



PLUTUS ACADEMY

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS



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13/12/2021 to 19/12/2021

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

DECEMBER 2021

National News

1. SENIOR SCIENTIST DR BISWAJIT BORKAKOTY PREPARES KIT DETECTING OMICRON VARIANT WITHIN 2 HOURS



- ICMR-RMRC Dibrugarh led by Senior Scientist Dr Biswajit Borkakoty has prepared a kit that enables detection of Omicron variant within 2 hours.
- This is important because as of now, a minimum of 36 hours is required for targeted sequencing and 4-5 days for the whole-genome sequencing to detect the variant.
- Internal validation has shown that the tests are 100% accurate.
- The kit is being synthesized in bulk based on ICMR-RMRC Dibrugarh's design by a 100% make in India Kolkata-based biotech company GCC biotech in PPP mode.

2. CENTRE TO ORGANIZE “INNOVATION WEEK” TO ENCOURAGE STARTUP ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA



- As a part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, a week-long event, “Celebrating Innovation Ecosystem”, to be hosted by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), is proposed to be held in January, 2022.
- The event will mark the 6th anniversary of the launch of the Startup India initiative. DPIIT Secretary, Anurag Jain reviewed the project at a high-level meeting.
- The key objectives of the Innovation Week will be to bring together the country’s key Startups, entrepreneurs, investors, policy makers and other national/ international stakeholders for a specially curated event on innovation and entrepreneurship and to exchange knowledge on best practices on nurturing Startup ecosystems.
- The proposed week-long event comprises activities organised with specific themes.
- The tentative themes are International Engagements, market access and incubation support, funding support to Start-ups etc and will cover the different areas of the innovation lifecycle.

3. INDIA’S HARNAAZ SANDHU CROWNED MISS UNIVERSE 2021



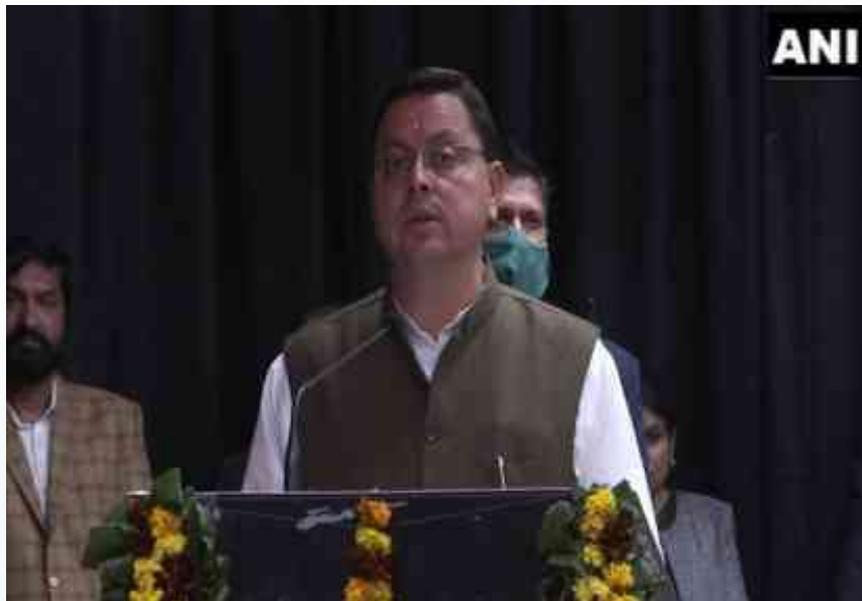
- India's Harnaaz Sandhu has been crowned Miss Universe 2021, two decades after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000. 21-year-old Harnaaz has won the Miss Universe crown at the contest held in Eilat, Israel on Monday morning. Harnaaz edged out contestants from Paraguay and South Africa to bag the crown.
- The moment her name was declared as the winner, Harnaaz broke down with tears of joy. She could also be seen joining her hands in gratitude. Mexico's Andrea Meza, the reigning queen, passed on her crown to the new successor.
- India had earlier won the coveted crown twice with Sushmita Sen bagging the title in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000.
- The 21-year-old Harnaaz, hailing from Chandigarh, has now joined the league of these incredible women.

4. PM MODI TO INAUGURATE SHRI KASHI VISHWANATH DHAM IN VARANASI ON MONDAY



- The Prime Minister will visit Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple at around 1 PM tomorrow, to offer prayers, after which, he will inaugurate first phase of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham, constructed at a cost of around 339 crore rupees.
- A total of 23 buildings will be inaugurated in the first phase of the project.
- Kashi Vishwanath (KV) Dham will transform the area around the holy Kashi Vishwanath Temple. Before the KV Dham, the KV temple lacked direct visibility from the Ganges.
- The 20-25 feet wide corridor will connect Lalita Ghat on Ganges to the Mandir Chowk in the temple premises.
- Like ancient times, a devout Shiva bhakt can take a dip in the holy river every morning and pay his tribute to Lord Shiva in the temple, which will now have a direct visibility from the Ghat. Before the KV Dham, one had to go through multiple lanes to visit the temple from the ghat.
- Like ancient Temples, the KV temple will have an area of its own with a giant courtyard. Earlier, one had to go through narrow lanes to enter the premises of the temple.

5. UTTARAKHAND CM LAUNCHED 'MILK PRICE INCENTIVE SCHEME' TO BENEFIT OVER 50,000 PEOPLE



- Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama unveiled the Milk Price Incentive Scheme, which will benefit around 53,000 people in the district.
- Dhama stated during the rally in Dehradun that he expects Uttarakhand to be the top milk producing state in India by the time the state celebrates its 25th anniversary.
- Ganga Cow Scheme: Ganga cow scheme and incentive amount of Rs.3-4 per litre of milk was also announced by the government so that milk production could be promoted and consumption could be met in time.
- Kamdhenu Scheme: The scheme was started in Uttarakhand on the lines of UP. Although there was a provision in Uttarakhand for a 25% subsidy for general farmers and a 33% subsidy for SC-ST on loans up to Rs.6 lakh for dairy under NABARD, farmers did not take advantage of it owing to a lack of knowledge.
- Uttarakhand Capitals: Dehradun (Winter), Gairsain (Summer)
- Uttarakhand Governor: Lt Gen Gurmit Singh

6. HAIDERPUR WETLAND IN UTTAR PRADESH RECOGNISED AS RAMSAR SITE

- Haiderpur wetland is one of the largest human-made wetland that was formed in 1984 after the construction of Madhya Ganga Barrage.
- The region is fed by the Ganges and its tributary Solani river, constituting an area of 6908 hectare within the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary in Muzaffarnagar and Bijnor districts.
- The wetland lies in the strategic Central Asian Flyway which is as an important stop over site for the winter migratory birds.
- The wetland has also been identified under Namami Gange, a central flagship, as a model wetland along the Ganga. With this, there are now a total of 47 such designated areas in the country.



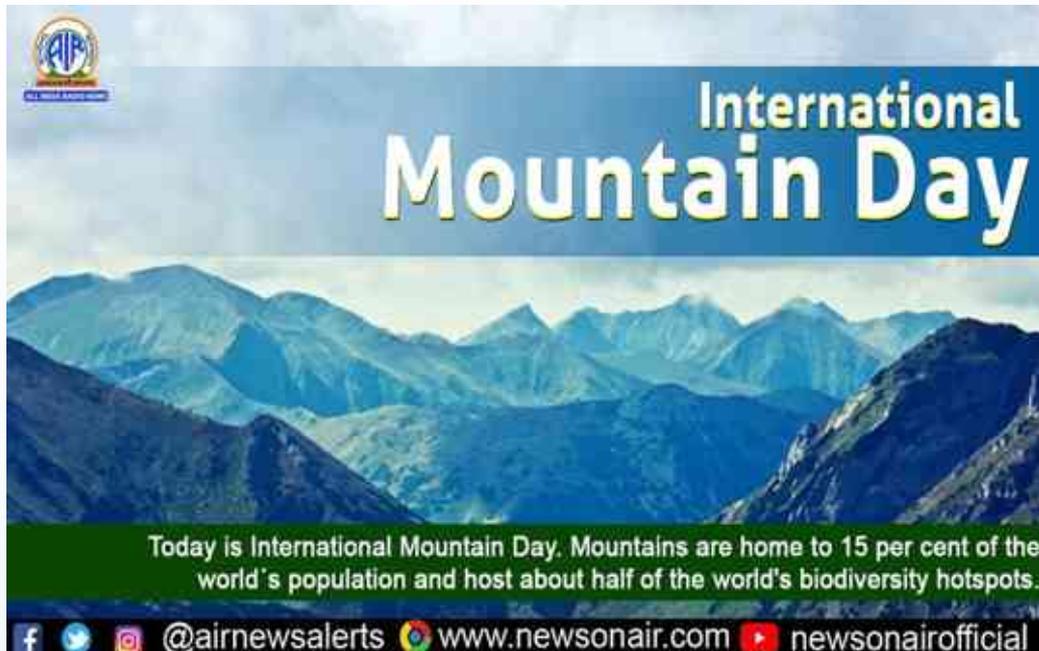
Important Days

7. UNICEF DAY 2021: 11 DECEMBER



- Every year, UNICEF Day is observed on December 11 to raise awareness about saving children's lives by defending and helping them to fulfil their wishes.
- The day provides assistance for the health, nutrition, education, and welfare of children during World War II.
- The theme for this year is to help children recover from interruptions and learning losses experienced through pandemics in the last two years.
- The day was established after World War II to assist people who needed help and whose lives were at risk.
- Later in 1953, UNICEF became a permanent agency of the United Nations.
- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Catherine Russell as the head of UN children's agency UNICEF, also known as the United Nations Children's Fund.

8. INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN DAY: 11TH OF DECEMBER



- The International Mountain Day is being celebrated today. The day is celebrated on 11th of December every year. The day aims to encourage sustainable development in mountains.
- The increasing attention to the importance of mountains led the UN to declare 2002 the UN International Year of Mountains.
- The International Day was celebrated for the first time the following year, 2003.
- International Mountain Day gives us an opportunity to spread awareness about protecting the mountain biodiversity as these delicate ecosystems are under tremendous pressure from climate change, overexploitation and pollution.
- The theme of this year's International Mountain Day is 'Sustainable mountain tourism'.

Obituary

9. GOTHIC NOVEL AUTHOR ANNE RICE PASSES AWAY AT 80



- Author Anne Rice, widely known for her bestselling gothic novel, Interview with the Vampire, has passed away at the age of 80.
- The American writer, who sold more than 150 million books, died last night due to complications resulting from a stroke, her son announced on her Facebook page.
- Interview with the Vampire was published in 1976 and went on to become a best seller. It was later adapted into a movie starring Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt in 1994.
- Anne Rice went on to write sequels to the book, forming a series called The Vampire Chronicles.
- Another of her books from the series, Queen of the Damned, was also made into a film in 2002.

Defence News

10. DRDO, IAF SUCCESSFULLY FLIGHT-TEST STAND-OFF ANTI-TANK MISSILE



- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Air Force flight-tested the indigenously designed and developed Helicopter-launched Stand-off Anti-tank (SANT) Missile from Pokhran range on Saturday.
- The flight-test was successful in meeting all its mission objectives. Ministry of Defence in a statement said, the missile is equipped with a state-of-the-art Millimetre Wave Seeker which provides high precision strike capability from a safe distance.
- The weapon can neutralise targets in 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 long-range bomb and smart anti-airfield weapon for strengthening the arsenal of IAF.

11. INDIA SUCCESSFULLY TESTS EXTENDED RANGE VERSION OF MULTI BARREL ROCKET LAUNCHER SYSTEM, PINAKA-ER



- The Pinaka-ER Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System was successfully tested at Pokharan range.
- Successful tests of Pinaka Extended Range (Pinaka-ER), Area Denial Munitions (ADM) and indigenously developed fuzes have been carried out at various test ranges.
- The system is jointly designed by laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) - Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune.
- The Pinaka - ER is the upgraded version of the earlier version of Pinaka which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade.
- The system has been designed in the light of emerging requirements with advanced technologies enhancing the range.

Awards and Honours

12. INDIAN MATHEMATICIAN NEENA GUPTA RECEIVES RAMANUJAN PRIZE 2021

- Professor Neena Gupta, a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in Kolkata was awarded the 'Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from Developing Countries 2021' for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra, the Ministry of Science and Technology informed, adding that Professor Neena is the third woman to receive the Ramanujan Prize since its inception in 2004.
- In 2014, Professor Neena Gupta had received the 'Young Scientist award from the Indian National Science Academy, which called her work among one of the best done so far in algebraic geometry in recent years.
- In 2019, Professor Gupta became one of the youngest people to receive the 'Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize' at the age of 35.

- The prize, named after Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, was first awarded in 2005 and is administered by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) jointly with the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, and the International Mathematical Union (IMU).



Index and Report

13. INDIA SKILLS REPORT 2022 : MAHARASHTRA RETAINS TOP POSITION



- The 9th edition of India Skills Report (ISR) 2022, released by Wheebox, Maharashtra has retained the top position in the list of states with the highest poll of employable talent followed by Uttar Pradesh and Kerala.
- The theme of ISR 2022 – ‘Rebuilding and Reengineering the Future of Work’.
- India Skills Report is a full-fledged report about the future of work, education, and skilling to match the talent demand and supply in a growing India.
- Pune is the city with the most highly employable resources with 78% of the test takers scoring above 60 per cent.
- Maharashtra Topped the list.
- Maharashtra 66.1, Uttar Pradesh 65.2, Kerala 64.2, West Bengal 63.8, Karnataka 59.3

By Sameer Singhal

National News

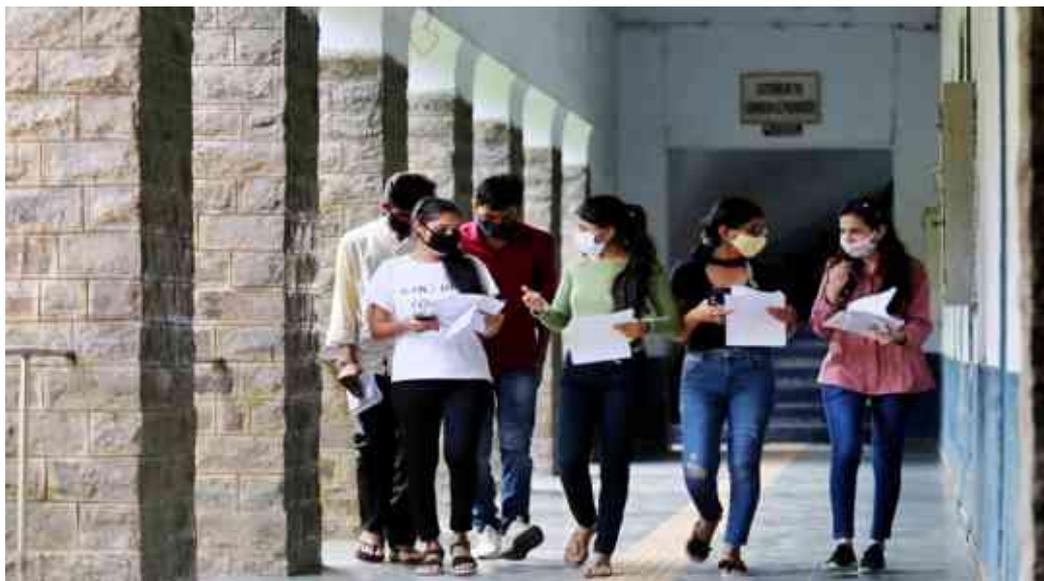
1. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT MINISTER DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR LAUNCHES NATIONAL HELPLINE AGAINST ATROCITIES ON SCs/STs



- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar today launched a National Helpline Against Atrocities in New Delhi.
- The Helpline is now available round the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country.
- The service is available in Hindi, English, and regional language of the State and Union Territories.
- It will ensure proper implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.
- It can be accessed by making a voice call either from a mobile or landline number of any Telecom Operator across the country.
- The Prevention of Atrocities Act was enacted with a prime objective view of preventing atrocities on members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

2. KARNATAKA GOVT SIGNS LOU WITH UNDP TO IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

- The Karnataka Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports has signed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as part of the state-level initiative 'Code-Unnati' with the aim of improving access to entrepreneurship and employment opportunities among the youth, including women.
- Fifty colleges, including government pre-university, ITIs, polytechnics and Arts & Science colleges, have already been identified to work with the faculty members and student communities in areas of Training and Capacity Building, Training in the 21st Century & Digital Skills, Entrepreneurship Development, Innovation Challenges, Boot Camps, Corporate Volunteering and Industry Connect.



3. ISRO, OPPO COLLABORATE TO STRENGTHEN R&D OF NAVIC MESSAGING SERVICE



- The Indian Space Research Organisation has signed an agreement with Chinese smart devices maker Oppo's Indian arm to strengthen the research and development of the NavIC messaging service.
- The messaging service is mainly used for broadcasting safety-of-life alerts in areas with poor or no communication, particularly in the oceans. Oppo India has its manufacturing unit in Noida and an R&D centre in Hyderabad.
- Both ISRO and Oppo India will exchange technical information of NavIC messaging services to build rapid, ready-to-use, end-to-end application-specific solutions.
- NavIC is a messaging service platform, which provides regional navigation services covering the entire country and an area up to 1,500 km beyond the Indian boundaries.

Sports News

4. NORWAY'S MAGNUS CARLSEN WINS FIDE WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP



- Reigning world chess champion Magnus Carlsen of Norway defended his title and won the FIDE World Championship in Dubai.
- He beat Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia, securing the one point he needed to cross the seven-point threshold to win the global tournament held at Dubai's Expo 2020 this month in the United Arab Emirates.

Awards and Recognition

5. AZIM PREMJI RECEIVES DR. IDA S. SCUDDER ORATION AWARD



- Azim Premji, founder chairman of Wipro Limited and founder of Azim Premji Foundation is this year's recipient of the 10th annual Dr Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration, jointly established by Christian Medical College Vellore (CMC) and the U.S.-based Vellore CMC Foundation.
- Dr Scudder who was born in Ranipet in 1870 dedicated her life to bringing modern healthcare and medical education to the people of India.
- The Oration seeks to inspire people to emulate her dedication to the service of humanity by honouring exceptional individuals.

6. TESLA CEO ELON MUSK NAMED TIME'S PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021



- Elon Musk, the founder of rocket company SpaceX and electric car maker Tesla, on Monday, has been named Time's 'Person of The Year 2021'.
- Previously the title was held by US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.
- According to The Hollywood Reporter, the magazine and media brand's editor-in-chief and CEO Edward Felsenthal, in his editor's letter spoke about the decision of selecting Musk, the richest man in the world.
- In addition to its main honoree, Time also announced an Entertainer of the Year, and Athlete of the Year, and Heroes of the Year.
- Singer-songwriter Olivia Rodrigo was named Entertainer of the Year, gymnast Simone Biles was named Athlete of the Year, and the Heroes of the Year were "Vaccine scientists and the miracle of mRNA."

Defence News

7. INDIA LAUNCHES SUPERSONIC MISSILE ASSISTED TORPEDO SYSTEM

- India on Monday successfully launched Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo System (SMAT) from Abdul Kalam island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, off the Odisha coast, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- During the mission, the full range capability of the missile was successfully demonstrated.
- The system has been designed to enhance anti-submarine warfare capability far beyond the conventional range of the torpedo, the DRDO said.

- Secretary, Department of Defence R&D, and DRDO Chairman Dr G Satheesh Reddy



Index and Reports

8. WORLD TALENT RANKING REPORT 2021: INDIA RANKED 56TH



- IMD World Competitive Centre published its “World Talent Ranking Report” on December 9, 2021.
- Report grades 64 economies on the basis of a range of factors like: How economies invest in and develop local personnel, ability to attract & retain skilled workers, and, Quality of domestic talent pools.
- Switzerland has retained its top spot.
- In the Arab world, UAE maintained its top position.
- The UAE has been ranked first in sub-indexes of readiness of skilled labour, student mobility inbound, competent senior managers and appeal for zero personal income tax.

9. 2021 GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY INDEX



- As per the Global Health Security (GHS) Index 2021, the world's average overall GHS Index score was reduced to 38.9 (out of 100) in 2021, from a score of 40.2 in the GHS Index, 2019.
- GHS Index is developed in partnership with the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) and the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security at the Bloomberg School of Public Health.
- India ranked 66 out of 195 countries with an overall Index score of 42.8
- The United States of America (USA) ranked 1st on the index with a score of 75.9 followed by Australia and Finland.

Important Days

10. NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION DAY 2021



- World Energy Conservation Day 2021 is observed on December 14 every year.
- It focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promoting efforts towards saving energy resources.
- With a growing population, the requirement for energy resources is also increasing. Energy conservation is an effort made to reduce the consumption of fuel and use the least energy resources to save for the future.
- The Energy Efficiency Bureau implemented the Indian Energy Conservation Act in 2001.
- The BEE is a constitutional body that works under the Indian Government and helps in the development of policies and strategies to reduce the use of energy.
- The BEE also forms policies pertaining to energy conservation and works in warning the public around the same issue.
- The theme for World Energy Conservation Day 2021 has not yet been released. In 2020, the theme was 'Conserve Energy and Save the Future'.

By Sameer Singhal

National News

1. HP GOVT NOTIFIES COMMISSION FOR 'GENERAL CATEGORY'



- Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Friday announced formation of a Commission for 'General category' on the lines of one implemented in Madhya Pradesh.
- Within minutes of the announcement Thakur made in the state assembly in Dharamsala, a notification was issued formalising the decision.
- The Commission, to be named as 'Samanya Varg Aayog', will be formalised through a legislative enactment in three months' time when the state assembly meets next in February-March 2021 for the budget session of the House.

- A Scheduled Caste Commission is already in operation in Himachal Pradesh and is chaired by former Shimla MP Virendra Kashyap.
- As per the 2011 population census, Himachal Pradesh has a population of 68.56 lakhs of which 19.29 lakh, which is 25.22 per cent, are SCs, while the other 4 lakhs are STs, which is 5.71 % and other 9.03 lakh are OBCs, which is 13.52%.

2. DELHI POLICE LAUNCHED E-LEARNING PLATFORM “UNNATI”



- Police Commissioner of Delhi, Rakesh Asthana has launched an e-learning platform ‘Unnati’, under the Delhi Police’s flagship scheme ‘YUVA’ at the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) Auditorium, New Delhi.
- Every year, over 1.5 lakh people are arrested by the Delhi Police for various crimes. More than 85 per cent of them are first-timers and only 10-15 per cent are repeat offenders.
- Unnati is an e-learning and certification initiative by the Delhi Police-South West District to help educate youths and impart skill training to school dropouts from the weaker sections of society.
- The courses offered under ‘Unnati’ include digital literacy courses comprising basic computer courses and typing training, preparatory courses for competitive exams and sports courses, among others.

3. CENTRE GRANTS GI TAG TO BIHAR’S MITHILA MAKHAAN



- 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.
- The Sabour based Bihar Agriculture University (BAU) initiated an application on behalf of the Mithilanchal Makhana Utpadak Sangh (MMUS) to name their produce as Mithila Makhana for the welfare of fox nut growers in the Mithila region.

4. MADHYA PRADESH GOVT ORGANISED FIRST DRONE MELA AT GWALIOR



- In Madhya Pradesh, the first drone fair in the country was organized at Gwalior.
- Gwalior Drone Mela was organized jointly by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Government of India, the Government of Madhya Pradesh, and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).
- Mr Scindia said that five Drone Schools will be opened in Gwalior, Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Satna in Madhya Pradesh.
- Madhya Pradesh Capital: Bhopal
- Madhya Pradesh Governor: Mangubhai C. Patel
- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister: Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

5. DEFENCE MINISTER RAJNATH SINGH INAUGURATES SWARNIM VIJAY PARV

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated Swarnim Vijay Parv commemorating 50 years of India's victory in the 1971 war. He inaugurates 'Wall of Fame -1971 Indo-Pak War' at the inaugural ceremony.
- Swarnim Vijay Parv is an event commemorating the valour & professionalism of the Armed Forces and their contribution to the liberation of Bangladesh in the Indo-Pak 1971 war, at India Gate Lawns in New Delhi on December 12, 2021.
- The event marks the culmination of year-long celebrations of 50 years of India's victory in 1971. The event will be opened to the public after the inauguration. Many dignitaries, including those from Bangladesh, will be present.



Sports News

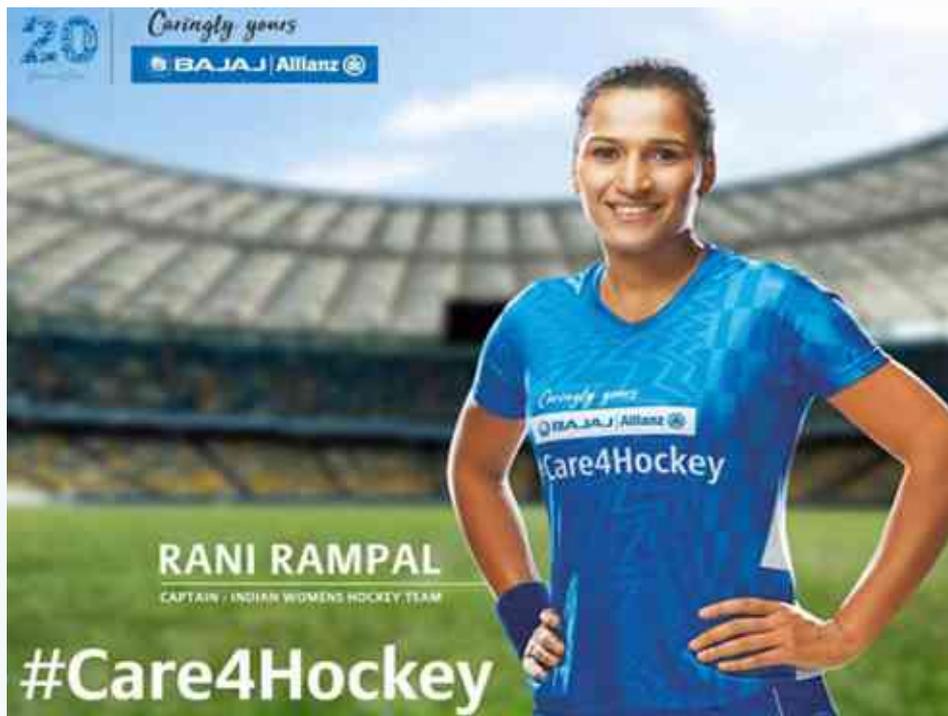
6. SPORTS MINISTER ANURAG THAKUR LAUNCHES 1ST EDITION OF KHELO INDIA U-21 WOMEN'S HOCKEY LEAGUE



- Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur today launched first edition of Khelo India Women's Hockey League U-21 at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in New Delhi today.
- A total of 14 teams across different States will participate in the league from 15th to 21st of this month.
- Speaking on the occasion, Mr Thakur said, if Leagues are established across the country before participation in big events, it will help athletes to play around the year.
- He congratulated Hockey India and Sports Authority of India for giving an opportunity to young women hockey players. Mr Thakur said, this platform will provide opportunity to Hockey players to showcase their talent.
- Minister of State for Sports Nisith Pramanik was also present on the occasion.

Banking News

7. BAJAJ ALLIANZ GENERAL INSURANCE STARTS '#CARE4HOCKEY' CAMPAIGN



- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, one of the leading private general insurers in India today announced the launch of its '#Care4Hockey' campaign.
- The company has partnered with Padma Shri (2020) Rani Rampal, Indian Women's Hockey Team Captain, who will be the face of the campaign.
- '#Care4Hockey' is a one of its kind campaign which aims to support the development of Hockey in India from the grass-root level.
- As a part of this association, the Company will contribute towards supporting underprivileged children pursuing hockey in terms of coaching, nutrition, and equipment.
- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Founded: 2001
- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Headquarters: Pune, Maharashtra
- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance CEO & MD: Tapan Singhel

International News

8. DUBAI 1ST IN WORLD TO GO 100% PAPERLESS

- Dubai became the world's first government to turn 100% paperless, the announcement was made by the United Arab Emirate (UAE) Crown Prince, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.
- It will save around 3 billion Dirham (USD 350 million).
- UAE Capital: Abu Dhabi

- UAE Currency: United Arab Emirates dirham
- UAE President: Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.



9. UAE BECOMES FIRST COUNTRY TO TRANSITION TO 4.5-DAY WORK WEEK



- 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.
- 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.
- UAE Capital: Abu Dhabi
- UAE Currency: United Arab Emirates dirham
- UAE President: Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

10. INDIA RE-ELECTED TO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION COUNCIL FOR 2022-23

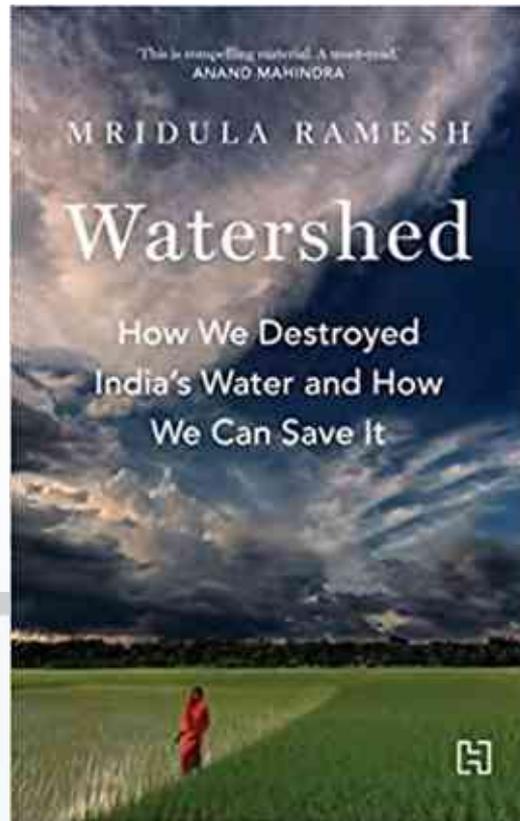


- India has been re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council after elections were held at its Assembly in London for the 2022-23 biennium.
- India's election falls under the Category of 10 states with "the largest interest in international seaborne trade", alongside Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- The newly elected Council will meet formally at the conclusion of the 32nd Assembly for the IMO's 126th session on Wednesday, when it will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair for the next biennium.
- India is re-elected to International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council, the High Commission of India in London said in a Twitter statement following the election on Friday.
- International Maritime Organisation Headquarters: London, United Kingdom
- International Maritime Organisation Founder: United Nations
- International Maritime Organisation Founded: 17 March 1948

Books and Authors

11. WATERSHED: HOW WE DESTROYED INDIA'S WATER AND HOW WE CAN SAVE IT

- Mriduala Ramesh, the founder of Sundaram Climate Institute, which works on water and waste solutions and the angel investor in cleantech start-ups, has authored a new book titled "Watershed: How We Destroyed India's Water And How We Can Save It".
- Mriduala Ramesh is the author of "The Climate Solution" and she writes regularly on climate issues. She is also a member of the board of trustees of World Wildlife Fund (WWF), India, and chairperson of the board of governors at the National Institute of Technology, Andhra Pradesh (AP).



Appointments

12. MEET LEENA NAIR, CHANEL'S NEW INDIAN-ORIGIN GLOBAL CEO



- The first female and youngest-ever Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) at FMCG major Unilever Leena Nair has stepped down to join the French luxury fashion group Chanel(Shun-nel) as its Global CEO. She will be based in London.

- “Leena Nair, CHRO, has decided to leave the company in January 2022 to pursue a new career opportunity as Global Chief Executive Officer, Chanel Ltd,” Unilever said in a statement.
- Leena Nair was associated with Unilever for 30 years and she started out as a management trainee in the company in 1992.
- After this, she assumed roles like Factory Personnel Manager of Lipton India from 1993-96, Employee Relations Manager at HUL from 1996-97, Management Development Planning Manager of HUL from 1997-2000, HR Manager of Home and Personal Care India from 2003-04, General Manager HR of Home and Personal Care India and General Manager of HR IND in 2006, as per her LinkedIn profile.

By Sameer Singhal

National News

1. UNESCO ADDS DURGA PUJA TO ITS REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY



- Durga Puja in Kolkata has been inscribed on the Intangible Heritage list by UNESCO.
- In an important announcement, the Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO’s 2003 Convention on Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage has inscribed ‘Durga Puja in Kolkata’ on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during its 16th session being held at Paris, France.
- The Committee commended Durga Puja for its initiatives to involve marginalized groups, and individuals as well as women in their participation in safeguarding the element.
- Culture Minister G Kishen Reddy said that this is a recognition of the confluence of India’s rich heritage, culture, rituals and practices and a celebration of the feminine divinity and the spirit of womanhood.

2. GOVT APPROVES RS 76,000 CRORE SCHEME TO BOOST SEMICONDUCTOR AND DISPLAY MANUFACTURING IN COUNTRY



- The Cabinet has approved a programme for Development of Semiconductors and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem in the country.
- Briefing reporters after the Cabinet meeting in New Delhi yesterday, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said, 76 thousand crore rupees will be spent on this project in the next six years.
- He said, this will strengthen India's journey towards Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

3. UTTARAKHAND'S ASKOT WILDLIFE SANCTUARY DECLARED ECO-SENSITIVE ZONE



- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), an area of 454.65 square kilometres around the boundary of Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand has been declared as the Askot Wildlife Sanctuary Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ).
- The notified area extends from 0 to 22 km around the Askot Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The Askot Wildlife Sanctuary was established to protect the endangered flagship species Musk Deer and its habitat. The Askot Wildlife Sanctuary is also known as Musk Deer Park.
- Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change: Bhupender Yadav.

4. MISSION SHAKTI LIVING LAB LAUNCHED IN ODISHA



- Odisha inked an agreement with United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) to launch “Mission Shakti Living Lab” for the financial empowerment of women.
- A Global Centre for Financial Health, to launch Mission Shakti Living Lab empowering women economically and drive gender equality.
- It will address the barriers related to the autonomy and financial freedom of women.
- Mission Shakti was launched in 2001 to enhance the holistic development of women, there are 6.02 lakh self-help groups (SHGs) comprising 70 lakh members across rural and urban areas of Odisha under the initiative.

5. INDIA BAGS THREE MORE MEDALS AT COMMONWEALTH WEIGHTLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN TASHKENT, TAKING TOTAL TALLY TO 12

- Indian weightlifters Punam Yadav, Arockiya Alish and Vikas Thakur have added three more medals to the country’s tally at the ongoing Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2021 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- Punam bagged a silver medal in the women’s 76kg category, having lifted a total of 220kg with 98kg snatch and a 122kg in clean and jerk.
- 2018 Commonwealth Games gold medallist compatriot R Arockiya Alish clinched bronze in the same category for a total lift of 214kg with 91123. In this category, Canada’s Maya Laylor won the Commonwealth gold for a total of 229kg with 99130.
- Earlier, twice CWG medallist Vikas Thakur clinched the bronze medal in the men’s 96kg at the championships. The seven-time national champion pulled off a combined lift of 339kg with 150189.

- So far, India have won 12 medals at the Commonwealth championships, including three golds.
- Meanwhile, Indian weightlifters Jeremy Lalrinnunga and Achinta Sheuli have secured direct qualification to the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games.
- The two earlier clinched gold medals in their respective categories at the ongoing Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent.



6. DAVID WARNER & HAYLEY MATTHEWS BAGS ICC PLAYER OF THE MONTH FOR NOVEMBER



- Explosive Australia opener David Warner and West Indies all-rounder Hayley Matthews were on Monday adjudged the men's and women's ICC Players of the Month of November after their superlative performances.
- Australian opener David Warner has bagged the ICC Player Of The Month for November. The southpaw has been in scintillating form in recent times. He was the Player of the Tournament as Australia won their maiden T20 World Cup title
- West Indies all-rounder Hayley Matthews secured the Women's Player of the Month award. David Warner scored 289 runs in seven matches in the tournament at a strike rate of 146.70, out of which 209 runs came from four games in November.

Banking News

7. BANK OF BARODA LAUNCHES BOB WORLD WAVE, A WEARABLE PAYMENT SOLUTION



- Bank of Baroda (BoB) has launched a solution for digital banking payments, named bob World Wave. Wearable technology is witnessing the rise of tremendous interest across the world and lenders are using this opportunity to adopt the more convenient and cashless digital payments systems.
- 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 teleconsultation and interactive video coaching.
- 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.
- Bank Of Baroda Headquarters: Vadodara, Gujarat, India

International News

8. NASA SPACECRAFT 'TOUCHES' THE SUN. WHAT THIS HISTORIC MILESTONE MEANS FOR SCIENCE

- Spacecraft launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) has achieved a feat once thought impossible.
- For the first time in history, a spacecraft has touched the corona of the Sun – an extreme environment that's roughly 2 million degrees Fahrenheit – in a milestone that marks one major step for the spacefaring organisation and one giant leap for mankind and solar science.
- The rocketship, called the Parker Solar Probe, successfully entered and flew through the Sun's upper atmosphere – the corona – on April 28 and sampled particles and magnetic fields situated on the surface of the red-hot star.



PLUTUS Academy

Important Days

9. NATION OBSERVES 50TH VIJAY DIWAS ON 16 DECEMBER 2021



- In India, Vijay Diwas (also called Victory Day) is celebrated every year on December 16. The country is celebrating the 50th Vijay Diwas in 2021.
- Vijay Diwas is observed to commemorate the service, valour, and sacrifices of the gallant men of the Indian Armed Forces' victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war.
- The Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 which began on December 3 lasted for 13 days and officially ended on December 16, after which Pakistan surrendered to India.
- It was on this day in 1971, the chief of the Pakistani forces, General AA Khan Niazi, along with 93 thousand troops, had surrendered unconditionally to the allied forces consisting of the Indian Army and Mukti Bahini.

Appointments

10. RAVINDER BHAKAR ASSUMES CHARGE OF NFDC, FILMS DIVISION AND CFSI



- Ravinder Bhakar, CEO of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has assumed charge of National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Films Division, and Children Films Society of India (CFSI) today.
- Mr. Bhakar, a 1999-batch officer of Indian Railway Stores Service (IRSS), has been assigned these charges in addition to his present duties as CEO of the film certification body.

By Sameer Singhal

National News

1. 3RD ANNUAL DEFENCE DIALOGUE BETWEEN INDIA AND FRANCE



- “The 3rd Annual Defence Dialogue between India and France will be held at ‘Vigyan Bhawan’ in New Delhi today.
- The talks will cover aspects of wide-ranging Indo-French defence cooperation, including operational defence cooperation, particularly maritime security in Indo-Pacific; an industrial and technological partnership in line with Make in India and counter-terrorism cooperation.

2. US BRAND PATAGONIA PURCHASES KHADI DENIM WORTH 1.08 CR FROM GUJARAT



- US-based world's leading fashion brand, Patagonia, is now using handcrafted Khadi Denim fabric for making Denim apparels. Patagonia, through textile major Arvind Mills, has purchased nearly 30,000 meters of Khadi Denim Fabric worth Rs 1.08 crore from Gujarat.
- In July 2017, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) signed an agreement with Arvind mills Limited, Ahmadabad, to trade Khadi Denim products around the world.
- Since then, Arvind Mills has been purchasing a large quantity of Khadi Denim fabric every year from KVIC-certified Khadi institutions of Gujarat.

3. IIT-DELHI TIE-UP WITH IAF TO IMPROVE INDIGENISATION EFFORTS



- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and Indian Air Force (IAF) have signed an agreement for various developmental projects to support the requirements of the IAF.
- The joint partnership between the IAF and IIT Delhi seeks to accelerate IAF's indigenisation efforts for achieving self-reliance, an IIT Delhi.
- The agreement was signed by Air Vice Marshal Samir V Borade VSM, Deputy Senior Maintenance Staff Officer (Dy SMSO), Headquarters Maintenance Command, IAF and Prof. M R Ravi, Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Delhi.
- IIT Delhi will provide cooperation and consultancy, duly supported by research, for feasibility studies and prototype development.
- IIT Delhi had also established a Joint Advanced Technology Center in the year 2017 with funding from the DRDO.
- Over 80 faculty members and close to 150 staff and PhD students are currently working on various defence related projects in the Institute.

4. ANDHRA PRADESH, FAO PACT FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



- The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations has signed an agreement with the Andhra Pradesh Government to train the farmers in good farm management practices and sustainable agricultural methods.
- FAO will provide training to farmers, Rythu Bharosa Kendram (RBK) staff, officials, and scientists on new technologies in agricultural allied sectors and training to farmers on best cultivation management practices.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation Headquarters: Rome, Italy.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation Head: Qu Dongyu.
- Food and Agriculture Organisation Founded: 16 October 1945.

Banking News

5. ADB APPROVES \$112M LOAN TO ESTABLISH ASSAM SKILL UNIVERSITY IN INDIA



- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$112 million loan to strengthen skills education and training through the establishment of the Assam Skill University (ASU).
- The Loan will create a path for skill development to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of Assam's economy and industries.
- The project will help develop the ASU's management and operating systems, business models, and faculty and staff, and support the design and construction of environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient university campus and facilities to ensure efficient and sustainable operations.
- Assam Governor: Jagdish Mukhi
- Assam Chief Minister: Himanta Biswa Sarma.

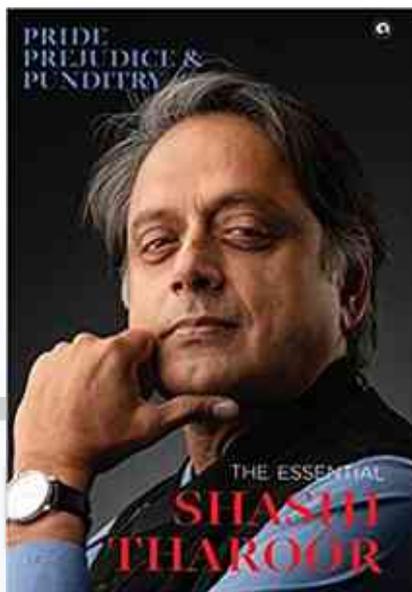
6. PAYTM LAUNCHES EDTECH PLATFORM 'WEALTH ACADEMY' TO TRAIN TRADERS, INVESTORS



- Paytm, which got listed in bourses last month, has announced the launch of Paytm Wealth Academy, a tech-powered educational platform.
- The launch of the wealth academy is initially on the Paytm Money app, the wealth management app owned by Paytm's wholly-owned subsidiary Paytm Money.
- The Paytm Wealth Academy will allow users to learn trading and financial concepts at their own pace at their level of comfort.
- The platform offers a wide catalogue of courses and webinars along with personalized recommendations for users, curated to complement their existing knowledge.
- Paytm Founded: August 2010
- Paytm Headquarters: Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India
- Paytm CEO: Vijay Shekhar Sharma.

Books and Authors

7. PRIDE, PREJUDICE AND PUNDITRY: THE ESSENTIAL SHASHI THAROOR



- Former union minister and Lok Sabha Member of Parliament Dr. Shashi Tharoor's 23rd book titled 'Pride, Prejudice and Punditry' was launched in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- There are ten sections in this book, each devoted to a particular topic such as modern Indian history, Indian Politics, etc. He has won 'Sahitya Akademi Award' for 2019, awarded to his book – 'An Era of Darkness'.
- The book marks the culmination of over 50 years of Dr Tharoor's writings.

Awards and Honors

8. BHUTAN CONFERS HIGHEST CIVILIAN AWARD ON PM MODI



- Bhutan has honored PM Modi with its highest civilian award, Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo.
- The honour comes as an appreciation for India's friendly approach to Bhutan under PM Modi's governance. During the pandemic, India had extended support to the neighbouring country in the form of vaccines, medicines and other emergency services.
- Bhutan Capital: Thimphu
- Bhutan Prime minister: Lotay Tshering
- Bhutan Currency: Bhutanese ngultrum.

Important Days

9. INTERNATIONAL TEA DAY: 15 DECEMBER



- Using tea plants brought from China, the first tea estates in India were established in Assam and the Assam Tea Company began the commercial production of tea in the region.
- After water, tea is the world's most consumed drink and India is the second largest producer of tea in the world after China.
- As per the United Nations, there is evidence that tea was consumed in China 5,000 years ago.
- The story goes that Chinese Emperor Shen Nung first tasted the beverage when he and his soldiers were busy sheltering under a tree and some windblown tea leaves fell into a pot of boiling water which then infused into it and resulted into today's most consumed drink.
- Tea is a beverage made from the Camellia Sinensis plant.

By Sameer Singhal

National News

1. PM MODI LAYS FOUNDATION STONE OF GANGA EXPRESSWAY AT SHAHJAHANPUR IN UTTAR PRADESH



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi today laid the foundation stone of the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur district.
- The 594 Km long six-lane Expressway will be built at a cost of over Rs 36,200 crore. Starting near the Bijauli village in Meerut, the Expressway will extend till near the Judapur Dandu village in Prayagraj.
- It will pass through Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Sambhal, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, Rae Bareli, Pratapgarh and Prayagraj districts. Upon completion of work, it will become the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh, connecting the western and eastern regions of the state.
- A 3.5 Km long airstrip for assisting emergency take-off and landing of Air Force planes will also be constructed on the Expressway in Shahjahanpur.
- An industrial corridor is also proposed to be built along the Expressway.

2. DEFENCE MINISTER ADDRESSES 94TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF FICCI IN NEW DELHI

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, India has never attacked any country nor occupied one inch of land of any country.
- He addressed the 94th Annual General body meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry, FICCI, New Delhi today.
- Mr. Singh said India is an emerging economy, started moving towards growth.
- He said, country has young trained scientific, technological and managerial talent and producing CEOs of world's top most organizations.



3. VICE PRESIDENT VENKAIAH NAIDU INAUGURATES RISHIHOOD UNIVERSITY IN DELHI



- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has called for Indianisation of education system in the country.
- He inaugurated Rishihood University at Vigyan Bhawan, today. Addressing a gathering of educationalists, Mr Naidu said our country had rich knowledge, traditions and practices.
- He recalled past days of India when we had contributed 25 percent of world's GDP. However, he said, foreign rulers have not just destroyed the country's wealth but minds as well.
- Mr. Naidu said, the colonialism has influenced the minds of influential people of the country and the education system as well.
- Rajya Sabha MP, Founder and Chancellor of Rishihood University Suresh Prabhu was also present in the inauguration.

4. AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV: DEFENCE MINISTER LAUNCHES RASHTRIYA EKTA GEET COMPOSED BY NCC CADETS IN 22 LANGUAGES



- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched Rashtriya Ekta Geet composed by the National Cadet Core cadets in 22 languages during the grand finale of Vijay Shrankhla aur Sanskrityon ka Mahasangam campaign yesterday.
- Rashtriya Ekta Geet is based on the theme of national integration.
- Highlighting the glorious history of NCC, Rajnath Singh said, NCC has produced a number of stalwarts who have brought glory and laurels to the nation.
- Leaders like Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and many others are NCC alumni who have contributed towards Nation building.

5. INDIA TO RAISE LEGAL MARRIAGE AGE FOR WOMEN

- The proposal to raise the minimum age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 was cleared by the Union Cabinet. Presently, the minimum age of marriage for men is 21 but for women, it is 18.
- The government will now look to introduce amendments to the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, Special Marriage Act, and the Hindu Marriage Act to bring the plan into action.
- This will give a chance to the girls to study more. They will be able to enjoy their independence. They will also get better employment opportunities.”

Defence News

6. INDIA SUCCESSFULLY TEST FIRES NEW GENERATION NUCLEAR CAPABLE BALLISTIC MISSILE 'AGNI P' OFF ODISHA COAST



- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) today successfully tested the new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha.
- Agni P is a two-stage canisterised solid-propellant ballistic missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system.
- This second flight test has proven the reliable performance of all the advanced technologies integrated into the system.
- Defence Ministry in a press released, said, various telemetry, radar, electro-optical stations and downrange ships positioned along the eastern coast tracked and monitored the missile trajectory and parameters.

7. ARMY CHIEF GEN NARAVANE TAKES CHARGE AS HEAD OF CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

- Army Chief Gen MM Naravane has assumed the charge as the chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee that comprises the three service chiefs, people familiar with the development said on Wednesday.
- The post fell vacant following the death of Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat in the IAF helicopter crash on December 8.
- Gen Naravane has been given the charge as the chairman of the committee as he is the senior-most among the three service chiefs

- IAF Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari and Navy Chief Admiral R. Hari Kumar had taken over their respective positions on September 30 and November 30.



Awards and Honors

8. SJFI TO HONOUR GAVASKAR WITH MEDAL



- The Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) on Tuesday decided to confer the prestigious 'SJFI Medal' to legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.

- SJFI Medal is the highest honour of SJFI. SJFI was founded on 27th February 1976 at the Eden Gardens, Calcutta (now Kolkata), West Bengal.
- Neeraj Chopra, who won India's lone gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics, was adjudged the SJFI Sportsman of the Year while weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, who won a silver at the quadrennial extravaganza, was voted as the Sportswoman of the Year.
- The Indian men's team that won the hockey bronze in Tokyo - its first hockey medal in 40 years - was declared the Team of the Year.

9. TiE NAMES KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA AS GLOBAL ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR



- Aditya Birla Group's chairman, Kumar Mangalam Birla has received the Global Entrepreneur of the Year Award Business Transformation from The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) based out of Silicon Valley.
- 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.

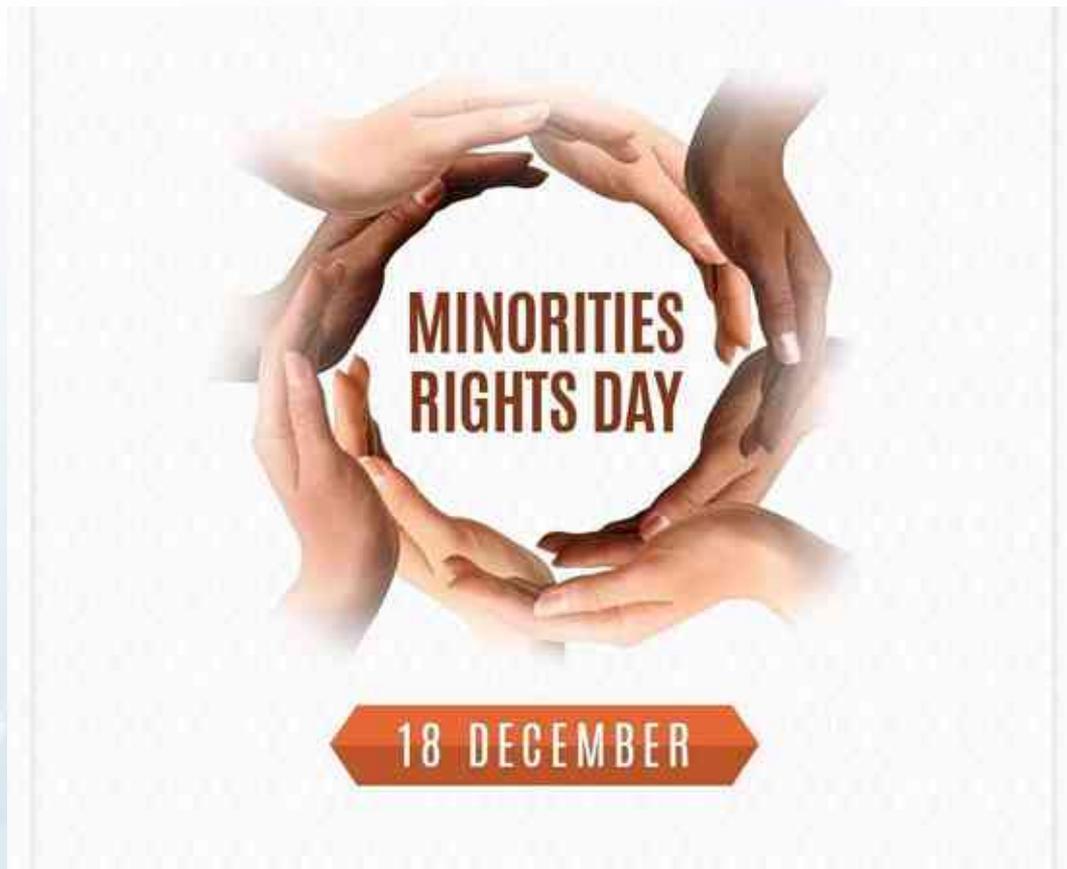
10. SIR LEWIS HAMILTON RECEIVES KNIGHTHOOD AT WINDSOR CASTLE



- Lewis Hamilton has picked up a new title only days after losing one on the track.
- The seven-time Formula One champion received a knighthood at Windsor Castle, London. Hamilton gets the honorary title of “Sir” after being knighted by the Prince of Wales for services to motorsports.
- Three other F1 drivers have been knighted: Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss and Jackie Stewart. Hamilton is the first to be awarded while still competing in the sport.

Important Days

11. NATIONAL MINORITIES RIGHTS DAY 2021



- Minorities Rights Day 2021: Every year, December 18 is observed as the Minorities Rights Day to uphold the right to freedom and equal opportunities for the ethnic minorities in India and create awareness about the respect and dignity of the minorities.
- On this day, the country focuses on the challenges and issues faced by the minority communities of different ethnic origins.
- The Minority Rights Day 2021 in India is celebrated annually on December 18 by conducting debates and seminars on the topic. The plight and situation of the minorities are thoroughly studied to rule out discrimination from the country.
- The Minority Rights Day 2021 aims to uplift all the minority sections of society and back them to voice their opinion.

12. INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY 2021: 18TH DECEMBER



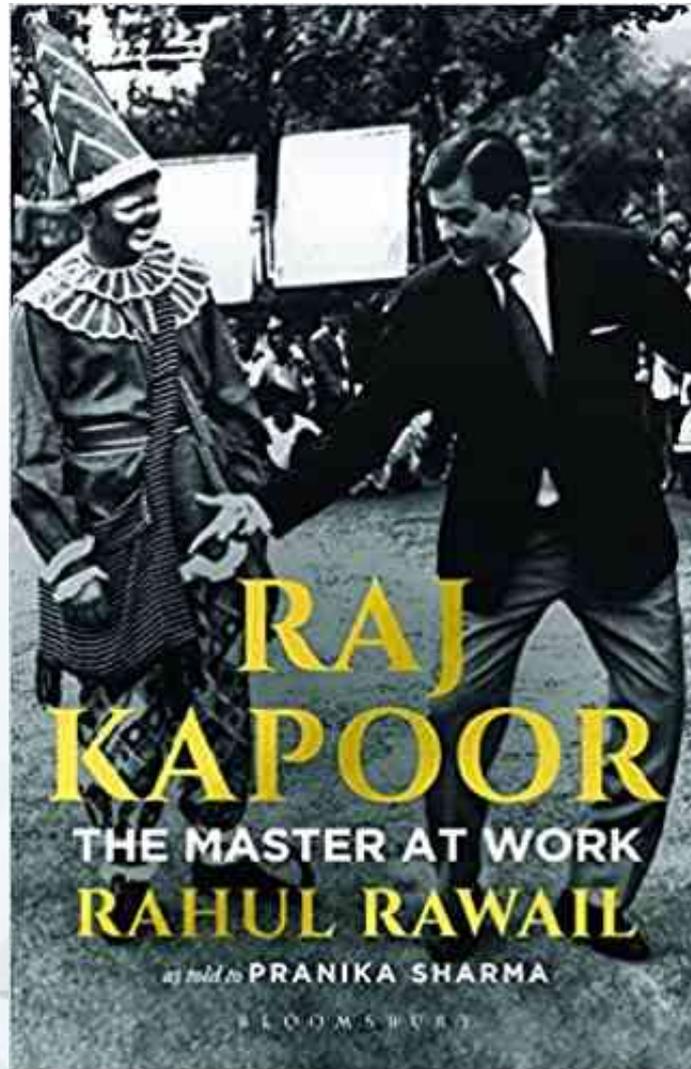
- International Migrants Day 2021: The United States has designated December 18 as the International Migrants Day.
- The day acknowledges the importance of protecting the rights and dignity of migrants around the world.
- People often move from their country voluntarily or are forced to leave their homeland.
- They are either voluntary or forced movements caused by an increased magnitude and frequency of disasters, economic challenges and extreme poverty or conflict.
- This year, the world saw an exodus from Afghanistan when the Taliban took control of the nation's administration in August.
- For this year, the United Nations has announced the theme for International Migrants Day as 'Harnessing the Potential of Human Mobility'.

Books and Authors

13. 'RAJ KAPOOR: THE MASTER AT WORK' AUTHORED BY RAHUL RAWAIL RELEASED

- Vice President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu has released the book titled 'Raj Kapoor: The Master At Work' authored by Rahul Rawail.
- The book launch event was held at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, coinciding with Raj Kapoor's 97th birth anniversary.
- The book also examines how the lessons he learnt under the tutelage of Raj Kapoor carried Rahul Rawail through directing his own blockbuster films including Love Story, Betaab, Arjun and Dacait. Raj Kapoor:

- The Master at Work offers unique insights into what it took for Raj Kapoor to be an exceptional filmmaker, with his understanding of human emotions, virtues of music and the art of visual storytelling.



By Sameer Singhal