

Current Affairs MONTHLY



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By
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**For HPAS & Other
Competitive
Exam in
Himachal Pradesh**

Prelims

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NATIONAL

1.1 National Pollution Control Day is observed on 2nd December every year.

Why in news?

- National Pollution Day is being observed on **2nd December, 2021**

About National Pollution Control Day

- The day is observed in the **memory of people who lost their lives in the Bhopal gas disaster**.
- The industrial accident occurred in **1984** when the gas **Methyl Isocyanate** leaked on the night of December 2–3 and killed thousands.

Objectives of the day

- Spread awareness of managing and controlling industrial disasters
- Prevent the pollution produced by industrial processes or human negligence
- Make people and industries aware of the importance of pollution control acts

1.2 Kerala Tourism launched STREET project for experiential tourism

Why in news?

- **Kerala tourism** recently launched a project by the name **STREET**

About STREET Project

- The STREET is an acronym for **Sustainable, Tangible, Responsible, Experiential, Ethnic, Tourism hubs**.

Launched by

- In a pioneering initiative to take tourism deep into the state's interiors and rural hinterland, Kerala Tourism will launch the 'STREET' project in select spots in **seven districts**, which would help visitors experience the diversity of offerings in these locales.

First phase of the project

- In the first phase, the project would be implemented in Kadalundi in Kozhikode, Thrithala and Pattithara in Palakkad, Pinarayi and Ancharakkandi in Kannur, Maravanthuruthu and Manchira in Kottayam, Valiyaparamba in Kasaragod, Kanthalloor in Idukki and Chekadi in Wayanad.

Project inspired from

- The project, conceived by the Responsible Tourism Mission, is inspired by the 'Tourism for Inclusive Growth' slogan of The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Themes under the project

- Green Street, cultural street, village life experience street, experiential tourism street, agri-tourism street, water street and art street are the themes that have been planned as part of the project.

1.3 All India Radio has launched youth programme AIRNxt

Why in news?

- All India Radio has decided to begin a new programme called AIRNxt to offer youth a platform to air their voices as part of the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.

More about youth programme AIRNxt

- Through this programme AIR stations will allow youngsters from local colleges, universities to take part in programming, allowing them to discuss and curate youth-centric shows.
- About 20,000 youth from 1,000 educational institutions will be participating during the next year from every nook and corner of India through 167 AIR stations.
- These shows would encourage the youth to speak about the achievements of the country during last 75 years of independence and where do they expect the country to reach in various fields.
- The new programme #AIRNxt is part of the celebrations under the ongoing **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**.

1.4 The World Handicap Day is observed on 3rd December every year.

Why in news?

- **World Handicapped day** also known as the International Day of Persons with disabilities (IDPWD) is observed every year on **3rd December globally**.

More about World Handicap Day

- The day is marked and observed to support critical issues which are related to the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- The IDPWD day was proclaimed in **1992 by the United Nations General Assembly**.
- The **theme for 2021** is **“Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world.”**
- The day is celebrated to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

1.5 International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2021 was recently observed

Why in news?

- International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2021 was observed on **2nd December**.

More about the day

- The day **aims to highlight the importance of eradicating contemporary forms of slavery** including trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, child labour, forced marriage, etc.
- According to the United Nations, around 150 million children are subject to child labour across the world. More than 40 million people across the globe are victims of modern slavery.
- **The day focuses on** eradicating contemporary forms of slavery, including trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, the worst forms of child labour, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
- The theme for International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2021 is **“ Ending Slavery’s Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice ”**. The theme reflects the global movement to end injustices whose roots lie in the slave trade.

1.6 Pharmaceutical company Zydus Cadila will supply 1 crore doses of ZyCoV-D, the world's first Plasmid DNA Covid vaccine, to the Centre by the end of December, 2021

Why in news?

Pharmaceutical company Zydus Cadila will supply 1 crore doses of ZyCoV-D the Centre by the end of December, 2021

About the Zydus Cadila vaccine

- India will initially introduce of Cadila Healthcare's ZyCoV-D Covid-19 vaccine in seven states of India.
- The seven states are **Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.**
- Recently, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has approved ZyCoV-D for restricted use in emergency situation in the age group 12 years and above.
- **ZyCoV-D is the first DNA plasmid vaccine in the world for human use**, developed indigenously by the company against the Covid-19 virus.
- It is also the first COVID-19 vaccine that is needle-free and administered using PharmaJet, a needle-free applicator to ensure painless intradermal vaccine delivery which also leads to a significant reduction in any kind of major side effects.

1.7 Centre to launch scheme for upliftment of SC students

Why in news?

- The Central government is set to launch the Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SRESHTA) scheme for the upliftment and development of scheduled castes (SC) students.

About SRESHTA

- The Centre is set to launch the Residential Education for Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SRESHTA) scheme recently for the upliftment and development of scheduled castes (SC) students.
- The announcement was made by Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Virendra Kumar recently.
- **The scheme will focus on** the socio-economics upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled Caste students by providing quality residential education to meritorious Scheduled Caste students in reputed private schools, having residential facility.

1.8 Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti conservation project wins two UNESCO awards

Why in news?

- UNESCO recently presented two Heritage Awards to the Nizamuddin Basti Project. The project was awarded for its conservation efforts. It was awarded with the Special Recognition for Sustainable Award and Award of Excellence.

About Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti

What is Nizamuddin Basti Project?

- The project restored more than 20 historic monuments located around 14th century Sufi Saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya.
- The Nizamuddin area consists of Humayun Tomb and Batashewala Tomb and tomb of a 16th century poet Rahim (Khan I Khanan). These regions were segregated and damaged. They were also renewed by the Nizamuddin Basti Project.

- The project was started in 2007 by the Aga Kahn Trust for Culture, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation and the Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Objectives of Nizamuddin Basti Project

- The Nizamuddin Basti Project is an Urban Renewal Project. It successfully unified the segregated zones of the seven-century old settlement of the Nizamuddin Basti and its surrounding 70 acres.
- It integrated socio – economic development, conservation and environmental development objectives in these areas.
- It unified three major sites namely Sundar Nursery, Nizamuddin Basti and Humayun Tomb.

1.9 National Navy Day was recently observed in India.

Why in news?

- Navy Day in India was observed recently on **December 4** to celebrate the achievements and role of the naval force to the country.

About the National Navy Day

Indian Navy Day 2021: Date

- Navy Day in India is observed on **December 4**. However, the day is celebrated all over the world on different dates.

Indian Navy Day 2021: History

- On the night of December 4-5, 1971, the Indian Navy planned the attack at night as Pakistan did not have aircraft that could carry out bombings at night.
- It was a devastating attack on the Pakistan Naval Headquarters of Karachi. The attack was successful as it sank a minesweeper, a destroyer, and an ammunition supply ship.
- Therefore, to celebrate the success and achievements of the Indian navy force, every year Navy day is celebrated.

Indian Navy Day 2021: Theme

- Each year, a different theme is proposed to celebrate Navy Day. The theme of 2021 Indian Navy Day is '**Swarnim Vijay Varsh**' signifying 50 years of India's victory in the Indo-Pakistan war that took place in 1971.
- Last year, the theme was "Indian Navy Combat Ready, Credible & Cohesive".

1.10 Scraping of the ongoing Hornbill Festival

Why in news?

- The Nagaland government has recently scraped the Hornbill festival celebrations

About Hornbill festival

- Hornbill Festival is celebrated in **Nagaland** to encourage inter-tribal interaction.
- It is one of the largest indigenous festival organised by the state government of Nagaland to promote tourism in the state.
- The festival is celebrated annually in the first week of December in order to preserve, protect and revive the uniqueness and richness of the Naga heritage.
- The festival is considered the "Festival of Festivals" in Nagaland.
- The festival is named after the bird – Hornbill which is the most revered and admired bird for the Nagas.
- The festival is a tribute to this bird, known for its qualities of grandeur and alertness.

- The bird is also closely identified with the social and cultural life of the Nagas, as reflected in various tribal dances, songs and folklores.
- Hornbill festival exposes the culture and tradition of the tribal people and reinforces the identity of the Nagaland.

1.11 Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India on December 6, 2021

Why in News

- President of the Russian Federation H.E. Vladimir Putin paid an official visit to India, New Delhi on 6 December 2021 for the 21st India–Russia Annual Summit news?

About 21st India – Russia summit

- Both of them discussed things related to terrorism and drug trafficking, including the situation in Afghanistan.
- Both countries welcomed the signing of a new Long-Term Program for Military and Technical Cooperation for the period 2021-2031
- The first 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between the Russian and Indian ministers was held at the Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, Delhi.
- India has also begun to receive S-400 missiles from Russia and Russia has also started delivering the S-400 missile systems to India in December 2021. The S-400 is a mobile long-range surface-to-air missile (LR-SAM) system developed by a Russian state-owned enterprise Almaz-Antey.
- Both nations also signed an agreement for the joint production of 6,01,427 assault rifles AK-203 through Indo Russia Rifles Pvt Ltd, in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi
- About Russia:
- Capital – Moscow
- Currency – Russian ruble
- President – Vladimir Putin
- Prime Minister – Mikhail Mishustin

1.12 CSE & NITI Aayog Releases 'Waste-wise Cities- Best Practices in Municipal Solid Waste Management' report

Why in news?

- NITI (National Institute for Transforming India) Aayog and Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) released a report titled 'Waste-wise Cities: Best practices in municipal solid waste management', a comprehensive knowledge on India's solid waste management.

About report

- The Report documents best practices of solid waste management from 28 cities in 15 states of India.
- The report contains, source segregation, material recovery and technological innovations to the management of different kinds of wastes and systems such as biodegradables, plastics, Electronic-waste (e-waste), Construction & Demolition (C&D) waste and landfills

1.13 Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar Launched 'Shreshtha Yojna' and National Fellowship Management and Grievance Redressal Portal

Why in news?

- On the occasion of the Mahaparinirvana Diwas 2021(6th December), Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment(SJE), Dr Virendra Kumar participated in the event organised by Dr Ambedkar Foundation at Dr Ambedkar International Center, New Delhi campus and launched the 'Shreshtha Yojna' and National Fellowship Management and Grievance Redressal Portal during the event.
- He also paid floral tribute to Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar at the Dr Ambedkar National Memorial, New Delhi.

About Shreshtha Yojna:

- The Shreshtha Yojana will support the socio-economic upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled
- Caste(SC) students by providing quality residential education in reputed private schools.

Highlights of the event:

- Union Minister Dr Virendra Kumar also launched a special book titled "Social Justice and Empowerment Reflections from Dr Ambedkar Chairs" published by Dr Ambedkar Foundation.
- He also released a brochure on Dr Ambedkar's 'Panchteerth' and several schemes and scholarships for the SC students by the MoSJE

1.14 Human Rights Day 2021, recently observed on 10th December**Why in news?**

- Every year on December 10, Human Rights Day is observed globally to honour the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948.
- This was the first-ever global document on human rights that outlines the fundamental rights of all human beings that need to be protected universally.

About Human Rights Day

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a milestone document in the history of human rights. Drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948.
- The year, 2021 celebrates the 73rd anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The year, 2021's theme is Human Rights Day theme is **"Equality, Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights."**
- This year's Human Rights Day theme relates to **'Equality' and Article 1 of the UDHR** – "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."
- The principles of equality and non-discrimination are at the heart of human rights. Equality is aligned with the 2030 Agenda and with the UN approach set out in the document Shared Framework on Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development.
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been translated into more than 500 languages and is the most translated document in the world.

1.15 NITI Aayog launches 'e-Sawari India E-Bus Coalition' in tie-up with CESL**Why in news?**

- Government assume tank **NITI Aayog** recently introduced the launch of **'e-Sawaari India Electric Bus Coalition'** in partnership with Convergence Energy Service Ltd () and World Resources Institute, India (WRI India), with assistance from Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI).

More about 'e-Sawari India E-Bus Coalition'

- The coalition has been launched with the intention to share information and learnings on e-bus adoption in India amongst varied stakeholders, together with central and state governments, city-level authorities businesses, transit service suppliers, authentic tools producers (OEMs), financing establishments and ancillary service suppliers.
- As per NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, electrification of public transport particularly in the bus sector is vital to India's decarbonisation technique.
- The e-Sawaari India Electric Bus Coalition is a step toward ensuring steady and paced electrification of the bus transport system in India.

1.16 She is a Changemaker programme launched for women in politics**Why in news?**

- Recently National Commission for Women (NCW) launched 'She is a Changemaker' programme.

About 'She is a Changemaker' programme

- **Launched by:** National Commission for Women (NCW)
- **Main objective:** To improve the leadership and decision-making skills of grassroot women political leaders and their communication skills including oration and writing skills.
- The pan-India capacity building programme has been launched for women representatives at all levels, from gram panchayats to the parliament including political workers and office bearers of national and state-level political parties.
- The capacity building programme will be undertaken in coordination with region-wise training institutes.
- The She is a Changemaker programme includes a series of training programmes. They were launched by National Commission for Women Chairperson Rekha Sharma in collaboration with Rhambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini, Thane, Maharashtra.
- **Benefit:** The 'She is a Changemaker' programme aims to benefit every woman who wishes to make an identity for herself in politics and help her claim her rightful space in politics.

1.17 Ministry of Power to celebrate the Energy Conservation Week from 8th to 14th December 2021.**Why in news?**

- Ministry of Power will be celebrating the Energy Conservation Week from 8th to 14th December 2021 under "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav".

About the Energy Conservation Week

- Celebration by Bureau of Energy Efficiency will include three major activities i.e. National Painting Competition for school children, National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) for Industries and establishments and National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards (NEEIA) to recognize innovative energy efficiency technologies.
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency has been organising National Level Painting Competitions on Energy Conservation for school children studying in 4th to 10th standard. This year, the themes for the competition are "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Energy Efficient India" and "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Cleaner Planet".
- State level painting competitions are being organised from 1st to 10th December 2021 in all 36 states and Union Territories of the country and it will culminate in a National Level Painting on December 12, 2021 in New Delhi.

- The winners of the national level competition will be rewarded on the occasion of National Energy Conservation Day, December 14, 2021.
- The National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) will be given to the energy-intensive units of various sectors of the Indian economy for their exceptional achievements in reducing specific energy consumption. Whereas NEEIA is conceptualised to boost energy efficiency through innovative measures. The objective of institutionalising this award is to instil a sense of competition among industries and sectors to develop innovative energy efficiency measures in their facilities and also to disseminate these technologies to ensure their multiplicity and adaptation in other sectors.
- In addition to award functions, Bureau, this year under “Azadi ka Amrit Mohstav” is organising National Level Events on daily basis during the Iconic Week from 8th to 14th December, 2021 involving Stakeholders for Industries, Institutions, Academic, State Govts etc.
- The week-long celebration will take place as daily events as per list below:
- Virtual launch of Certificate Course on Home Energy Audit Program – 8th December
- Webinar on Technology Transfer for Decarbonization of Industry – 9th December
- National Workshop on Energy Efficiency in the Indian Residential Sector – 10th December
- National Workshop on the Role of Energy Efficient Appliances in Market transformation – 10th December
- National Workshop Event on Energy Efficiency Plans for the MSME Sector – 11th December
- Amrit Utsav Celebration for Designated Consumers under PAT Cycle II – Interaction with Dignitaries. – 13th December
- The events scheduled during the week aim at promoting energy conservation among all sectors of the economy and will be followed by an award distribution ceremony for the winners, industrial units and other establishments on National Energy Conservation Day’ i.e 14th December, 2021 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

1.18 Myanmar’s Aung San Suu Kyi sentenced to jail

Why in news?

- A court in military-ruled Myanmar has found elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who was removed by the generals when they seized power, guilty of charges widely dismissed as politically motivated and sentenced her to detention at an undisclosed location.

About Location of Myanmar

- Four Northeast Indian states share the border with Myanmar: **Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur.**



1.19 UP Cabinet approves Atma Nirbhar Krishak development scheme

Why in news?

- Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has recently approved a scheme aimed at boosting the agriculture sector, which will be implemented from the current financial year.

About Atma Nirbhar Krishak development scheme

- In a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the Cabinet recently gave its nod to implement **Atma Nirbhar Krishak Integrated Development Scheme** in Uttar Pradesh from 2021-22.
- Under this scheme, **1,475 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)** will be formed in the next three years in each development block of the state.
- The state government is likely to bear an **expenditure of Rs 1,220.92 crore** for implementation of the scheme from financial year 2021-22 to 2031-32.
- The scheme will also help in achieving the target of **utilising a budget of Rs 12,000 crore** allotted to the state by the Centre under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF).

1.20 Uttarakhand CM Launched 'Milk Price Incentive Scheme'

Why in news?

- Recently, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami unveiled the Milk Price Incentive Scheme, which will benefit around 53,000 people.

About 'Milk Price Incentive Scheme'

- The milk price incentive scheme will benefit around 53,000 individuals because the money will be directly put into the beneficiaries' accounts via Direct Bank Transfer (DBT).
- The state government would invest Rs.444.62 crore in Uttarakhand to create 500 milk vending stations.

Current Milk Production Scenario in Uttarakhand:

- In the Dehradun district, milk production and consumption are completely contradictory. On one hand, the government is making many attempts to enhance milk production, all government claims of promoting production are proving to be fictitious. Despite thousands of hours of labor, milk is not produced in accordance with demand.

1.21 UNICEF Day is observed on December 11

Why in news?

- UNICEF Day is observed on **December 11 every year**, to spread awareness on saving children's lives, defending their rights and helping them fulfil their potential from childhood to adolescence.

About UNICEF DAY

- The United Nations General Assembly announced this day on December 11 in year 1946. This was done to ensure the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

UNICEF day 2021 theme

- UNICEF Day 2021 theme is to help children to recover from interruptions and learning losses experienced through the Pandemic in the last two years.
- UNICEF is providing a lot of opportunities across the globe and working towards a better future.

1.22 Universal Health Coverage Day observed on December 12

Why in news?

- Every year Universal Health Coverage is **observed on December 12** to raise awareness about having strong and resilient world-class health systems across the globe with multi-stakeholder partners.

About Universal Health Coverage Day

- The reason behind the day is to have access to quality, affordable health care for international development. The inequalities among the various sections are promoted on this day in the health care system that threatens social and economic development worldwide. The Covid-19 pandemic has more emphasized the health inequalities everywhere. Therefore, health equity should be high on the agenda in working for universal health coverage.

Significance

- The day plays a significant role in reviewing the progress and identifying loopholes of the health care system. So that it is ensured to help the needy with an accessible health care system without failing the financial hardship. The idea is to achieve continuous, concrete progress towards a fairer and healthier world.

History

- On December 12, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly established a resolution to urge nations to fasten the progress of universal health coverage (UHC). Finally, in the year 2017, the United Nations proclaimed Universal Health Coverage Day.

Theme

- This year's theme for Universal Health Coverage Day 2021 is '**Leave No One Behind When It Comes to Health: Invest in Health Systems for All.**'

1.23 National Energy Conservation Day 2021 was observed

Why in news?

- National Energy Conservation Day is observed on **December 14, every year**. The day focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promotes efforts towards saving energy resources. The day is also known as **Energy Efficiency Day**.

About National Energy Conservation Day 2021

- A large number of events such as discussions, conferences, debates, workshops, and competitions are all held across the country to observe the day.
- The National Energy Conservation Day 2021 **aims** to spread awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation of energy. Energy conservation is one of the key action points in fighting climate change.
- The Union Ministry of Power is celebrating National Energy Conservation Week under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav from December 8-14, 2021. Various programmes have been organised as a part of the celebration including workshops and discussions on the outcomes of Energy and Resource Mapping of MSME Clusters.

National Energy Conservation Day 2021 Theme

- The theme for this year is 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Energy Efficient India' and 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Cleaner Planet'.

1.24 Saryu Nahar Project was recently launched

Why in news?

- PM Modi inaugurated Rs 9,800 crore Saryu canal project in **UP's Balrampur**.

About Saryu canal project in UP's Balrampur

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the Saryu Canal National Project which will provide assured water for irrigation to over 14 lakh hectares of land and benefit about 29 lakh farmers, mainly in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

- The project has been completed at a cost of over Rs 9,800 crore, out of which more than Rs 4,600 crore was provisioned in the last four years.
- The Saryu canal project also involves **interlinking of five rivers -- Ghaghara, Saryu, Rapti, Banganga and Rohini** -- to ensure optimum usage of water resources of the region.
- The work on the project started in 1978 but due to lack of continuity of budgetary support, interdepartmental coordination and adequate monitoring, it got delayed and was not completed even after nearly four decades.

1.25 External Affairs Minister Jaishankar to participate in 6th edition of 'Global Tech Summit 2021'

Why in news?

- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar participated in the 6th edition of Global Technology Summit 2021.

About the 6th edition of Global Technology Summit (GTS)

- It discussed various topics including cryptocurrencies, encryption, vaccine supply chains, cloud computing, green technology, digital payments, cyber security, and science & tech cooperation in the Quad.
- According to the MEA statement, this year the Summit is organized in a hybrid format but due to the exceptional circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, physical attendance is on an invite-basis only.
- Global Technology Summit is the flagship event on geotechnology, held annually since 2016.
- It is jointly organized by the **Ministry of External Affairs and Carnegie India**.
- The Summit convenes policymakers and domain experts to discuss policy aspects of trending technology topics.
- The **theme of the 2021** Global Technology Summit is '**Global Meets Local**'.

1.26 6th India Water Impact Summit based on theme for River Resources Allocation- Planning and Management at the Regional Level concluded recently.

Why in news?

- Recently, the 6th Edition of the India Water Impact Summit based on theme for **River Resources Allocation- Planning and Management at the Regional Level** concluded.
- The valedictory session was conducted in a hybrid mode by National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), New Delhi and Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga), Kanpur.

About 6th India Water Impact Summit

- The session had adopted a regional level approach for the Summit and was categorized into overall basin and subsequently in upper, middle, lower and deltaic region of the Ganga basin.
- The various sessions organized included the need for identification and conducting systematic assessment and valuation of river resources, potential impact of water efficient solutions in maintaining the overall water balance of the country, implementation challenges of the river resources allocation plans, the need to inculcate a scientific understanding of rivers for developing sustainable policies and encourage the creation of circular water economy through water recycling and establishing a water trading market, amongst others.
- The summit days also had dedicated session for international collaborations. These include countries such as Norway, United Kingdom, Australia, Japan and EU and its member states.

- The 5-day Summit also witnessed the signing of an **MoU between C-Ganga and Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO)** for the development of a sludge management framework.
- Similarly, two MoUs have also been signed with **Innovation Centre Denmark and UPS Hungary** to encourage the sharing of knowledge and increase participation of Hungarian industry in the Ganga River Basin Restoration and Conservation Program.
- An **MoU between C Ganga and British water** was also signed to promote the development of 21st century infrastructure in water and the environment sector.

1.27 Odisha govt joins hands with UNCDF to drive economic empowerment of women

Why in news?

- The **Odisha government** has signed an agreement with the **United Nations Capital Development Fund** to empower women economically and drive gender equality in the state.

About agreement between Odisha government and UNCDF

- Under the joint initiative, the launch of **Mission Shakti Living Lab** was announced.
- This partnership will address barriers that limit women's access to financial security, autonomy and financial freedom with use of digital technologies and rising e-commerce industry in India.
- It will **help 3.5 million self-help groups (SHG) women members** and low income individuals to have access to digital financial services and improved financial health.
- The initiative will also help 10,000 women-led micro-enterprises get better access to affordable market opportunities, capital for business promotion, and market solutions for better linkages.
- The programme will improve the ability of SHG members and households to plan, save, borrow or spend better thereby improving their women's financial wellbeing.

1.28 Government of India granted GI Tag to Bihar's Mithila Makhana

Why in News?

- Apart from identifying & protecting the product's Geographical Indications (GI) rights, the Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) under the Central Ministry of Commerce has accepted the petition to rename Bihar Makhana as Mithila Makhana and has also suggested further changes to the brand logo to better reflect its origins.

About GI Tag to Mithila Makhana

- The development has put an end to the debate over the branding of one of the Mithila region's most famous **Makhana or Fox nut products**.
- Following a review of the application for a name change, a consultation panel of experts led by Prashanth Kumar S Bhairappanavar, a senior examiner at Geographic Indication Registry (GIR), ruled that certain post-registration conditions must be completed.

What is GI Tag?

- A geographical indicator (GI) is a name or sign that appears on certain items and refers to a specific geographic area of origin.
- The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 protects products having a GI tag.

1.29 Kolkata's Durga Puja gets world heritage tag

Why in news?

- Kolkata's Durga Puja has been included in UNESCO's list of 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'. PM Modi in a tweet hailed the development as a matter of pride and joy for every Indian.

About Durga Puja getting world heritage tag

- The decision to include Durga Puja in the list was taken during the sixteenth session of the annual convention of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- An annual festival, Durga Puja is celebrated in different parts of the country, but most notably in Kolkata. It marks the ten-day worship of goddess Durga which involves artisanal sculptures of the goddess sculpted from clay pulled from the Ganga.
- Durga Puja is seen as the best instance of the public performance of religion and art, and as a thriving ground for collaborative artists and designers.

ON UNESCO HERITAGE LIST

<p>India on Unesco Intangible Cultural Heritage list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Koodiyattam A Sanskrit theatre of Kerala ➤ Mudiyett A ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala ➤ Vedic chanting Recitation of sacred Hindu texts ➤ Ramlila The traditional performance of the Ramayana ➤ Ramman A religious festival and ritual theatre of Garhwal, Uttarakhand ➤ Kalbelia Folk songs and dances of Rajasthan ➤ Chhau dance A classical dance form of West Bengal and Odisha ➤ Ladakh Buddhist chanting Recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in Ladakh ➤ Manipuri Sankirtana A ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur ➤ Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab ➤ Yoga Ancient Indian physical, mental and spiritual practices originating in ancient India 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Kumbh Mela Mass Hindu pilgrimage held at Haridwar of Uttarakhand, Nashik of Maharashtra, Prayagraj of Uttar Pradesh and Ujjain of Madhya Pradesh <p>The world on UNESCO ICH list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tango, Argentina and Uruguay ➤ Baul songs, Bangladesh ➤ Samba de Roda of the Recôncavo of Bahia, Brazil ➤ Frevo, performing arts of the Carnival of Recife, Brazil ➤ Royal Bellet, Vietnam ➤ Dragon boat festival, China ➤ Flamenco, Spain ➤ Carnival of Barranquilla, Colombia ➤ Gastronomic meal of the French ➤ Three genres of traditional dance in Bali, Indonesia ➤ Reggae music of Jamaica
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1.30 Vijay Diwas 2021 was recently observed

Why in news?

- Vijay Diwas on December 16, 2021, marks the 50th-anniversary celebrations of India's glorified victory over Pakistan in the **1971 Bangladesh Liberation war**.

About Vijay Diwas, 2021

- India on Vijay Diwas 2021 pays homage to the soldiers who fought bravely during the war which ultimately helped the Indian Armed Forces in establishing their prowess.
- Vijay Diwas in India is celebrated annually on December 16 to commemorate the country's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war leading to the creation of Bangladesh.
- India on Vijay Diwas 2021 pays homage to the soldiers who fought bravely during the war which ultimately helped the Indian Armed Forces in establishing their prowess.
- Vijay Diwas in India is not only a day of India's victory over Pakistan during the 1971 Indo-Pak war but is also a day that played a crucial role in establishing strong relations between India and Bangladesh.

1.31 Maharashtra topped the list of Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana beneficiaries.

Why in news?

- **Maharashtra** has topped the list of states with maximum number of beneficiaries under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY), **followed by Tamil Nadu and Gujarat**.
- As on December 4, 2021, as many as 6,49,560 beneficiaries were recorded in Maharashtra, followed by Tamil Nadu (5,35,615), Gujarat (4,44,741) and Karnataka (3,07,164), Minister of State for Labour & Employment Rameswar Teli said in written reply to Lok Sabha.

About Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana

- Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY) was announced to increase the employment generation in post-COVID-19 recovery phase and to incentivise creation of new employment along with social security benefits and restoration of loss of employment during COVID-19 pandemic.
- This scheme, being implemented through the **Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)**, reduces the financial burden of the employers of various sectors/industries and encourages them to hire more workers.
- Under the scheme, the government will provide subsidies for two years for new employees engaged on or after October 1, 2020, and up to March 31, 2022.
- The government will pay both 12 per cent employees' contribution and 12 per cent employers' contribution, which means 24 per cent of basic wages, towards EPF (employees provident fund), for new employees in establishments employing up to 1,000 employees for two years.
- However, the government will pay only employees' share of EPF contribution — 12 per cent of wages — for new employees in establishments employing more than 1,000 employees for two years.
- An employee drawing a monthly wage of less than Rs 15,000, who was not working in any establishment registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) before October 1, 2020, and did not have a Universal Account Number or EPFO member account number prior to October 1, 2020, will be eligible for the benefit.
- The Cabinet had approved extension of scope of the scheme from June 30, 2021 to March 31, 2022. Approximately 71.8 lakh employees are likely to get benefited during the scheme period.
- The beneficiaries registered upto March 31, 2022 will continue to receive the benefits for two years from the date of registration under the scheme.

1.32 Hemant Soren launches sports scheme for Maoist-hit areas

Why in news?

- In a move to curb Left Wing Extremism, the **Jharkhand government** recently launched the **Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme** aimed at nurturing young sporting talents in Maoist-hit districts.

About SAHAY Scheme

- The scheme, which was launched in Saraikela-Kharsawan, West Singhbhum, Khunti, Gumla and Simdega districts, will be replicated in other districts as well.
- According to the scheme, boys and girls in the 14-19 age group from villages to ward level will be registered under the scheme, and given opportunities to display their skills in basketball, volleyball, hockey and athletics.
- They will be encouraged with incentives such as cash prize as well as money for kits.
- The chief minister said a Sports Nursery will be set up in the affected areas to nurture talented youngsters.

1.33 Goa Liberation Day celebrated on December 19

Why in news?

- Every year, Goa's Liberation Day is observed on December 19 in India. The day is celebrated to recognise the achievements of Goa in the tourism sector and also for being the highest per capita income among all the states and Union Territories in India. The state has its own history that is the story of its liberation. The day is marked with enormous celebrations and events which bring honour to the country's smallest state.

About Goa Liberation Day

- Goa Liberation Day was celebrated on 19th December, 2021 in commemoration of the Indian armed forces freeing Goa from Portuguese colonial rule.

Goa Liberation Day 2021: Celebrations

- PM Modi was a part of inauguration projects like the renovated Fort Aguada Jail Museum in North Goa, the Super Specialty Block at the Goa Medical College and Hospital, the New South Goa District Hospital, Aviation Skill Development Center at Mopa Airport, and the Gas-insulated Substation at Dabolim-Navelim, Margao.

1.34 KVIC Rolls Out self-employment schemes to Empower Rural Artisans in UP's

Bundelkhand Region

Why in news?

- During the last 3 years, KVIC has empowered over 300 potters' families in Bundelkhand region, creating livelihood for nearly 1200 persons of the community. It has also given a big thrust to the PMEGP scheme by setting up nearly 11,000 new manufacturing units in the region and thereby, creating 8800 direct employments. To support these projects, KVIC also disbursed subsidy amount of Rs 75 crore. Also, 16 Khadi institutions are currently working in the Bundelkhand region that are engaged in spinning and weaving activities by mostly women artisans.

About Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a **statutory body** formed in April 1957 by the Government of India, under the Act of Parliament, 'Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956'.
- It is an apex organisation under the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises**, with regard to khadi and village industries within India, which seeks to - "plan, promote, facilitate, organise and assist in the establishment and development of khadi and village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.
- **The broad objectives that the KVIC has set before it is...**
- The social objective of providing employment.
- The economic objective of producing saleable articles.
- The wider objective of creating self-reliance amongst the poor and building up of a strong rural community spirit.

1.35 SECI Awards 100 MW Solar Contract with Battery Project in Chhattisgarh

Why in news?

- Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) has awarded a contract for setting up a 100 MW (AC) solar with 40 MW/120 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project to be set up at Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh. The project, with one of the largest grid-connected BESS projects in the country, will

demonstrate how, by using a large battery storage system like BESS, solar power can be used to provide clean solar energy during evening peak hours.

About Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. (SECI)

- Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. (SECI) is a company of the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India**, established to facilitate the implementation of the National Solar Mission (NSM).
- It is the only Central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) dedicated to the solar energy sector. The company's mandate has been broadened to cover the entire renewable energy domain and the company will be renamed to Renewable Energy Corporation of India (RECI).
- The company is responsible for implementation of a number of government schemes, major ones being the VGF schemes for large-scale grid-connected projects under NSM, solar park scheme and grid-connected solar rooftop scheme, along with a host of other specialised schemes such as defence scheme, canal-top scheme, and Indo-Pak border scheme.

1.36 Odisha CM inaugurated State's longest bridge 'T-Setu' over Mahanadi

Why in news?

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik recently, inaugurated T-Setu, the State's longest bridge over **Mahanadi** in Cuttack district of Odisha.

About 'T-Setu' over Mahanadi

- The 3.4 km long bridge, connecting Gopinathpur in Badamba, Baideswar in Banki to Singhanath Pitha located in the middle of the river, has been built in the shape of English alphabet 'T' at a cost of Rs 111 crore.
- The bridge, which has a footpath of 1.5 metre width on its both sides, will benefit people of Cuttack and Khurda and reduce the distance between Badamba and Baideswar in Banki by 45 km.
- The 7.5-metre-wide bridge will facilitate communication for around five lakh people of the nearby localities besides improving agriculture, business and tourism activities in and around the area.
- It will also benefit devotees visiting Baba Singhanath's Bali Makar Jatra in Badamba block.

1.37 Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched Rashtriya Ekta Geet.

Why in news?

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched Rashtriya Ekta Geet composed by the National Cadet Corps (NCC) in 22 languages during the grand finale of Vijay Shrankhla aur Sanskrityon ka Mahasangam campaign.
- Highlighting the glorious history of NCC, Rajnath Singh said, leaders like Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and many others are NCC alumni who have contributed towards Nation building.

About Rashtriya Ekta Geet

- Rashtriya Ekta Geet is based on the theme of national integration.
- The National Cadet Corps (NCC) is the youth wing of the Indian Armed Forces with its headquarters in New Delhi, India.

1.38 The Belagavi border dispute has been going on between Maharashtra and Karnataka

Why in news?

- An inter-state dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra dating back to the period of Independence and the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines in 1956 has reared its head again in the Belagavi region of Karnataka.

About the dispute

- The latest flashpoint is following a series of minor incidents over the recent week that have inflamed pro-Kannada and pro-Marathi passions on the two sides of the border.

1.39 Nagaland has created three New Districts - Tseminyu, Niuland, and Chumukedima

Why in news?

- "The Governor of Nagaland is pleased to upgrade Tseminyu subdivision to a full-fledged district with immediate effect. The jurisdiction of the new district shall comprise of the existing Tseminyu subdivision under Kohima district, Nagaland," read a notification issued by the Nagaland government.

About districts of Nagaland

- Nagaland government has created three new districts in the state, taking the total number of districts to 15.
- The three new districts are Tseminyu, Niuland and Chumukedima.

1.40 National Farmer's Day 2021 observed on 23rd December

Why in news?

- Kisan Diwas or National Farmers Day was observed on December 23 across the country to praise the farmers as they are the spine of India. The day was chosen to honour the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, **Choudhary Charan Singh**.

About National Farmer's Day 2021

- National Farmers Day is celebrated every year, especially in those states which are actively engaged in farming, such as Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, among others.

National Farmers Day 2020: History

- Chaudhary Charan Singh, the Kisan Leader, served the country for a very short period, from July 28, 1979, to January 14, 1980. He introduced several welfare schemes for the farmers and wrote several books on farmers and their problems, depicting various solutions to improve the lives of the farmers of the nation. Therefore, the government, in 2001, decided to mark Charan Singh's birth anniversary as Kisan Diwas.
- Chaudhary Charan Singh followed the famous slogan - "JAI JAWAN JAI KISAN", which was given to the farmers by Lal Bahadur Shastri, the second Prime Minister of India.

1.41 UP to launch 'Free Smartphone Yojna' on December 25.

Why in news?

- Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government is set to distribute free smartphones and tablets to about one crore final year students in the state, starting from December 25.

About 'Free Smartphone Yojna'

- The launch of new scheme marks the birth anniversary of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- Number of students, including girls, from every district of the state likely to get benefit from the scheme.
- The state government will offer cellphones and tablets to students in their last year of high school and higher as part of the program.
- The chief minister will hand away 60,000 smartphones and 40,000 tablets to the youths.

- The candidate must be a student and a resident of Uttar Pradesh.
- Students in their last year of MA, BA, BSc, ITI, MBBS, MD, BTech, and MTech, among other programs, will be given priority.

1.42 Fifth Siddha Day celebrated on December 23, 2021

Why in news?

- Recently, the Fifth Siddha Day was celebrated in India.

About Siddha and Siddha Day

- Siddha system of medicine is one of the oldest codified traditions of healthcare originated in the Indian sub-continent with many intricate, novel therapeutic interventions and treatment modalities.
- The fundamentals and principles largely rely upon **Panchabootham, taste and three humours**.
- It enjoys state patronage as part of the officially recognized Ayush systems and caters to considerable proportion of population through public and private health care facilities Ministry of Ayush observes Siddha Day on eve of **Agathiyar's birthday every year**, which falls during the Ayilyam star of Margazhi Month.
- This year, the Fifth Siddha Day celebration on **"Strength of Siddha Medicine for Communicable Diseases"** has been jointly organized by Central Council for Research in Siddha, National Institute of Siddha and Directorate of Indian Medicine & Homeopathy, Government of Tamil Nadu on 23rd December 2021.

1.43 Government of India & European Investment Bank have signed a finance contract

Why in news?

- Government of India & European Investment Bank (EIB) recently signed finance contract for first tranche loan of Euro 250 million for Agra Metro Rail project

About the contract

- Government of India & European Investment Bank sign finance contract for first tranche loan of Euro 250 million for **Agra Metro Rail project**
- EIB had approved a total loan of Euro 450 million to fund the Agra Metro Rail Project.
- The project aims to provide a safe, reliable, affordable, and environment-friendly public Mass Rapid Transit System for Agra city which will improve mobility and support endeavor for planned urban development in Agra, according to the statement.

1.44 Mob Violence and Mob Lynching Bill, 2021 passed by the state of Jharkhand

Why in news?

- The Jharkhand Assembly recently passed Prevention of Mob Violence and Mob Lynching Bill, 2021

About the Bill

- The Bill seeks punishment for "conspiracy or abetment or attempt to lynch"; "obstructing legal process" as well as "dissemination of offensive material".
- The government has brought this Bill to maintain peace, communal harmony, and brotherhood in the state," Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren said after the Bill was passed in the state Assembly.

1.45 PM Modi laid the foundation stone of 'Banas Dairy Sankul'

Why in news?

- Recently, the foundation stone was laid by PM Modi for 'Banas Dairy Sankul' at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park, Karkhiyaon, Varanasi.

About Banas Dairy Sankul

- It is a dairy project covering an area of 30 acres and built at a cost of about Rs 475 crore which is likely to process about 5 lakh litre milk per day.
- This will strengthen the rural economy and help the farmers of the region by creating new opportunities for them.

1.46 Auction of Lalgarh and Beheraband mines

Why in news?

- The Ministry of Coal had launched 2nd Attempt of auction of 11 coal mines for commercial mining on September 27, 2021 and bids were received for 4 mines.
- Recently, the auction was held for two mines that have received multiple bids.
- Adhunik Power and Natural Resources Ltd has emerged as preferred bidder for Lalgarh (North) coal mine in Jharkhand. Auro Coal Pvt Ltd has emerged as preferred bidder for Beheraband North Extension coal block in Madhya Pradesh, the coal ministry said in a statement.
- The results of the auction are as under.

About the mines

S. No	Name of the Mine	State	Status of Exploration	PRC (mtpa)	Geological Reserves (MT)	Preferred Bidder
1	Lalgarh (North)	Jharkhand	Explored	1.00	27.038	Adhunik Power and Natural Resources Ltd.
2	Beheraband North Extn*	Madhya Pradesh	Partially Explored	NA	170.00	Auro Coal Private Ltd.

1.47 President Kovind unveils P N Panicker's statue in Thiruvananthapuram

Why in news?

- President Ram Nath Kovind recently unveiled a statue of late P.N. Panicker at Poojappura in Thiruvananthapuram and said he wanted to remove the evil of illiteracy.

About the P N Panicker statue

- President Ram Nath Kovind said that Panicker made libraries and literacy a movement of the people.
- The President said Panicker spread an important message - "Vayichu Valaruka" which means "Read and Grow".

1.48 Gujarat govt launches 'Nadi Utsav' to honour rivers, raise awareness about their protection

Why in news?

- The Gujarat government recently launched 'Nadi Utsav', or river festival, to honour rivers for their contribution to the development of the state as well as to raise awareness about their protection.

About Nadi Utsav

- Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel participated in a state-level launch function at a weir-cum-causeway on Tapi river here, where he worshipped Goddess Tapi with Vedic rituals.
- The state government is committed to building a riverfront on the Tapi river in Surat, Patel said at the function, organised as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', being celebrated across the country, to honour rivers.
- 'Nadi Utsav' is an attempt to revive the glorious culture scattered along the rivers. Our rivers are a silent witness to the unparalleled development of the state. Rivers are the only source of pure fresh water for many species, including humans. It is our duty to preserve life-giving rivers to protect the environment for our future generations.

1.49 'Meendum Manjappai' scheme was recently launched

Why in news?

- Bag makers in Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu have welcomed Chief Minister MK Stalin's 'Meendum Manjappai' scheme to reduce the use of plastic bags, and are all set to print yellow bags, among other cloth bags.

About 'Meendum Manjappai'

- The demand for the traditional yellow cloth bag in Tamil Nadu that has been a landmark for the businessmen and ordinary people of the state is making a major comeback.
- Chief Minister M K Stalin has inaugurated a scheme 'Meendum Manjappai' aimed at reducing the use of plastic bags and promoting cloth bags.
- The cloth bag-making units of Pudukkottai, Kancheepuram, Salem, Erode, and Dindigul have become vibrant with orders pouring in from wholesale and retail traders across the state.

1.50 Telangana has 100% first dose Covid vaccine coverage with 2.77 crore jabs

Why in news?

- Telangana is the first large state across the country to complete 100 per cent first dose vaccination against Covid-19, said state health minister T Harish Rao recently.

About Telangana having 100% first dose Covid vaccine

- Telangana is the first large state across the country to complete 100 per cent first dose vaccination against COVID-19, said state health minister T Harish Rao recently.
- As per the health minister of Telangana, until now the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Sikkim -- only 8 smaller states, Union Territories, have achieved this feat.
- The minister further informed that that state has completed 66 per cent coverage of second dose.

1.51 'Bijli Utsav' organized by REC (Rural Electrification Corporation) in Varanasi as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Why in news?

- As part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' – to celebrate 75 years of Independence, REC Limited, a public infrastructure finance company under the Ministry of Power organized a 'Bijli Utsav' at Karsada sub-station in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

About 'Bijli Utsav'

- The event highlighted the benefits of electricity, the challenges faced during electrification in rural areas and how the quality of life improved with access to power. The event also witnessed several beneficiaries of Saubhagya Yojana who were invited on stage to share their experience.
- To engage with the villagers, various cultural programmes such as Nukkad Natak and a Lok Gayan were held along with that a quiz on various Government programmes, on awareness about usage of electricity, billing, energy efficiency etc. was conducted to impart knowledge to the public. The event concluded with the distribution of LED bulbs as prizes to the winners of the competitions.
- Given the large gathering, it was ensured that all Covid safety protocols such as social distancing and wearing of masks were adhered to. In addition, masks were also distributed to all the attendees.

About REC Limited

- **(Rural Electrification Corporation)** REC Limited is a Navratna NBFC focusing on Power Sector Financing and Development across India. Established in 1969, REC Limited has completed over fifty years in the area of its operations.
- It provides financial assistance to state electricity boards, state governments, central/state power utilities, independent power producers, rural electric cooperatives and private sector utilities.
- Its business activities involve financing projects in the complete power sector value chain; different types of projects include Generation, Transmission, Distribution and Renewable Energy segments. REC's funding illuminates every fourth bulb in India.

1.52 India to become 3rd largest economy in 2031, says CEBR

Why in news?

- The Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) predicted that India will regain sixth position from France next year and become the third-largest economy in 2031, a year later than previously predicted.

About CEBR analysis on Indian economy

- (CEBR) has predicted that India will regain sixth position from France next year and become the third-largest economy in 2031, a year later than previously predicted.
- CEBR, one of the UK's leading economics consultancies, in its annual World Economic League Table also predicted that China will overtake the US in 2030, two years later than forecast a year ago.
- The London-based think tank said, over the next 15 years, India will see an improvement in its ranking in the World Economic League Table (WELT), rising from 7th place in 2021 to be the world's third-largest economy in 2036.
- India will again take over France to regain its 6th place in WELT ranking for 2022, which it briefly lost to France in 2021, the CEBR added.

PRACTISE MCQS

1. National Pollution Control Day is observed on which of the following dates every year in India?

- A. 20th January
- B. 26th March
- C. 2nd December
- D. 14th November

2. Which of the following Indian states has launched STREET project for experiential tourism?

- A. Karnataka
- B. Kerala
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Andhra Pradesh

3. With reference to AIRNxt, a programme launched by All India Radio, consider the following statements:

- 1. Through this programme AIR stations will allow youngsters from local colleges, universities to take part in programming, allowing them to discuss and curate youth-centric shows.
- 2. It is a part of the celebrations under the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

4. The World Handicap Day is observed on which of the following days every year?

- A. 3rd December
- B. 25th November
- C. 14th July
- D. 29TH August

5. With reference to International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is observed on 5th of December every year.
- 2. The theme for International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2021 is “Ending Slavery’s Legacy of Racism: A Global Imperative for Justice”.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

6. With reference to ZyCoV-D, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is the first DNA plasmid vaccine in the world for human use.
- 2. It is also the first COVID-19 vaccine that is needle-free and administered using PharmaJet

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

7. The recently launched SRESHTA scheme is associated with which of the following?

- A. Providing drinking water in the dry regions of eastern ghats.
- B. Upliftment and development of scheduled castes (SC) students.
- C. Upliftment and care of manual scavengers.
- D. None of the above

8. With reference to Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti, consider the following statements:

1. It has recently been awarded two heritage awards by UNESCO.
2. The project was started in 2007 by the Aga Kahn Trust for Culture, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation and the Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

9. With reference to National Navy Day which was recently observed in India, consider the following statements:

1. It is observed every year on 10th of December.
2. The theme for the year 2021 is "Indian Navy Combat Ready, Credible & Cohesive".

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

10. With respect to the famous hornbill festival, consider the following statements:

1. Hornbill Festival is celebrated in Rajasthan to encourage inter-tribal interaction.
2. The festival is named after the bird, Hornbill which is the most revered and admired bird.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

11. What are the points that are correct with respect to the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit?

- A. During the summit both countries' Ministries hold their 1st 2 + 2 Defence Ministry level Dialogue in New Delhi.
- B. Both Nations renewed the military-technical cooperation agreement for another 10 years till 2031 & also signed the deal for Manufacture of AK-203 assault rifles.
- C. India & Russia signed 28 MoU's & set a target of bilateral trade worth 30 billion Dollars by 2025.

- A. All A, B & C
- B. Only A
- C. Only B
- D. Only A & B

12. The Centre for Science and Environment & _____ released a report 'Waste-wise Cities: Best practices in municipal solid waste management' that documented the best practices in solid waste management from 28 cities in 15 states of India.

- A. Swachh Bharat Mission
- B. National Development Council
- C. National Mission for Clean Ganga
- D. NITI Aayog

13. Which Ministry launched the 'Shreshtha Yojna' & National Fellowship Management and Grievance Redressal Portal at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi?

- A. Ministry of Minority Affairs
- B. Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- C. Ministry of Home Affairs
- D. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

14. With reference to Human Rights Day, consider the following statements:

1. It is observed every year on 12th December

2. The year, 2021's theme is Human Rights Day theme is "Equality, Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights."

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

15. With respect to the launch of 'e-Sawari India E-Bus Coalition', consider the following statements:

- 1. It has been launched by NITI Aayog in partnership with Convergence Energy Service Ltd () and World Resources Institute, India (WRI India), with assistance from Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI).
- 2. The coalition has been launched with the intention to share information and learnings on e-bus adoption in India amongst varied stakeholders, together with central and state governments, city-level authorities businesses, transit service suppliers, authentic tools producers (OEMs), financing establishments and ancillary service suppliers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

16. With respect to recently launched 'She is a Changemaker programme', consider the following statements:

- 1. It has been launched by NITI Aayog.
- 2. It's objective is to improve the leadership and decision-making skills of grassroot women political leaders and their communication skills including oration and writing skills.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

17. With reference to the Energy Conservation Week which is to be celebrated from 8th to 14th December 2021, consider the following statements:

- 1. Ministry of Power will be celebrating the Energy Conservation Week 2021 under "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav".
- 2. Under this, State level painting competitions are being organised from 1st to 10th December 2021 in all 36 states and Union Territories of the country and it will culminate in a National Level Painting on December 12, 2021 in New Delhi.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

18. Which of the following Northeast Indian states share the border with Myanmar?

- 1. Assam
- 2. Arunachal Pradesh
- 3. Nagaland
- 4. Mizoram
- 5. Manipur

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- A. 1, 3 and 4 only
- B. 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
- C. 1, 4 and 5 only
- D. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

19. With reference to Atma Nirbhar Krishak Integrated Development Scheme, recently

approved by Uttar Pradesh cabinet, consider the following statements:

1. Under this scheme, 1,475 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) will be formed in the next three years in each development block of the state.
2. The scheme will also help in achieving the target of utilising a budget of Rs 12,000 crore allotted to the state by the Centre under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

20. The Chief Minister of which of the following states has recently launched the 'Milk Price Incentive Scheme'?

- A. Uttarakhand
- B. Karnataka
- C. Jharkhand
- D. West Bengal

21. With reference to the recently observed UNICEF Day, consider the following statements:

1. It is observed every year on 1st of December.
2. UNICEF Day 2021 theme is to help children to recover from interruptions and learning losses experienced through the Pandemic in the last two years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

22. With reference to the Universal Health Coverage Day, consider the following statements:

1. Universal Health Coverage Day is observed on December 12 every year.
2. This year's theme for Universal Health Coverage Day 2021 is 'Leave No One Behind When It Comes to Health: Invest in Health Systems for All.'

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

23. With reference to National Energy Conservation Day 2021, consider the following statements:

1. National Energy Conservation Day is observed on December 24, every year.
2. The theme for this year is 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Energy Efficient India' and 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Cleaner Planet'.
3. The National Energy Conservation Day 2021 aims to spread awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation of energy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

24. In which of the following states of India has PM Modi inaugurated Rs 9,800 crore Saryu canal project?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Gujarat
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Assam

25. With reference to the 6th edition of Global Technology Summit 2021, which was recently held, consider the following statements:

1. It discussed various topics including cryptocurrencies, encryption, vaccine supply chains, cloud computing, green technology, digital payments, cyber security, and science & tech cooperation in the Quad.
2. The theme of the 2021 Global Technology Summit is 'Global Meets Local'.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

26. With reference to the recently held 6th India Water Impact Summit, consider the following statement:

1. The valedictory session was conducted in a hybrid mode by National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), New Delhi and Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga), Kanpur.
2. The Summit also witnessed the signing of an MoU between C-Ganga and Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO) for the development of a sludge management framework.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

27. With reference to recent agreement between Odisha government and UNCDF, consider the following statements:

1. The Odisha government has signed an agreement with the United Nations Capital Development Fund to empower women economically and drive gender equality in the state.

2. Under the joint initiative, the launch of Mission Shakti Living Lab was announced.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

28. Mithila Makhana which was recently granted Geographical Indication (GI) Tag belongs to which of the following states of India?

- A. Andhra Pradesh
- B. Bihar
- C. Tamil Nadu
- D. Rajasthan

29. Which of the following has recently been included in the UNESCO's list of 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'?

- A. Durga Puja
- B. Karama festival
- C. Yakshagana
- D. Maha Shivratri

30. With reference to Vijay Diwas 2021, consider the following statements:

1. It is observed every year on 4th of December.
2. The year 2021 marks the 50th-anniversary celebrations of India's glorified victory over Pakistan in the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation war.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

31. Which of the following states of India has topped the list of Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana number of beneficiaries?

- A. Himachal Pradesh

- B. Assam
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Kerala

32. Which of the following state government has recently launched the Sports Action toward Harnessing Aspiration of Youth (SAHAY) scheme?

- A. Haryana
- B. Jharkhand
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Tamil Nadu

33. With reference to the Goa Liberation Day 2021, consider the following statements:

1. Goa Liberation Day was celebrated on December 19.
2. PM Modi inaugurated projects like the renovated Fort Aguada Jail Museum in North Goa, the Super Specialty Block at the Goa Medical College and Hospital etc.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

34. With respect to Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) of India, consider the following statements:

1. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body formed by the Government of India.
2. It is an apex organisation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
3. It seeks to plan, promote, facilitate, organise and assist in the establishment and development of khadi and village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

35. With reference to Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. (SECI), consider the following statements:

1. It is a company of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India
2. It has been established to facilitate the implementation of the National Solar Mission (NSM)

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

36. With reference to the 'T-Setu' bridge which has recently been inaugurated, consider the following statements:

1. It has been inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Orissa Naveen Patnaik.
2. It has been built over the Godavari River.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

37. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched 'Rashtriya Ekta Geet' composed by which of the following?

- A. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- B. Ministry of Culture
- C. Niti Aayog
- D. National Cadet Corps (NCC)

38. The Belagavi border dispute has been going on between which of the following states?

- A. Maharashtra and Karnataka
- B. Telangana and Andhra Pradesh
- C. Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
- D. Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh

39. The districts Tseminyu, Niuland, and Chumukedima have recently been created in which of the following states of India?

- A. Assam
- B. West Bengal
- C. Mizoram
- D. Nagaland

40. With reference to the National Farmer's Day 2021, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is observed every year on 20th December.
- 2. The day was chosen to honour the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Choudhary Charan Singh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

41. The launch of the 'Free Smartphone Yojna' is associated with which of the following states of India?

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Assam

42. As per the Fifth Siddha Day, which was recently observed, consider the following statements:

- 1. Siddha system of medicine is one of the oldest codified traditions of healthcare originated in the Indian sub-continent with many intricate, novel therapeutic interventions and treatment modalities.

- 2. The Fifth Siddha Day celebration on "Strength of Siddha Medicine for Communicable Diseases" has been jointly organized by Central Council for Research in Siddha, National Institute of Siddha and Directorate of Indian Medicine & Homeopathy, Government of Tamil Nadu.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

43. Government of India & European Investment Bank (EIB) have signed finance contract for first tranche loan of Euro 250 million for which of the following projects?

- A. Agra Rail Metro Project
- B. Mumbai Rail Metro Project
- C. Flyovers in Punjab
- D. None of the above

44. Which of the following states of India has recently passed the Mob Violence and Mob Lynching Bill, 2021?

- A. Punjab
- B. Jharkhand
- C. Assam
- D. Meghalaya

45. PM Modi has recently laid the foundation stone for 'Banas Dairy Sankul' in which of the following states of India?

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Arunachal Pradesh

46. Lalgah mines is situated in which of the following states of India?

- A. Assam
- B. Jharkhand
- C. Meghalaya

D. Chhattisgarh

47. Consider the following statements:

1. President Ram Nath Kovind recently unveiled a statue of late P.N. Panicker at Poojappura in Thiruvananthapuram.
2. The President said Panicker spread an important message - "Vayichu Valaruka" which means "Read and Grow".

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

48. With reference to the recently launched 'Nadi Utsav', consider the following statements:

1. It has been launched by the Government of Kerala.
2. 'Nadi Utsav' is an attempt to revive the glorious culture scattered along the rivers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

49. 'Meendum Manjappai' scheme was recently launched by which of the following states of India?

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Karnataka
- C. Assam
- D. Meghalaya

50. Which of the following has become the first large state across the country to complete 100 per cent first dose vaccination against Covid-19 in India?

- A. Tamil Nadu

- B. Rajasthan
- C. Gujarat
- D. Telangana

51. With reference to the (Rural Electrification Corporation) REC Limited, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Maharatna NBFC focusing on Power Sector Financing and Development across India.
2. It provides financial assistance to state electricity boards, state governments, central/state power utilities, independent power producers, rural electric cooperatives and private sector utilities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

52. As per Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), India will become the third-largest economy in which of the following years?

- A. 2030
- B. 2031
- C. 2040
- D. 2041

Answers

1. ANSWER: C
2. ANSWER: B
3. ANSWER: C
4. ANSWER: A
5. ANSWER: B
6. ANSWER: C
7. ANSWER: B
8. ANSWER: C
9. ANSWER: D
10. ANSWER: B
11. ANSWER: A
12. ANSWER: D
13. ANSWER: D
14. ANSWER: B
15. ANSWER: C
16. ANSWER: B
17. ANSWER: C
18. ANSWER: B
19. ANSWER: C
20. ANSWER: A
21. ANSWER: B
22. ANSWER: C
23. ANSWER: B
24. ANSWER: A
25. ANSWER: C
26. ANSWER: C
27. ANSWER: C
28. ANSWER: B
29. ANSWER: A
30. ANSWER: B
31. ANSWER: C
32. ANSWER: B
33. ANSWER: C
34. ANSWER: C
35. ANSWER: C
36. ANSWER: A
37. ANSWER: D
38. ANSWER: A
39. ANSWER: D
40. ANSWER: B
41. ANSWER: B
42. ANSWER: C
43. ANSWER: A
44. ANSWER: B
45. ANSWER: B
46. ANSWER: B
47. ANSWER: C
48. ANSWER: B
49. ANSWER: A
50. ANSWER: D
51. ANSWER: B
52. ANSWER: B

CivilsTap Hlmachal

INTERNATIONAL

1.53 India has joined the G20 'Troika'

Why In news?

- Recently, India joined the G20 'Troika' and with this India has started the procedure for taking over the G20 presidency next year.

About G20 'Troika':

- Troika refers to the top grouping within the G20 that consists of the **current, previous and the incoming presidencies — Indonesia, Italy and India.**
- As a Troika member, India will work closely with Indonesia and Italy to ensure consistency and continuity of the G20's agenda.
- India will assume the G20 presidency on 1st December 2022 from Indonesia, and will convene the G20 Leaders' Summit for the first time in India in 2023.
- Italy hosted the G20 summit during October 30-31.
- Indonesia took over the G20 presidency from 1st December, 2021.

About G20:

- It is an informal group of 19 countries and the European Union (EU), with representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.
- It does not have a permanent secretariat or Headquarters.
- Member countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the EU.

1.54 OECD slashes India growth forecast to 9.4% for FY22

Why in news?

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recently pared its growth forecast for India from 9.7% estimated earlier to 9.4% for this fiscal even as it maintained that the ongoing economic recovery is gaining traction, supported by progress in vaccination, which is boosting consumer sentiment.

About OECD

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is a group of member countries that **discuss and develop economic and social policy.**
- OECD was **founded in the year 1961** to stimulate world trade and economic progress.
- OECD is an official Permanent observer to the United Nations and is referred to as a think-tank or as a monitoring group.
- OECD members are typically democratic countries that support free-market economies.

- The stated goal of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all.
- The organization is **headquartered** in the **Chateau de la Muette in Paris, France**.

Objectives of OECD

- It also ensures that the environmental impact of growth and social development is always considered.
- Over the years, OECD has raised the standards of living in multiple countries.
- It has also contributed to the expansion of world trade.

1.55 The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$500-million loan to India.

Why in news?

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$500-million loan to India to help improve the quality of school education and to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 on students' learning.

About the \$500-million loan by ADB

- The loan supports the Integrated Scheme for School Education (Samagra Shiksha) and the new Exemplar School Initiative of the Ministry of Education (MOE) to improve education quality by focusing on inclusive and equitable learning outcomes.
- About 1,800 government schools will be transformed into exemplar schools in the states of Assam, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand. Exemplar schools will demonstrate quality learning environments and effective learning, which will become a model for replication in other government schools across India.

Significance

- As per ADB Principal Social Sector Specialist for South Asia Sunhwa Lee ADB's assistance will support the government's commitment to providing high-quality education to all by accelerating quality education initiatives across the participating states. A well-educated and productive population is crucial for the country's vision of becoming a vibrant and knowledge-based economy

1.56 The International Civil Aviation Day was recently observed on December 7, 2021

Why in news?

- The International Civil Aviation Day was observed on December 7, 2021 to help generate and reinforce worldwide awareness of the importance of international civil aviation to the social and economic development of States.

About International Civil Aviation Day

- The day also aims to throw light on the unique role of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in helping States to cooperate and realize a global rapid transit network at the service of all mankind.

International Civil Aviation Day theme 2021

- The ICAO Council has established a special anniversary theme for International Civil Aviation Day every five years that coincide with the ICAO anniversaries such as 2014, 2019, 2024 and 2029. The council representatives choose a single theme for full 4-year intervening period between the anniversaries.

- The International Civil Aviation Day theme from now till 2023 will be **“Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development”**.

International Civil Aviation Day Significance

- The importance of civil aviation as an engine of global connectivity is even more relevant now as the United Nations and world nations have adopted Agenda 2030 and have embarked towards a new era in global sustainable development.

1.57 PANEX-21 is being held in the backdrop of the emergence of the Omicron variant which has sparked widespread concerns across the world.

Why in news?

- PANEX-21 a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise is being held in the backdrop of the emergence of the Omicron variant.

About PANEX-21

- It is to be held for the BIMSTEC countries. It is a multinational disaster relief exercise. The exercise is to be held among the BIMSTEC countries: Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.
- The aim of the exercise is to foster joint planning and build regional cooperation for responding to natural disasters.
- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a body of seven countries for cooperation in areas of common interests. PANEX 21 is planned to be conducted at Pune from December 20-22, 2021.
- The exercise will be based on three scenarios built on the theme of disaster management in the backdrop of a pandemic. The participants will be divided into eight syndicates, with one syndicate each from the participating countries and two syndicates from India.
- The exercise will look at analysing capabilities of member states and share best practices, review existing procedures for notification, preparedness and response and recommend the evolution of an organised structure with mechanisms for response to disasters including capability development, training, the regional pool of experts. Protocols for military-to-military cooperation will also be discussed.

1.58 UN General Assembly grants Observer status to International Solar Alliance

Why in news?

- Six years after being jointly launched by India and France, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) has got an 'Observer' status in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) which will help this treaty-based international organisation usher in a new era of green diplomacy for increasing solar power roots as a part of larger goal to face the challenges of climate change.

About International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) was launched by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and former French president Francois Hollande in November 2015 at the 21st session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP-21) in Paris.

- The ISA primarily consists of an Assembly, Secretariat and different committees. The Assembly of the alliance is the apex decision-making body and the Secretariat is responsible for its operations and functioning.
- The body is funded by voluntary contributions by its members, partner countries, the UN and the private sector, while revenue is generated from specific activities approved by the Assembly.
- The body aims to scale up solar energy applications, take coordinated action through programmes and activities launched on a voluntary basis and facilitate collaborative research and development activities in solar energy technologies.
- The ISA is a coalition of solar resource-rich countries that lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
- The alliance was formed with the aim to promote solar energy in 121 member countries and to mobilise over \$1 trillion of investment for the deployment of solar energy at affordable costs. It is the first inter-government organisation headquartered in India, in Gurugram.

1.59 International Mountain Day observed on December 11, 2021

Why in news?

- **December 11** is observed every year as the International Mountain Day to raise awareness about the importance of mountains to life and to climate.

About International Mountain Day

- December 11 is observed every year as the International Mountain Day to raise awareness about the importance of mountains to life and to climate.
- International Mountain Day was designated by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to acknowledge the fact that mountains are home to 15% of the total population of the world and they also host about half of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

Theme

- The International Mountain Day 2021 theme is '**Sustainable Mountain Tourism**'. The theme signifies that sustainable tourism in mountains is a way to preserve the cultural, natural, and spiritual heritage of the mountains around the world.

Significance of International Mountain Day 2021

- The International Mountain Day aims at creating awareness about the significance of mountains and the role that they play in maintaining biodiversity. Mountain Day also sheds light on the opportunities and constraints in mountain development.
- However, the International Mountain Day 2021 is of extreme relevance because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect it had on mountain tourism. Mountain Day acknowledges that the covid pandemic has further compounded the vulnerabilities of the mountain communities.

1.60 PM Modi attended Joe Biden's democracy summit

Why in news?

- Participating in '**Summit for Democracy**', Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the democratic spirit, including respect for rule of law and pluralistic ethos, is "ingrained in Indians".

About 'Summit for Democracy'

- The Summit for Democracy was a virtual summit hosted by the United States "to renew democracy at home and confront autocracies abroad" on December 9–10, 2021.

- The three themes are defending against authoritarianism, addressing and fighting corruption, and advancing respect for human rights.
- The United States calls invited attendees' "participants", in recognition that some attendees, such as the Republic of China (Taiwan), are not states recognized by the United Nations or by the U.S., or Kosovo, which is not fully recognized by the United Nations member states.

1.61 G7 nations warn Russia to face consequences if Ukraine is invaded

Why in news?

- G7 told Russia to de-escalate its military buildup near the Ukrainian border, warning that an invasion would have massive consequences and inflict severe economic pain on Moscow.

About G7

- The seven members (**UK, USA, Canada, Japan, Germany, France and Italy, plus the EU**) are all bound by shared values as open, democratic and outward-looking societies.
- In past years the G7 has taken action to strengthen the global economy and combat tax evasion, save 27 million lives from AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and supported the education of millions of children in the poorest countries.

1.62 Dubai first in the world to go 100% paperless

Why in news?

- Dubai is the first government globally to turn completely paperless, according to the Emirate's Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

About Dubai going 100% paperless

- Dubai is the first government globally to turn completely paperless, according to the Emirate's Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. He also pointed at savings worth \$350 million- and 14-million-man hours across the Dubai Government.
- Internal, external transactions and procedures in the Dubai government are 100 per cent digital and managed using a comprehensive digital government services platform.
- The achievement of this target marks the beginning of a new stage in Dubai's journey to digitize life in all its aspects, a journey rooted in innovation, creativity and a focus on the future.
- Dubai government's paperless strategy was implemented in five phases, each of which comprises different group of Dubai government entities. These entities provide over 1,800 digital services and more than 10,500 key transactions. With the end of the fifth phase, the strategy was fully implemented in all 45 Dubai government entities.
- As per various statements collaboration and integration among entities enabled automation of processes and services provided to customers and reduced paper consumption by ~336 million papers. It added the digital transformation in the Dubai Government will enrich smart city experience for all residents, entirely removing the need for paper transactions. Digitalisation will also help in providing exceptional experiences for residents through the Dubai Now application which allows access to more than 130 smart city services in 12 major categories.

1.63 India re-elected to International Maritime Organisation Council

Why in news?

- India has been re-elected to International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council for the 2022-2023 biennium under category B states.

- The Assembly of the International Maritime Organization has elected the Members of its Council for the 2022-2023 biennium.

About International Maritime Organisation

- The Council is the executive organ of IMO and is responsible, under the Assembly, for supervising the work of the Organization.
- The International Maritime Organization is a specialised agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating shipping.
- The IMO was established following agreement at a UN conference held in Geneva in 1948 and the IMO came into existence ten years later, meeting for the first time in 1959.
- IMO is **headquartered in London, United Kingdom.**
- The IMO's primary purpose is to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for shipping and its remit today includes maritime safety, environmental concerns, legal matters, technical co-operation, maritime security and the efficiency of shipping.
- IMO is governed by an assembly of members and is financially administered by a council of members elected from the assembly.
- The work of IMO is conducted through five committees and these are supported by technical subcommittees.

1.64 UAE becomes first country to transition to 4.5-day Work Week

Why in news?

- Recently, the United Arab Emirates has announced to change its existing five-day workweek to a four-and-a-half day starting January 1, becoming the world's first country to make the employee-friendly transition as part of its efforts to improve productivity and work-life balance.

About 4.5 day work week

- According to the new schedule, Monday to Thursday the work timings would be from 7.30 am to 3.30 pm, followed by a half-day on Friday from 7.30 am to 12.00 pm.
- Saturdays and Sundays are full-day holidays under the new rule.
- The government's move is expected to make it come closer to the timings of the US, the UK, and Europe, boosting commerce.

1.65 IAEA and Iran agreement to replace cameras at Karaj Facility

Why in news?

- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recently said that it will soon install new surveillance cameras at Iran's Karaj centrifuge component manufacturing workshop under an agreement reached by Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi and the Head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran, Mohammad Eslami.

About replacing cameras at Karaj Facility

- The cameras, to be installed in coming days, will replace those that were removed from the Karaj facility earlier this year. In addition, the Agency and Iran will continue to work on remaining outstanding safeguards issues with the aim of resolving them
- The agreement includes the following elements:
- The Agency and Iran will continue to work on remaining outstanding safeguards issues with the aim of resolving them. To this end, Iran and the Agency will conduct a series of exchanges of information and assessments including through meetings of experts.

- The Agency will make available a sample camera and related technical information to Iran for analysis by its relevant security and judiciary officials, in the presence of the Agency inspectors, on 19 December 2021.
- The Agency will reinstall cameras to replace those removed from the workshop at Karaj and perform other related technical activities before the end of December 2021 on a date agreed between the Agency and Iran.

1.66 International Migrants Day 2021

Why in news?

- Every year on December 18, the International Migrant Day is observed to tackle the problem and challenges of global migration.

About International Migrant Day 2021

International Migrants Day 2021: History

- The United Nations General Assembly in the year 1999 created the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.
- But on December 04, 2000, keeping an account of the large and increasing migrants across the globe, December 18 was decided as International Migrants' Day.
- Later, based on the previous concerns on December 14 and 15, 2006, 132 member states shared a high-level dialogue on the migration issues proposed by the General Assembly.
- Therefore, International Migrants Day was created to commemorate the importance of strengthening international cooperation and migration bilaterally, regionally, and globally.

International Migrants Day 2021: Theme

- The theme for the year 2021 is 'Harnessing the potential of human mobility'.

International Migrants Day 2021: Significance

- The day plays a significant role in determining the movement of people due to voluntary or forced movements for environmental issues like disaster and poverty.
- The various factors that result in the characteristics and scale of migration in the present and the future have created the issue of migration.

1.67 International Human Solidarity Day 2021

Why in news?

- International Human Solidarity Day was introduced by the UN General Assembly. The purpose of solidarity is to build our movement and to embody our mutual care and concern for justice. Solidarity works best when there is respect and understanding of each other's needs and life circumstances.
- The principle of solidarity is a socio-ethical and political concept which states that it is fair and just that benefits and obligations are shared between members of society.

About International Human Solidarity Day 2021

International Human Solidarity Day 2021: Date

- International Human Solidarity Day is observed annually on December 20, every year.
- Solidarity is capable of reducing inequality and social injustice in the world. It leads to the sustainable development of people.
- Solidarity can be cultivated through education.

International Human Solidarity Day 2021: Significance

- The United Nation's creation brought the nations and people of the world together to promote human rights, social and economic development and peace.

- The organization was founded on the fundamentals of unity and harmony among its members.
- It is expressed in the concept of collective security that relies on the solidarity of its members to unite and maintain peace and security.

1.68 World Economic Forum postpones Davos meet due to Omicron outbreak

Why in news?

- The World Economic Forum has decided to postpone its Annual Meeting in Davos due to the outbreak and spread of the Omicron variant of Covid-19. The meeting was scheduled to happen in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, between January 17 and 21, 2022. It is now planned for early summer.

About World Economic Forum

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an international non-governmental and lobbying organisation based in Cologny, canton of Geneva, Switzerland.
- It was founded on 24 January 1971 by Klaus Schwab.
- The foundation, which is mostly funded by its 1,000 member companies – typically global enterprises with more than five billion US dollars in turnover – as well as public subsidies, views its own mission as improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas.
- The WEF is mostly known for its annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.
- The meeting brings together some 3,000 paying members and selected participants – among which are investors, business leaders, political leaders, economists, celebrities and journalists – for up to five days to discuss global issues across 500 sessions.

1.69 Under Mission Sagar, INS Kesari delivers 500 tonnes of food aid to Mozambique

Why in news?

- Under Mission Sagar, INS Kesari delivers 500 tonnes of food aid to Mozambique. It is the eighth such deployment under Mission Sagar and is being conducted in close coordination with the ministry of external affairs, and other central government agencies.

About the deployment of INS Kesari

- Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kesari recently reached Port of Maputo, Mozambique to deliver 500 tonnes of food aid under Mission Security and Growth for All in the Region (Sagar). It is the eighth such deployment under Mission Sagar and is being conducted in close coordination with the ministry of external affairs, and other central government agencies.
- India also remains committed in supporting the capacity building efforts of the Armed Forces of Mozambique. To this end Kesari is carrying two Fast Interceptor Craft and self-defence equipment to be handed over to the Armed Forces of Mozambique.
- INS Kesari undertook similar missions between May and June 2020 to provide humanitarian and medical assistance to Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros. The aid also included the deployment of medical assistance teams of the Indian Navy in multiple locations during the initial days of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19).

1.70 International day of epidemic preparedness was recently observed

Why in news?

- International day of epidemic preparedness was recently observed on 27th December

About International day of epidemic preparedness

- The day was first observed last December in 2020 when the United Nations General Assembly had emphasised on the need to advocate the importance of the preparedness for, prevention of and partnership against epidemics.
- According to the United Nations, it is necessary to learn lessons on epidemic management and apply those to strengthen epidemic prevention in order to have the most adequate response for any future adversity. It also underscores the significance of solidarity and partnership among every international organisation, and even every community and individual to combat a pestilence like Covid-19.
- Marking the day, the United Nations General Assembly had invited all its member states to use awareness raising campaigns and education to exchange information, scientific knowledge along with best practices to help stepping up the preparedness for epidemics.

1.71 Belgium agreed to close controversial ageing nuclear reactors**Why in news?**

- The Belgian government has reached a deal to close seven ageing nuclear reactors by 2025.

About Belgium closing the ageing nuclear reactors

- The reactors, housed at two plants in **Doel and Tihange**, have long been controversial. They have been shutdown repeatedly for safety checks and have sparked fear in neighbouring countries.
- A compromise was reached after years of debate and overnight talks by government ministers.
- The plan in principle was confirmed at a press conference recently.
- Closures will begin in 2022 with the aim of both plants being safely decommissioned and demolished by 2045, Reuters news agency reports.
- Some reactors at the plants, operated by utility company Engie, have been operational since the 1970s and have long been a source of regional concern.

PRACTISE MCQS

1. Which of the following countries form part of the G20 'Troika' as of 2021?

1. India
2. Italy
3. Singapore
4. Indonesia

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- A. 1, 2 and 3 only
- B. 2, 3 and 4 only
- C. 1, 3 and 4 only
- D. 1, 2 and 4 only

2. With reference to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), consider the following statements:

1. The stated goal of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all.
2. The organization is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

3. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has recently approved a \$500-million loan to India for which of the following purposes?

- A. To help the development of road infrastructure in North-East India.
- B. To help India improve the quality and quantity of underground available water.

- C. To help India improve the quality of school education and to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 on students' learning.
- D. None of the above.

4. The International Civil Aviation Day is observed on which of the following dates every year?

- A. December 7
- B. January 15
- C. October 30
- D. February 15

5. With respect to PANEX-21, recently seen in news, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise is being held in the backdrop of the emergence of the Omicron variant.
2. It is to be held among the BIMSTEC countries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

6. With reference to International Solar Alliance (ISA), consider the following statements:

1. It aims to scale up solar energy applications, take coordinated action through programmes and activities launched on a voluntary basis and facilitate collaborative research and development activities in solar energy technologies.
2. It is a coalition of solar resource-rich countries that lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
3. It is headquartered in Paris, France.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

7. With reference to International Mountain Day, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is observed every year on 1st January.
- 2. The International Mountain Day 2021 theme is 'Sustainable Mountain Tourism'.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

8. With reference to the recently held 'Summit for Democracy', consider the following statements:

- 1. It a virtual summit hosted by the United States "to renew democracy at home and confront autocracies abroad".
- 2. The three themes of the summit are defending against authoritarianism, addressing and fighting corruption, and advancing respect for human rights.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

9. Which of the following countries form part of the G7 group of nations?

- 1. UK
- 2. USA
- 3. India
- 4. Canada
- 5. Japan

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- A. 1, 2, 3, and 4 only
- B. 1, 2, 4 and 5 only
- C. 1, 4 and 5 only
- D. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

10. The government of which of the following countries has gone 100% paperless?

- A. Australia
- B. Bhutan
- C. Dubai
- D. Sweden

11. With reference to International Maritime Organisation, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a specialised agency of the United Nations responsible for regulating shipping.
- 2. It is headquartered in Paris, France.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

12. Which of the following country has recently announced to change its existing five-day workweek to a four-and-a-half day starting January 1, 2022?

- A. Australia
- B. India
- C. Nepal
- D. United Arab Emirates

13. Karaj centrifuge component manufacturing workshop is located in which of the following countries?

- A. Iran
- B. South Korea
- C. Bhutan
- D. Oman

14. With reference to International Migrant Day 2021, consider the following statements:

- 1. It was observed on December 11.

2. The theme for the year 2021 is 'Harnessing the potential of human mobility'.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

15. On which of the following dates is International Human Solidarity Day observed?

- A. 20th December
- B. 25th December
- C. 5th January
- D. 10th January

16. With reference to the World Economic Forum, consider the following statements:

- 1. It works under the administrative control of the United Nations.
- 2. Its headquarters is located in Geneva, Switzerland.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

17. Which of the following has become the first EU country to legalise cannabis for personal use?

- A. Malta
- B. Switzerland
- C. Italy
- D. Estonia

18. Consider the following statements, about deployment undertaken by INS Kesari:

- 1. INS Kesari recently delivered 500 tonnes of food aid to Mozambique.
- 2. Deployment has taken place under Mission Sagar and is being conducted in close

coordination with the ministry of external affairs, and other central government agencies.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

19. International day of epidemic preparedness was recently observed on which of the following dates?

- A. 22nd December
- B. 24th December
- C. 27th December
- D. 28th December

20. Which of the following countries has recently agreed to close controversial ageing nuclear reactors by 2025?

- A. Belgium
- B. Canada
- C. Australia
- D. Sri Lanka

Answers

1. ANSWER: D
2. ANSWER: A
3. ANSWER: C
4. ANSWER: A
5. ANSWER: C
6. ANSWER: A
7. ANSWER: B
8. ANSWER: C
9. ANSWER: B
10. ANSWER: C
11. ANSWER: A
12. ANSWER: D
13. ANSWER: A
14. ANSWER: B
15. ANSWER: A
16. ANSWER: B
17. ANSWER: A
18. ANSWER: C
19. ANSWER: C
20. ANSWER: A



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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1.72 Dept. of Telecommunications operating under the Ministry of Communications and International Telecommunication Union commences India-ITU Joint Cyber-drill 2021

Why in news?

- Recently, the Department of Telecommunications operating under the Ministry of Communications and International Telecommunication Union ITU commenced the India-ITU Joint Cyber-drill 2021. This Cyber-drill is intended for Indian entities especially Critical Network Infrastructure operators.

About India-ITU Joint Cyber-drill 2021

- The cyber drill was conducted for the **Critical Network Infrastructure operators of India**.
- The Critical Network Infrastructure are the **systems, assets and networks** that are essential to ensure the security of a country.

Aim of the drill

- It aims to improve the **cyber security readiness** of India. Also, it aims to improve the **protection and incident response capability of the country**.
- During the cyber drill, the cyber-attacks and information security incidents were simulated. And the participants were trained to defend and respond against such incidents. Thus, the drill helped to test the cyber capabilities of an organization.

1.73 NASA's TESS reveals 'lightest' Exoplanet named GJ 367b.

Why in news?

- NASA's TESS reveals 'lightest' Exoplanet ever with a year lasting around 8 hours
- Astronomers have discovered an exoplanet named GJ 367b that orbits its star in just 7.7 hours and has just half the mass of Earth.

About GJ 367b

- Adding to the list of strangest exoplanets ever found, astronomers have discovered a new one which is the lightest and possibly the hottest one ever.
- Dubbed GJ 367b, the exoplanet is located 31 light-years away from our sun and orbits a small red dwarf star in just 7.7 hours, which means that one year on this planet is shorter than a full day here on Earth.
- Besides, the rocky planet also has several mind-bending features as it is just 70% the size of Earth and is nearly half as massive which makes it the lightest planet ever discovered.

1.74 NASA has launched its new Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (LCRD).

Why in news?

- NASA's new Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (LCRD) has recently been launched. It is the agency's first-ever laser communications system. The LCRD will help the agency test optical communication in space.

About Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (LCRD)

- LCRD is a technology demonstration that will pave the way for future optical communications missions.

- The LCRD payload is hosted onboard the US Department of Defense's Space Test Program Satellite 6 (STPSat-6).
- It will be in a geosynchronous orbit, over 35,000km above Earth.
- Optical communications systems are smaller in size, weight, and require less power compared with radio instruments.
- A smaller size means more room for science instruments. Less weight means a less expensive launch. Less power means less drain on the spacecraft's batteries.
- With optical communications supplementing radio, missions will have unparalleled communications capabilities.

1.75 Microsoft launches cybersecurity skilling programme in India

Why in news?

- Microsoft will conduct cybersecurity skilling programme along with its strategic consortium of partners including Cloudthat, Koenig, RPS, and Synergetics Learning.

About cybersecurity skilling programme

- To address the skills gap and empower India's workforce for a career in cybersecurity, Microsoft recently launched a cybersecurity skilling program that aims to **skill over 1 lakh learners by 2022**.
- The program is designed to give learners hands-on experience in the fundamentals of security, compliance, and identity.
- Microsoft will conduct these courses along with its strategic consortium of partners including Cloudthat, Koenig, RPS, and Synergetics Learning.
- The course modules are designed to support all levels of learners, regardless of where they are in their cybersecurity journey.
- Microsoft has introduced four new security, compliance, and identity certifications, of which the accredited certification for Fundamentals will be offered at zero cost for any individual who attends the associated training through this initiative.
- Additionally, in collaboration with its partners, Microsoft, offers learners discounted offers on the rest of the advanced role-based certifications to drive deep skills for addressing cybersecurity challenges.

1.76 Airtel and Invest India join hands to launch 'Startup Innovation Challenge'

Why in news?

- Bharti Airtel recently launched 'Airtel India Startup Innovation Challenge' in partnership with Invest India that will let early-stage technology companies demonstrate differentiated solutions.

About 'Startup Innovation Challenge'

- As part of the 'Startup Innovation Challenge' early-stage technology companies are invited to demonstrate differentiated solutions in the following areas –
- **5G** – Innovative B2C or B2B use cases and applications that can leverage high speed and low latency 5G technology.
- **IoT** - Creating innovative IoT solutions that can power the digital transformation journey of enterprises.
- **Cloud Communication** – Leveraging AI and ML technologies to create B2C or B2B products that can improve customer engagement and experience.
- **Digital Advertising** – Creating innovative and unique ad formats – both digital and otherwise that would make ads or brand promotions an enriching experience for the end customer.

- **Digital Entertainment** – Creating a platform or offering disruptive solutions in music, video or gaming that can support the growth of India's content creator economy.
- Applications will close on 24th January 2022 and the results will be announced on 14th February 2022.
- The top 10 winners will win cash prizes, get access to Airtel's Innovation Lab and will be able to leverage Airtel's advanced technology infrastructure to scale up their use cases and even co-innovate with Airtel's engineering teams. A select few of the 10 startups shall be offered to be on-boarded onto the Airtel Startup Accelerator Program and hyper-scale their company with Airtel.
- Under this Program, startups gain access to Airtel's core platform strengths of data, distribution, network and payments. Further, startups get access to Airtel's global partner ecosystem and advisory from Airtel's executive team.

1.77 IIT-Kanpur develops portable device for soil testing

Why in news?

- The Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, has developed a portable testing device that can detect the soil health in just 90 seconds through a mobile application using merely five grams of the soil as sample.

About portable device for soil testing developed by IIT Kanpur

- The portable and wireless soil testing device requires five grams of dry soil as a sample for detecting macronutrients present in it.
- This first-of-its-kind invention is based on near Infrared spectroscopy technology that provides real-time soil analysis report on smartphones with an embedded **mobile application, named Bhu Parikshak**, available on Google Play Store.
- The technology has been transferred to an agri-tech company, AgroNxt Services Private Limited.
- Once the soil is poured into a 5 cm-long cylindrical shaped device, it connects itself with the mobile through Bluetooth and starts analysing the soil for 90 seconds.
- After the analysis, the results appear on the screen in the form of a soil health report, which is accessible on Bhu Parikshak cloud service with a unique ID. The report also comes with a recommended dose of fertilisers.
- The device can detect six important **soil parameters, including nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and organic carbon**.
- It also recommends the required dose of fertilisers for the field and crops. The rapid soil testing device will assist individual farmers for obtaining soil health parameters of agricultural fields with recommended doses of fertilisers.
- The device can test up to one lakh soil test samples, which is the highest testing capability of a device among its predecessors.
- The mobile application is made user-friendly through the user interface, which is available in local languages, so that even a Class 8 passout can easily handle the device and the mobile application.

1.78 Bank of Baroda launches bob World Wave, a wearable payment solution.

Why in news?

- **Bank of Baroda** and **bob World** has joined hands with **National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI)** to launch **bob World Wave**, a wearable line of products for payments, integrated with a complete health ecosystem.

About bob World Wave

- Its core features include:
- The bob World Wave wearable device will allow customers to monitor their **SpO2, body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure**.
- With bob World Wave, the Bank is providing an exclusive **3-months free wellness package** along with a personal health coach, doctor tele-consultation and interactive video coaching.
- The device will provide **contactless payments of up to Rs.5000** in all NFC enabled PoS devices. Customers can do contactless payment above Rs. 5000 using a PIN.
- The Bank will also provide a **dummy plastic card** (with the same card number printed as that of the wearable device along with expiry date and CVV) to enable customers to do e-commerce transactions at ease.

1.79 LIC launched Dhan Rekha plan

Why in news?

- The **Life Insurance Corporation of India** has recently launched a new non-linked, non-participating, individual savings life insurance plan called **Dhan Rekha**, it offers special premium rates for female lives.

About Dhan Rekha plan

- The minimum sum assured under this plan is ₹2 lakh
- The plan is also allowed for the third gender.
- The minimum sum assured under this plan is ₹2 lakh and there is no limit for maximum sum assured.
- The minimum age at entry ranges from 90 days to eight years and the maximum age at entry ranges from 35 years to 55 years depending upon the chosen policy term.
- This plan also takes care of liquidity needs through loan facility. Optional riders are available under this plan on payment of additional premium subject to conditions.

1.80 China launches “Shijian-6 05” satellites for Space Exploration

Why in news?

- China successfully launched a new group of satellites Shijian-6 05 into space from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China for space exploration and new technology tests.

About Shijian-6 05” satellites

- The satellites, Shijian-6 05, were launched by a Long March-4B rocket and have entered their planned orbit.
- China stated the satellites will be used for ‘space exploration and new technology tests.’
- The launch marked the 400th mission of Long March series carrier rocket.
- The information about the number of satellites has not been specified. As the message reads, they will be used for space exploration and new technology tests.

1.81 India and the US announce new programme supporting innovations to tackle climate & clean energy challenges

Why in news?

- Recently, a programme to support India-US S&T-based entrepreneurial initiatives that address the development and implementation of next-generation clean and renewable energy, energy storage, and carbon sequestration was announced to tackle climate and clean energy challenges.

About the India and the US programme

- The programme titled '**Technology-based Energy Solutions: Innovations for Net Zero**' constitutes a call for Ignition Grants by the United States-India Science & Technology Endowment Fund (USISTEF), in partnership with Social Alpha, a non-profit organisation promoting S&T entrepreneurship.
- It will identify and support technology showstoppers or promising joint India-US S&T-based entrepreneurial initiatives in this area.
- Climate Change is one of the biggest challenges facing our world today, spurring the call for global collaborations to tackle this crisis. The launch of the U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 partnership in April 2021 reiterated the commitment of both nations to work together to achieve their ambitious climate and clean energy targets and to strengthen bilateral collaborations. The new program aligns with the goals of the U.S.-India strategic Clean Energy Partnership and will be administered by the bi-national Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF). The IUSSTF is a bilateral organization under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, and U.S. Department of State.

1.82 LogiXtics a Unified Logistics Interface Platform hackathon launched to crowdsource ideas to benefit logistics industry**Why in news?**

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has launched the Unified Logistics Interface Platform's (ULIP) hackathon – 'LogiXtics' to crowdsource more ideas which will benefit the logistics industry.

About Unified Logistics Interface Platform's (ULIP) hackathon – 'LogiXtics'

- ULIP is designed to enhance efficiency and reduce logistics cost in India by creating a transparent platform that can provide real time information to all stakeholders and remove all asymmetry information.
- The ULIP Hackathon – LogiXtics was organised by NITI Aayog and Atal Innovation Mission and supported by National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC) and NICDC Logistics Data Bank Services Limited (NLDSL).

Significance

- The cost of logistics in the India is about 14% which is higher than other countries in the world.
- ULIP's objective has been to work with top Indian technology organizations from the private sector and identify solutions to reduce logistics cost.

1.83 NASA releases eerie sounds captured near Jupiter's moon Ganymede**Why in news?**

- NASA has released noises captured by its spacecraft near Jupiter's moon Ganymede. The sounds released by NASA are spooky and frightening to hear at first.

About Ganymede

- Ganymede is the largest moon in our solar system. It is so large that it size dwarfs Mercury, a full-fledged planet. Ganymede also has its own magnetic field, something that other moons in solar system can't boast of.
- NASA's Juno spacecraft is in Jupiter's neighbourhood and making its observations. Earlier this year, Juno captured Ganymede's electromagnetic waves.

- NASA has converted these waves into sound and has released what can be perhaps scientifically considered as sound of Ganymede.

1.84 Niti Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission Unveils Vernacular Innovation Program

Why in news?

- With an ambition to empower innovators and entrepreneurs across the country, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog has come up with a first of its kind Vernacular Innovation Program (VIP), which will enable innovators and entrepreneurs in India to have access to the innovation ecosystem in 22 scheduled languages by the Government of India.

About Vernacular Innovation Program (VIP)

- To build the necessary capacity for the VIP, AIM has identified and will be training a Vernacular Task Force (VTF) in each of the 22 scheduled languages. Each task force comprises of vernacular language teachers, subject experts, technical writers, and the leadership of regional Atal Incubation Centers (AICs).
- To get the program rolling, AIM NITI Aayog is launching a train-the-trainer program where it will collaborate with the Design Department of IIT Delhi to coach the VTF in design thinking and entrepreneurship and the adaptation of these subjects in the 22 languages and cultures. Furthermore, industry mentors have joined hands to lend design thinking expertise, and CSR sponsors have agreed to generously support the program. Upon training the task force over the period of December 2021 to April 2022, the ecosystem will be opened to vernacular innovators.
- Vernacular Innovation Program strengthens the design and innovation capabilities of our communities, thereby assisting local entrepreneurs, artisans and innovators to seamlessly assimilate the knowledge cum technical materials that AIM will develop. This would assist India in building a strong local network of design experts and innovation practitioners.
- VIP is an initiative to lower the language barrier in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship such that will systematically decouple creative expressions and languages of transaction said Dr. Chintan Vaishnav Mission Director AIM, NITI Aayog at the launch event of the program.

1.85 Chalo mobile app and smart card launched for convenient bus travel in Mumbai

Why in news?

- Chalo mobile app and smart card launched for convenient bus travel in Mumbai

About Chalo mobile app

- The mobile application will provide live bus tracking, and information on how crowded the vehicle is, along with the arrival time of the bus.
- Bus travelling will get convenient in Mumbai. From ticket purchasing through e-wallet to live bus tracking, passengers can now enjoy smooth and convenient bus travel with Chalo smart cards and Chalo mobile application. Recently, Tourism and Environment Minister of Maharashtra, Aaditya Thackeray launched Chalo mobile application as well as Chalo smart cards. This mobile app and smart card will facilitate digital, and advance purchase of BEST bus tickets. Chalo mobile app will allow passengers to buy bus tickets and passes through e-wallet. Besides, the mobile application will provide live bus tracking, and also information on how crowded the vehicle is, along with the arrival time of the bus.

- Moreover, bus commuters can book tickets online and also, they will have access to bus passes for purchase and renewal through the Chalo mobile app and the Smart Card.

1.86 Japanese professor creates 'tele-taste' TV screen

Why in news?

- A Japanese professor has developed a prototype lickable TV screen that can imitate food flavours, another step towards creating a multi-sensory viewing experience.

About 'tele-taste' TV screen

- The device, called Taste the TV (TTTV), uses a carousel of 10 flavour canisters that spray in combination to create the taste of a particular food. The flavour sample then rolls on hygienic film over a flat TV screen for the viewer to try.
- In the COVID-19 era, this kind of technology can enhance the way people connect and interact with the outside world, said Meiji University professor Homei Miyashita.
- Its goal is to make it possible for people to have the experience of something like eating at a restaurant on the other side of the world, even while staying at home.

1.87 2 vaccines and 1 pill have been granted Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) against Covid variants

Why in news?

- A game-changing pill and two new vaccines will bolster India's fight against Covid variants.
- India has granted Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) to Serum Institute of India's **Covovax**, Biological E's **Corbevax** and antiviral Covid-19 pill **molnupiravir** in a significant move.

About the vaccine and pills

- The new vaccines could possibly be used as booster shots in the days to come. With this nod, the number of Covid vaccines which have received emergency use authorisation is now eight.
- Six COVID-19 vaccines -- Serum Institute's Covishield, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, Zydus Cadila's ZyCoV-D, Russia's Sputnik V and the US-made Moderna and Johnson and Johnson -- had already received EUA from the Indian drug regulator earlier.

1.88 Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog released 'Innovations For You' & 'The Ingenious Tinkerers'

Why in news?

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) NITI Aayog recently released the second edition of – 'Innovations for You' - a compendium of innovations focused on agriculture featuring 70 startups supported by Atal incubation Centers (AICs) of AIM and 'The Ingenious Tinkerers' – a compendium on the innovations on technology featuring 41 innovations from Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) of India.

About 'Innovations For You' & 'The Ingenious Tinkerers'

- As the nation rejoices the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav – 75th Year of Independence, both the books are celebration of the success stories of young innovators of India. The 'Innovations For You' is a compilation of successful innovations by the entrepreneurial minds of India solving problems of present for future, while as 'The Ingenious Tinkerers' is a compilation of the top innovations created by young student innovators who participated in the ATL Marathon - which invites school students to address a problem that they see or face on a day-to-day basis.

- 'The Ingenious Tinkerers' leveraged the up-and-coming technologies available at ATLs to devise a solution. These young tinkerers took it upon themselves to identify their problem statements by interacting with the members of their community and designing a prototype in a manner that fits their needs and demands.
- Meanwhile, the 'Innovations For You' in its second edition, focuses on the startups and innovations in field of Agriculture and Allied services. The book is a compilation of 70 Ag-Tech startups, incubated at Atal Incubation Centres spread across the country. These startups are leveraging frontier technologies such as AI, IoT, ICT and others to provide socially relevant solutions to problems of modern farming. The first edition of this book was focused on innovations in Health Care, which was launched in October, this year.

1.89 Japan introduces world's first dual-mode vehicle (DMV)

Why in news?

- Japan introduces world's first dual-mode vehicle that can run on roads and tracks.

About world's first dual mode vehicle

- The world's first dual-mode vehicle has hit the ground recently in the town of Kaiyo, Japan. It is said that the vehicle can run on roads as well as rail tracks.
- The DMV looks like a minibus and runs on normal rubber tyres on the road. What makes this vehicle different from the rest is, it also has steel wheels in its underbelly which descend when it hits the rail tracks.
- The front tyres are lifted off the track and the rear wheels stay down to propel the DMV onto the railway. This feature of effectively changing into a train-like module easily on a rail track is the first of its kind.
- According to reports, the DMV can carry upto 21 passengers and runs at a speed of 60km/h on rail tracks and can go as fast as around 100km/h on public roads.
- Powered by diesel, the small fleet of vehicles comes in different colours. It runs along part of the coast of Shikoku Island in southern Japan, connecting several small towns and offering passengers attractive seaside scenery.

1.90 China launches new camera satellite with high resolution to find resources

Why in news?

- China recently launched a new satellite with a camera that can take pictures of the ground with a resolution of five meters.

About "Ziyuan-1 02E"

- The satellite, called "Ziyuan-1 02E" or "five-meter optical satellite 02," was launched by a Long March-4C rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in north China's Shanxi province.
- Ziyuan-1 02E weighs about 2.5 kilograms and is equipped with infrared, near-infrared and hyperspectral cameras.
- The cameras can take full-colour panchromatic images of the Earth, state-run CGTN-TV reported.

PRACTICE MCQS

1. With reference to the India-ITU Joint Cyber-drill 2021, consider the following statements:

1. It was conducted for the Critical Network Infrastructure operators of India.
2. It aims to improve the protection and incident response capability of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

2. What is GJ 367b, which was recently seen in news?

- A. An exoplanet discovered by NASA.
- B. A new vaccine for Covid-19 by Australia.
- C. A new species of frog discovered from western ghats.
- D. A missile recently launched by Japan.

3. With reference to NASA's Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (LCRD), consider the following statements:

1. LCRD is a technology demonstration that will pave the way for future optical communications missions.
2. The LCRD payload is hosted onboard the US Department of Defense's Space Test Program Satellite 6 (STPSat-6).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

4. With reference to cybersecurity skilling programme launched by Microsoft in India, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to skill over 500 learners by 2022.
2. The program is designed to give learners hands-on experience in the fundamentals of security, compliance, and identity.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

5. With reference to the recently launched 'Startup Innovation Challenge', consider the following statements:

1. It has been launched jointly by Bharti Airtel and NITI Aayog.
2. Under this Program, startups gain access to Airtel's core platform strengths of data, distribution, network and payments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

6. Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, has recently developed a portable testing device that can detect the soil health. With respect to this device, consider the following statements:

1. The portable and wireless soil testing device requires five grams of dry soil as a sample for detecting macronutrients present in it.
2. This first-of-its-kind invention is based on near Infrared spectroscopy technology that provides real-time soil analysis report on smartphones with an embedded mobile application, named Bhu Parikshak, available on Google Play Store.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

7. With reference to the recently launched 'bob World Wave', a wearable payment solution, consider the following statements:

- 1. NITI Aayog and bob World has joined hands with National Payments Corporations of India (NPCI) to launch bob World Wave.
- 2. The bob World Wave wearable device will allow customers to monitor their SpO₂, body temperature, heart rate and blood pressure.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

8. With reference to recently launched 'Dhan Rekha plan', consider the following statements:

- 1. It has been launched by Reserve Bank of India.
- 2. It a new non-linked, non-participating, individual savings life insurance plan and it offers special premium rates for female lives.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

9. Which of the following countries has launched "Shijian-6 05" satellites for Space Exploration?

- A. India
- B. Pakistan
- C. United Arab Emirates

D. China

10. 'Technology-based Energy Solutions: Innovations for Net Zero' Programme has been launched by which of the following countries?

- 1. India
- 2. USA
- 3. Australia
- 4. Egypt

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 3 and 4 only
- D. 1 and 4 only

11. With respect to recently launched LogiXtics, a Unified Logistics Interface Platform hackathon, consider the following statements:

- 1. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has launched the Unified Logistics Interface Platform's (ULIP) hackathon – 'LogiXtics' to crowdsource more ideas which will benefit the logistics industry.
- 2. ULIP is designed to enhance efficiency and reduce logistics cost in India by creating a transparent platform that can provide real time information to all stakeholders and remove all asymmetry information.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

12. To which of the following planets does the moon Ganymede belongs to?

- A. Saturn
- B. Mars
- C. Jupiter

D. Mercury

13. With respect to Vernacular Innovation Program, consider the following statements:

1. It has been launched by Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
2. It will enable innovators and entrepreneurs in India to have access to the innovation ecosystem in 22 scheduled languages by the Government of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

14. Chalo mobile app and smart card for convenient bus travel have been launched in which of the following cities of India?

- A. Lucknow
- B. Ahmedabad
- C. Ajmer
- D. Mumbai

15. Consider the following statements about the device, called Taste the TV (TTTV):

1. It has been developed by a professor from China.
2. The device uses a carousel of 10 flavour canisters that spray in combination to create the taste of a particular food.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

16. What is molnupiravir, which was recently seen in news?

- A. An antiviral Covid-19 pill
- B. A type of butterfly species

- C. A type of bacteria found in lake water
- D. A type of disease in mouse

17. Who among the following is associated with the release of 'Innovations For You' & 'The Ingenious Tinkerers'?

- A. Reserve Bank of India
- B. NITI Aayog
- C. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers welfare
- D. Ministry of Science and Technology

18. With reference to the world's first dual-mode vehicle (DMV), consider the following statements:

1. It has been launched by Malaysia
2. According to reports, the DMV can carry upto 21 passengers and runs at a speed of 60km/h on rail tracks and can go as fast as around 100km/h on public roads.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

19. With reference to "Ziyuan-1 02E", consider the following statements:

1. It weighs about 2.5 kilograms and is equipped with infrared, near-infrared and hyperspectral cameras.
2. It has been launched by Japan.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer

1. ANSWER: C
2. ANSWER: A
3. ANSWER: C
4. ANSWER: B
5. ANSWER: B
6. ANSWER: C
7. ANSWER: B
8. ANSWER: B
9. ANSWER: D
10. ANSWER: A
11. ANSWER: C
12. ANSWER: C
13. ANSWER: B
14. ANSWER: D
15. ANSWER: B
16. ANSWER: A
17. ANSWER: B
18. ANSWER: B
19. ANSWER: A



CivilsTap Hlmachal

PERSON IN NEWS

1.91 Sanjay Dutt has been roped in as brand ambassador of '50 Years of Arunachal Pradesh' Celebrations

Why in news?

- **Sanjay Dutt** has been roped in as brand ambassador of '50 Years Of Arunachal Pradesh' Celebrations.
- The celebrations would start from January 20 to February 20, 2022, commemorating the birth of Arunachal Pradesh as a state.

About '50 Years of Arunachal Pradesh' Celebrations

- The month-long state-wide celebration is scheduled to start from January 20, 2022 **at Ziro in Lower Subansiri district**.
- It will cover all the five river basins of the state after which the first districts were named - **Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit and Tirap**.
- The month-long event will culminate on February 20, 2022 during the 36th Statehood Day celebrations.
- As part of the media campaign, Sanjay Dutt will feature in a series of promotional videos on tourism in the state.
- Sanjay Dutt will also engage with local youths on a series of initiatives on substance and drug abuse, and issues that have emerged as a serious concern for the state in recent years.

1.92 India-born Parag Agrawal, has been named the chief executive officer of Twitter

Why in news?

- **Parag Agrawal**, the Chief Technology Officer of Twitter, is now **taking over from Jack Dorsey** as the Chief Executive Officer.

About Parag Agrawal

- Agrawal, an alumnus of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, was appointed Twitter CTO on March 8, 2018.
- Agrawal joined Twitter in October 2011 as a Distinguished Software Engineer after completing his PhD in Computer Science from Stanford University. While studying at Stanford, he worked as a research intern for Microsoft, Yahoo!, and AT&T Labs.
- The news of his appointment has led to much celebration in India where the micro-blogging platform has more than 30 million users.

1.93 Pradip Shah appointed National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL) Chairman

Why in news?

- Pradip Shah, founder of IndAsia Fund Advisors, has been appointed chairman of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL).

About the appointments

- **Pradip Shah**, founder of IndAsia Fund Advisors, has been appointed chairman of **National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL)** while Aditya Birla Asset Reconstruction Company managing director **Sanjay Jain** will be the chief executive of **India Debt Resolution Company (IDRCL)**, the privately owned asset management company (AMC) mandated to resolve bad loans acquired by NARCL
- **Diwakar Gupta**, former managing director of State Bank of India NSE -0.81 %, is selected as chairman of IDRCL.
- Before joining Aditya Birla ARC, Jain was with Asset Reconstruction Company of India, J M Financial and SBI Capital Markets. He has experience of 29 years in corporate lending, investment banking and stressed fund management.
- After superannuating from SBI, Gupta joined Aditya Birla Financial Services as a senior advisor and later joined Asian Development Bank as its vice president.

1.94 Gita Gopinath appointed as the Deputy Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF)**Why in news?**

- **Gita Gopinath**, the India-born, first female chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), is set to **take over from Geoffrey Okamoto** as the multilateral institution's number 2 official in early 2022. The elevation to the post of first deputy managing director (FDMD).
- Gita Gopinath, chief economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has been named as the fund's new first deputy managing director (FDMD) and will take over her new responsibility from January, 2022.

'Positive Impact On Ecos, Lives'

➤ This is the first time that two women are occupying the top two jobs at IMF

➤ Current first deputy managing director Geoffrey Okamoto will leave the fund early next year

“Over the past three years I have had opportunity to experience first-hand and be a part of hugely important work done by IMF at the intersection of rigorous economic analysis and public policy. It has been so gratifying to see the positive impact of our work on economies and lives of so many people worldwide

Gita Gopinath, CHIEF ECONOMIST AT IMF

**1.95 General Bipin Rawat, India's first CDS, was on a mission to modernise the military was died in a plane crash.****Why in news?**

- In the untimely death of General Bipin Rawat in a helicopter crash in Coonoor, Tamil Nadu, India has lost a fine soldier who rose to become the country's most senior general as its first Chief of Defence Staff.
- All but one of the 14 people on board were killed in the crash of the Mi-17V5 transporter, which was ferrying them from Sulur air base to the Staff College at Wellington.

About GENERAL BIPIN RAWAT

- Rawat, who was Army chief until December 2019, when he was elevated to the newly created office of CDS, was a vastly experienced officer, having served in both the Northern and Eastern commands.
- He was involved in counter-insurgency operations in both Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast, and his battalion was among those deployed along the Line of Actual Control in Arunachal Pradesh during the 1987 clash with the People's Liberation Army in Sumdorong Chu.
- Rawat started his career as an officer in the Gorkhas and rose to command 5/11 Gorkha Rifles, the battalion his father Lt Gen L S Rawat also commanded.

1.96 India's Harnaaz Sandhu is the new Miss Universe, 2021

Why in news?

- India's Harnaaz Sandhu is the new Miss Universe, 21 years after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000.

About Harnaaz Sandhu

- Ms Sandhu represented India at the 70th Miss Universe 2021, held in Eilat, Israel.
- The 21-year-old from Punjab claimed the crown edging out Paraguay's Nadia Ferreira and South Africa's Lalela Mswane.
- Ms Sandhu was presented the crown by Andrea Meza, former Miss Universe 2020 from Mexico.
- Before the Chandigarh-based model, only two Indians have won the title of Miss Universe - **actors Sushmita Sen in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000.**

1.97 Joe Biden adviser Catherine Russell appointed Executive Director of UNICEF

Why in news?

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Catherine Russell, an adviser to US President Joe Biden, as Executive Director of UNICEF.

About Catherine Russell being appointed as the Executive Director of UNICEF

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed **Catherine Russell**, an adviser to US President Joe Biden, as **Executive Director of UNICEF**.
- She replaces Henrietta Fore, to whom Guterres expressed his gratitude for her commitment and dedicated service to the UN agency.
- Russell brings to the role decades of experience in developing innovative policy that empowers underserved communities around the world.
- Russell currently serves as Director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel. From 2013 to 2017, she served as ambassador-at-large for global women's issues in the Department of State.
- **UNICEF**, also known as the United Nations Children's Fund, is a United Nations agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide.
- UNICEF activities include providing immunizations and disease prevention, administering treatment for children and mothers with HIV, enhancing childhood and maternal nutrition, improving sanitation, promoting education, and providing emergency relief in response to disasters.

- The UN's International Children's Emergency Fund was established in the aftermath of World War II. Their mandate was clear, which was to help people whose lives and futures were at risk, no matter what role they played during the war.

1.98 Rishabh Pant appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador

Why in news?

- Rishabh Pant has been appointed the brand ambassador of Uttarakhand with an **aim to promote sports and create mental health awareness among the state's youth.**

About the news

- Pant, 24, was born in the state's Roorkee town in Haridwar district.
- Pushkar Singh Dhami took to Twitter to confirm the news. He labelled Pant as one of the best cricketers of the Indian side and added that Pant is the idol of the youth of the country. Dhami also added that Pant has been appointed as the State Brand Ambassador to encourage the youth to focus on sports.

1.99 Gabriel Boric Font is the youngest President of Chile

Why in news?

- Gabriel Boric Font is the president-elect of Chile, having won the 2021 presidential election run-off vote on 19 December 2021.

About Gabriel Boric

- Gabriel Boric, a former student activist, is elected Chile's youngest president
- At 35, Boric will be the nation's youngest leader and by far its most liberal since President Salvador Allende, who died by suicide during the 1973 military coup that ushered in a brutal 17-year dictatorship.
- He will assume office at the final stage of a yearslong initiative to draft a new constitution, an effort that is likely to bring about profound legal and political changes on issues including gender equality, Indigenous rights and environmental protections.

PRACTICE MCQS

1. Who among the following has been roped in as brand ambassador of '50 Years of Arunachal Pradesh' Celebrations?

- A. Shah Rukh Khan
- B. Sanjay Dutt
- C. Ranbir Kapoor
- D. Salman Khan

2. Who among the following has recently been named the Chief Executive Officer of Twitter?

- A. Shantanu Narayen
- B. Satya Nadella
- C. Parag Agrawal
- D. Sundar Pichai

3. Who among the following has been appointed as the chairman of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL)?

- A. Pradip Shah
- B. Sanjay Jain
- C. Diwakar Gupta
- D. Azim Premji

4. Who among the following has been appointed as the Deputy Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF)?

- A. Vivek Johri
- B. Geoffrey Okamoto
- C. Gita Gopinath
- D. Antonio Guterres

5. General Bipin Rawat, India's first CDS, was died in a plane crash in

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Kerala
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Karnataka

6. Who among the following has won the Miss Universe title 2021?

- A. Harnaaz Sandhu
- B. Andrea Meza
- C. Nadia Ferreira
- D. Lalela Mswane

7. Who among the following has been appointed as the Executive Director of UNICEF?

- A. Kofi Annan
- B. Filippo Grandi
- C. Yuri Fedotov
- D. Catherine Russell

8. Who among the following has been appointed as Uttarakhand's brand ambassador?

- A. Virat Kohli
- B. Rohit Sharma
- C. Kapil Dev
- D. Rishabh Pant

9. Gabriel Boric Font has recently become the youngest President of which of the following countries?

- A. Egypt
- B. Italy
- C. Chile
- D. Sri Lanka

Answers

1. ANSWER: B

2. ANSWER: C

3. ANSWER: A

4. ANSWER: C

5. ANSWER: A

6. ANSWER: A

7. ANSWER: D

8. ANSWER: D

9. ANSWER: C

ENVIRONMENT

1.100 Odisha bears brunt of cyclone Jawad rain

Why in news?

- A deep depression in the Bay of Bengal has intensified into **cyclonic storm Jawad** and has made landfall near **Odisha coast**.
- Under its influence, some parts of eastern and north eastern region of India are likely to receive rains for further more days.

About cyclone Jawad

How Cyclone Jawad got its name?

- As per updates, **Saudi Arabia** has given the cyclone its name 'Jawad'. The meaning of 'Jawad' is liberal or merciful. The carries significance as this cyclonic storm will not be as severe as the previous ones.

How are storms named?

- It is interesting to know that the naming of cyclones was started with a treaty in 1953 in the Atlantic region.
- In the Indian Ocean region, the name of cyclone system started from 2004. To name the cyclones, the member countries give a list of names on their behalf. After this, the alphabetical listing is done. In the way, storm cyclones are named after the suggested name.

1.101 Leonard Comet to Fly Past Earth on December 12 and is likely to be very bright

Why in news?

- The comet, also known as **C/2021 A1**, will appear brighter as it nears Earth's horizon during its flyby during December, 2021.

About Comet C/2021 A1

- The comet, named Leonard after the astronomer Gregory Leonard, who discovered it earlier this year, is likely to be bright when it makes its closest approach to Earth on December 12.
- In fact, the comet is still visible in the sky in the east, before sunrise. Stargazers can spot it between the Big Dipper's handle and Arcturus, one of the brightest stars seen from Earth.
- NASA says the comet, also known as C/2021 A1, will appear brighter as it nears Earth's horizon during its flyby. This will make it difficult for stargazers to view it. However, after the close encounter on December 12, the comet will be visible in the evening sky, especially right after sunset, around December 14, says the space agency.

1.102 Tamil Nadu declared Kaliveli wetlands as bird sanctuary

Why in news?

- Tamil Nadu has declared 5,151 hectares of Kaliveli wetlands in Villupuram as bird sanctuary.

About Kaliveli wetlands

- Kaliveli wetland system is one of the largest waterfowl congregation sites in Tamil Nadu, and a well-known raptor roosting site for some bird species.
- Tamil Nadu government on Monday has declared 5,151.60 hectares of swamp/wetlands in Villupuram district as Kazhuveli Wetland Birds Sanctuary effectively putting brakes on some of the controversial infra projects proposed in the ecologically sensitive region.
- The declaration was made in exercise of the power conferred in **subsection (1) of section 18 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.**
- Kazhuveli or Kaliveli wetland system is one of the largest waterfowl congregation sites in Tamil Nadu, and a well-known raptor roosting site for species like the Eastern Imperial Eagle, Greater Spotted Eagle, Red-necked Falcon and several harriers. The Grey-tailed Tattler, a rare migratory wader, has been recorded only here and in Pulicat across the country.
- Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary will be the 16th Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu and will help to preserve the biological diversity of the region and conserve the future of threatened bird species in their natural environments.

1.103 New Species of Bird Flatbill Flycatchers has been discovered

Why in news?

- Recently, a New Species of Bird named Flatbill flycatchers have been discovered in **South America.**

About Flatbill flycatchers

- Flatbill flycatcher is members of rubric Rhynchocyclus in simply New World family Tyrannidae.
- Four given species in this rubric are distributed across southern Mexico to north-eastern Bolivia, Brazil and eastern Venezuela.
- Olivaceous flatbill (*Rhynchocyclus olivaceus*),
- Eye- ringed flatbill (*Rhynchocyclus brevirostris*),
- Pacific flatbill (*Rhynchocyclus pacificus*) and
- Fulvous-breasted flatbill (*Rhynchocyclus fulvipes*).
- The recently discovered species has been named as cryptic flatbill (*Rhynchocyclus cryptus*) after its remarkable morphological cryptic nature.
- It largely contrasts with its high situations of oral and inheritable isolation.
- The species prefers seasonally swamped lowland timbers (varzea), including degraded patches near to mortal agreements.
- Other region of its preference are Amazon River, banks of Madeira River in Amazonas & Acre in Brazil, west of Marañon River in Peru, and south to north or central Bolivia in the Mamore.

1.104 Haiderpur Wetland added to Ramsar site

Why in news?

- Uttar Pradesh's Haiderpur wetland has been added to the list of Indian wetlands of international importance.

About Haiderpur Wetland

- The human-made Haiderpur wetland spreads over an area of 6,908 hectares in Bijpur, Uttar Pradesh. Formed in 1984 on a floodplain of the River Ganga on the Madhya Ganga Barrage, the wetland is located within the boundaries of **Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary.**
- In terms of supporting life, the wetland is a habitat for numerous animals and plant species. It homes more than 30 species of plants, over 300 species of birds including 102 waterbirds, more than 40 fish, and more than ten mammal species. Further, it is home to more than 15 globally threatened species

such as the critically endangered gharial, endangered hog deer, black-bellied tern, steppe eagle, Indian skimmer, and gold mahseer.

- According to the Ramsar Convention, wetlands are land areas saturated with water, either permanently or seasonally. Inland wetlands include marshes, ponds, lakes, rivers, floodplains, and swamps. The coastal wetlands include saltwater marshes, estuaries, mangroves, lagoons, and coral reefs. And, human-made wetlands include fishponds, rice paddies, and saltpans. For instance, Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary, the largest wetland in Haryana is a human-made freshwater wetland.

1.105 Royal Bengal Tiger spotted in Buxa after 23 years

Why in news?

- West Bengal Forest Minister Jyotipriya Mallick recently broke the good news of Royal Bengal Tiger sighting at the Buxa Tiger Reserve in Alipurduar after 23 years.

About Buxa Tiger Reserve

- Buxa Tiger Reserve is a tiger reserve in northern **West Bengal**, India, covering an area of 760 km² (290 sq mi).
- In altitude, it ranges from 60 m (200 ft) in the Gangetic Plains to 1,750 m (5,740 ft) bordering the Himalayas in the north.
- At least 284 bird species inhabit the reserve.
- Mammals present include Asian elephant, gaur, Sambar deer, clouded leopard, Indian leopard

1.106 India, Iran and Uzbekistan recently talks on joint use Chabahar port

Why in news?

- For the first time, **India, Iran and Uzbekistan** held a trilateral dialogue on joint use of the strategically located **Chabahar port** which is being increasingly seen as a fulcrum of connectivity to Central Asia.

About Chabahar Port

- Chabahar Port is a seaport in Chabahar located in southeastern Iran, on the **Gulf of Oman**.
- It serves as Iran's only oceanic port, and consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti, each of which has five berths.
- It is only about 170 kilometres west of the Pakistani port of Gwadar.



1.107 Super Typhoon Rai recently hit Philippines

Why in news?

- Thousands of people in the Philippines fled their homes and beachfront resorts as Super Typhoon Rai pummelled the country.

About Super Typhoon Rai

- Rai is the strongest storm to hit the disaster-prone archipelago this year.
- It was packing maximum sustained winds of 195 km an hour as it made landfall on the southern island of Siargao.
- This storm is frightening and threatens to hit coastal communities like a freight train.

1.108 IndusInd Bank announces launch of 'green fixed deposits'

Why in news?

- IndusInd Bank has announced the launch of 'green fixed deposits', whereby the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

About 'green fixed deposits'

- Investing in green deposits allows customers to build a cleaner and better society
- These deposits will be offered to both retail and corporate customers.
- The Bank will use the proceeds from these deposits to finance a wide array of sectors falling under the SDG category including, energy efficiency, renewable energy, green transport, sustainable food, agriculture, forestry, waste management and greenhouse gas reduction.

PRACTICE MCQS

1. With respect to the cyclone Jawad which was recently seen in news, consider the following statements:

1. It has made landfall near the Odisha coast of India.
2. Bangladesh has given the cyclone its name 'Jawad'

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

2. What is C/2021 A1, which was recently seen in news?

- A. A comet
- B. A new Covid vaccine
- C. A spider species
- D. None of the above

3. In which of the following states of India is Kailveli wetlands located?

- A. Karnataka
- B. Gujarat
- C. Meghalaya
- D. Tamil Nadu

4. Recently, a new species of bird named Flatbill flycatchers have been discovered from which of the following regions of the world?

- A. South America
- B. Australia
- C. Africa
- D. Antarctica

5. Haiderpur wetland is located in which of the following states of India?

- A. Rajasthan
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Meghalaya
- D. Jharkhand

6. Buxa Tiger Reserve is located in which of the following states of India?

- A. Rajasthan
- B. Tamil Nadu
- C. West Bengal
- D. Gujarat

7. Chabahar port is located in which of the following countries?

- A. Iran
- B. Iraq
- C. Afghanistan
- D. Pakistan

8. Super Typhoon Rai has recently hit which of the following countries?

- A. Japan
- B. North Korea
- C. Sri Lanka
- D. Philippines

9. With reference to the launch of 'green fixed deposits', consider the following statements:

- 1. It has been launched by NITI Aayog.
- 2. Through it, the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWERS

- 1. ANSWER: A
- 2. ANSWER: A
- 3. ANSWER: D
- 4. ANSWER: A
- 5. ANSWER: B
- 6. ANSWER: C
- 7. ANSWER: A
- 8. ANSWER: D
- 9. ANSWER: B

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ECONOMY

1.109 Worldwide Cost of Living 2021 Report has been released by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Why in news?

- Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2021 has released the list of cheapest and the most expensive cities in the world.

About Cost-of-Living Index 2021

- A survey is conducted by the **Economist Intelligence Unit**, EIU every year. This year it was conducted in September-October 2021.
- This Worldwide Cost of Living Index **explores 173 cities** of the world which are ranked based on "Impactful Global Events".
- It stated that prices for goods and services have risen by 3.5 per cent year-on-year, the highest inflation rate seen in the last five years.

Key findings

- Tel Aviv** is the world's most expensive cities. It was followed by **Paris in second** place and **Singapore in third** place.
- In 2020, Paris was the most expensive city according to the index.
- In 2021, **Zurich and Hong Kong** were at **fourth and fifth** places respectively.
- Overall, the upper rankings were dominated by developed Asian cities and European cities.
- The lowest rankings were occupied by cities in Africa, Middle East and less wealthier parts of Asia.

1.110 Central government has formed a three-member committee to review criteria for Economically Weaker Section quota

Why in news?

- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** recently announced the formation of a three-member committee to review the criteria for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) reservations.

About committee to review criteria for Economically Weaker Section quota

- The committee members are former finance secretary **Ajay Bhushan Pandey**, member secretary of Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) **V K Malhotra** and principal economic advisor to the government **Sanjay Sanyal**. The committee has been asked to complete its work within three weeks.
- Former Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey will head the committee.**
- The committee will examine various approaches followed in the country so far for identifying the economically weaker sections.
- It will also send its recommendations to the Centre.

PRACTISE MCQS

1. Which of the following organisations has recently released the Worldwide Cost of Living 2021 Report?
 - A. Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)
 - B. World Bank (WB)
 - C. International Monetary Fund (IMF)
 - D. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

2. Central government has formed a three-member committee to review criteria for Economically Weaker Section quota. Who among the following is the head of the committee?
 - A. Vivek Johri
 - B. B. Rajendra
 - C. Pradeep Kumar Sinha
 - D. Ajay Bhushan Pandey

Answers

1. ANSWER: A
2. ANSWER: D

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DEFENCE

1.111 Government of India launched a pilot project to revive Namda craft in Jammu and Kashmir

Why in news?

- Recently, **Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Ministry of Electronics & IT**, launched two projects—
- Revival of **Namda craft of Kashmir** as a special pilot project under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 3.0 and
- Upskilling of artisans and weavers of Kashmir under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), component of PMKVY.

About the projects

- The **objective of these projects** is to boost and preserve the traditional **Namda craft of Kashmir** and upskill the local weavers and artisans to enhance their productivity through RPL assessment and certification.
- The Namda project will benefit 2,250 people of 30 Namda Clusters from 6 districts of Kashmir (**Srinagar, Baramulla, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Budgam and Anantnag**) and RPL initiative targets to upskill 10,900 artisans and weavers of Jammu and Kashmir.

What is Namda craft?

- Namda craft is a **rug made of sheep wool** through felting technique instead of normal weaving process.

Significance of the initiative

- Due to low availability of raw material, lack of skilled manpower and marketing techniques, the export of this craft has declined almost 100 percent between 1998 and 2008.
- Therefore, through this special project under PMKVY, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has designed short-term training curriculum to preserve this endangered craft.

More on the project

- The project will be implemented in **25 batches in 3 cycles of training**.
- Each training program will be of approximately three and half months, which results in the cycles being completed in approximately 14 – 16 months.
- The Namda project will be an industry-based training program with beneficiaries involved in Namda Crafts Production who will contribute towards preserving and reviving the rich heritage associated with Namda craft in Kashmir. This will also improve the access of existing artisans of Namda crafts cluster in Kashmir and will improve their prospects of employability.

1.112 Border Security Force marked its 57th Raising Day on December 1st, 2021

Why in news?

- Border Security Force celebrated its **57th Raising Day on December 1, 2021**.

About BSF

- The Border Security Force (BSF) is India's border guarding organisation on its border **with Pakistan and Bangladesh**.
- It is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces of India, and was raised in the wake of the 1965 War on 1 December 1965, "for ensuring the security of the borders of India and for matters connected there with".
- The **moto of BSF is 'Duty unto Death'**.

1.113 HAL, BEL, Indian Ordnance Factories Ranked among SIPRI Top 100 Arms-Producing Companies 2020.**Why in news?**

- As per the report of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) titled 'Top 100 arms-producing and military services companies, 2020', 3 Indian defence manufactures companies such as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Indian Ordnance Factories, and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) ranks among the Top 100 manufacturers globally
- The HAL, ranked 42nd, and BEL, ranked 66th, and Indian Ordnance Factories ranked 60th.
- The arms sales of HAL, BEL, and Indian Ordnance Factories increased by 1.5 percent, 4.0 percent, and 0.2 percent respectively in 2020 when compared to 2019.

Important points

- The combined arms sales of the world's largest top 100 arms-producing and military services companies in 2020 was about \$531 billion.
- The arms sales of the Top 100 were 17 percent higher in 2020 than in 2015.
- With 41 arms companies, the USA has the highest number of companies in the top 100 worldwide.
- Together, their arms sales amounted to \$285 billion, an increase of 1.9 percent compared with 2019. The top five companies are from the US.
- With 13 percent share of total Top 100 arms sales, China stands at 2nd to the US in terms of manufacturing military equipment, arms and weapons.

1.114 Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo or SMART was recently test fired.**Why in news?**

- Defence Research and Development Organization, DRDO has recently test-fired the Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo or SMART.

About Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo or SMART

- India has recently test-fired a **long-range Supersonic missile assisted torpedo** or popularly called SMART from the Balasore coast in Odisha.
- The weapon has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) for the Indian Navy.
- This is a next-generation missile-based standoff torpedo delivery system.
- The system of this missile has been designed for the enhancement of anti-submarine warfare capability. It would work beyond the conventional range of the torpedo.
- It is also a canister-based missile system consisting of advanced two-stage solid propulsion, electromechanical actuators and precision inertial navigation.

- The missiles launch was done from a ground mobile launcher and it is capable of covering a range of distances.

1.115 DRDO, IAF successfully flight-tested indigenous Stand-Off Anti-Tank missile

Why in news?

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Air Force (IAF) recently successfully flight-tested the indigenously designed and developed helicopter launched Stand-off Anti-Tank (SANT) missile from Pokhran range.

About Stand-Off Anti-Tank missile

- The SANT missile's flight test is the third in the series of indigenous stand-off weapons to be tested in recent times after the Long-Range Bomb and Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon (SAAW).
- The missile is equipped with a state-of-the-art millimetre wave (MMW) seeker which provides high precision strike capability from a safe distance. The weapon can neutralise targets at a range up to 10 kilometres.
- The SANT missile has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad in coordination with other DRDO labs and participation from industries.
- This is the third in the series of indigenous stand-off weapons to be tested in recent times, after the Long-Range Bomb and Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon (SAAW), further strengthening the arsenal of the Indian Air Force.

1.116 Nuclear-capable Agni-P missile successfully flight tested

Why in news?

- Recently, a new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile, Agni-P (Prime), was successfully flight tested from the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha.

About Agni-P missile

- Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles. It is a two-stage canisterised solid propellant ballistic missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system that can be launched from rail and road and stored for a longer period. It can be transported across the length and breadth of the country, as per requirements.
- Canisterisation of missiles reduces the time required to launch the missile while improving its storage and mobility.
- The new ballistic missile, which has a range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 kilometres, weighs half of Agni III and has new kinds of propulsion and new guidance.
- It also comes with the technologies found in the 4000-kilometre range Agni-IV and 5000-kilometre range Agni-V. The new Agni P can be used to target enemy warships in the Indo-Pacific.
- Agni class of missiles are the mainstay of India's nuclear launch capability which also includes the Prithvi short range ballistic missiles, submarine launched ballistic missiles and fighter aircraft. The longest of the Agni series, Agni-V, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km, has already been tested several times and validated for induction.

1.117 Indian Army inducts Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicles (AERV)

Why in news?

- The Indian Army has inducted the first batch of domestically developed **Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicles**.

About Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicles (AERV)

- According to a Ministry of Defence statement, the first set of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)- designed vehicles were assigned to the Corps of Engineers of Indian Army.
- The armoured engineer reconnaissance vehicles (AERVs) were manufactured by Ordnance Factory Medak & Bharat Electronics in **Pune**.
- The vehicle is designed to perform navigation, reconnaissance of water obstacles and boggy patches to support engineering engineer tasks. It can also be used to conduct reconnaissance and provide real time update to force commanders.
- Additionally, the AERV can check soil strength to determine if they are motorable for military vehicles.
- It is equipped with a central computer to support automatic storage and print recce data.

1.118 India tests Pralay missile second time in 2 days

Why in news?

- India recently successfully tested the locally developed surface-to-surface missile Pralay, the second test of the conventional missile in two days. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) tested the missile from the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast.

About Pralay Missile

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) recently successfully conducted maiden flight test of indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay', from Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- The new missile followed the desired quasi ballistic trajectory and reached the designated target with high degree accuracy, validating the control, guidance and mission algorithms. All the sub-systems performed satisfactorily. All the sensors deployed near the impact point across the eastern coast, including the down range ships, tracked the missile trajectory and captured all the events.
- The missile is powered with solid propellant rocket motor and many new technologies.
- The missile has a range of 150-500 kilometre and can be launched from a mobile launcher.
- The missile guidance system includes state-of-the-art navigation system and integrated avionics.

1.119 DRDO conducts flight-test of indigenous aerial target 'Abhyas'

Why in news?

- DRDO successfully conducted the flight test of indigenously **developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas** recently. The successful flight test of Abhyas was conducted from Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.

About High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas and its test

- Abhyas is a high-speed expendable aerial target (HEAT) that is being built by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of DRDO.
- HEAT Abhyas demonstrated a high subsonic speed trajectory at a very low altitude with high endurance during the flight test. The two boosters provided initial acceleration during launch and a small turbojet engine was used to sustain the high subsonic speed with long endurance.
- Abhyas's radar cross-section (RCS) and its visual and infrared signatures can be boosted to simulate a variety of aircraft for air-defense weapon practices.
- Abhyas is also GPS-enabled and has an onboard flight control computer and a miss-distance indicator.

- The aircraft is designed for autonomous flight with the help of an autopilot.

1.120 Indian Army launched ASIGMA: an in-House Messaging Solution

Why in news?

- The Indian Army has launched its latest messaging application dubbed as ASIGMA (Army Secure IndiGeneous Messaging Application), which has been exclusively developed by the team of officers of the Corps of Signals of the Army.

About ASIGMA (Army Secure Indi Geneous Messaging Application)

- The new generation web-based messaging application is entirely in-house and has been exclusively developed by the team of officers of the Corps of Signals of the Army.
- The new ASIGMA application is being deployed on the Army's internal network, as a replacement of the AWAN (Army Wide Area Network) messaging application which has been in service for the past 15 years. The application has been sent out on Army-owned hardware and will cater to the army from this time forward, lending itself to lifetime support with future upgrades.
- The messaging application is designed to meet all futuristic requirements for the army and boasts of an enhanced user experience. It comes with a variety of contemporary features including multi-level security, dynamic global address book, message prioritisation, and tracking, and options to meet the requirements of the army at present.
- This future-ready messaging application will meet the real-time data transfer and messaging requirements of the Army, especially in the backdrop of the current geopolitical security environment. ASIGMA has been developed in line with the Government of India's, Make in India initiative.
- The Indian Army has braced automation in a major way, especially post COVID-19 outbreak, and is taking substantial steps towards paperless functioning. ASIGMA will further boost these efforts and will add to the host of other applications already being employed by the Army over its captive pan Army network.

1.121 Foundation stone for Defence Technology & Test Centre and BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre was recently laid.

Why in news?

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for Defence Technology & Test Centre and BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre, established by Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh recently.

About foundation stone for Defence Technology & Test Centre and BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre

- The foundation for the two units was laid in the presence of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Yogi Adityanath. A first-of-its-kind Defence Technologies & Test Centre (DTTC), over approximately 22 acres is being set up to accelerate the growth of the defence and aerospace manufacturing clusters in Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UP DIC).
- It will consist of the following six subcentres:
 - Deep-Tech Innovation & Startup Incubation Centre
 - Design & Simulation Centre
 - Testing & Evaluation Centre
 - Centre for Industry 4.0/Digital Manufacturing

- Skill Development Centre
- Business Development Centre
- The BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre, announced by BrahMos Aerospace, is a modern, state-of-art facility in the Lucknow node of UP DIC. It will cover over 200 acres and produce the new BRAHMOS-NG (Next Generation) variant, which carries forward the lineage of the BRAHMOS weapons system. This new centre would be ready over the next two to three years and will commence production at a rate of 80-100 BRAHMOS-NG missiles per year.

1.122 Indian Army Establishes Quantum Laboratory at Mhow (MP)

Why in news?

- The Indian Army is making steady, yet significant strides in the field of emerging technology domains. The Army, with support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) has recently established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, Mhow (MP) MCTE to spearhead research and training in this key developing field. Gen MM Naravane, the Chief of Army Staff was briefed on the facility during his recent visit to Mhow.

About Quantum Laboratory by the Indian army and other achievements

- Indian Army has also established an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre at the same institution with over 140 deployments in forward areas and active support of industry and academia. Training on cyber warfare is being imparted through a state of art cyber range, and cyber security labs. Ideation for Army's involvement in Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations was done in a seminar on Electromagnetic Spectrum and National Security organised in October last year. Since then, an impetus has been given to Indian Army's Technology Institutions for investing in AI, Quantum and Cyber.
- Research undertaken by Indian Army in the field of Quantum Technology will help leapfrog into next generation communication and transform the current system of cryptography in the Indian Armed Forces to Post Quantum Cryptography (PQC).
- Key thrust areas are Quantum Key Distribution, Quantum Communication, Quantum Computing and Post Quantum Cryptography.

1.123 Seven-member committee formed on AFSPA in Nagaland to submit report in three months

Why in news?

- The committee formed is to suggest withdrawal of the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) from Nagaland will comprise seven members and will submit its report within three months.

About the Committee

- Dr Vivek Joshi, Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, is the chairman while J Alam, chief secretary of Nagaland is a member. Director General of Assam Rifles Lt Gen PC Nair, DGP Nagaland T John Longkumer, Dr MSTuli joint director of Intelligence Bureau are members.

PRACTISE MCQS

1. **Where has the Government of India recently launched a pilot project to revive Namda craft?**

- A. Nagaland
- B. Kashmir
- C. Goa
- D. Bihar

2. **Border Security Force recently celebrated its 57th Raising Day on which of the following dates?**

- A. 1st December, 2021
- B. 15th November, 2021

4. **With reference to Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo or SMART, consider the following statements:**

- 1. It has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) for the Indian Navy.
- 2. It is a canister-based missile system consisting of advanced two-stage solid propulsion, electromechanical actuators and precision inertial navigation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

5. **With reference to recently launched Stand-off Anti-Tank (SANT) missile, consider the following statements:**

- 1. The missile is equipped with a state-of-the-art millimetre wave (MMW) seeker which provides high precision strike capability from a safe distance.
- 2. The SANT missile has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad in coordination with other DRDO labs and participation from industries.

C. 2nd October, 2021

D. 22nd September, 2021

3. **As per the report 'Top 100 arms-producing & military services companies, 2020' by SIPRI, India's HAL, Indian Ordnance Factories & _____ ranks among the top 100 manufacturers globally while US's Lockheed Martin Corp tops.**

- A. Boeing India Pvt Ltd
- B. Electronics Corporation of India Ltd
- C. Bharat Electronics Limited
- D. BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

6. **With respect to Nuclear-capable Agni-P missile, consider the following statements:**

- 1. It is a two-stage canisterised solid propellant ballistic missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system that can be launched from rail and road and stored for a longer period.
- 2. It can be used to target enemy warships in the Indo-Pacific.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

7. **With reference to Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicles (AERV), consider the following statements:**

1. The armoured engineer reconnaissance vehicles (AERVs) were manufactured by Ordnance Factory Medak & Bharat Electronics in Pune.
2. The vehicle is designed to perform navigation, reconnaissance of water obstacles and boggy patches to support engineering engineer tasks. It can also be used to conduct reconnaissance and provide real time update to force commanders

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

8. With reference to the Pralay Missile, consider the following statements:

1. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) recently successfully conducted maiden flight test of indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile 'Pralay'.
2. The missile has a range of 50-100 kilometre and can be launched from a mobile launcher.
3. The missile guidance system includes state-of-the-art navigation system and integrated avionics.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

9. With reference to the High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas which was recently test fired, consider the following statements:

1. Abhyas is a high-speed expendable aerial target (HEAT) that is being built by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of DRDO.

2. Abhyas is GPS-enabled and has an onboard flight control computer and a miss-distance indicator.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

10. With reference to ASIGMA (Army Secure Indigenous Messaging Application), consider the following statements:

1. The new generation web-based messaging application is entirely in-house and has been exclusively developed by the team of officers of the Corps of Signals of the Army.
2. The messaging application comes with a variety of contemporary features including multi-level security, dynamic global address book, message prioritisation, and tracking, and options to meet the requirements of the army at present.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

11. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for Defence Technology & Test Centre and BRAHMOS Manufacturing Centre, established by Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) in which of the following cities?

- A. Lucknow
- B. Mumbai
- C. Hisar
- D. Ahmedabad

12. Consider the following statements:

1. The Indian Army, with support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) has recently established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering in Mhow (MP).
2. Research undertaken by Indian Army in the field of Quantum Technology will help leapfrog into next generation communication and transform the current system of cryptography in the Indian Armed Forces to Post Quantum Cryptography (PQC).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

13. Who among the following will head the committee which has been formed to suggest withdrawal of the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) from Nagaland?

- A. Abhijeet Sen
- B. Rajeev Mehrishi
- C. Arun Goel
- D. Dr Vivek Joshi

Answers

1. ANSWER: B
2. ANSWER: A
3. ANSWER: C
4. ANSWER: C
5. ANSWER: C
6. ANSWER: C
7. ANSWER: C
8. ANSWER: C
9. ANSWER: C
10. ANSWER: C
11. ANSWER: A
12. ANSWER: C
13. ANSWER: D

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REPORTS

1.124 Federal Bank launched an exclusive feature-rich scheme for women

Why in news?

- Private sector lender Federal Bank has launched a feature-rich savings bank product for women.

About Mahila Mitra Plus Scheme

- The savings scheme is called '**Mahila Mitra Plus**' and provides a curated set of features, designed to make financial planning and investments easy for women.

Features

- The special features include exclusive preferential interest rates on housing loans, processing fee waiver for home loans, complimentary and customised insurance cover.
- Women are also encouraged to open savings accounts in the names of their minor children through the provision of two zero balance savings accounts.

1.125 World Inequality Report 2022

Why in news?

- According to the recently released World Inequality Report 2022, India is now among the most unequal countries in the world.

About World Inequality Report 2022

Released by:

- **World Inequality Lab**, which aims to promote research on global inequality dynamics.
- This report presents the most up-to-date synthesis of international research efforts to track global inequalities.

Key Points of the Report

- **Distribution of Wealth:** The poorest half of the global population "barely owns any wealth" possessing just 2% of the total, whereas the richest 10% of the global population own 76% of all wealth.
- The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are the most unequal regions in the world, whereas Europe has the lowest inequality levels.
- **Gender Inequalities:** Women's share of total incomes from work (labour income) was about 30% in 1990 and is less than 35% now. Inequalities within countries are now greater than those observed between countries. At the same time, the gap between the average incomes of the top 10% and the bottom 50% of individuals within countries has almost doubled.
- **Rich Countries Poor Governments:** Over the past 40 years, countries have become significantly richer, but their governments have become significantly poorer. The currently low wealth of governments has important implications for state capacities to tackle inequality in the future, as well as the key challenges of the 21st century such as climate change.

India Specific Findings

- **Distribution of Wealth:** India stands out as a poor and very unequal country. The top 1% of the population hold more than one-fifth of the total national income in 2021 and the bottom half just 13%.
- The economic reforms and liberalization adopted by India have mostly benefited the top 1%.

- **Average Household Wealth:** It stands at Rs. 983,010. It has been observed that the deregulation and liberalisation policies implemented since the mid-1980s have led to “one of the most extreme increases in income and wealth inequality observed in the world”.
- **Gender Inequalities:** The female labour income share is equal to 18% which is significantly lower than the average in Asia [21%, excluding China] and this value is one of the lowest in the world.

1.126 India Ranked as fourth in the Asia Power Index 2021

Why in news?

- Recently, in the **Asia Power Index 2021**, **India Ranked as Fourth** most powerful country in the Asia-Pacific region for comprehensive power.

About the Asia Power Index 2021

- India has been ranked the 4th most powerful country in the Asia-Pacific region for comprehensive power out of 26 countries.
- According to the Lowy Institute Asia Power Index 2021, Indians have an overall score of 37.7 out of 100. In comparison to 2020, India's overall score dropped by two points.
- In 2021, India will once again fall short of the major power benchmark. India is one of 18 Asian countries with a declining overall score in 2021.
- The yearly Asia Power Index assesses the relative power of Asian states by measuring resources and influence.
- It's a tool that rates 26 countries and territories based on what they have and how they use it, with countries as far west as Pakistan, as far north as Russia, and as far into the Pacific as Australia, New Zealand, and the United States included.
- The 2021 edition, which contains four years of data, is the most complete analysis of Asia's evolving power distribution to date.
- **Top 10 countries are:** United States, China, Japan, India, Russia, Australia, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand.

1.127 Annual skills survey India Skills Report 2022 was released.

Why in news?

- Annual skills survey India Skills Report 2022 was released by Wheebox, a talent assessment platform, with AICTE, Association of Indian Universities, Confederation of Indian Industries, and other agencies.

About India Skills Report 2022

- The theme of this edition is **Rebuilding and Reengineering the Future of Work**.
- According to it, **Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Kerala** have the highest pool of employable talent in the country.
- The study revealed that 46.2% of the youth were considered highly employable resources.
- The study also found out that **Pune** is the city with the most highly employable resources with 78% of the test takers scoring above 60%. This is followed by Lucknow.
- On the demand side Software, Pharma, Internet Business and BFSI emerged as the highest pool of talent demand.

- A higher percentage of women than men have been found to be employable in India yet again, according to the India Skills Report 2022.
- It also says that the sectors in which the most hiring will take place are IT, pharmaceutical, e-commerce, and banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI). These sectors are expected to hire 20 per cent more fresh graduates in 2022 than in 2021.
- This year's report is based on responses gathered from an assessment of 3 lakh candidates across India who took part in the Wheebox National Eligibility Test (WNET), and a report from the India Hiring Intent Survey that covered 150 corporations spanning more than 15 industries and sectors.
- It says the pool of employable women is steadily increasing. This stands at 51.44 per cent for 2022, compared to 41.25 per cent in 2021. The 2022 figure for men is 45.97 per cent, against 34.26 per cent in 2021.
- According to the 2022 report, 46.2 per cent of skilled youth overall were found to be highly employable, compared to 45.97 per cent in 2021.
- In a new trend that has emerged this year, 88.6 per cent of graduates were found to be seeking internship positions within organisations.

1.128 Literacy & Numeracy Index was recently released

Why in news?

- The 'Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy', an indicator of literacy among children below 10 years, was recently released by **Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)** chairman Bibek Debroy.

About the Literacy and Numeracy Index

- The Index has been prepared by '**Institute for Competitiveness**'
- **5 pillars of Foundational Literacy Index**
- **The Foundational Literacy Index 2021 includes 5 pillars comprising 41 indicators on the basis of which the states have been ranked for literacy among children. The 5 pillars are-**
 1. Access to Education
 2. Educational Infrastructure
 3. Basic Health
 4. Governance
 5. Learning Outcomes
- There are **four categories**: large states, small states, Union Territories and North East.
- West Bengal (58.95) topped the chart and Bihar languished at the bottom in the 'large states' category.
- In the 'small states' category, Kerala (67.95) grabbed the top spot and Jharkhand was adjudged the worst performer on the index.
- Lakshadweep (52.69) and Mizoram (51.64) are top-scoring regions in the Union Territory and Northeast state category, respectively.

1.129 ICICI Prudential Life Insurance is the first Indian insurance company to sign United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI)

Why in news?

- ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has recently signed United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI) demonstrating its commitment towards Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) issues. It is the first Indian insurance company to do so.

About ICICI Prudential Life Insurance signing United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI)

- In its journey towards promoting sustainability, the Company is integrating ESG factors into its investment management framework. As a responsible corporate it has also adopted sustainability principles across its business activities.
- The company in a recent release said, the sustainability framework is built on three pillars of ESG which include leaving the planet a better place for the next generation, giving back to society and transparency in functioning.
- With Assets under Management of over ₹2.37 trillion, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance is a key institutional investor and believes integrating the ESG framework in its investment management practices will ensure sustainable value creation for all stakeholders.
- The Company also engages with investee companies on ESG issues to ensure the business operates in a responsible and sustainable manner, benefitting the environment, society and investors.

1.130 Bajaj Allianz General Insurance launched 'Health Prime', a wellness rider

Why in news?

- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, one of the leading private general insurers of India, recently announced the launch of its unique 'Health Prime' rider.

About 'Health Prime' rider

- This rider can be availed along with the company's health insurance and personal accident policies.
- The idea behind this rider is to provide holistic healthcare solutions. In order to provide seamless services under this rider, the Company has tied up with Bajaj Finserv Health Ltd., a health-tech company that will leverage its extensive network of more than 2,500 lab chains and 90,000 doctors with various specialties to serve the customers of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.
- This will be a remarkable step towards redefining the health and wellness landscape in the country, thriving on the power of digitization.
- Health Prime rider covers 4 key areas for the customers, namely – **Tele-consultation Cover** wherein the customer suffering from any illness/injury can opt for unlimited consultations with a doctor on the service provider's digital platform, **Doctor Consultation Cover** where the customer can consult a doctor in person in case of any illness/injury from the prescribed network centres of the service provider or outside its network, **Investigations Cover** for pathology or radiology expenses from prescribed network centres or outside prescribed network and lastly, **Annual Preventive Health Check-up Cover** wherein the customer can avail free Preventive health check-up once in every policy year as per the list of tests mentioned in the rider document.
- All these benefits are completely cashless and can easily be utilized seamlessly at your fingertips through the 'Caringly yours' app of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.
- Health Prime rider has 6 plans on an individual basis with premium ranging from Rs. 63 to Rs. 1,084 excluding GST and 3 plans on floater basis with premium ranging from Rs. 1,146 to Rs. 2,348 excluding GST.

1.131 India among world's top 3 dope violators in latest WADA report

Why in news?

- An uptick in the number of offenders has taken India into the top-three of the world's biggest doping violators in a WADA report detailing the transgressions for the year 2019 with bodybuilding, weightlifting and athletics contributing majorly to the country's embarrassing record.

About the latest WADA Report

- In the latest report published by the World Anti-Doping Agency, 152 (17 per cent of the world total) Anti-doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) were reported in India in 2019, leaving it third in the list with the maximum dope offenders coming from bodybuilding (57).
- Among Olympic sports, weightlifting leads the way with 25 ADRVs, followed by athletics (20) and wrestling (10). Boxing and judo reported four ADRVs each. Four cricketers were also found to have committed ADRVs in 2019.
- A lightweight in global sport, India is only behind Russia (167) and Italy (157), while Brazil (78) is at fourth and Iran (70) fifth.

About WADA

- The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was established in 1999 as an international independent agency composed and funded equally by the sport movement and governments of the world.
- Its key activities include scientific research, education, development of anti-doping capacities, and monitoring of the World Anti-Doping Code (Code) – the document harmonizing anti-doping policies in all sports and all countries.
- It is headquartered in Montreal, Canada.

1.132 Rajnath Singh Inaugurates GIS-based Automatic Water Supply System for Cantonment Boards

Why in news?

- Rajnath Singh unveiled a GIS-based 'Automatic Water Supply System' for residents of Cantonment Boards on Defense Estates Day 2021.

About GIS-based Automatic Water Supply System for Cantonment Boards

- The module of GIS based Water Supply system for Cantonment Boards has been developed by Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo informatics (BISAG) under the guidance of Defense Secretary and Director General of Defense Estates, Delhi.
- It is easy and fast application to provide water connection to the citizens of Cantonment. It is completely automated which:
 - Provides facility to its citizen to identify the location of water supply connection.
 - It automatically determines nearest water pipeline.
 - Also, capacity of all water supply lines have been defined.
 - It calculates distance based on the location and;
 - Amount payable by the Applicant including connection charges can be paid online.
- The module further facilitates sanction for water connection online. Once the system issues sanction, the concerned Department in Cantt Board will ensure actual water connection within given time-lines. The system is highly user friendly, efficient and transparent.
- This GIS System is first of its kind in the country. It is based on "minimum government and supports the concept of "maximum governance" as there is no manual intervention for clearance/sanction of the water connection.

- In conventional Water Supply System, citizens apply to the local bodies and the application is processed which takes time. The charges are required to be deposited offline and no time period is defined for grant of water connection. BISAG has successfully implemented the GIS module and its integration with the e-Chhawani portal is done by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

1.133 . Protests are taking place across Kerala against Silver Line.

Why in news?

- Protests are taking place across Kerala against SilverLine, a semi high-speed railway project that envisages trains running at 200 km/h between the state's northern and southern ends. The project, estimated to cost Rs 63,940 crore, is billed as one of the biggest infrastructure plans being pushed by the Pinarayi Vijayan government.

About the SilverLine project

- The proposed 529.45-km line will link Thiruvananthapuram in the south to Kasaragod in the north, covering 11 districts through 11 stations.
- When the project is completed, one can travel from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram in less than four hours at 200 km/hr.
- On the existing Indian Railways network, it now takes 12 hours.
- The deadline for the project, being executed by the Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL), is 2025. KRDCL, or K-Rail, is a joint venture between the Kerala government and the Union Ministry of Railways created to execute big railway projects.

1.134 Good Governance Index 2021 was recently released

Why in news?

- Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Mr Amit Shah released the Good Governance Index 2021 prepared by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) on Good Governance Day.

About Good Governance Index 2021

- Good Governance Index, GGI 2021 Framework covered ten sectors and 58 indicators.
- The sectors of GGI 2020-21 are 1) Agriculture and Allied Sectors, 2) Commerce & Industries, 3) Human Resource Development, 4) Public Health, 5) Public Infrastructure & Utilities, 6) Economic Governance, 7) Social Welfare & Development, 8) Judicial & Public Security, 9) Environment, and 10) Citizen-Centric Governance.
- The GGI 2020-21 categorises States and UTs into four categories, i.e., (i) Other States – Group A; (ii) Other States – Group B; (iii) North-East and Hill States; and (iv) Union Territories.
- Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa top the composite rank score covering 10 sectors.
- Rajasthan has topped the Other States (Group B) category in Judiciary and Public Safety, Environment & Citizen Centric Governance.
- In the North-East and Hill States category, Mizoram and Jammu and Kashmir have registered an overall increase of 10.4% and 3.7% respectively over GGI 2019.
- In the Union Territories category, Delhi tops the composite rank registering a 14 percent increase over the GGI 2019 indicators.

1.135 NITI Aayog Released Fourth Edition of State Health Index

Why in news?

- NITI Aayog recently released the fourth edition of the **State Health Index for 2019–20**.

About State Health Index

- The report, titled “Healthy States, Progressive India”, ranks states and Union Territories on their year-on-year incremental performance in health outcomes as well as their overall status.
- Round IV of the report focuses on measuring and highlighting the overall performance and incremental improvement of states and UTs over the period 2018–19 to 2019–20.
- The report was released jointly by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar, CEO Amitabh Kant, Additional Secretary Dr Rakesh Sarwal, and World Bank Senior Health Specialist Sheena Chhabra.
- The report has been developed by NITI Aayog, with technical assistance from the World Bank, and in close consultation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

The Findings

- The State Health Index is annual tool to assess the performance of states and UTs. It is a weighted composite index based on 24 indicators grouped under the domains of ‘Health Outcomes’, ‘Governance and Information’, and ‘Key Inputs/Processes’. Each domain has been assigned weights based on its importance with higher score for outcome indicators.
- To ensure comparison among similar entities, the ranking is categorized as ‘Larger States’, ‘Smaller States’ and ‘Union Territories’.
- Among the ‘Larger States’, in terms of annual incremental performance, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Telangana are the top three ranking states.
- Among ‘Smaller States’, Mizoram and Meghalaya registered the maximum annual incremental progress.
- Among UTs, Delhi, followed by Jammu and Kashmir, showed the best incremental performance.
- On overall ranking based on the composite index score in 2019–20, the top-ranking states were Kerala and Tamil Nadu among the ‘Larger States’, Mizoram and Tripura among the ‘Smaller States’, and DH&DD and Chandigarh among the UTs.

PRACTISE MCQS

1. With reference to 'Mahila Mitra Plus' Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It has been launched by NABARD.
2. The savings scheme provides a curated set of features, designed to make financial planning and investments easy for women.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

2. With respect to World Inequality Report 2022, consider the following statements:

1. It has been released by World Inequality Lab.
2. It presents the most up-to-date synthesis of international research efforts to track global inequalities.
3. As per the report, the poorest half of the global population "barely owns any wealth" possessing just 2% of the total, whereas the richest 10% of the global population own 76% of all wealth.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

3. At what position has India been placed in the Asia Power Index 2021?

- A. Second
- B. Fourth
- C. Sixth
- D. Eighth

4. With reference to India Skills Report 2022, consider the following statements:

1. According to it, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Kerala have the highest pool of employable talent in the country.
2. A higher percentage of women than men have been found to be employable in India, according to the India Skills Report 2022.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

5. With respect to the Literacy & Numeracy Index which was recently released, consider the following statements:

1. The Index has been prepared by 'Institute for Competitiveness'
2. Karnataka topped the chart and West Bengal languished at the bottom in the 'large states' category.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

6. Which of the following Insurance companies has recently signed United Nations supported Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI) demonstrating its commitment towards Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) issues?

- A. HDFC Life Insurance Company
- B. Tata AIA Life Insurance Company
- C. SBI Life Insurance Company
- D. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance

7. With reference to recently launched 'Health Prime', a wellness rider, consider the following statements:

1. It has been launched by Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.
2. It covers 4 key areas for the customers, namely Tele-consultation Cover, Doctor Consultation Cover, Investigations Cover and Annual Preventive Health Check-up Cover.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 Nor 2

8. With respect to the World Anti-Doping Agency, consider the following statements:

1. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was established in 1999 as an international independent agency composed and funded equally by the sport movement and governments of the world.
2. It is headquartered in Paris, France.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

9. With reference to the recently launched GIS-based Automatic Water Supply System for Cantonment Boards, consider the following statements:

1. The module of GIS based Water Supply system for Cantonment Boards has been developed by Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo informatics (BISAG).
2. It is easy and fast application to provide water connection to the citizens of

Cantonment. It is completely automated which provides facility to its citizen to identify the location of water supply connection.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

10. SilverLine, a semi high-speed railway project is associated with which of the following states of India?

- A. Kerala
- B. Telangana
- C. Karnataka
- D. Goa

11. With reference to the Good Governance Index 2021 which was recently released, consider the following statements:

1. Rajasthan has topped the Other States (Group B) category in Judiciary and Public Safety, Environment & Citizen Centric Governance.
2. In the North-East and Hill States category, Mizoram and Jammu and Kashmir have registered an overall increase of 10.4% and 3.7% respectively over GGI 2019.
3. In the Union Territories category, Delhi tops the composite rank registering a 14 percent increase over the GGI 2019 indicators.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

12. With reference to Fourth Edition of State Health Index released by NITI Aayog, consider the following statements:

1. Among the 'Larger States', in terms of annual incremental performance, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Telangana are the top three ranking states.
2. Among 'Smaller States', Mizoram and Meghalaya registered the maximum annual incremental progress.
3. Among UTs, Delhi, followed by Jammu and Kashmir, showed the best incremental performance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answers

1. ANSWER: B
2. ANSWER: D
3. ANSWER: B
4. ANSWER: C
5. ANSWER: A
6. ANSWER: D
7. ANSWER: C
8. ANSWER: A
9. ANSWER: C
10. ANSWER: A
11. ANSWER: D
12. ANSWER: D

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SPORTS

1.136 Sanket Mahadev Sargar wins gold, creates new national record in snatch at Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships

Why in news?

- For the top-podium finish at Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021, the Indian lifted the weight of 113kg. With this lift, Sanket Mahadev Sargar also created the new snatch national record.

About lifting by Sanket Mahadev Sargar

- Sanket Mahadev Sargar recently won the gold medal in the Men's 55kg snatch category at the ongoing Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent.
- For the top-podium finish, the Indian lifted the weight of 113kg. With this lift, Sargar also created the new snatch national record.
- The Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 is currently being held concurrently in Tashkent along with World Weightlifting Championships 2021 from December 7 to 17. India, being a Commonwealth nation is competing in both.
- Indian team for World Weightlifting Championships 2021 and Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 is:
- Men: Sanket Sargar (55kg), Guru Raja (61kg), Jeremy Lalrinnunga (67kg), Achinta Sheuli (73kg), Ajay Singh (81kg), Vikas Thakur (96kg), Jagdish Vishwakarma (96kg), Lovepreet Singh (109kg), and Gurdeep Singh (109kg).

1.137 Kidambi Srikanth won silver medal in the World Badminton Championships

Why in news?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed Kidambi Srikanth's silver medal win in the World Badminton Championships, saying it will inspire several sportspersons and further interest in badminton.

About Kidambi Srikanth

- Srikanth clinched a historic silver medal in the World Badminton Championships after suffering a straight-game defeat to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in the summit clash to notch up the best ever performance by an Indian in the men's singles
- Srikanth Kidambi (born 7 February 1993) is an Indian badminton player who trains at the Gopichand Badminton Academy, Hyderabad. He ranked as world number 1 at the BWF ranking in April 2018. Kidambi was awarded with the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian award in 2018 and Arjuna award in 2015.

1.138 Avani Lekhara Wins in Best Female Debut Category

Why in news?

- Avani this year became the first-ever female Paralympic gold medallist from India.

About Avani Lekhara

- The 19-year-old broke the Paralympic record and equalled the World record in the women's 10m SH1 air rifle standing final.
- The first woman to win a gold medal in Olympic or Paralympic Games, Avani Lekhara added more glitter to her gold as she won the Best Female Debut award in the 2021 Paralympic Sports Awards announced in a virtual ceremony.

- Avani this year became the first-ever female Paralympic gold medallist from India. The 19-year-old broke the Paralympic record and equalled the World record in the women's 10m SH1 air rifle standing final. She also won bronze in the women's 50m SH1 air rifle standing event to become the first Indian female to win two medals in the Paralympics. It was also India's first Paralympic medal in shooting.

1.139 Emma Raducanu wins BBC Sports Personality of the Year

Why in news?

- Emma Raducanu has won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award, rounding off an incredible year where she became the first British women in 44 years to win a Grand Slam singles title at the U.S. Open.

About the awards

- The award is decided by a public vote from a list of shortlisted nominees, which this year included Raducanu, diver Tom Daley, swimmer Adam Peaty, heavyweight world champion Tyson Fury, footballer Raheem Sterling and Paralympic cyclist Dame Sarah Storey.

1.140 2021 Men's Asian Champions Trophy was recently held

Why in news?

- The 2021 Men's Asian Champions Trophy was the sixth edition of the Men's Asian Champions Trophy, a men's field hockey tournament for the six best Asian national teams organized by the Asian Hockey Federation.

About Men's Asian Champions Trophy

- It was originally scheduled to be held in from 17 to 27 November 2020 at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium in **Dhaka, Bangladesh**. The tournament got postponed again and again and was eventually held from 14 to 22 December 2021.

1.141 Rishabh Pant breaks MS Dhoni's Indian record for fastest wicketkeeper to 100 dismissals

Why in news?

- Rishabh Pant has set a new Indian record for the fastest wicketkeeper to 100 dismissals. He broke the joint- record held by MS Dhoni and Wriddhiman Saha by affecting his 100th dismissal in his 26th Test which came at the SuperSport Park in Centurion on December 28, 2021.

About Rishabh Pant's record

- Rishabh Pant picked up his 100th dismissal as wicketkeeper when he caught Temba Bavuma off Mohammed Shami's bowling on Day 3 of the Boxing Day Test in Centurion.
- Pant needed 3 dismissals in the Boxing Day Test to eclipse his idol, Dhoni. He got there on Day 3 as India pacers dominated the South African bowling attack after the visitors posted 327 on the board. Pant took the catches of Bavuma, Dean Elgar and Wiaan Mulder at the SuperSport Park to achieve the milestone.

PRACTISE MCQS

1. **Who among the following has won a gold and created new national record in snatch at Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent?**
 - A. Satish Sivalingam
 - B. Ragala Venkat Rahul
 - C. Katulu Ravi Kumar
 - D. Sanket Mahadev Sargar
2. **Who among the following has recently won the silver medal in the World Badminton Championships?**
 - A. Sourabh Verma
 - B. H.S. Prannoy
 - C. Ajay Jayaram
 - D. Kidambi Srikanth
3. **Who among the following has become the first-ever female Paralympic gold medallist from India?**
 - A. Simran Sharma
 - B. Ekta Bhyan
 - C. Jyoti Baliyan
 - D. Avani Lekhara
4. **Who among the following has recently won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award?**
 - A. Rachael Blackmore
 - B. Sky Brown
 - C. Jen Beattie
 - D. Emma Raducanu
5. **The 2021 Men's Asian Champions Trophy was recently held in which of the following countries?**
 - A. Japan
 - B. China
 - C. India
 - D. Bangladesh
6. **Who among the following has set a new Indian record for the fastest wicketkeeper to 100 dismissals?**
 - A. Dinesh Karthik
 - B. Naman Ojha
 - C. Virat Kohli
 - D. Rishabh Pant

Answers

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. ANSWER: D | 3. ANSWER: D |
| 2. ANSWER: D | 4. ANSWER: D |
| | 5. ANSWER: D |
| | 6. ANSWER: D |

AWARDS

1.142 Lionel Messi won Ballon d'Or Winner Award 2021 for the record 7th time

Why in news?

- Recently, **Lionel Messi** won the men's Ballon d'Or award for a record **seventh time**.

About the Ballon d'Or Award

- The Ballon d'Or is one of the oldest and most prestigious individual awards in football that is presented annually by the French news magazine France Football.
- The prize has been awarded every year since 1956. Between 2010 and 2015, the award was temporarily merged with the FIFA World Player of the Year after an agreement with FIFA and was known as FIFA Ballon d'Or.
- The award reverted to Ballon d'Or in 2016 and FIFA also went back to its own separate award. The recipients of FIFA Ballon d'Or are considered as winners of both awards.

Which player has won the Ballon d'Or award most number times?

- Lionel Messi** has now won the Ballon d'Or award a record seven times, six while he was playing for Barcelona and first time while playing for Paris Saint-Germain.
- Cristiano Ronaldo** follows closely with five Ballon d'Or awards, one while he was playing for Manchester United and four with Real Madrid.
- Besides them, three footballers have won the award three times each- **Michel Platini** of Juventus, **Johan Cruyff** of Barcelona and **Ajax and Marco van Basten** of Milan.
- Two Spanish football clubs, **Barcelona and Real Madrid** lead the ranking for employing the greatest number of Ballon d'Or award winners, with 12 and 11 wins respectively.

1.143 Anju Bobby George has won the World Athletics' Woman of Year Award, 2021

Why in news?

- World Athletics** awarded sprinter **Anju Bobby George** as 'Woman of the Year' in 2021 after her efforts in advancing the sport in India as well as inspiring more women to follow her footsteps.

About Anju Bobby and World Athletics' Woman of Year Award

- Anju, is the only Indian to win a world championship medal -bronze at the 2003 edition in Paris.
- She also clinched a gold medal at the World Athletics Final in Monte Carlo in 2005.
- Anju said their aim was not only to create champions in the sporting field but to also make them responsible citizens.

1.144 Ratan Tata to be conferred Assam's highest civilian award

Why in news?

- The Assam government will confer the state's highest civilian awards to **industrialist Ratan Naval Tata**, **Olympian Lovlina Borgohain** and an array of personalities from diverse fields.

About Assam's Awards

- The state govt of Assam will honour **industrialist Ratan Naval Tata** with the Assam Baibhav award for his contribution towards cancer care facilities in the state.
- Assam Govt has planned to confer **Assam Baibhav 2021, Assam Saurav 2021 and Assam Gaurav Awards 2021** to 19 personalities and the award ceremony will be conducted on January 24th, 2022.
- The Assam Baibhav award will be worth Rs 5 lakh, the Assam Saurav award will be worth Rs 4 lakh, and the Assam Gaurav award will carry a cash component of Rs 3 lakh.
- Assam Baibhav award will be presented to Ratan Tata, and Assam Saurav award will be distributed to 5 personalities including Prof Kamalendu Deb Krori, Dr Lakshmanan S, Prof Dipak Chand Jain, Lovlina Borgohain and Neel Pawan Baruah.

1.145 A biography of Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, by Dinyar Patel was recently named winner of the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021.

Why in news?

- **‘Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism’** was selected for the **NIF Book Prize** from a brilliant shortlist of six books that showcased some of the finest non-fiction writing.

About the NIF Book Prize

- "Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism" was selected from the six shortlisted books that covered a variety of themes and subjects and showcased some of the finest non-fiction writing about India, organisers New India Foundation said.
- **Instituted in 2018**, the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize is one of the most prestigious **literary awards in the country**. It celebrates high-quality non-fiction literature on modern and contemporary India from writers of all nationalities published in the previous calendar year. The Prize carries a cash award of **INR 15 lakhs and a citation**.
- This year's winner, **Dinyar Patel**, was selected by a jury panel which included political scientist and author Niraja Gopal Jayal (Jury Chair), entrepreneur and author Nandan Nilekani; historian and author Srinath Raghavan; historian and author Nayanjot Lahiri; and entrepreneur Manish Sabharwal.

About Dadabhai Naoroji

- Naoroji's political career evolved in three distinct phases. He began as the activist who formulated the "drain of wealth" theory, which held the British Raj responsible for India's crippling poverty and devastating famines. His ideas upended conventional wisdom holding that colonialism was beneficial for Indian subjects and put a generation of imperial officials on the defensive. Next, he attempted to influence the British Parliament to institute political reforms. He immersed himself in British politics, forging links with socialists, Irish home rulers, suffragists, and critics of empire. With these allies, Naoroji clinched his landmark election to the House of Commons in 1892, an event noticed by colonial subjects around the world. Finally, in his twilight years he grew disillusioned with parliamentary politics and became more radical. He strengthened his ties with British and European socialists, reached out to American anti-imperialists and Progressives, and fully enunciated his demand for swaraj. Only self-rule, he declared, could remedy the economic ills brought about by British control in India. Naoroji is the first comprehensive study of the most significant Indian nationalist leader before Gandhi.

1.146 Indian architect B V Doshi is the recipient of the RIBA Royal Gold Medal 2022**Why in news?**

- The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) announced Indian architect, Balkrishna Doshi, as the recipient of the Royal Gold Medal 2022.

About BV Doshi and the RIBA Royal Gold Medal 2022

- Among one of the world's highest honours for architecture, the medal is approved by Her Majesty The Queen.
- Having been conceived in 1848, the award is given to a person or group of people who have had a significant influence on the advancement of architecture.
- Doshi will be presented with the medal at a special ceremony in 2022.

1.147 Time magazine's 2021 "Person of the Year" is Elon Musk**Why in news?**

- Elon Musk, who is also the founder and CEO space exploration company SpaceX, recently passed Amazon founder Jeff Bezos as the world's wealthiest person.

About "Person of the Year" Elon Musk

- Calling him a "clown, genius, edgelord, visionary, industrialist, showman," Time magazine has named Tesla CEO Elon Musk as its Person of the Year for 2021.
- Mr. Musk, who is also the founder and CEO space exploration company SpaceX, recently passed Amazon founder Jeff Bezos as the world's wealthiest person as the rising price of Tesla pushed his net worth to around \$300 billion

1.148 Bhutan confers its highest civilian award on PM Modi**Why in news?**

- PM Modi has been conferred with the highest civilian decoration of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo.

About PM Modi being conferred the Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred with the highest civilian award of Bhutan, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo, on the occasion of the country's National Day.
- Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering shared on social media that he was overjoyed to hear His Majesty pronounce Prime Minister Modi's name for the highest civilian decoration of the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- His Majesty highlighted all the unconditional friendship and support Modiji extended over the years and particularly during the pandemic.

1.149 Raksha Mantri Awards for Excellence**Why in news?**

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh gave away Raksha Mantri Awards for Excellence 2021 on the occasion of 96th Raising Day of Directorate General Defense Estates in New Delhi on December 16, 2021.

About Raksha Mantri Awards for Excellence

- The recipients were awarded for innovation and digital achievements in the fields of health, education and sanitation along with public service and land management.

- This year, a new award has been instituted by the Raksha Mantri for achievement in implementation of 'e-Chhawani' project.
- **These categories are:**
- Swachh Chhawani Swasth Chhawani
- Digital Accomplishments
- Innovation in Public Services
- Land and Record management
- Improvement in Cantonment General Hospital
- Implementation of 'e-Chhawani' Project

About e- Chhawani

- It is a unified portal for 62 Cantonment Boards using which citizens have ready access to information regarding their cantonment board.

1.150 Kumar Mangalam Birla receives Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE)

Why in news?

- Aditya Birla Group's chairman, **Kumar Mangalam Birla** received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award- Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley.

About the awards

- Birla is the first Indian Industrialist to receive the award for global entrepreneurship along with top global business leaders Satya Nadella, Elon Musk, and Jeff Bezos.
- In addition, awards were given out to Techstars for Best Global Accelerator for Startups, MIT for Global University Promoting Student Entrepreneurship and Accel as Best Global VC Fund.
- The awards ceremony was attended by policymakers, business tycoons and entrepreneurs, that travelled from over 30 countries to Dubai for the two-day TiE Global Summit.
- These awards are meant to acknowledge the enablers of the global ecosystem. These are the people who are providing opportunities for wealth creation, job creation and the inspiration to our next generation of enablers.

1.151 Divya Hegde wins United Nations Women's Award for Leadership Commitment to Gender Equality

Why in news?

- Divya Hegde from Udupi, coastal Karnataka, has won the UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony on November 18th, 2021.

About Divya Hegde and the award

- The UN Leadership Commitment Award recognises leaders who have been instrumental in setting up strong commitments that aim to promote gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and/or community.
- This award is a joint initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact aimed at empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors.
- Divya Hegde has been recognised for her sustained efforts in advancing gender equality through climate action efforts. Her organisation, Baeru Environmental Services, works in the areas of waste

management, creation of livelihoods for rural women, and developing a circular economy in the region.

1.152 JGU wins "Digital Innovation of the Year" at the Times Higher Education Asia Awards 2021

Why in news?

- O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) has won the "Digital Innovation of the Year" award at the distinguished Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Awards 2021.

About JGU winning "Digital Innovation of the Year"

- JGU was the only Indian University to be Shortlisted for the "Digital Innovation of the Year"
- JGU's win at the Awards is a recognition of JGU's successful digital transformation and impact over the last two years. This award is also a reflection of JGU's commitment to ensure continued education for its students during the ongoing pandemic.
- However, with the collective effort put in by the faculty, students and staff and the digital governance led by our IT team, by December 2020, 24,000+ online classes were completed, 1250+ unique online examinations were conducted and 69,000+ assessments were submitted.

1.153 Greenman Viral Desai honoured with Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award

Why in news?

- Surat's noted industrialist Viral Desai, popularly known as Greenman for his love for the environment, has been awarded the prestigious Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award in Dubai.

About the awards

- Viral Desai and the other winners were felicitated at Dubai's Atlantis, The Palm, on December 23, with the Bharat Gaurav Samman by Sanskruti Yuva Sansthan. The UAE's Foreign Trade And Economic Development Department's Director-General Sheikh Awad Mohammed Mugrin graced the ceremony with his presence.
- Twenty-eight prominent personalities from 11 countries, including the UK, the US, New Zealand, France, and Malaysia, were felicitated with the prestigious awards on occasion, **but Viral Desai was the only one from India to have won the honour for climate action.**
- Some of the other awardees include motivational speaker Padma Shri Gaur Gopaldas, polo player Ashvini Kumar Sharma, Akshaya Patra Foundation's chairman Padma Shri Madhu Pandit Dasa, instrumentalist Padma Bhushan Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Padma Shri Ramkishore Chhipa, Nirbhaya's mother Asha Devi, investor banker Saket Mishra, and others

PRACTISE MCQS

1. Who among the following has won the Ballon d'Or award a record seven times in the field of football?

- A. Johan Cruyff
- B. Cristiano Ronaldo
- C. Michel Platini
- D. Lionel Messi

2. Who among the following has won the World Athletics' Woman of Year Award, 2021?

- A. Mithali Raj
- B. Jyotirmoyee Sikdar
- C. Karnam Malleswari
- D. Anju Bobby George

3. To whom among the following the Assam government will confer the state's highest civilian awards?

- A. Mukesh Ambani
- B. Shiv Nadar
- C. Uday Kotak
- D. Ratan Naval Tata

4. Which of the following books was recently named winner of the Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2021?

- A. The Man Who Knew Infinity: A Life of the Genius Ramanujan
- B. Brothers Against the Raj
- C. The Golden Threshold
- D. Naoraji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism

5. Who among the following has been announced as the recipient of the Royal Gold Medal 2022 by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)?

- A. Raj Rewal
- B. Brinda Somaya
- C. Hafeez Contractor
- D. Balkrishna Doshi

6. Who among the following has been chosen as the Time magazine's 2021 "Person of the Year"?

- A. Narendra Modi

- B. Gita Gopinath
- C. Elon Musk
- D. Jeff Bezos

7. Who among the following has been conferred with the highest civilian award of Bhutan, Ngadag Pelgi Khorlo?

- A. Narendra Modi
- B. Joe Biden
- C. Elon Musk
- D. Jeff Bezos

8. With reference to the Raksha Mantri Awards for Excellence 2021, consider the following statements:

- 1. The recipients were awarded for innovation and digital achievements in the fields of health, education and sanitation along with public service and land management.
- 2. This year, a new award has been instituted by the Raksha Mantri for achievement in implementation of 'e-Chhawani' project

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

9. Who among the following has received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE)?

- A. Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoy Tata
- B. Kumar Mangalam Birla
- C. Lakshmi Niwas Mittal
- D. Dilip Shanghvi

10. Who among the following has won the "UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment" at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific?

- A. Purna Prasad
- B. Nupur Agarwal
- C. Ashwini Gaikar

D. Divya Hegde

D. Chitkara university

11. Who among the following has won the "Digital Innovation of the Year" award at the distinguished Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Awards 2021?

- A. O.P. Jindal global university (jgu)
- B. Lovely professional university (lpu)
- C. Amity university

12. Who among the following has recently been honored with Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award in Dubai?

- A. Dia Mirza
- B. Viral Desai
- C. Chandi Prasad Bhatt
- D. Sunita Narain

Answers

- 1. ANSWER: D
- 2. ANSWER: D
- 3. ANSWER: D
- 4. ANSWER: D
- 5. ANSWER: D
- 6. ANSWER: C
- 7. ANSWER: A
- 8. ANSWER: C
- 9. ANSWER: B
- 10. ANSWER: D
- 11. ANSWER: A
- 12. ANSWER: B

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HIMACHAL PRADESH CURRENT AFFAIR

1.154 Himachal CM inaugurates artificial limbs transplant camp

Why in news?

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur, inaugurated a **state-level artificial limb transplant camp in Shimla**.

About the camp

- The Chief Minister said that steps would be taken to start this facility at the **Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital, Shimla**, for which training would be provided to doctors and the staff.
- The camp was organised by the State Social Justice and Empowerment Department with the help of the Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti.

1.155 ₹605-cr Palampur ropeway project gets NHAI nod.

Why in news?

- The Centre's move to execute the Rs 605 crore Palampur-Thathri-Chunja Glacier Ropeway Project through the NHAI.
- Union Surface and Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari in a tweet conveyed to the state that the NHAI had approved the much-awaited 13.5-km-long ropeway project, which had been hanging fire since 1990.
- The ropeway will connect Palampur with Chunja Glacier in the Dhauladhar hills at the height of 12,000-ft above sea level. Tourists will reach the snow-covered peaks within 31 minutes.

1.156 HP cricketers lift Hazare Trophy

Why in news?

- It is also Himachal's first-ever domestic title. Rishi Dhawan's team defeated the southern outfit by 11 runs after bad light stopped the play and the VJD method was applied to decide the winner.
- Shubham Arora's unbeaten knock of 136 (131 balls; 13x4, 1x6) helped Himachal Pradesh to beat Tamil Nadu to clinch their maiden Vijay Hazare Trophy title in Jaipur on Sunday.
- Himachal Pradesh seamers made the most of the early seam movement and left Tamil Nadu reeling at 40-4. Baba Aprajith (2), Narayan Jagadeesan (9), R Sai Kishore (18) and Murugan Ashwin (7) fell cheaply.

1.157 Log Valley to be tourism hotspot

Why in news?

- The government had included the Log valley under the "Nai Rahein, Nai Manzilein" scheme to develop untouched tourism spots in the region, said DC Ashutosh Garg.
- Mathasaur was a beautiful place where tourists could be attracted and asked the department to prepare a proposal for ropeway for this site from Bhalyani.
- Brown trouts were found in the valley's natural springs and streams and there was a need to publicise it. "Efforts will be made to bring the valley on the tourism map by creating basic facilities for the tourists."

1.158 CM unveils Vajpayee's statue in Manali.**Why in news?**

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur unveiled a statue of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his 97th birth anniversary on the Mall Road in Manali today. The statue has been constructed at a cost of Rs 44 lakh.
- The CM also addressed a public gathering at Prini village that has Vajpayee's residence. He said the people of Kullu district in particular and people of the state in general were fortunate that Vajpayee had special love and showered benevolence on the state and its people.
- Atal Tunnel was the vision of the former Prime Minister which had virtually transformed the economy of the tribal district of Lahaul & Spiti and was strategically very important.
- Sushasan Divas' (Good Governance Day) as a mark of respect to the former Prime Minister. He said several schemes of the state government had been named after Atal Bihari Vajpayee as a mark of respect to the beloved leader of the masses

1.159 PM Narendra Modi inaugurated hydropower projects in Himachal Pradesh**Why in news?**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently addressed a rally in Mandi and said that the hydropower projects inaugurated are a part of the climate-friendly new India and aim at conserving the environment.

About Hydropower projects

- Modi addressed the rally in Himachal Pradesh after inaugurating 287 investment projects worth over Rs 28,197 crores.
- Modi also laid the foundation of the Rs 6,700-crore Renukaji Dam project along with several other developmental projects. The dam will substantially add to the water supply of Delhi. The Luhri Stage 1 Hydro Power Project, Dhaulasidh Hydro Power Project and Sawra-Kuddu Hydro Power Project were also inaugurated. These projects aim to tap the hydropower potential of the region and are worth Rs 11,281 crore.

1.160 Himachal Pradesh stun Tamil Nadu to clinch maiden Vijay Hazare title**Why in news?**

- Himachal Pradesh stunned Tamil Nadu to clinch the Vijay Hazare Trophy for the first time ever.

About

- The Vijay Hazare Trophy, also known as the Ranji One-Day Trophy, was started in 2002-03 as a limited-overs cricket domestic competition involving state teams from the Ranji Trophy plates.
- It is named after the legendary Indian cricketer Vijay Hazare.

1.161 Amrut Scheme: Master plan for Kullu in the pipeline**Why in news?**

- Education, Arts, Language and Culture Minister of HP Govind Singh Thakur said about 82-km area having width of about 2.5 km from Bhuntar to Kothi in Kullu district had been included in the Amrut scheme to formulate a master plan to meet the basic needs of people by 2041.
- The minister said tourism is the backbone of the district. Adventure tourism, religious tourism and deity culture also need to be kept in mind

- The Government of India has launched the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) with the aim of providing basic civic amenities like water supply, sewerage, urban transport, parks as to improve the quality of life for all especially the poor and the disadvantaged.

1.162 To promote natural farming, women become messengers

Why in news?

- Rural women picked up as 'Krishi Sakhis' (community resource persons) for agriculture-related activities under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) have become the messengers of natural farming in Himachal.
- The womenfolk associated with training in natural farming technique, concept seeding at village organisation level, training and promotion of ecological practices, promotion of agri-nutri garden and running seed banks by the Himachal Pradesh Prakritik Khushhal Kisan (PK3Y) Yojana are changing the mindsets, with sustainable agriculture, income, environment and nutrition in focus.

1.163 IIT Mandi Innovate New Fabric To Mix Artica Parviflora With Cotton

Why in news?

- IIT MANDI INNOVATE NEW FABRIC TO MIX ARTICA PARVIFLORA
- (FOUND FROM HIMALAYANS) WITH COTTON UNDER HIS STARTUP PROGRAMS
- THIS FABRIC WILL BE SUITABLE FOR BOTH SUMMER And winter seasons.
- This innovation help also to plantation programs in the forests.

1.164 Activists protest demolition of Buddha's statue in Tibet

Why in news?

- Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) activists took out a candlelight march in McLeodganj last night to protest the demolition of a 99-foot-tall statue of the Buddha by the Chinese government in Tibet.
- The bronze statue was built with the contributions of Tibetans in Drakgo which cost around 40,000,000 Yuan (around 6.3 million USD). In 1973, Drakgo had witnessed a massive earthquake that caused widespread damage. The statue was built on October 5, 2015, to ward off natural disasters.

1.165 Pawan Hans to cut-heli taxi fares soon

Why in news?

- Pawan Hans has assured Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur that the fares of the Shimla-Dharamsala heli-taxi services will be reduced to promote tourism in the state.
- The Chief Minister met Sanjeev Razdan, Managing Director, Pawan Hans Ltd., in New Delhi today and reviewed the government company's operations in Himachal Pradesh.
- He asked Razdan to reduce the fare of the Shimla-Dharamsala heli-taxi services and operate direct flights from Shimla to Dharamsala and Shimla to Manali at the earliest.

1.166 Raise import duty on apple to 100%, Himachal CM urges Centre

Why in news?

- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur today urged the Central Government to increase import duty on apple from 50 per cent to 100 per cent to protect Himachal growers and approve the Mandi airport project.

- The import duty on apple should be increased and the crop should be excluded from the list of fruits and other commodities brought under the Open General Licence.
- Apple is the main horticultural crop of the state and a primary source of livelihood for a large population. However, due to a huge arrival of imported apple in the national market, the prices of Himachal apple have fallen sharply, leading to revenue loss to local horticulturists,”

1.167 Lahaul Snow Fest from January 13

Why in news?

- The 75-day Snow Festival will begin with prayers at the famous Triloknath temple in the Lahaul valley on January 13.
- The festival would be celebrated according to religious beliefs and traditional customs, and also keeping in mind the calendar fixed by the Lamas (monks) of the valley for various events.
- The festivals of Udna, Gochi, Halda, Fagli and Yor organised in Gahar, Pattan and Tinan valleys would also be associated with the Snow Festival to make tourists aware about the rich traditions of the region.
- It is one of the longest festivals celebrated in India and is on a par with the 75-day Bastar Dussehra held in Chhattisgarh. The cultural traditions and ancient festivals have been rejuvenated through this festival.

PRACTISE MCQS

- 1. Where has the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Jai Ram Thakur, inaugurated a state-level artificial limb transplant camp?**
 - A. Kangra
 - B. Hamirpur
 - C. Shimla
 - D. Una
- 2. Chunja glacier is situated in which hills of Himachal Pradesh?**
 - A. Dhauladhar Hills
 - B. Shivalik Hills
 - C. Pir Panjal
 - D. None of the above
- 3. Himachal Pradesh defeat which of the following team to win Vijay Hazare Trophy?**
 - A. Tamil Nadu
 - B. Services
 - C. Mumbai
 - D. Saurashtra
- 4. Lug Valley is situated in which of the following district of Himachal?**
 - A. Kullu
 - B. Mandi
 - C. Shimla
 - D. Hamirpur
- 5. Where did cm of Himachal unveil the statue of former pm Atal Bihari Vajpayee?**
 - A. Manali
 - B. Dharmshala
 - C. Lahaul Spiti
 - D. Solan
- 6. The Dhaulasidh Hydro Power Project is located in which of the following states of India?**
 - A. Haryana
 - B. Himachal Pradesh
 - C. Punjab
 - D. Uttarakhand
- 7. Which of the following states has stunned Tamil Nadu to clinch the Vijay Hazare Trophy for the first time ever?**
 - A. Haryana
 - B. Assam
 - C. Gujarat
 - D. Himachal Pradesh
- 8. What is the Aim of AMRUT Scheme?**
 - A. Providing basic civic amenities
 - B. B. Improve infrastructure
 - C. Improve medical facilities
 - D. Improve school education
- 9. Krishi Sakhi is a**
 - A. Community Agriculture care Service Provider
 - B. Banking service provider
 - C. Medical assistant
 - D. None of the above
- 10. IIT MANDI INNOVATE NEW FABRIC TO MIX ARTICA PARVIFLORA WITH COTTON UNDER HIS STARTUP PROGRAMS IIT MANDI WAS STARTED IN**
 - A. 2008
 - B. 2009
 - C. 2010
 - D. 2011
- 11. Who is the president of Tibetan government-in-exile?**
 - A. Penpa Tsering
 - B. Lobsang sangay
 - C. Aung sang suu kii
 - D. Dalai lama
- 12. Which helicopter service company are providing heli taxi services to Himachal Pradesh?**
 - A. Pawan hans

- B. Ubify technologies
- C. Uber air taxi
- D. All of the above

13. What is the present import duty on apples imposed by Govt of India?

- A. 50 %
- B. 60%
- C. 70 %
- D. 40%

14. 75 Days Snow fest will be organised in which of the following place of himachal Pradesh?

- A. Lahaul valley
- B. Dharmshala
- C. Kaza
- D. Kufri

Answers

- 1. ANSWER: C
- 2. ANSWER - A
- 3. ANSWER - A
- 4. ANSWER - A
- 5. ANSWER: A
- 6. ANSWER: B
- 7. ANSWER: D
- 8. ANSWER: A
- 9. ANSWER: A
- 10. ANSWER: B
- 11. ANSWER: A
- 12. ANSWER: A
- 13. ANSWER: A
- 14. ANSWER:A

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