

PRACTICE **MOCK**

December 2021 - Week 4

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. Nadi Utsav 2021 has been collectively organized by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism, and National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) from **16 to 23 December 2021**.

- It has been organized to recognise the mystical and cultural river Ganga by storytelling, folklore, quizzes, dialogues with eminent personalities, dance & music performances, displaying traditional art forms, photo galleries and exhibitions.
- It is being observed in India across **16 states and 41 districts** from Uttarkashi to Kerala.
- It has been organized under 4 chosen themes namely,
 - ✚ Cleanliness
 - ✚ Nature & Ecology
 - ✚ Patriotism
 - ✚ Devotion & Spirituality

2. Union Ministers Hardeep Singh Puri & Dr. Jitendra Singh have attended the first ever **'J&K Real Estate Summit- 2021-Unlocking Opportunities'** at Convention Centre, Jammu.

- It has been organized by the Department of Housing & Urban Development Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India.
- During the summit, Jammu and Kashmir administration has signed **39 MoUs** (Memorandum of Understanding) worth **Rs 18,300 crore** with the country's real investors for the development of housing and commercial projects in the union territory.
- The next 'Real Estate Summit' will be organised in **Srinagar** on 21st May and 22nd May 2022.

3. Praveen Kumar, IAS, Former Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, has been appointed as Director General & Chief Executive Officer, **Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)**. He is a 1987 batch retired IAS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre.

- IICA was approved by Planning Commission in the year 2007. It was established in 2008 at **Manesar, Haryana**.

4. According to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), India's green energy industry received foreign direct investment (FDI) worth **\$7.27 billion** from 2014-15 till June 2021. Of this \$797.21 million came during 2020-21.

- India's installed Renewable Energy (RE) capacity stands at **150.54 GW** (solar: 48.55 GW, wind: 40.03 GW, Small hydro Power: 4.83, Bio-power: 10.62, Large Hydro: 46.51 GW) as on 30.11.2021 while its nuclear energy based installed electricity capacity stands at **6.78 GW**.
 - The total non-fossil based installed energy capacity is **157.32 GW** which is 40.1% of the total installed electricity capacity of 392.01 GW.
5. The Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) has selected **Paras Defence and Space Technologies** for handing over the technology of border surveillance systems as developed by Instruments Research & Development Establishment and DRDO.
6. The Indian Army has launched a messaging application named '**Army Secure IndiGeneous Messaging Application (ASIGMA)**'. It is a new generation, state-of-the-art, web-based application developed by a team of officers of the Corps of Signals of the Army. It is positioned as a replacement for the Army Wide Area Network messaging application, which has been in service for over 15 years.
7. **South Korea's Men's Hockey team** has recently won the Men's Asian Champions Trophy Hockey tournament 2021 by defeating Japan in the finals held at Mawlana Bhashani Hockey Stadium, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Indian Men's Hockey team under the captaincy of Manpreet Singh has won a **bronze medal** in the tournament after defeating Pakistan.
 - **Best goalkeeper:** Suraj Karkera (India)
 - **Best player of the tournament:** Kanta Tanaka (Japan)
8. The Central Government has declared the whole of the state of **Nagaland** to be 'disturbed area' and extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 (AFSPA) for a period of **six months** with effect from 30th December 2021.
9. Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal has recently chaired an interaction with the heads of Indian industry and Export Promotion Councils in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- During the meeting, it has been revealed that **UAE** has committed \$100 Billion for investment and infrastructure creation in India.
 - Dubai's DP World is setting up **India Mart Traders Market**, a dedicated market for Indian businesses which would enable traders and manufacturers to trade with the UAE local market and regional market.
 - UAE has also allotted land for India to set up a temple.

- 10.** India has recently successfully test-fired a short range surface-to-surface ballistic missile named '**Pralay**' from APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- It is developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation** (DRDO).
 - The missile is powered by a solid-propellant rocket motor and many new technologies.
 - The missile has a range of **150-500 kilometres** and can be launched from a mobile launcher.
 - It has the ability to defeat interceptor missiles.
- 11.** The **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** under the NITI Aayog has launched a **vernacular innovation programme (VIP)** to empower innovators and entrepreneurs across the country by removing the language barrier.
- Under the programme, AIM will be training a vernacular task force (VTF) in each of the **22 scheduled languages** with each task force consisting of vernacular language teachers, subject experts and technical writers.
 - The AIM will launch 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.
 - The task force will be trained from December 2021 to April 2022
 - *Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) was set up in **2016** to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.*
- 12.** The Indian Air Force (IAF) has deployed the first **S-400** air defence missile system in the **Punjab sector** which will take care of aerial threats from Pakistan and China.
- In October 2018, India had signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with **Russia** to procure the S-400 defence system in a deal worth around **Rs 35000 crores**. Under the deal, five squadrons would be provided to India for tackling air threats from up to 400 km.
 - The S-400 air defence system is equipped with four different missiles which can engage enemy aircraft, ballistic missiles, and AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) planes at 400 km, 250 km, the medium-range 120 km and the short-range 40 km.
- 13.** The **Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS)** has been selected to join a research project backed by the Space Application Centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under a NASA-ISRO research programme.

- The project will be headed by **Girish Gopinath**, Associate Professor of Remote Sensing and GIS at KUFOS and U. Surendran, senior scientist at CWRDM.
- KUFOS has been selected as one of the nodal agencies in South India to implement the project.

NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR):

- NASA and ISRO are jointly developing a space-borne synthetic aperture radar (NISAR), to be launched in January 2023.
- It will produce high resolution data for large areas with the capability for systematic observation of earth resources.
- It will provide time-series data for eco-systems applications benefiting several operational activities related to agriculture, forestry, wetlands, and soil moisture estimation.

14. NITI Aayog has signed a Statement of Intent (Sol) with **United Nations World Food Program (WFP)** to address issues related to inclusion of **millets** in government programmes. Under the agreement, the focus will be on mainstreaming millets and strengthening of climate resilient agriculture for enhanced food and nutrition security in India.

15. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) have launched the first **AgriTech Challenge** cohort 2021 under South-South Innovation platform.

Aim: To help smallholder farmers across Asia and Africa to address their challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic.

16. AIM, NITI Aayog in partnership with UNCDF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rabo Foundation have launched a South-South innovation platform to enable cross-border exchange of innovations, insights and investments in July 2021.

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17. The Government of India (GoI) has recently signed a contract with European Investment Bank (EIB) for the first tranche loan of **Euro 250 million** for the **Agra Metro Rail Project** in Uttar Pradesh.

- This project is under the control of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, and Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (UPMRCL) is the implementing agency.
- **Aim:** To provide a safe, reliable, affordable and environment-friendly public Mass Rapid Transit System for Agra city.

18. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently (Dec 2021) approved the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for copra for the 2022 season.

- The MSP for fair average quality of milling copra has been increased to **Rs.10, 590** per quintal for the 2022 season from Rs.10, 335 in 2021.
- The minimum price for ball copra has been increased to **Rs.11, 000** per quintal for the 2022 season from Rs.10, 600 in 2021.

19. INS Khukri (Pennant number 49), the first of the indigenously built missile corvettes, has been decommissioned by the Indian Navy after 32 years of service at **Visakhapatnam**.

- The ship was built by the Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders
- It was commissioned on 23rd August 1989.

20. The Central Government has recently declared '**Soya Meal**' as an Essential Commodity up to **30th June 2022** by amending the Schedule of the *Essential Commodities Act, 1955*.

21. The Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari has launched the first 'Intelligent Transport System' on **Eastern Peripheral Expressway** (Length: 135 km) at Dasna, Ghaziabad to minimize traffic problems and enhance safety of commuters.

- He has also laid the foundation stone of National Highway projects of 240 km worth **Rs. 9, 119 crore** in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh.

22. The Central Government has appointed two separate groups of experts to suggest suitable working models with cost benefit analysis that will lower crop insurance premium and technology in crop yield estimation under the flagship **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana** (PMFBY). The sub-committees will submit their report by 10th January 2021.

First Committee	Second Committee

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members – 10 • Chairman - KR Manjunath, Scientist of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) • Aim- To explore the feasibility of adoption of various technology-based approaches developed through pilot projects by ISRO and its arm National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) as well as Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre (MNCFC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members – 4 • Chairman - Saurabh Mishra, joint secretary in Ministry of Finance • It will conduct cost benefit analysis of all “accepted models – agriculture insurance pool, cup and cap 80-110 per cent and co-insurance 20-80 per cent” as well as any profit-loss sharing model.
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23. The Government of India has recently constituted a ‘5-member’ high-level committee to examine the possibility of lifting the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in **Nagaland**. The committee will submit its recommendations within 45 days.

- **Chairman:** Vivek Joshi, the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India
- **Secretary:** Piyush Goyal, Additional Secretary in the Union Home Ministry
- **Other members:** Chief Secretary and Director General of Police (DGP) of Nagaland, DGP of Assam Rifles (North) and a representative of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

24. Union Defence minister, Rajnath Singh has recently laid the foundation stone of the Defence Technology and Test Centre (DTTC) and BrahMos Manufacturing Centre. These centres will be established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**.

25. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog has recently released the second edition of digital books named ‘Innovations For You’ & ‘The Ingenious Tinkerers’.

- **‘Innovations For You’ (2nd edition)** is a compendium of innovations focused on **agriculture** featuring 70 startups supported by Atal incubation Centers (AICs) of AIM. The first edition of this book was focused on innovations in Health Care.
- **‘The Ingenious Tinkerers’** is a compendium on the innovations on technology featuring 41 innovations from the Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) of India.

26. The Indian Army in collaboration with National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) has established **Quantum Lab** at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, **Mhow** in

Madhya Pradesh to spearhead research and training in key thrust areas - Quantum Key Distribution, Quantum Communication, Quantum Computing and Post Quantum Cryptography.

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STATES AFFAIRS

- 27.** Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has launched the '**Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam**' portal and announced to set up Atal Park and Memorial Centre in Gurugram.
- 28.** The Uttar Pradesh government has recently renamed Jhansi Railway Station as 'Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station' after Rani Laxmi Bai.
- 29.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently inaugurated and laid foundation stone of **23 projects** worth **17,500 crore** rupees at Haldwani in **Uttarakhand**.
Key projects:
- Lakhwar Multipurpose Project, a hydropower facility in Pithoragarh.
 - Tanakpur-Pithoragarh Road project to improve the connectivity of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.
 - Aroma Park at Kashipur and Plastic Industrial Park at Sitarganj.
 - All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rishikesh Satellite Centre at Udham Singh Nagar and Jagjivan Ram Government Medical College at Pithoragarh.
- 30.** The state government of **Maharashtra** has recently launched '**Chalo Mobile App**' and '**Chalo Smart Cards**' to facilitate digital and advance purchase of Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) bus tickets.
- 31.** The union territory of **Jammu & Kashmir** has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with University College Birmingham (UCB) at India Global Forum, Dubai to facilitate J&K students with wider opportunities in education.
- 32.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundation stone of 27 development projects worth **Rs 2,095 crore** in **Varanasi**, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Projects:

- Banas Dairy Sankul – It will be built at a cost of about Rs 475 crore and would process about 5 lakh litre milk per day.
- Biogas-based electricity generation plant.
- Launched a portal and a logo dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme of milk products developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) with the help of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).
- Union Education Ministry's Inter University Centre for Teachers Education – It will be built at a cost of around Rs 107 crore.

33. HOP Electric has recently entered into a preliminary agreement with the Rajasthan government to set up an Electric Vehicle (EV) manufacturing plant in **Jaipur**, Rajasthan with a capacity to produce 1.8 lakh vehicles per annum.

34. The state government of Tamil Nadu has recently launched the '**Meendum Manjappai**' scheme to promote the use of **cloth bags** by the public and discourage the use of plastic bags.

- This awareness campaign on using '**yellow**' cloth bag or 'manjappai' as it is called in Tamil, is aimed at encouraging the people to return to the use of this eco-friendly bag and discard the plastic bags. Manjal means turmeric in Tamil which has curative power.
- Tamil Nadu government had enforced a ban on the production, use, storage, distribution, transportation or sale of 14 types of plastics with effect from 1st January 2019.

35. The Chief Minister of **Gujarat**, Bhupendra Patel has recently launched a **Health Service Management Centre (HSMC)** for monitoring various national and state-level health schemes. It will also monitor and review the free diagnostic treatment given to patients such as screening for non-communicable diseases.

36. The state government of **Karnataka** has recently partnered with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and the State Bank of India (SBI) to enable and implement '**e-RUPI**', a cashless and contactless payment solution to students under its scholarship programme.

37. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently presided over the second groundbreaking ceremony of Himachal Pradesh Global Investors' Meet in **Mandi, Himachal Pradesh**. He has also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of hydropower projects worth over **Rs.11, 000 crore**.

38. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently inaugurated the completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail Project, **Bina-Panki multi-product pipeline project**, and has attended the 54th Convocation Ceremony of IIT Kanpur in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.
39. Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad has recently inaugurated the '**Narendra Modi Marg**', a road named after Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It is the 2nd road connecting the **Tsomgo lake** and Nathula border pass with Gangtok, Sikkim. The older route is called **Jawaharlal Nehru Road**.
40. **Odisha** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has recently launched an online service for verification of identity and submission of life certificates for the pensioners of the state government. It will be of immense help to the pensioners as they can submit their identification and life certificates digitally, without visiting any government office.
- With this, Odisha has become the first state to implement such a digital service for the pensioners.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

41. **Typhoon Rai**, known in the Philippines as Typhoon Odette, has destroyed the central Philippines in mid-December 2021. It has become the third Category 5 super typhoon to form in South China Sea after Pamela of 1954 and Rammasun of 2014.
42. **Pakistan** has successfully test-fired an enhanced range version of the indigenously developed surface-to-surface '**Babur Cruise Missile 1B**' that can strike targets up to **900 kilometres**.
- In August 2021, Pakistan has launched 'Fatah-1', a guided multi-launch rocket system capable of delivering conventional warheads.
43. India and **Maldives** have recently launched a pilot project on Pre-Arrival Customs Data Exchange. This will help in faster Export-Import clearances, fast-track customs payments and help identify frauds.
44. The Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has recently partnered with the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** to launch the "Tribal Samvaad network".
- It is a Tribal network for Social and Behaviour Change (A people-to-people 'prosperity' platform built on the emergent digital, social, alternate and mobile revolution).

- The mantra of the campaign is “**Samvad se Sambandh.**”

- 45. Japan** has launched the **world's first dual-mode vehicle (DMV)** that can run on roads and tracks. The DMV has made its public debut in the town of Kaiyo in Japan's Tokushima prefecture. It runs on diesel.
- 46.** As per the latest survey, **Telangana** has secured the first position in the implementation of the Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM). **Tamil Nadu** and **Gujarat** have secured the second and third positions respectively.
- In the Ranking of the Cluster, the **Ryakal cluster** of Sangareddy and the **Jukkal cluster** of Kamareddy in Telangana have secured the 1st and 2nd position respectively. The **Aibawk cluster** of Aizawl in Mizoram has secured the 3rd position.
- 47.** The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has recently launched the world's largest and most powerful space telescope named '**James Webb Space Telescope**'. It has been launched from Europe's Spaceport, the Guiana Space Centre in Kourou, French Guiana.
- 48. Japan** has launched the communication satellite '**Inmarsat-6F1**' through a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries H-2A rocket from Japan's Tanegashima Space Centre that will enter geostationary orbit, about 22,240 miles (35,790 kilometres) above earth.
- 49.** The **China National Space Administration (CNSA)** has recently launched a new camera satellite named "**Ziyuan-1 02E**" or "five-meter optical satellite 02" by a Long March-4C rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in north China's Shanxi province.
- The cameras can take full-colour panchromatic images of the Earth.
 - The satellite will work with the five-meter optical satellite 01 and shorten the revisit time of Chinese territory from three days to two days.
- 50.** India has recently (December 2021) welcomed **Egypt** as the new member of BRICS New Development Bank (NDB). With this, Egypt has become a **fourth new member** to be admitted to BRICS NDB.
- **Note:** In September 2021, Bangladesh, Uruguay and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have become the new members of the BRICS New Development Bank.
- 51. Russia** has recently launched its first in the series Project 22220 versatile nuclear icebreaker named '**Sibir**'. It will contribute to the rapidly growing fleet of lethal icebreakers

to keep the Northern Sea Route open for year-round shipping through the Arctic enabling wider presence of India in the region.

- Russia has a fleet of six nuclear-powered icebreakers: "Taymyr", "Vaygash", "50 Let Pobedy", "Yamal", "Arktika" and "Sibir".

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REPORTS & INDICES

52. Reliance Industries, India's largest corporate by revenues, profits and market value, has recently topped the 2021 Wizikey News Score ranking as India's most-visible corporate in media. It is followed by State Bank of India (SBI), Bharti Airtel, Infosys and Tata Motors.

- Globally, **Facebook** is ranked No.1 on the index, followed by Alphabet Inc., Amazon, Apple Inc., Samsung Electronics, Netflix and Microsoft.
- **Reliance** is ranked at No. 8 on the global ranking.
- The highest-ranked state-owned firm is **National Thermal Power Corporation Limited** (NTPC), at rank **13**.

53. IIT Roorkee has been recognized as the **top innovative research institution** by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). IIT Roorkee has bagged the first position under the Most Innovative Research Institutions category.

- The second and third positions have gone to IIT Madras and the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad (INCOIS), respectively.
- *In 2020, IIT Roorkee was adjudged as 'The Most Innovative Institute of the Year' for its innovation quotient.*

54. Hurun Research Institute has recently released the Global Unicorn Index 2021. In the index, India has been placed at the **third** position with **54 unicorns**, displacing the United Kingdom (UK).

- In 2020, India was ranked at 4th spot.
- Byju's (15th rank), InMobi, OYO, Razorpay and Ola are also ranked in the top 100 unicorns in the world.

Global Unicorn Index 2021		
Rank	Country	No. of Unicorns
1	USA	487 (254 unicorns added newly)

2	China	301 (74 unicorns added newly)
3	India	54 (33 unicorns added newly)
4	UK	39 (15 unicorns added newly)
5	Germany	26 (16 unicorns added newly)

55. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has recently published its report titled "2019 Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) Report'.

- **Russia** is the biggest dope violator in the world with 167 ADRVs, followed by Italy (157).
- Brazil (78) is at fourth and Iran (70) is at fifth positions.
- India has been **ranked 3rd** with 152 ADRVs.
- The maximum dope offenders are from bodybuilding (57) followed by weightlifting (25), athletics (20), wrestling (10), and boxing.

56. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has released a report titled '**Coal 2021 Analysis and Forecast to 2024**'. As per the report, the global coal demand is expected to grow by **6%** in **2021** with coal consumption to 7,906 million tonnes and is set to rise to 8,025 million tonnes in 2022.

57. Union Minister of Home Affairs Amit Shah has released the Good Governance Index (GGI) 2021. It is prepared by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)**.

Gujarat has topped the composite ranking in the 58 indicator index, followed by Maharashtra and Goa.

- 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** has topped the composite ranking (14 percent increase).

58. The Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), one of the UK's leading economics consultancies, has published its annual World Economic League Table (WELT) 2022.

As per the WELT 2022:

- The world economy is set to surpass **\$100 trillion** for the first time in 2022.
- India will become the **6th largest** economy by overtaking France in **2022** and will become the **3rd largest** economy in **2031**.

**World Economic League Table (WELT)
2022**

Country	2021	2022	2026	2031	2036
USA	1	1	1	2	2
China	2	2	2	1	1
Japan	3	3	3	4	5
India	7	6	5	3	3

59. NITI Aayog has released the fourth edition of the **State Health Index for 2019–20** in the report titled “Healthy States, Progressive India”.

- The index has been developed by NITI Aayog, World Bank, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
- The report ranks states and Union Territories on their year-on-year incremental performance in health outcomes as well as their overall status.
- It is a weighted composite index based on 24 indicators grouped under the domains of ‘Health Outcomes’, ‘Governance and Information’, and ‘Key Inputs/Processes’.
- The index is being compiled and published since 2017.
- It has covered 19 larger states, 8 smaller states, and 7 UTs.

Category	In terms of annual incremental performance	In terms of overall performance	Worst performers (in terms of overall performance and incremental performance)
Larger States	Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Telangana	Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana	Rajasthan
Smaller States	Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland	Mizoram, Tripura, and Sikkim	Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur
Union Territory	Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, and Lakshadweep	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Chandigarh and Lakshadweep	_____

60. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently released a report on "**Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2020-21**".

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently released a report on "**Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2020-21**". This report presents the performance of the banking sector, including co-operative banks, and non-banking financial institutions during 2020-21 and 2021-22 so far.

Highlights of the Report are:

- During 2020-21, the consolidated balance sheet of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) expanded in size, notwithstanding the pandemic and the resultant contraction in economic activity. In 2021-22 so far, nascent signs of recovery are visible in credit growth. Deposits grew by **10.1 per cent** at end-September 2021 as compared with 11.0 per cent a year ago.
- **Capital to risk weighted assets (CRAR) ratio** of SCBs strengthened from 14.8 per cent at end-March 2020 to **16.3 per cent** at end-March 2021 and further to **16.6 per cent** at end-September 2021, partly aided by higher retained earnings, recapitalisation of public sector banks (PSBs) and capital raising from the market by both PSBs and private sector banks (PVBs).
- SCBs' **gross non-performing assets (GNPA)** ratio declined from 8.2 per cent at end-March 2020 to 7.3 per cent at end-March 2021 and further to **6.9 per cent** at end-September 2021.
- Return on assets (RoA) of SCBs improved from 0.2 per cent at end-March 2020 to 0.7 per cent at end-March 2021, aided by stable income and decline in expenditure.
- Some of the policy measures taken by the RBI in response to the COVID-19 pandemic reached the pre-announced sunset dates in 2021-22. Certain liquidity measures have been wound down as a result, while other regulatory measures, including deferment of implementation of net stable funding ratio (NSFR), restrictions on dividend payouts by banks, deferment of implementation of the last tranche of capital conservation buffer, have been realigned to avoid extended forbearance and risks to financial stability while providing targeted support to needy sectors.
- Even though initiation of fresh insolvency proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) was suspended for a year till March 2021, it constituted one of the major modes of recovery in terms of amount recovered.
- The balance sheet growth of urban co-operatives banks (UCBs) in 2020-21 was driven by deposits, while subdued credit growth led to acceleration in investments. Their

financial indicators, including capital position and profitability, improved.

- The profitability of state co-operative banks and district central co-operative banks improved in 2019-20, while their asset quality deteriorated.
- The consolidated balance sheet of NBFCs expanded during 2020-21, driven by credit and investments of non-deposit taking systemically important NBFCs (NBFCs-ND-SI). Their asset quality and capital buffers also improved.
- The Report also offers some perspectives on the evolving outlook for India's financial sector.

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- 61.** On Dec 29, 2021, the Reserve Bank has released the **24th issue** of the Financial Stability Report (FSR).

The Reserve Bank of India published the first **Financial Stability Report (FSR)** in **March 2010**. To be published every six months, these reports are an attempt at institutionalizing the implicit focus and making financial stability an integral driver of the policy framework.

The FSR reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the *Financial Stability and Development Council* (FSDC) on risks to financial stability, as also the resilience of the financial system. The Report also discusses issues relating to the development and regulation of the financial sector.

On Dec 29, 2021, the Reserve Bank has released the **24th issue** of the Financial Stability Report (FSR)

Highlights of the 24th issue of the Financial Stability Report (FSR):

- 1) The global economic recovery has been losing momentum in the second half of 2021 in the face of resurfacing COVID-19 infections, the new variant Omicron, supply disruptions and bottlenecks, elevated inflationary levels, and shifts in monetary policy stances and actions across advanced economies and emerging market economies.
- 2) On the domestic front, progress in vaccination has enabled the recovery to regain traction after the debilitating second wave of the pandemic, notwithstanding signs of

slowing pace more recently; the corporate sector is gaining strength and bank credit growth is improving.

3) The capital to risk-weighted assets ratio (CRAR) of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) rose to a new peak of 16.6 percent and their provisioning coverage ratio (PCR) stood at 68.1 percent in September 2021.

4) Macro stress tests for credit risk indicate that the gross non-performing asset (GNPA) ratio of SCBs may increase from **6.9 percent in September 2021 to 8.1 percent by September 2022** under the baseline scenario and to 9.5 percent under a severe stress scenario. SCBs would, however, have sufficient capital, both at the aggregate and individual levels, even under stress conditions.

5) Emerging signs of stress in micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) as also in the micro-finance segment call for close monitoring of these portfolios going forward.

6) The GNPA ratio of NBFCs, which had declined in September 2020 reflecting the standstill on asset

classification prevalent then rose to reach **6.5 percent** as at the end of September 2021.

62. The Ministry of Education's innovation cell has released the 3rd edition of the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) 2021. ARIIA 2021 classifies participating institutions into two major categories; technical and non-technical.

- In the technical ranking, the **Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)** has been recognised as the Most Innovative Educational Institute in India. This is the third time that IIT Madras has secured the first rank.
- IIT Bombay and IIT Delhi have been placed at the second and third ranks respectively.

Category	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
CFTIs/Central University/Institute of National Importance (Technical)	Indian Institute of Technology Madras	Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
State University & Deemed University (Govt. & Govt. Aided) (Technical)	Punjab University	Delhi Technological University	Netaji Subhas University of Technology
Govt. College/Institution (Govt. & Govt. Aided) (Technical)	College of Engineering Pune	PSG College of Technology	L. D. College of Engineering

University & Deemed University (Self-Finance/Private) (Technical)	Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology Khordha	Chitkara University	Lovely Professional University
Private College/Institute (Self-Finance/Private) (Technical)	G H Raison College of Engineering, Nagpur	R.M.K. Engineering College	KIET Group of Institutions
Institute of National Importance, Central University & CFIs (Non-Technical)	Indira Gandhi National Open University	Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode	_____
General (Non-Technical)	Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India	Sree Narayana College	Mahatma Gandhi University

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

63. ITC Limited has collaborated with **Invest India**, a non-profit venture by the central government for national investment promotion and facilitation, to crowdsource innovative ideas for single-use plastic substitution and automate waste segregation.

- Under this collaboration, ITC Paperboards and Specialty Papers Division (PSPD) has launched the ITC Sustainability Innovation Challenge, which would support innovative start-up ideas on sustainable packaging and smart waste management solutions.
- **Theme for challenge:** Sustainable Solution

64. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) has recently acquired a **4.93% stake** in Indian Gas Exchange Limited, the country's first automated national level exchange for the trading of natural gas. IOCL has acquired 36, 93,750 equity shares of the face value of Rs.10 each.

Other acquisitions:

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of up to 16.94% equity share capital of IRB Infrastructure Developers (IRB) by Bricklayers Investment (controlled by GIC Investor).
- CCI has also approved the acquisition of a controlling stake in Forbes Enviro Solutions by Lunolux Limited.

65. National Stock Exchange (NSE) has launched a new corporate governance initiative named '**NSE Prime**' to raise the bar for corporate governance standards in India.

- All the NSE-listed companies can adopt NSE Prime voluntarily. However, they need to comply with pre-defined norms on an ongoing basis, which will be monitored by NSE.
- An NSE Prime company needs at least **40%** public shareholding as against 25% under SEBI regulations.
- The Chairperson and Managing Director must be different and the Board members of these companies cannot serve on the boards of more than 5 listed companies.

66. Wipro has signed an agreement to acquire Edgile, a transformational cyber security consulting provider, for \$230 million. This will enhance Wipro's cyber security and risk consulting capabilities for the benefit of its customers.

- Both will develop Wipro CyberTransform, an integrated suite that will help enterprises enhance boardroom governance of cyber security risk, invest in robust cyber strategies, and reap the value of practical security in action.

67. REC Limited has recently entered into an agreement with KfW Development Bank of Germany for availing ODA (Official Development Assistance) term loan of **USD 169.5 million** under Indo-German bilateral partnership for the power sector and renewable energy projects.

68. The Government of India has signed an agreement with the German-based KfW Development Bank for a **140 million Euro** reduced interest loan and a **2 million Euro** grant for an energy reform program in **Madhya Pradesh**.

- The project comprises two components, implementation of smart meters and Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI); and separation of agriculture and non-agriculture feeders.

69. The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government of **West Bengal** to develop the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) ecosystem in the state. Under this MoU, a project management unit (PMU) of SIDBI will work with the state government.

70. The Information and Credit Rating agency (ICRA) has projected India's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of **9%** in **FY22 and FY23** amid the Omicron uncertainty. The agency is expecting the CPI inflation to an average of 4.5-5.0% in FY23 from 5.5% in FY22.

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BANKING & FINANCE

- 71. Karnataka Gramin Bank (KGB)**, sponsored by Canara Bank, has recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Care Health Insurance to market health insurance products for customers of the bank across 22 districts of Karnataka.
- 72.** Mastercard has recently collaborated with **Google Pay** on tokenization for card-based payments. This will enable Google Pay users to safely transact using their Mastercard credit and debit cards without having to share their credit or debit card details such as card number and expiry date with a merchant.
- Google Pay is a digital wallet platform and online payment system developed by Google. It was initially launched in 2018.*
- 73.** The board of Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited has recently approved the proposal for re-appointment of **Vasudevan Pathangi Narasimhan (PN)** as the MD & CEO for three years, with effect from 23rd July 2022, up to 22nd July 2025, subject to the RBI and shareholders' approval.
- 74. Bank of Baroda** has recently won the top position in the overall digital transactions among large banks for FY20-21. It has been felicitated by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) at the Digital Payments Utsav.
- As a part of the celebration, the Bank of Baroda has been conferred with 5 DigiDhan awards for FY 2019-20 & 2020-21 in various categories.
- 75.** The **State Bank of India (SBI)** has recently acquired a minority stake in JSW Cement Limited for an investment of Rs 100 crore through compulsorily convertible preference shares (CCPS).
- 76. Axis Bank** has announced the approval to reclassify the **Oriental Insurance Company Limited (OICL)** from promoter category to public category shareholder in the bank.
- Axis Bank was incorporated in the year 1993 with the name UTI Bank Ltd. In July 2007, it was renamed as 'Axis Bank'.*

- 77. CSB Bank** has been empanelled as an '**agency bank**' by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to undertake general banking business of central and state governments which may be entrusted by the RBI. It will also enable the bank to handle a broad range of transactions related to government business, such as TDS, GST, stamp duty, registration, property tax, value-added tax and professional tax.
- 78. HDFC Life Insurance** has recently won the '**Best Governed Company Listed Segment: Large Category**' at the 21st edition of the ICSI National Awards for Excellence in Corporate Governance. The award has been presented by the Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah.
- 79. Punjab National Bank (PNB)** has recently entered into the 4th co-lending arrangement with Lendingkart Finance Limited as part of its efforts to improve the flow of credit to the unserved and underserved sector of the economy.
- *As per RBI's co-lending model, banks and NBFCs will co-lend the customers in the ratio of **80%** and **20%** respectively.*
- 80. Paytm Payments Bank**, an associate entity of Paytm, has recently partnered with MoneyGram to enable international fund transfer directly to Paytm Wallet.
- With this partnership, MoneyGram users abroad can now conveniently transfer money to full KYC Paytm wallet users in India.
 - This is MoneyGram's first mobile wallet partnership in India.
- 81. HDFC Bank** has been selected under the 'Most Innovative Best Practices' at the coveted Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Digital Transformation Awards 2021 or CII DX Award 2021 for its efforts in furthering financial inclusion through a partnership with the Common Service Centres (CSCs) of the Government of India.
- 82. Indipaisa**, a member of the Nexxo Network, has recently partnered with **NSDL Payments Bank** to launch a new Financial Technology (Fintech) solutions targeting India's flourishing 63 million Small & Mid-sized Enterprise (SME) sector.
- 83.** The Reserve Bank of India has recently extended the deadline for periodic Know Your Customer (KYC) updation in bank accounts till **31st March 2022**, from the previous deadline of 31st December 2021, due to the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 in India.
- 84.** Private lender **Federal Bank** has recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU), with Schwing Stetter (India) Ltd, a subsidiary of Schwing GMBH, Germany, one of the

largest manufacturers of concrete and construction equipment in India. This MoU will enable both Federal Bank and Schwing Stetter to offer customized financial solutions to their customers

85. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has announced that insurance intermediaries and their entities can maintain **current accounts** in various banks to meet regulatory requirements and reinsurance business.

86. Vayana Network, one of India's largest trade finance platform, and **Federal Bank**, a leading Private Sector Bank have recently been awarded the 'Most Effective Bank-Fintech Partnership: Agile and Adaptable' at the IBSi-Global Fintech Innovation Awards 2021.

- Federal Bank partnered with Vayana Network to provide a seamless on-boarding experience to dealers through their unique 'Full Stack' tech infrastructure.
- This facilitates end to end digital solution including client supply chain account set up, monitoring, digital authentication of documents on the transaction platform and notification to customers at every step.

87. The Reserve Bank of India has recently extended the card-on-file (CoF) tokenisation deadline by 6 months to **30th June 2022**. The earlier deadline was 31st December 2021.

Background:

- In September 2021, RBI has prohibited merchants from storing customer card details on their servers with effect from 1st January 2022, and mandated the adoption of CoF tokenization as an alternative to card storage.
- card-on-file (CoF) refers to card information stored by payment gateway and merchants to process future transactions.

88. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has recently restructured its advisory committees on secondary market, mutual funds, corporate bonds, and securitization.

Committee	Members	Chairman
Secondary Market Committee	17	Madhabi Puri Buch
Mutual Funds Committee	24	Usha Thorat
Corporate Bonds and Securitization Committee	23	G Mahalingam
Information Systems Security Committee	5	Prof H Krishnamurthy

- 89. BoB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda (BoB), and Indian Navy have recently launched a co-branded credit card for Indian Navy personnel.
- The credit card will be equipped with contactless features and will be offered on the RuPay platform.
 - A navy personnel up to the age of 64 years will be eligible to choose from three variants of the co-branded credit card.
- 90.** HSBC Asset Management Company has recently acquired the mutual fund business of L&T Finance Holdings for \$425 million (Rs 3,250 crore).
- 91. IndusInd Bank** has partnered with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for offering real-time cross-border remittances to India using UPI IDs, for its Money Transfer Operator (MTO) partners.
- With this, IndusInd Bank has become the **first Indian bank** to go live on UPI for Cross Border Payments/NRI Remittances.
- 92. IndusInd Bank** has launched '**Green Fixed Deposits**' where the deposit proceeds will be used to finance projects and firms supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 93.** HDFC Life Insurance has recently signed a bancassurance agreement with **South Indian Bank**. This will enable customers of the bank to avail a range of life insurance products of the insurer that include solutions for protection, savings and investment, retirement and critical illness.
- 94.** HDFC Bank has recently tied up with **India Post Payments Bank** to offer banking services to over 4.7 crore customers of IPPB in semi-urban and rural areas.
- 95.** Reserve Bank of India has recently (December 2021) imposed a penalty of **Rs 30 lakh** on **MUFG Bank** for non-compliance with the directions issued by it on "Loans and Advances -- Statutory and Other Restrictions".
- 96. RBL Bank** has recently extended the co-brand credit card partnership with **Bajaj Finance** for a period of **5 years** to December 2026. The lender had entered into a partnership with Bajaj Finance in 2018.

97. MAS Financial Services has recently entered into a strategic co-lending partnership with **Bank of Maharashtra** for lending to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME). This partnership is subject to compliance laws including applicable guidelines issued by RBI.
98. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of **Atul Kumar Goel**, MD & CEO of UCO Bank, as MD & CEO of **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** with effect from 1st February 2022 to 31st December 2024. He will succeed S.S. Mallikarjuna Rao.
99. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended its restrictions on scam-tainted **Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank Ltd.** for **three months** from 1st January 2022 to 31st March 2022.
100. ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has recently launched a new term cover named '**ICICI Pru iProtect Return of Premium**'. The plan offers a return of **105%** of all premiums paid on survival, besides providing cover against 64 critical illnesses, one of the highest in the industry. It offers two variants – Life Stage Cover and Level Cover.

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AWARDS & RECOGNITION

101. Indian climate action entrepreneur, **Divya Hegde** from Udupi, Karnataka, has recently won the UN Women's Award for Leadership Commitment at the 2021 Regional Asia-Pacific Women's Empowerment Principles Awards ceremony. She has been recognised for her sustained efforts in advancing gender equality through climate action efforts.
102. **Jindal Global University (JGU)** has recently won the "**Digital Innovation of the Year**" award at the Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Awards 2021. It is the only Indian University to be shortlisted for the "Digital Innovation of the Year" award under the Technological or Digital Innovation of the Year category.
- **Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology** has bagged the award for Asia's '**Leadership and Management Team of the Year**' category at THE Asia Awards 2021.

103. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India has named Bollywood actress **Alia Bhatt** its 2021 Person of the Year. This year, Alia Bhatt invested in Phool, the company behind Fleather, which is a vegan leather made from discarded temple flowers. Her vegan kidswear line, **Ed-a-Mamma**, also won a 2021 PETA India fashion award for helping to nurture kids' love for animals and nature.

104. Sahitya Akademi has announced its prestigious Sahitya Akademi Awards, Yuva Puraskar and Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2021 in various languages.

Sahitya Akademi Award 2021:

- The winner of Gujarati, Maithili, Manipuri, and Urdu languages will be announced at a later date.
- Author, **Namita Gokhale (English)** has been awarded for her novel '**Things to Leave Behind**'.

Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar 2021:

- The award in Tamil will be declared later, there was no award given in Rajasthani language this year.
- Author, **Megha Majumdar (English)** has won the award for her debut book '**A Burning**', published in **2020**.

Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2021:

- No award was given in Gujarati and Punjabi languages this year.
- **Anita Vachharajani (English)** has won the award for the biography "**Amrita Sher-Gil: Rebel with a Paintbrush**".
- **Devendra Mewari (Hindi)** has won the award for his play titled "**Natak Natak me Vigyan**".

105. Harmony Foundation has hosted the Mother Teresa Memorial Awards for Social Justice 2021. The Awards in its 17th year is the only award endorsed by Sister Prema, the Superior General of the Missionaries of Charity, the organization started by Mother Teresa.

List of winners of Mother Teresa Memorial Awards for Social Justice 2021:

- **Dr. Anil Prakash Joshi** - For his efforts as a change maker in the environmental sustainability sector by impacting over 10,000 villages in the Himalayan region through his Himalayan Environmental Studies & Conservation Organisation. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2021.
- **Vidyut Mohan** - For his seminal and ingenious efforts in combating air pollution through his social enterprise Takachar. He is the winner of the Earth shot Prize.
- **Ridhima Pandey** - For her spectacular courage, and indomitable spirit as a youth environmental activist who has galvanized national participation to stop climate change.

- 106.** Surat's noted industrialist **Viral Desai**, popularly known as '**Greenman of Gujarat**', has been awarded the prestigious Global Environment and Climate Action Citizen Award 2021 in Dubai.
- 107. Anukruti Upadhyay** has won the Sushila Devi Award 2021 for the Best Book of Fiction for her novel, '**Kintsugi**'. The novel was published by the Fourth Estate imprint.
- The Ratanlal Foundation and the Bhopal Literature and Art Festival's organizing committee have announced the winner of this prestigious award for fiction written by a woman author and published in 2020.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- 108.** Actor-producer **Tusshar Kapoor** has recently authored his debut book titled '**Bachelor Dad**'. The actor became a single father to son Laksshya Kapoor via surrogacy in June 2016. He has shared his journey of being a single father in the new book. The book is published by Penguin India.
- 109.** Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu has recently released the autobiography of former NTPC and NBCC chief **Arup Roy Choudhury**, titled "The Turnover Wizard - Saviour Of Thousands".
- The book is published by HP Hamilton Limited.
 - The book is also endorsed by E Sreedharan, the 'Metro Man of India'.
- 110.** Economist and BJP national spokesperson, **Sanju Verma** has recently authored a new book titled 'The Modi Gambit: Decoding Modi 2.0'. The book features the various achievement in the last 2 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2nd term as PM of India. The book is published by Gaurav Book Centre.
- 111.** A new book titled 'The Riddle of Kashmir The Quest for Peace in a Troubled Land' has been authored by former Indian Army Chief of Staff Gen. **Nirmal Chander Vij (ret)**. The book is published by HarperCollins India.

PERSON IN NEWS

- 112.** Indian Forest Service officer, **Chandra Prakash Goyal** has been appointed as the Director-General of Forests & Special Secretary (DGF&SS), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change.

- 113.** Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Chief **Sanjay Arora** has been appointed to hold the additional charge of another border guarding force Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) as the latter's chief Kumar Rajesh Chandra has retired on 31st December 2021. He is a 1988-batch officer of Tamil Nadu cadre.
- 114.** Indian origin **Narandran 'Jody' Kollapen** has been appointed to South Africa's highest judicial bench, the Constitutional Court. He has been appointed along with Rammaka Steven Mathopo. Both will take office from 1st January 2022.
- 115.** **Vikram Misri**, former Indian envoy to China, has been appointed as the Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) in the National Security Council secretariat. He will succeed **Pankaj Saran**, who will step down as Deputy National Security Advisor on 31st December 2021. He is a 1989 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer.
- **Note: Ajit Doval** is the current NSA.
- 116.** Senior Diplomat **Anupam Ray** has been appointed as the next Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament, Geneva. He is an Indian Foreign Services (IFS) officer of the 1994 batch.
- 117.** **Dr Pankaj Sharma**, who is presently the Permanent Representative of India to the UN Conference on the Disarmament, has been appointed as the next **Ambassador of India to Mexico**.
- 118.** Senior DRDO scientist **Atul Dinkar Rane** has been appointed as the Director-General (DG) of the BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd, which manufactures the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.
- *BrahMos Aerospace is a joint venture between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and NPO Mashinostroyeniya of Russia. It is headquartered in New Delhi.*
- 119.** **Mohammed Ben Sulayem** of the **United Arab Emirates** has been elected as the new President of the International Automobile Federation (FIA). He has succeeded Jean Todt.
- 120.** EaseMyTrip, India's second-largest online travel platform, has appointed actors Vijay Raaz and Varun Sharma as its brand ambassadors. This is the first time that EaseMyTrip has appointed any brand ambassadors.

- 121.** The Board of Directors of the RBL Bank has recently appointed **Rajeev Ahuja**, who's currently working as the Executive Director at the bank, as interim Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of the bank with immediate effect, subject to the regulatory and other approvals. The board has accepted the request of Vishwavir Ahuja, Managing Director and CEO of the bank, to proceed on leave with immediate effect.
- 122.** RBI has also appointed its chief general manager **Yogesh K Dayal** as an additional director on the board of RBL Bank for a period of two years.
- 123.** Ice Hockey Association of India's general secretary, **Harjinder Singh** has been appointed as the Chef de Mission of India for the upcoming 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing by the Indian Olympic Association of India (IOA). He has also led the Indian contingent at the 2018 Winter Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea.
- 124.** IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance has recently appointed **H O Suri** as new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The appointment is effective from 1st October 2021.
- 125.** Yamaha Motor India has appointed **Eishin Chihana** as its new chairman. He has been associated with Yamaha Motor Company and its group companies across the globe since 1991. He has replaced Motofumi Shitara.
- 126.** **Radhika Jha**, a 2002 Uttarakhand IAS, has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of **Energy Efficiency Services (EESL)**. EESL is a joint venture between NTPC, Power Grid, Power Finance Corp and REC, working to promote energy efficiency in the country.

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OBITUARIES

- 127.** **Rajya Sabha MP from Bihar** and industrialist **Mahendra Prasad** has passed away recently in New Delhi. He was born on 8th January 1940 in Govindpur, Bihar.
- He represents the Janata Dal (United) party of Bihar in the Rajya Sabha.

- He was the founder of Aristo Pharmaceuticals and was a seven-term Rajya Sabha MP from Bihar and was also elected to the Lok Sabha once.
- His name was often prefixed with **"King"**, as he remained in the Rajya Sabha since 1985 except for brief gaps.

128. Italian-British architect Richard Rogers has passed away recently in London, UK. He was born on 23rd July 1933 in Italy. He designed a series of landmark buildings around the world, including London's "Cheesegrater" and the famous multi-coloured, pipe-covered Pompidou art centre in Paris.

- He received the prestigious **Pritzker prize**, known as the Nobel Prize of Architecture, in **2007**.

129. Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and veteran of **South Africa's** struggle against white minority rule, has passed away recently in Capetown, South Africa. He was born on 7 October 1931 in Klerksdorp, South Africa.

- He was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize** in **1984** for his nonviolent protest against apartheid.

130. The former President of Greece, Karolos Papoulias has passed away recently in Athens, Greece. He was born on 4th June 1929 in Ioannina, Greece.

131. Former England cricketer, Ray Illingworth has passed away recently. He was born on 8 June 1932 in Pudsey, West Yorkshire, England.

- He played 61 Tests for England between 1958 and 1973 and captained the country 31 times, winning 12 matches and an Ashes series in Australia in 1970. He was the chairman of the England selectors between 1993 and 1996 and coached the team in 1995-96.

132. Edward Osborne Wilson, known as the "Father of Biodiversity" and the 'Father of Sociobiology', has passed away recently in Burlington, Massachusetts, USA. He was born on 10th June 1929 in Alabama, USA.

- He was the former Harvard University biologist and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner: On Human Nature in 1978, and The Ants in 1990. He is also known as **'Modern-day Darwin'**.

SPORTS

- 133.** Indian **badminton** player **PV Sindhu** has been re-elected as a member of the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission. She has been named alongside five others who will serve as members till 2025.
- 134.** Indian cricketer **Harbhajan Singh**, the first Indian bowler to claim a Test hat-trick, has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. He made his cricket debut in 1998 in an ODI against Australia.
- He played 103 Tests, 236 ODIs and 28 T20Is for Team India. He was part of the winning squad of the 2011 Cricket World Cup and also the inaugural 2007 T20 World Cup in South Africa.
 - He was awarded the **Padma Shri**, India's fourth highest civilian honour, in **2009**.
- 135.** Ace Indian skier **Aanchal Thakur** has won a bronze medal in the giant slalom category at a Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS) Alpine skiing competition held at Kolasin, Montenegro.
- With this, she has become the **first Indian Ski athlete** to win two medals at international level. She has previously won a bronze medal in the 2018 FIS Alpine 3200 Cup held in Turkey.
- 136.** Indian teenager **Anahat Singh** has recently won the prestigious Junior US Open Squash Tournament in the U-15 girls' category at the Arlen Spectre Centre in Philadelphia, USA. She has defeated Egypt's Jayda Marei in the final match.
- Anahat Singh is a 13 year old girl from Delhi. She is currently the No. 1 **squash player** in India, Asia and Europe in the girls Under-13 category and No. 4 in the Under-15 category.
- 137.** Indian billiards player **Pankaj Advani** has recently won his 11th National Billiards title 2021. He has won the title after defeating his PSPB teammate Dhruv Sitwala. He represented the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) team in the National Billiards Championship.
- The 88th edition of National Billiards and Snooker Championships 2021 has been held in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**. It is organized by Cue Sports India.
- 138.** **Himachal Pradesh** cricket team has won their maiden Vijay Hazare Trophy 2021 by defeating Tamil Nadu in the finals held at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium, Jaipur.
- **Most runs** - Ruturaj Gaikwad (Maharashtra)
 - **Most wickets** - Yash Thakur (Vidarbha)

139. Bangladesh women team has recently won the SAFF U 19 Women's Championship by defeating India in the finals held at BSSS Mostafa Kamal Stadium, Dhaka in Bangladesh.

- **Shaheda Akter Ripa** of Bangladesh has scored the maximum number of goals in the tournament. She has received the 'most valuable player' award.

140. World No. 7 Nitesh Kumar (Haryana) has won the double gold at the 4th Para-Badminton National Championship 2021 held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

- He has won the gold medal in the Men's singles category.
- He along with his partner Tarun has defeated World No. 1 Paralympic Games gold medallist Pramod Bhagat and Manoj Sarkar in the Men's doubles category.

141. Uttar Pradesh hockey team has won the 11th Junior National Men's Hockey Championship 2021 by defeating Chandigarh in the finals held at Kovilpatti, Tamil Nadu. Tournament top scorer Sharda Nand Tiwari opened the scoring for Uttar Pradesh. It has been organized by the Hockey India.

142. Senior cricket player of New Zealand, Ross Taylor has recently announced his retirement from international cricket after the two-Test series against Bangladesh and the ODI against Australia and the Netherlands in February and March 2022. He holds the nation's record in one-day international runs (8,581) and centuries (21), and was the world's first to play in 100 internationals in all formats.

IMPORTANT DAYS

140. National Mathematics Day is observed annually on **22nd December** to commemorate the birth anniversary of Mathematician **Srinivasa Ramanujan**. The year 2021 marks **134th** birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan.

- The day was announced on 26 February 2012 by the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of the Indian mathematical genius Srinivasa Ramanujan. The year **2012** was also observed as National Mathematics Year.
- Srinivasa Ramanujan was born on 22nd December 1887 in Erode, Tamil Nadu. He was one of the youngest members of Britain's Royal Society and the first Indian to be elected a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge University. He compiled around 3,900 results consisting of equations and identities. One of his most treasured findings was his infinite series for Pi. He died on 26th April 1920 in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu.

141. National Farmers' Day or Kisan Diwas is observed annually on **23rd December** to commemorate the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, **Chaudhary Charan Singh**. The year 2021 marks his **119th** birth anniversary.

- The government has decided to celebrate Chaudhary Charan Singh's birthday as Kisan Diwas in **2001** to recognise his contributions to the agriculture sector and the welfare of farmers.

Chaudhary Charan Singh:

- Chaudhary Charan Singh was born on 23rd December 1902 in Uttar Pradesh. He breathed his last on 28th May 1987 in New Delhi.
- He served as the **5th Prime Minister of India** from 28 July 1979 to 14 January 1980.
- A memorial dedicated to him was built at Raj Ghat and is called '**Kisan Ghat.**'
- He was the chief architect of land reforms in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Books written by him** are 'Abolition of Zamindari', 'Co-operative Farming X', 'Prevention of Division of Holdings Below a Certain Minimum', etc.

142. National Siddha Day has been observed on **23rd December 2021** to spread awareness about the Siddha system of medicine. The day is annually organized by the Ministry of AYUSH on the eve of the birthday of Siddhar Agathiyar, which falls during the Ayilyam star of Margazhi Month (Tamil). The first Siddha Day was observed on 4th January 2018.

- The year 2021 marks the celebration of the **5th Siddha Day**.
- **Theme 2021:** "Strength of Siddha Medicine for Communicable Diseases"
- *Agathiyar or Agastaya is considered as the 'Father of Tamil Literature'.*

143. National Consumer Rights Day is observed annually on **24th December** to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and spread awareness about the rights and responsibilities of every consumer. The day was first observed in 1986 under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

- In August 2019, the Consumer Protection Act 2019 was passed by parliament. It came into force in July 2020 and replaced the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.
- World Consumer Rights Day is observed annually on 15th March.

144. Good Governance Day is observed annually on **25th December** to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna and former-Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**. Since 2014, the Good Governance Day has been celebrated every year on 25th December. The year 2021 marks the **97th birth anniversary** of Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

145. The United Nation's International Day of Epidemic Preparedness is observed annually on **27th December** to facilitate exchange of information, transmission of scientific knowledge and exchange best practices regionally, locally, and internationally.

- The day was first observed in 2020.

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