation facilities. The heli-hub will be the first of its kind in India to have all facilities at one place for helicopters. The heli-hub is proposed to be built in Gurugram & would be near the metro facility along with easy connectivity to **industrial areas (Noida & Bhiwadi)**.
- The **9th edition** of the **North East Festival** concluded in **Guwahati, Assam**. The main purpose of this festival is to promote and highlight the commercial and tourism potential of the **North East region**. The festival was organised in the format of a carnival with live music and dance performances, engaging the visitors throughout the day in the open area while serious discussions **on business, economic, socio-political issues of the region engrossed the intellectuals in the conference halls**.
- India's oldest female sloth bear, whose name was **Gulabo**, has passed away at the **Van Vihar National Park and Zoo**, located in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**.
- A **US man** has become the first person in the world to get a **heart transplant from a genetically-modified pig**. **David Bennett**, 57, is doing well three days after the experimental seven-hour procedure in Baltimore. The possibility of using animal organs for so-called xenotransplantation to meet the demand has long been considered, and using pig heart valves is already common.
- The **20th Dhaka International Film Festival** begins at **Dhaka, Bangladesh**. The festival will showcase 225 films from 70 countries under 10 categories will be screened across various venues in Dhaka between **15-23 January**. The Indian entries to the 20th DIFF include films like Koozhangal directed by P S Vinothraj, Avijatrik directed by Subhrajit Mitra, Mayar Jonjal directed by Indranil Roychowdhury, and Aandaal directed by Shareef Easa among the 35 entries.
- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has successfully conducted the qualification test of Cryogenic Engine for Gaganyaan programme for a duration of 720 seconds at **ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu**. According to the space agency, the performance of the engine met the test objectives and the engine parameters were closely matching with the predictions during the entire duration of the test.
- India's "**Supermom**" **tigress**, popularly known as '**Collarwali**', has passed away at **Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Madhya Pradesh**, due to old age. It was over 16 years old. '**Collarwali**' tigress was known for giving birth to 29 cubs during her lifetime, which is believed to be a world record.
- The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) announced the "**Open Data Week**" that will see participation from all the **100 smart cities**, a move aimed at ensuring a collaborative effort towards making Indian cities "**data smart**". The Open Data Week will be conducted during the **third week of January** from **17th January 2022 to 21st January 2022**.

- The Oxford University Press (OUP) has picked up 'Anxiety' as the **Children's Word of the Year 2021**, based on their recent research. Apart from "anxiety" (21%), "Challenging" (19%), "isolate" (14%), "Wellbeing" (13%) and "resilience" (12%) were the children's top five words. In 2020, Coronavirus was the Children's Word of the Year by OUP.
- A new species of rainfrog, discovered in the **Panama jungle**, has been named after Swedish environmental activist **Greta Thunberg**. The species has been named as **Pristimantis gretathunbergae**, or popularly known as the **Greta Thunberg Rainfrog**. The frog was originally discovered in 2012 and was thought to be part of the already categorised Pristimantis family. However, recent DNA analysis confirmed that the frog is a new species, according to the scientific journal Zookeys.
- In the Union Territory of **Jammu and Kashmir**, the administration has declared Jerri settlement in Reasi district as the first '**Milk Village**' of the Union Territory and sanctioned 57 more dairy farms under the **Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDS)** for the hamlet. The village, which houses 73 individual dairy units with 370 cows, will give the local farmers financial security.
- Indian Movie's **Jai Bhim** and **Marakkar: Arabikadalinte Simham** have been officially shortlisted for the **Oscars 2022**. **Jai Bhim** is the fourth Indian film to get nominated for Oscars after **Mother India, Salaam Bombay, and Lagaan**. **Marakkar Arabikadalinte Simham** has been also nominated for the **Global Community Oscar Awards 2021**. The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences has released the list of 276 films eligible for the awards this year.
- **Jammu and Kashmir Police** has bagged **115 Police Medals for Gallantry (PMG)**, out of a total of 189 awarded this year. They more than doubled their last year's tally of 52 PMGs. J&K Police won awards for conducting several counter-insurgency operations in 2019-20.
- **India's largest electric vehicle (EV) charging station** with a capacity of 100 charging points for 4 wheelers, was opened at **Delhi-Jaipur National Highway in Gurugram**. Previously, India's largest EV charging station was situated in Navi Mumbai with 16 AC & 4 DC charging ports for EVs. The new EV charging station has been developed by tech-pioneering company **Alektrify Private Limited**.

Obituaries

- Bollywood film producer **Vijay Galani** has passed away. He was suffering from blood cancer and was in London for seeking treatment.
- World-renowned Kenyan politician, conservationist and fossil hunter **Richard Leakey** has passed away. The legendary paleoanthropologist is credited for the discovery of '**Turkana Boy**' in 1984 which led to groundbreaking discoveries proving that humankind evolved in Africa.
- The Indian Navy's 1971 Indo-Pak war veteran **Vice Admiral S.H. Sarma** has passed away, at the age of 100. He was the Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet during the 1971 war. India had defeated Pakistan in the 1971 war leading to the creation of Bangladesh. Vice Admiral Sarma had celebrated his **100th birthday** on December 1 last year. He also took part in the **Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav** celebration in Delhi recently.
- Social worker **Sindhutai Sapkal**, who was called as '**Mother of Orphans**' passed away at the age of 73 years. She was also referred to just as 'Sindhutai' or 'Mai'. She was awarded the Padma Shri in 2021 in the Social Work category.
- The Olympic triple jump 3-time gold medalist and former world record holder, **Viktor Danilovich Saneyev** passed away in Australia. He was a triple long player who represented the **Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR)** in the Olympic games. Later he worked as a coach in Australia. He secured gold medals in European Games organized in 1969 Athens and 1974 Rome.
- Founder of **Shillong Chamber Choir (SCC)** and renowned Indian concert pianist **Neil Nongkynrih** passed away. In 2010, SCC performed for former US President Barack Obama & Michelle Obama during their visit to India. SCC's version of '**Vande Maataram**' was played during the live telecast program Indian space rocket Chandrayaan - 2's landing on the moon. In 2015, he was awarded the **Padma Shri - India's fourth-highest civilian honour**.
- 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.

- **Marilyn Bergman**, the Oscar, Emmy and Grammy-winning American lyricist and songwriter has passed away. Bergman collaborated with her husband, Alan Bergman for song-writing.
- European Parliament President, **David Sassoli** has passed away due to health issues. He had served as the **President of the European Parliament** from July 2019 until his death in January 2022. He was first elected as a member of the **European Parliament (MEP) in 2009**.
- Prominent Kannada writer **Chandrashekhar Patil**, popularly known as "**Champa**", passed away at the age of 82. He was a Kannada language activist, a poet and a playwright and also served as President of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat (KSP) and Chairman of the Kannada Development Authority.
- Olympic athlete **Deon Lendore**, who participated in the 400 meters race at the 2020 Olympics, passed away at the age of 29 years due to a fatal car accident in **Texas, United States (US)**.
- Legendary Kathak dancer, **Pandit Birju Maharaj** has passed away at the age of 83. A recipient of the country's second-highest civilian award, **Padma Vibhushan**, he was fondly called Pandit-ji or Maharaj-ji by his disciples and legions of followers and was one of India's best-known artistes.
- Odisha's social worker and Padma Shri awardee **Shanti Devi**, who was remembered as the voice of the poor, has passed away. She was 88. She was also called **Lugdi Devi**.
- The former President of Mali, **Ibrahim Boubacar Keita**, who was ousted in a military coup, has passed away. Mr Keita had ruled Mali for seven years, since September 2013, till he was overthrown in a military coup in August 2020.
- The former Prime Minister of Japan, **Toshiki Kaifu** has passed away at the age of 91 years in Japan. He served as the **PM from 1989 to 1991**. He is known for sending the Maritime Self-Defense Force to the Persian Gulf in 1991.
- Legendary Bengali comics artist, writer and illustrator, **Narayan Debnath**, has passed away after a prolonged illness. He was 97. The celebrated cartoonist was the creator of popular Bengali comic strips like **Handa Bhonda (1962)**, **Bantul the Great (1965)** and **Nonte Phonte (1969)**.
- Noted environmentalist & 'Save Silent Valley' campaigner **Prof M K Prasad** passed away recently. He was a prominent figure in the historic grassroots level movement to save the evergreen tropical rain forests in Kerala's Silent Valley from destruction.
- Renowned Bengali theatre personality **Saoli Mitra** has passed away. She had acted in Ritwik Ghatak's avant garde film **Jukti Takko aar Gappo** in 1974. She also wrote, directed and acted in the hugely popular **Katha Amritsamman** (Words that are like Nectar) another adaptation of the Mahabharata.
- The well-known Professional mountaineer Major Hari Pal Singh Ahluwalia passed away recently. Major Hari Pal Singh Ahluwalia was the recipient of **Arjuna Award-1965 Padma Shri-1965 Padma Bhushan-2002** and **Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award** for lifetime achievement in 2009.
- Guinness World Records holder for the oldest person living (male), **Saturnino de la Fuente García (Spain)** has passed away at the age of **112 years and 341 days**. Saturnino claimed the record as the oldest person living (male) in September 2021 when he was exactly 112 years and 211 days. He was born on February 11, 1909, in the Puente Castro neighbourhood of León in Spain.
- Former India footballer **Subhas Bhowmick** has passed away at the age of 72 years due to prolonged illness. He was born in West Bengal. He was part of the Indian Football team that won a bronze medal at the **1970 Asian Games (held in Bangkok)**.
- Noted Indian historian, archaeologist and epigraphist from Tamil Nadu, **Ramachandran Nagaswamy**, has passed away. He was 91. He first director of the Tamil Nadu government's Department of Archaeology. Nagaswamy was known for his work on temple inscriptions and art history of Tamil Nadu.
- Noted Kathakali dancer **Milena Salvini** of France has passed away. Italian-born Salvini was a regular visitor to India, especially Kerala where she learnt Kathakali, and ran 'Centre Mandapa', a school for Indian dance forms, in Paris. The Government of India conferred the **Padma Shri award** on Salvini in 2019 for her contribution in the field of performing arts.



- Former Hockey mid-fielder **Charanjit Singh** has passed away, after suffering a cardiac arrest and prolonged age-related illnesses. He was 90. He was the Captain of the Indian hockey team which won **gold in the Tokyo Olympics of 1964**. He was also a member of the Indian team which won silver medals in the 1960 Games in Rome, and in the 1962 Asian Games at Jakarta.
- Renowned Marathi author and social activist **Anil Awachat** has passed away. Awachat was the founder of a de-addiction center called Muktangan Rehabilitation Center in Pune in 1986. He was known for his several Marathi books like **“Manasa”, “Swatahavishayi”, “Gard”, “Karyarat”, “Karyamagna” and “Kutuhlapoti”**.
- **Iqbal Singh Kingra**, who was an Indian socio-spiritual leader of the Sikh community and an educationalist passed away at the age of 95 years. He was conferred with the **Padma Shri** in 2022 for his contributions in the field of social work. He established Eternal University in 2008 and Akal University, Guru ki Kashi in 2015.
- Fino Payments Bank established: 13 July 2006.
- Headquarters of Fino Payments Bank: Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Airtel Payments Bank Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Airtel Payments Bank Founded: January 2017.
- Jammu & Kashmir Bank Headquarters: Srinagar;
- Jammu & Kashmir Bank Founded: 1 October 1938.
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Headquarters: Vasant Kunj, New Delhi;
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Founded: 14 August 1956.
- DRDO Headquarters: New Delhi.
- DRDO Established: 1958.
- IRDAI Founded: 1999;
- IRDAI Headquarters: Hyderabad;
- LIC Headquarters: Mumbai;
- LIC Founded: 1 September 1956.
- Tech Mahindra Founded: 1986.
- Google Founded: 4 September 1998, California, United States;
- NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd Founded: 2021;
- NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra;
- Dunzo Founded: July 2014;
- Dunzo Headquarters location: Bengaluru.
- Kazakhstan Capital: Nur-Sultan;
- Kazakhstan Currency: Kazakhstani tenge.
- Cyprus Capital: Nicosia;
- Cyprus Currency: Euro;
- Cyprus Continent: Europe;
- Cyprus President: Nicos Anastasiades.
- Adani Group Headquarters: Ahmedabad;
- Adani Group Founded: 1988.
- SBM Bank Incorporated: 1st December 2018
- SBM Bank Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
- RBL Bank Founded: 1943;
- RBL Bank Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra;
- RBL Bank Tagline: Apno Ka Bank.
- HDFC Bank Headquarters: Mumbai;
- HDFC Bank Founded: August 1994;
- Reliance Industries Ltd Founded: 8 May 1973, Maharashtra;
- Reliance Industries Ltd Headquarters: Mumbai.
- Tata Consultancy Services Limited Founded: 1 April 1968;
- Tata Consultancy Services Limited Headquarters: Mumbai.
- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India Headquarters: New Delhi;

Static Takeaways

- France Capital: Paris;
- France Currency: Euro;
- France Prime Minister: Jean Castex;
- President of France: Emmanuel Macron.
- Russia Capital: Moscow;
- Russia Currency: Rouble;
- Russia President: Vladimir Putin.
- Apple Inc. Founded: 1 April 1976, California, United States;
- Apple Inc. Headquarters: Cupertino, California, United States;
- Apple Inc. Founders: Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, Ronald Wayne.
- Sudan Capital: Khartoum; Currency: Sudanese pound.
- Antigua and Barbuda Capital: Saint John's;
- Antigua and Barbuda Currency: East Caribbean Dollar;
- Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister: Gaston Browne.
- World Food Programme Founded: 1961;
- World Food Programme Headquarters: Rome, Italy;
- SBI Card Headquarters: Gurugram, Haryana;
- SBI Card Managing Director & CEO: Rama Mohan Rao Amara.
- Reserve Bank of India Founded: April 1, 1935;
- Reserve Bank of India Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra;

- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India Founder: Parliament of India;
- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India Founded: 1 October 2016.
- Headquarters of AIIB: Beijing, China.
- AIIB established: 16 January 2016.
- International Monetary Fund Formed: 27 December 1945;
- International Monetary Fund Headquarters: Washington D.C., USA;
- International Monetary Fund Member countries: 190;
- ISRO Headquarters: Bengaluru, Karnataka;
- ISRO established: 15 August 1969.
- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Headquarters: Bengaluru;
- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Founded: 1 February 2017.
- Indian Council of Historical Research Founded: 27 March 1972;
- Indian Council of Historical Research Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Tata group Founded: 1868, Mumbai;
- Tata group Headquarters: Mumbai;
- International Committee of Sports for the Deaf Founded: 1924;
- International Committee of Sports for the Deaf Headquarters: Maryland, USA;
- Sri Lanka Capitals: Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte; Currency: Sri Lankan rupee.
- Sri Lanka Prime Minister: Mahinda Rajapaksa; Sri Lanka President: Gotabaya Rajapaksa.
- Philippines Capital: Manila;
- Philippines Currency: Philippine peso;
- Philippines President: Rodrigo Duterte.
- Nicaragua Capital: Managua;
- Nicaragua Currency: Nicaraguan córdoba.
- Paytm Payments Bank Ltd Headquarters: Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
- ISRAEL Capital: Jerusalem
- ISRAEL Currency: Israeli New Shekel
- ISRAEL Prime Minister: Naftali Bennett
- ISRAEL President: Isaac Herzog
- World Food Programme Founded: 1961
- World Food Programme Headquarters: Rome, Italy
- Indian Bank Headquarters: Chennai;
- Indian Bank Founded: 15 August 1907.
- IREDA Founded: 1987
- IREDA Headquarters: New Delhi
- National Payments Corporation of India Founded: 2008;
- National Payments Corporation of India Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra;
- SEBI Founded: 12 April 1992
- SEBI Headquarters: Mumbai
- Microsoft Headquarters: Redmond, Washington, United States.
- Apparel Export Promotion Council Established: 1978;
- Apparel Export Promotion Council HQ: Gurgaon.
- European Union's parliament Headquarters: Strasbourg, France;
- European Union's parliament Founded: 10 September 1952, Europe.
- Air India Ltd Founded: 1932, Mumbai;
- Air India Ltd Headquarters: New Delhi.
- IFFCO Headquarters: New Delhi;
- IFFCO Founded: 3 November 1967, New Delhi.
- National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd Founded: 2014;
- National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd Headquarters: New Delhi.
- Axis Bank Founded: 3 December 1993;
- Axis Bank Headquarters: Mumbai;
- Axis Bank Chairperson: Shri Rakesh Makhija;
- Axis Bank Tagline: Badhti Ka Naam Zindagi.
- World Economic Forum Founded: January 1971;
- World Economic Forum Headquarters: Cologny, Switzerland.
- International Labour Organisation Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland;
- International Labour Organisation Founder: Paris Peace Conference;
- International Labour Organisation Founded: 1919.
- Badminton World Federation Founded: 5 July 1934;
- Badminton World Federation Headquarters: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;
- Tata Consultancy Services Founded: 1 April 1968
- Tata Consultancy Services Headquarters: Mumbai
- UAE Capital: Abu Dhabi;
- UAE Currency: United Arab Emirates dirham;
- UAE President: Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.
- Union Minister of Agriculture: Narendra Singh Tomar.
- NATO Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium.
- Member countries of NATO: 30; Founded: 4 April 1949.
- Barbados Capital: Bridgetown;
- Barbados Currency: Barbados Dollar.
- PMC Bank Founded: 1984;
- PMC Bank Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- City Union Bank Headquarters: Kumbakonam;
- City Union Bank Founded: 1904.
- Fullerton India Founded: 1994;
- Fullerton India Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Tata Group Founded: 1868, Mumbai;
- Tata Group Headquarters: Mumbai.
- Saab Founded: 1937;
- Saab Headquarters: Stockholm, Sweden;
- 1st Chief Election Commissioner of Independent India- Sukumar Sen.
- World Customs Organization headquarters: Brussels, Belgium.
- World Customs Organization Membership: 182 countries.
- ISRO Headquarters: Bengaluru, Karnataka;
- ISRO established: 15 August 1969.
- Bharti Airtel Founded: 7 July 1995.
- World Gold Council Headquarters: London, United Kingdom;
- World Gold Council Founded: 1987;
- The Netherlands Capital: Amsterdam;
- The Netherlands Currency: Euro;
- The Netherlands Prime minister: Mark Rutte.
- Meta Headquarters: California, United States;
- Paytm Money Headquarters location: Bengaluru;
- Paytm Money Founded: 20 September 2017.
- Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited Founded: 10 February 2006.
- SBI Founded: 1 July 1955;
- SBI Headquarters: Mumbai.

Heads of various organizations in News in month of January 2022

| Sr No | Head of Organization | Name of Person |
|-------|---|---|
| 1 | Apple Inc. CEO | Tim Cook |
| 2 | World Food Programme Executive Director | David Beasley |
| 3 | Reserve Bank of India Governor | Shaktikanta Das |
| 4 | Chairman of Fino Payments Bank | Prof Mahendra Kumar Chouhan |
| 5 | MD & CEO of Fino Payments Bank | Rishi Gupta |
| 6 | Airtel Payments Bank's MD and CEO | Anubrata Biswas |
| 7 | Chairman DRDO | Dr G Satheesh Reddy |
| 8 | IRDAI Chairperson | Subhash Chandra Khuntia |
| 9 | LIC Chairperson | M R Kumar |
| 10 | Tech Mahindra CEO | C. P. Gurnani |
| 11 | Tech Mahindra Founder | Anand Mahindra |
| 12 | Google CEO | Sundar Pichai |
| 13 | Google Founders | Larry Page, Sergey Brin |
| 14 | NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd CEO | Noopur Chaturvedi |
| 15 | Dunzo Founder(s) | Kabeer Biswas, Ankur Agarwal, Dalvir Suri, Mukund Jha |
| 16 | Adani Group Founder | Gautam Adani |
| 17 | SBM Bank CEO & MD | Sidharth Rath |
| 18 | RBL Bank CEO & MD | Rajeev Ahuja |
| 19 | HDFC Bank CEO | Sashidhar Jagdishan |
| 20 | HDFC Bank Chairman | Atanu Chakraborty |
| 21 | Reliance Industries Ltd CEO | Mukesh Ambani |
| 22 | Tata Consultancy Services Limited CEO | Rajesh Gopinathan |
| 23 | President of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank | Jin Liqun |
| 25 | International Monetary Fund Managing Director | Kristalina Georgieva |
| 26 | Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Founder | Samit Ghosh |
| 27 | Tata group Founder | Jamsetji Tata |

| Sr No | Head of Organization | Name of Person |
|-------|---|-------------------------------|
| 28 | Chairman of the Board at Tata Sons | Natarajan Chandrasekaran |
| 29 | International Committee of Sports for the Deaf President | Rebecca Adam |
| 30 | Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Railway Board | Vinay Kumar Tripathi |
| 31 | 28th Chief of Army Staff | General Manoj Mukund Naravane |
| 32 | Chairman of Paytm Payments Bank Ltd | Vijay Shekhar Sharma |
| 33 | MD and CEO of Paytm Payments Bank Ltd | Satish Kumar Gupta |
| 34 | World Food Programme Head | David Beasley |
| 35 | Indian Bank CEO | Shri Shanti Lal Jain |
| 36 | IREDA Chairperson | Pradip Kumar Das |
| 37 | National Payments Corporation of India MD & CEO | Dilip Asbe |
| 38 | SEBI Chairperson | Ajay Tyagi |
| 39 | Microsoft CEO and Chairman | Satya Nadella |
| 40 | Axis Bank MD & CEO | Amitabh Chaudhary |
| 41 | World Economic Forum Founder & Executive Chairman | Klaus Schwab |
| 42 | International Labour Organisation Director-General | Guy Ryder |
| 43 | Badminton World Federation President | Poul-Erik Høyer Larsen |
| 44 | Tata Consultancy Services CEO | Rajesh Gopinathan |
| 45 | NATO Chairman of the NATO Military Committee | Admiral Rob Bauer |
| 46 | Chairman Of PMC Bank | S. Balbir Singh Kochhar |
| 47 | City Union Bank CEO | Dr. N. Kamakodi |
| 48 | Fullerton India CEO | Shantanu Mitra |
| 49 | Tata Group Founder | Jamsetji Tata |
| 50 | Saab President and CEO | Micael Johansson |
| 51 | Ice Hockey Association of India President | Dr Surinder Mohan Bali |
| 52 | 24th Chief Election Commissioner | Sushil Chandra |
| 53 | World Customs Organization Secretary-General | Kunio Mikuriya |
| 54 | Chairman and Space Secretary of ISRO | Dr S Somanath |
| 55 | Bharti Airtel CEO | Gopal Vittal |
| 56 | Bharti Airtel Founder | Sunil Bharti Mittal |
| 57 | World Gold Council CEO | David Tait |
| 58 | World Gold Council President | Kelvin Dushnisky |
| 59 | Meta CEO | Mark Zuckerberg |
| 60 | FICCI President | Sanjiv Mehta |
| 61 | FICCI Secretary-General | Dilip Chenoy |
| 62 | Paytm Money CEO | Varun Sridhar |
| 63 | Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited Chairman and Managing Director | Tripti Patra Ghosh |
| 64 | SBI Chairman | Dinesh Kumar Khara |