

PRACTICE **MOCK**

January 2022 - Week 2

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has recently constituted a 3-member committee to probe the serious lapse in security arrangements during Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Ferozepur, Punjab.
 - The three-member committee will be led by **Sudhir Kumar Saxena**, Secretary (Security), Cabinet Secretariat, and would comprise Balbir Singh, Joint Director of the Intelligence Bureau, and S Suresh, IG, Special Protection Group.
2. **Kochi** has become India's first city to have a **water metro project** after the launch of its first boat, namely '**Muziris**', among the 23- battery-powered electric boats. This project is operated by **Kochi Water Metro Rail Ltd (KWML)** while its boats are called Water Metros.
 - It is a ferry transport project which provides feeder service to the suburbs.
 - The transport system is powered by LTO battery technology. LTO is *Linear Titanium Oxide* is a rechargeable battery.
 - The total cost of the project is **Rs 819 crores**. The major part of the project is financed by Indo – German Cooperation.
 - The project will reduce traffic congestions and pollution.
3. The Ministry of Railways has approved the renaming of the **Kevadiya railway station** in the **Narmada** district of Gujarat, as **Ekta Nagar railway station**. The Statue of Unity's Kevadiya railway station falls under the Vadodara division. The station code of Ekta Nagar railway station will be **EKNR**. The numerical code of the station will be **08224620**.
4. India has successfully test-fired an advanced **sea to sea** variant of **BrahMos supersonic cruise missile** from **INS Visakhapatnam** warship off the west coast. The missile hit the designated target ship precisely at the maximum range.
5. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of the Western Railways zone of Indian Railways has launched a new initiative called "**Mission Amanat**" to make it easier for railway passengers to get back their lost luggage. This will help the passengers in tracking and getting back their lost belongings as well as ensure the safety and security of passengers and their luggage and belongings.
6. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated **Kalpana Chawla Centre for Research in Space Science and Technology (KCCRSST)** at **Chandigarh University**.
 - It has been established with the objective of training students in space science and satellite development and to meet future challenges in the area of space research.

- He has also launched Chandigarh University's Defence Scholarship Scheme, worth Rs 10 Crore, for the wards of Defence Personnel of the three services.
 - *Kalpana Chawla* was the first woman of Indian origin to go to space.
7. The Supreme Court of India has recently constituted a 5-member committee to probe the security breach during the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Punjab. The committee will be headed by former apex court judge Justice **Indu Malhotra**.
- Other members of the panel include the Inspector General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the Director-General of Police of Chandigarh, the Registrar General of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and the Additional DGP (Security) of Punjab.
8. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently inaugurated the second campus of the **Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute (CNCI)** in Rajarhat New Town area of **Kolkata, West Bengal**. It has been built at a cost of **Rs 530 crore**.
9. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry have recently organized a week-long virtual innovation celebration called '**Startup India Innovation Week**' to showcase the spread and depth of entrepreneurship across India.
- It has been organized from **10th January to 16th January 2022**.
 - It aims to commemorate the 75th year of India's independence '*Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*'.
10. Indian Naval Ships **Kadmatt and Shivalik** has recently participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise with Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force Ships *Uruga* and *Hirado* in the Bay of Bengal on 13th January 2022. The maritime exercise included a wide range of operations including flying operations, tactical maneuvers and replenishment approaches.
11. The Department of Fisheries, Government of India in association with Startup India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry has inaugurated the "**Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge**" on 13th January 2022. The challenge has been launched with an objective to provide a platform to start-ups within the country to showcase their innovative solutions within the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector.
12. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully conducted the qualification test of Cryogenic Engine for the **Human Space Programme -Gaganyaan** programme for a duration of 720 seconds at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), **Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu**.

- According to the space agency, the performance of the engine met the test objectives and the engine parameters were closely matching with the predictions during the entire duration of the test.

13. Minister of State for Education, **Subhas Sarkar**, has recently launched the **Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) 2021 – 2022** to promote sustainable practices of improved Water, Sanitation & Hygiene across schools. The schools will be assessed by an online portal & mobile app across **6 sub-categories**- Water, Hand Washing with soap, Sanitation, Operation & Maintenance, Capacity Building and Behaviour Change, and COVID-19 Preparedness and Response.

- The Ministry has increased the award money this year from Rs. 50,000 to **Rs. 60,000** per school.
- The award was first instituted in 2016-17 by the Department of School Education & Literacy.

14. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has flagged off India's first **multi-dimensional adventure sports expedition** in **France**. It has been conducted by the National Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports (NIMAS).

- The expedition was organised as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.
- It was conducted in November 2021 and the team was led by Director NIMAS Colonel Sarfaraz Singh, comprising 12 people – eight Army personnel and four youths of Arunachal Pradesh.
- It included activities like **250 kilometres of winter trekking in the Alps Mountain Ranges**, cycling from Alps Mountain Ranges to English Channel near Dunkirk via France, Switzerland and Belgium and also scuba diving in Mediterranean Sea.

15. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has recently raised the expenditure limit for candidates in Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies, due to the rise in inflation. The new limits will be applicable in all upcoming elections in the country.

Parliamentary constituencies poll expenditure ceiling:

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

16. Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh has recently inaugurated the **24th National Conference on e-Governance** in **Hyderabad, Telangana**.
- The theme of the two-day Conference is '**India's Techade: Digital Governance in a Post Pandemic World**'.
 - The conference has been organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) and the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), in association with the State Government of Telangana.
17. Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Chairman, **Vinai Kumar Saxena** has launched the country's first **Mobile Honey Processing Van** at **Village Sirora in Ghaziabad**.
- It has been designed in-house by KVIC at its Multi-disciplinary Training Centre, Panjokehra, at a cost of **Rs 15 lakh**.
 - This mobile honey processing unit can process up to 300 KG of honey in 8 hours.
 - The van is also equipped with a testing laboratory, that would instantly examine the quality of honey
18. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully flight tested the final deliverable configuration of the **Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM)** at a range in Southern India.
19. Union Minister of Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh has recently launched an **Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Start-Up** by IIT alumni for **water purification** through innovative technology. It has been started to provide clean drinking water at a low cost against the market price.
- The Technology Development Board (a statutory body of Science & Technology department) has also signed a MoU with Swajal Water Private Limited which is a tech Start Up Company founded by ex-IITians.
 - *India has set an ambitious target of providing **clean drinking water to all** by **2024**.*

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20. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently inaugurated an **MSME Technology Centre** at **Pondicherry** on the occasion of National Youth Day (12th January).
- It is set up with an investment of about **Rs. 122 crore** and is spread across 10 acres

- It will train 20,000 youth, support 2000 MSMEs and incubate 200 Start Ups.
- It will function under the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME).

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY):

It is **National Mission for Financial Inclusion** to ensure access to financial services, namely, Banking/ Savings & Deposit Accounts, Remittance, Credit, Insurance, Pension in an affordable manner.

It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **28th August 2014**.

Features:

- One basic savings bank account is opened for the unbanked person.
- There is no requirement to maintain any minimum balance in PMJDY accounts.
- Interest is earned on the deposit in PMJDY accounts.
- Rupay Debit card is provided to PMJDY account holder.
- Accident Insurance Cover of **Rs.1 lakh** (enhanced to Rs. 2 lakh to new PMJDY accounts opened after 28.8.2018) is available with a RuPay card issued to the PMJDY account holders.
- An overdraft (OD) facility up to **Rs. 10,000** to eligible account holders is available.
- PMJDY accounts are eligible for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)**, **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)**, **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)**, **Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Bank (MUDRA)** scheme.

Why in News?

According to the Ministry of Finance, the deposits in bank accounts opened under the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) scheme** have crossed **Rs 1.5 lakh crore** mark. The total balance in accounts under the Jan Dhan scheme is recorded at Rs 1, 50,939.36 crore as of December-end 2021.

The data revealed that over **44.23 crore accounts** have been opened under the scheme:

- Public sector banks - 34.9 crore accounts
- Private sector banks – 1.28 crore accounts
- Regional Rural banks – 8.05 crore accounts

RuPay Debit Cards have been issued to **31.28 crores** PMJDY beneficiaries under this scheme.

STATES AFFAIRS

21. The government of Haryana in collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Aviation has decided to set up **India's first Heli Hub** in **Gurugram**, Haryana. It will be used for services like air taxis, chartered helicopters, maintenance of the helicopters, among other things. The proposed hub will be developed on 10-20 acres of land well connected with the Dwarka Expressway and National Highway (NH) 8.
22. The government of **Jammu and Kashmir** has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UAE's pioneering financial services company, Century Financial to invest **100 million dollars** in the Union Territory. This MoU will strengthen the Hospitality & Tourism Industry in Jammu & Kashmir.
23. **National Health Mission, Assam**, in collaboration with **Piramal Swasthya** and **Cisco**, has recently launched project "**Niramay**" to demonstrate the integration of digital health technology and to strengthen the public health care delivery in Assam.
 - This initiative is based on Piramal Swasthya's indigenous integrated health technology platform '**AMRIT**'- *Accessible Medical Records via Integrated Technologies*.
 - It will cover health and wellness centres, block primary health centres, and district hospitals at three local districts of Barpeta, Darrang and Baksa.
24. Karnataka's Minister for Youth Empowerment and Sports K.C. Narayana Gowda has announced that **Karnataka** will host the next Khelo India Games in **2023**. He has also announced that over 75 sports students are being trained in the State to take part in the next Olympics.
25. The 18th edition of the two days long **Kachai Lemon Festival** has recently begun in **Manipur** at the Local Ground of Kachai Village in Ukhrul district. It is organised annually to promote this unique kind of lemon fruit and to encourage the lemon farmers.
 - **Theme 2022:** 'Organic Kachai Lemon for Safe Environment and Rural Transformation'
 - Kachai Lemon of Manipur has been accorded Geographical Indication (GI) registration tag and widely grown in the Kachai Village of Ukhrul district.

26. Kachai Lemon is considered to be unique as it is a rich source of ascorbic acid and famous for its juice content. It contains **51 percent ascorbic acid**, which is the highest so far available in any Citrus fruit that is grown in India. The juice content in Kachai Lemon is about **36-56 ml**.
27. The **9th** edition of the **North East Festival** has been held in **Guwahati, Assam** from 7th January to 9th January 2022. It has been inaugurated by Jagdish Mukhi, Governor of Assam. The aim is to promote and highlight the commercial and tourism potential of the North-East region.
28. The state government of **Gujarat** has recently launched the **“Student Start-ups and Innovation Policy 2.0 (SSIP-2.0)”** for the next five years. The policy aims to cover 50 lakh students across 1,000 higher education institutes and 10,000 schools of innovation and entrepreneurship. The policy also aims to give assistance to 10,000 proof of concepts and prototypes developed by the students and to 1,000 proof of concepts developed by school children.
29. **Telangana's Forest Minister A Indrakaran Reddy** has recently launched the first of its kind mobile app **“Urban Forest Parks”**. The app provides all the information about the parks, including entry ticket fee, special features of the park, distance from the app user, route app etc. It has been developed by PamTen Software Solutions Private Limited.
30. The state government of **Assam** has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)** for dairy development.
- As per the MoU, a joint venture company will be set up for **Rs 2,000 crore** with a target of processing 10 lakh litres of milk through six new units in 7 years.
31. The state government of **Uttar Pradesh** has recently declared **four villages** located near the Nepal border in the district as **revenue villages**. These four villages are Bhavanipur, Tedhia, Dhakia and Bichhia located in Mihinpurwa tehsil of the district.
- All these villages are Vantangiya villages. The Vantangiya' community comprises people brought from Myanmar during the colonial rule to plant trees.
 - There are around 225 families in these four villages consisting of over 1,500 members.
32. Karnataka Government has recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Singapore-based LNG Alliance Company to set up the State's first LNG Terminal in **Mangaluru**, Karnataka. It will be set up in collaboration with New Mangalore Port Trust (NMPT) with an investment of **Rs. 2, 250 crores**.

33. Lasoong festival, also known as Namsoong, is celebrated annually across the Indian state of **Sikkim** on the 18th day of the tenth Tibetan lunar month. It is the Sikkimese New Year. It is usually the time when the farmers rejoice and celebrate their harvest.

- It is celebrated as Sonam Lasoong by the Bhutias, and as Namsoong by the Lepchas.
- It is also celebrated in Nepal and Bhutan.
- During the festival of Lasoong, often dance forms depict tales from the life of Padmasambhava (or Guru Ugyen).
- This year, the Lasoong kick starts on **3rd January 2022**.

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

34. Sri Lanka has recently signed an agreement with **India** to jointly redevelop the strategic World War II-era **Trincomalee Oil Tank Complex** in Sri Lanka's eastern port district of Trincomalee for a lease period of **50 years**.

- Now, 85 of the 99 tanks will be under the Sri Lankan control which had previously remained under Indian control.
- The Cabinet has also approved the proposal to allocate 24 and 14 oil tanks of Trincomalee Oil Tank Complex to Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) and the local operators of the Indian Oil Company (LIOC) respectively while remaining 61 oil tanks are to be developed under Trinco Petroleum Terminal Pvt. Ltd, with shares of CPC (51%) & LIOC (49%).

35. The **Sea Dragon 22** exercise has been held at **Andersen Air Force Base, Guam** in the western Pacific. The exercise is a multinational exercise led by the **US Navy**. The countries that are participating in the exercise are **India, Australia, Canada, US, South Korea, and Japan**.

36. Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has nominated **Alikhan Smailov** as the new Prime Minister of the country. He served as the first Deputy Prime Minister in the previous cabinet which Mr. Tokayev dismissed last week amid violent unrest in the oil-rich Central Asian nation.

37. Daniel Ortega, leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), has been sworn in for the 4th consecutive term as the **President of Nicaragua**. He will remain in the office until January 2027.

38. According to Indian poet and diplomat Abhay K., the **Madagascar epic of Ibonia** is similar to Indian epic of Ramayana in its grand plot.

Similarities between Ibonia and Ramayana-

- Abduction of Ibonia's betrothed wife Rampela by Ravato, is similar to abduction of Rama's wife Sita by Ravana.
- Ibonia's fight with Rabato to get his wife Rampela back is similar to Rama's fight with Ravana to get back Sita.
- 300 words in Malagasy language from Sanskrit.

39. Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov has recently ordered experts to find a method to extinguish a fire in the Darvaza gas crater.

About Darvaza gas crater:

- It is also known as the 'Gateway to Hell', it is a huge natural gas crater.
- It is located in the **Karakum desert**, 260 kilometres away from **Turkmenistan's** capital, Ashgabat.
- The Gas Crater has been burning for the last 50 years.
- In 2018, the president officially renamed it to the **"Shining of Karakum"**

40. Mark Rutte has recently become the Prime Minister of Netherlands for the fourth term. He was first sworn in as Prime Minister of the Netherlands on 14 October 2010.

41. Japan and Australia have recently (January 2022) signed the **Reciprocal Assessment Agreement** to allow faster deployment of defence personnel to each other's facilities and ease restrictions on transporting weapons and supplies for joint training and disaster relief operations.

42. Recently, the five permanent United Nations Security Council members (**China, France, Russia, the U.K. and US**) have pledged to prevent atomic weapons spreading and to avoid nuclear conflict. The pledge is made in a rare joint statement ahead of a review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) 1970.

REPORTS & INDICES

43. The First Advance Estimates (FAE) of National Income at both Constant (2011-12) and Current prices, for the financial year 2021-22 has been released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

- Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices (2011-12) in the year 2021-22 is estimated at **Rs.147.54 lakh crore**, as against the Provisional Estimate of GDP for the year 2020-21 of **Rs.135.13 lakh crore**.
- The growth in real GDP during 2021-22 is estimated at **9.2 per cent** as compared to the contraction of 7.3 per cent in 2020-21.
- Real GVA is estimated at Rs.135.22 lakh crore in 2021-22, as against Rs.124.53 lakh crore in 2020-21, showing a growth of 8.6%.
- The growth in nominal GDP during 2021-22 is estimated at 17.6%, while nominal GVA is estimated at Rs.210.37 lakh crore in 2021-22, as against Rs.179.15 lakh crore in 2020-21.
- The agriculture sector is estimated to see a growth of **3.9%** in FY22, higher than the 3.6% expansion recorded in the previous financial year.

44. World Bank has recently released the Global Economic Prospects Report.

Key highlights:

- The report states that, Global economic growth will decrease sharply to **4.1%** in **2022** and **3.2%** in **2023**, from **5.5%** in **2021**.
- It projects India's annual growth to be **8.3%** in the fiscal year **2021-2022**, **8.7%** in **2022-23**, while **6.8%** in **2023-24**.
- It also flagged the risks posed by rising inflation and growing inequality.
- It noted that, after having recovered in 2021, global economy is headed towards "pronounced slowdown", because of new Covid-19 variants, increasing inflation, debt & income inequality, reducing fiscal & monetary support and decreasing demand.

45. Chennai International Airport has been ranked **8th** for on-time performance among large international airports globally for 2021 by Cirium — a provider of aviation data to the travel, finance, aerospace and aviation industries. It is the only Indian airport ranked in the top 10.

- According to the latest traffic figures of Chennai Airport, it has done recovery of 80 % in domestic traffic.
- It is the sixth busiest airport in India.

Top-3 Airports in the list:

Rank	Airports
1st	Miami Airport (United States)
2nd	Fukuoka Airport (Japan)

3rd

Haneda Airport (Japan)

46. As per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based **retail inflation** has risen to **5.59%** in December 2021 due to a sharp rise in food prices. It was 4.91 percent in November 2021 and 4.59 percent in December 2020. The food inflation for the period has stood at 4.05 percent in December 2021 as compared to 1.87 per cent in November 2021.

47. Ministry of Labour and Employment has recently released July-Sept. 2021 employment figures under the **second round of the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES)**.

Key highlights:

- **Nine sectors** that account for about 85% of total employment in establishments with 10 or more workers hired 2 lakh more people in **July-September 2021** compared to April-June 2021.
- The estimated total employment in the nine selected sectors is **3.10 crore** approximately, which is 2 lakh higher than the first round of QES (April 1, 2021). It was 3.08 crore in April-June 2021.
 - The report covers manufacturing, construction, trade, transport, education, health, accommodation and restaurants, IT/BPOs and financial services sectors.
 - 90% of the establishments had less than 100 workers, while 30% of the IT/BPO establishments had at least 100 workers.
- The overall percentage of female workers stood at **32.1%**, higher than 29.3% reported during the first round of QES.
- In the construction sector, 20% of the workers were contractual and 6.4% were casual workers.
- While most of the vacancies (65.8%) were for unspecified reasons, 23% were due to resignation and 11.7% due to retirement of employees.

48. The Henley & Partners has recently released the 'Henley Passport Index: Q1 2022 Global Ranking'.

Henley Passport Index: Q1 2022 Global Ranking		
Top-3		
Rank	Country	Visa-free score
1	Japan and Singapore	192
2	Germany and South Korea	190
3	Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, and Spain	189

Bottom-3		
109	Syria	29
110	Iraq	28
111	Afghanistan	26

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BUSINESS & ECONOMY

- 49.** The **Flipkart Group**, owned by Walmart Inc, has recently acquired electronics reverse commerce (or recommerce) company **Yaantra** to strengthen its recommerce business as well as enhance after sale offerings for its customers in the smartphones segment.
- Yaantra was incorporated in 2013 by Jayant Jha, Ankit Saraf and Anmol Gupta. It is engaged in repairing and selling refurbished consumer tech products.
- 50.** The rating agency **India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)** has recently lowered India's GDP growth forecast by **10 basis points** to **9.3%** y-o-y in **FY22**. Earlier, this estimate was 9.4%. The rapid spread of the Omicron variant is the main driver to downgrade GDP growth projections.
- 51.** **Reliance Industrial Investments and Holdings Limited**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), has entered into an agreement to acquire the entire share capital of Columbus Centre Corporation, Cayman Islands, for an equity consideration of **\$98.15 million (Rs 735 crore)**. Columbus Centre is the indirect owner of a **73.37%** stake in Mandarin Oriental New York, one of the premium luxury hotels in New York City.
- 52.** **POSCO of South Korea** has tied up with **Adani Group** to set up a **\$5 billion** integrated steel plant at **Mundra** in **Gujarat**. This partnership will contribute to the growth of India's manufacturing industry and the Government of India's ambitious self-reliant India plan. It will also help in strengthening India's position in green enterprises.
- 53.** The Board of Directors of **Adani Power Limited** has recently approved the appointment of **Shersingh B Khyalia** as a chief executive officer (CEO) of the company with effect from 11th

January 2022. He is a Chartered Accountant, who has worked as managing director in Gujarat Power Corporation.

- 54. Tata group** has replaced Chinese mobile phone manufacturer **Vivo** as the title sponsor of the Indian Premier League (IPL) for the **2022 and 2023 seasons**. The multinational conglomerate will pay Rs. 300 crore per year as the title sponsor of IPL for the next two seasons. This is about 60% of what Vivo would have paid. The league will now be known as 'Tata IPL' from the 2022 season.
- 55.** As per the IHS Markit report, **India** will overtake **Japan** to become **Asia's second-largest economy** by 2030. India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is also projected to surpass that of Germany and the UK to rank as world's No.3.
- India's nominal GDP measured in USD terms projected an increase from \$2.7 trillion in 2021 to \$8.4 trillion by 2030.
 - India's consumption expenditure will double from \$1.5 trillion in 2020 to \$3 trillion by 2030.
- 56. SJVN** has been granted a category 'I' licence for **inter-state trading in electricity** in the whole of India by the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC). SJVN has a portfolio of more than 16,000 MW, out of which 2,016.5 MW is under operation.
- If the licensee fails to undertake trading in electricity within one year from the date of licence, the licence will be liable for revocation in accordance with the provisions of the Act and Trading Licence Regulations.
 - According to the trading licence regulations, an entity or person applying for a Category 'I' trading licence should have net worth of **Rs.50 crore** and should have maintained minimum current ratio and liquidity ratio of **1:1**.
- 57. Nepal Power Exchange Limited** has signed a trading agreement with India's **Manikaran Power Limited** to sell electricity produced by the domestic private sector to India through India's Manikaran Power.
- The agreement will allow Nepal to sell **500 MW** of electricity to India in the initial phase.
 - Under the agreement, Manikaran Power will invest in 15 percent of shares belonging to NPEL, which is equivalent to Rs 300 million.
- 58.** The Government of India (GoI) has recently decided to hold a **35.8%** stake of **Vodafone-Idea (Vi)** in the form of equity after the financially-stressed telco has decided to convert interest on the deferred spectrum and adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues into equity. This makes the

Union government the single-largest shareholder in Vi, a joint venture between the Aditya Birla group and UK-headquartered Vodafone, followed by Vodafone Group (28.5%) and Aditya Birla Group (17.8%).

- Currently, the Aditya Birla group holds around 27.7 percent while Vodafone Group holds 44.3 percent in Vi.
- **Adjusted Gross Revenue** (AGR) is the usage and licensing fee that telecom operators are charged by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT)

59. National Stock Exchange (NSE) has recently received SEBI approval to launch **derivatives** on **Nifty Midcap Select Index**. The index will be available for trading from **24th January 2022**.

- Nifty Midcap Select Index aims to track the performance of a focused portfolio of 25 stocks within the Nifty Midcap 150 index. The midcap stocks account for around 17% of market capitalization.

BANKING & FINANCE

60. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has introduced limits for cash withdrawals and mini statements to make Aadhaar enabled payment system (AEPS) more standardized.

Key Highlights:

- Standardized limit of a minimum of **five approved cash withdrawal transactions** per month for every customer. Post five transactions, issuer banks can either decline the request or charge a fee.
- A limit of a minimum of **five mini statement transactions** per customer per month will also be implemented.
- Limits have to be implemented by **15th January 2022**.
- Acquirers must implement two-factor authentication for login of business correspondents, agents and merchants at least once a day with one of the factors as Aadhaar based biometric authentication.

61. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently extended the validity of its Directions **for Sri Guru Raghavendra Sahakara Bank Niyamitha, Bengaluru**, by **4 months** i.e. till **May 2022**.

- The directions have been issued under **Section 35A** read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- The bank has been under RBI Directions with effect from close of business on 10th January 2020.
- The withdrawal limit for depositors of the bank is capped at Rs. 1 lakh per depositor during the entire duration.

- 62. Axis Bank**, India's third-largest private sector bank, has recently partnered with **MinkasuPay** to offer the smoothest net banking payment experience for its customers through a **biometric authentication solution**.
- This partnership will enable customers to make net banking payments in merchant apps using Fingerprint or Face ID, without the need of usernames, passwords, and OTPs.
 - Transaction time will reduce from the current 50-60 seconds to just 2-3 seconds.
- 63. Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB)** has recently partnered with the Bengaluru-based Mecwin Technologies Ltd to introduce farmer-friendly solar-powered pump-sets using bank finance.
- **Note:** KVGB was the first bank to introduce solar loan schemes. It has been in the forefront in financing solar lights and sustainable energy solutions to underserved households and businesses in association with SELCO for the last 25 years.
- 64.** The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** has recently collaborated with **Arthimpact Digital Loans (ARTH)** to provide end-to-end fintech solutions including skilling, micro-financial services, and forward linkage support to self-help group members.
- 65. RBL Bank** has recently collaborated with **Google** to improve the Bank's customer experience strategy through its digital platform, Abacus 2.0. This collaboration will enable better customer data management, and analytics, enabling effective cross-selling within the Bank's large customer base and subsequently reducing the cost of customer acquisition, significantly.
- 66. Federal Bank** has recently launched an online lending platform **federalinstaloans.com** to facilitate quick and hassle-free credit approvals for **micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)** across India.
- The platform enables MSME borrowers to avail loans in less than 30 minutes digitally, by uploading their income tax returns, bank account statements, and online verification of goods and services tax (GST) details.
 - Eligible borrowers can avail of up to **Rs.50 lakh** through the platform at present.
- 67. UCO Bank**, in association with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has recently launched a **RuPay Select contactless debit card** for its premium customer segment. The card offers an ATM withdrawal limit of **Rs.50, 000** along with a purchase of up to **Rs.2 lakh** at Point of Sale (PoS) or e-commerce.

- 68. Edelweiss Housing Finance Ltd (EHFL) and ECL Finance Ltd (ECLF)** have recently entered into a co-lending partnership with **Indian Bank** for lending to priority sector areas. This partnership will help in expanding the portfolio of lending products available to the target customers and will also increase their access to credit.
- 69. Sova Capital**, a London-based emerging markets broker-dealer, has recently collaborated with **India International Exchange (IFSC) Limited (India INX)** to allow Indian investors to access the **Russian market**. This partnership will create a cost-effective bridge for Indian investors to access trading on the Moscow Exchange (MOEX), Russia's main trading venue for equities, bonds, derivatives, FX and money markets.
- 70.** As per the latest Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data, the foreign currency reserves of India have **declined by \$1.466 billion to \$633.614 billion**, in the last week of 2021, which ended 31st December 2021.
- Gold reserves have raised by USD 14 million to USD 39.405 billion.
 - Foreign currency assets, which show the change in the valuation, have declined by \$1.480 billion to \$569.89 billion.
 - India's forex touched a lifetime high of USD 642.453 billion in the week ended September 03, 2021.
- 71. AIC STPINEXT Initiatives**, a special purpose vehicle of Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), an organisation under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), has recently signed two Memorandums of Understanding (MoU), one with **HDFC Bank** and the other with **Excelpoint Systems India Pvt. Ltd.** to strengthen the tech startup ecosystem in India.
- 72.** Chennai-headquartered NBFC **Shrinithi Capital**, which is primarily into commercial vehicle and two-wheeler loans, has recently raised **Rs 300 crore** as co-lending facility from **IndoStar Capital Finance**.
- Through this arrangement, Shrinithi Capital has planned to disburse Rs 400 crore in 2022 to small truck transporters and owner-cum-drivers who are unable to take loans from banks and leading NBFCs.
- 73.** As per the weekly Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data, the **foreign exchange reserves of India** has declined by **USD 878 million to USD 632.736 billion** in the week ended 7th January 2022. The decline is mainly due to a fall in gold reserves and foreign currency assets (FCA).
- In the reporting week, FCAs has declined by \$497 million to \$569.392 billion.

- Gold reserves has declined by \$360 million to \$39.044 billion.
- The special drawing rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) fell by \$16 million to \$19.098 billion.
- India's reserve position with the IMF has lowered by \$5 million to \$5.202 billion.
- In the previous week ended 31st December 2021, India's reserves has dropped by \$1.466 billion to \$633.614 billion.

74. The Reserve Bank of India has recently (January 2022) upped the threshold limit for Banks to maintain **Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR)** on deposits and other extension of funds received from non-financial small business customers from **Rs.5 crore to Rs.7.5 crore**. Therefore, all commercial banks (other than regional rural banks, local area banks and payments banks) will be required to maintain LCR if they receive deposits of Rs.7.5 crore and above from non-financial small business customers against Rs.5 crore earlier.

75. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has decided to set up two hubs on **motor insurance and property insurance** and also an advisory committee with the overall objective to promote loss prevention measures in the general insurance industry.

- To form a hub on property insurance at '**National Insurance Academy (NIA)**' and one on motor insurance at '**Institute of Insurance and Risk Management (IIRM)**'.
- There will be an **advisory committee** under the chairmanship of the NIA director, which among other things will create a repository of past risk inspection reports and developing standard survey/inspection report formats. The committee has a term of **2 years**. There will be two sub-committees within the advisory committee.
- The sub-committee on property insurance will create a repository of past risk inspection reports and developing standard survey/inspection report formats.
- The sub-committee on motor insurance will develop guidelines on inspection of vehicles and standard operating processes to be followed by vehicle owners in the event of a loss.

76. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has released final guidelines to ensure the orderly development of the surety insurance business in India. The **IRDAI (Surety Insurance Contracts) Guidelines, 2022** will come into effect from **1st April 2022**.

New Guidelines:

- According to new guidelines Insurance companies can launch the much-anticipated surety bonds now.
- The premium charged for all surety insurance policies underwritten in a financial year, including all installments due in subsequent years for those policies, **should**

not exceed 10 percent of the total gross written premium of that year, subject to a maximum of **Rs 500 crore**.

- As per IRDAI, insurers can issue contract bonds, which provide assurance to the public entity, developers, subcontractors, and suppliers that the contractor will fulfil its contractual obligation when undertaking the project.
- The limit of guarantee **should not exceed 30 percent** of the contract value. Surety Insurance contracts should be issued only to specific projects and not clubbed for multiple projects.

77. Lazypay, a Buy Now Pay Later solution by PayU Finance, has partnered with **SBM Bank** India to launch LazyCard, a prepaid payment instrument backed by a credit line that works on the Visa payment network.

- **Aim:** To empower financially underserved Indians, who struggle with limited credit options, with easy access to credit.
- The card is available to the 62 million pre-approved users of LazyPay, with a credit limit of up to **Rs.5 lakh**.

78. Airtel Payments Bank has tied up with **Park+** to offer FASTag-based smart parking solutions to marquee commercial and residential properties across the country. This partnership aims to leverage the distribution reach and digital payments stack of Airtel Payments Bank to digitize the parking ecosystem using FASTag associated with the vehicle.

79. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has selected **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** for the second phase of the **Passport Seva Programme**, the country's largest mission-critical e-governance programme.

- TCS has been involved as a service provider in the Passport Seva Project for over 10 years.
- In the second phase, TCS will refresh existing facilities and systems, and develop innovative new solutions to enable the issuance of e-passports.
- It will also enhance the citizen experience using technologies such as biometrics, artificial intelligence, advanced data analytics, chatbots, auto-response, natural language processing, and the cloud.

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AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- 80.** Bajrangi Bhaijaan (2015) fame actress, **Harshaali Malhotra** has been awarded the **12th Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar Award 2022**. She has received the award from Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Governor of Maharashtra, for her commendable performance in the movie and contribution in the field of Indian Cinema.
- 81.** The Government of Maharashtra has organised the Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar national Awards 2022 ceremony in the memory of Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar as a part of the upcoming 73rd Republic Day.
- 82.** **HDFC Bank** has been named as the '**Best Private Bank in India**' at the Global Private Banking Awards 2021 for contributing to accelerate key trends, including digitalisation, communication, investment in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) strategies. The award has been organised by Professional Wealth Management (PWM).
- 83. Winners of SKOCH Literature Award 2021:**
- 1) Ajit Ranade**, Executive President & Chief Economist, Aditya Birla Group, for the book titled **“Rising to the China Challenge: Winning Through Strategic Patience and Flexible Policies”**.
 - The book was published in 2021 by Rupa Publications India Ltd.
 - The book was based on the 2020 Galwan Valley clash provoked by China.
 - 2) Tamal Bandyopadhyay**, Consulting Editor, Business Standard & Senior Adviser, Jana Small Finance Bank, for the book titled **“Pandemonium: The Great Indian Banking Tragedy”**.
 - 3) Manish Tewari**, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, for the book titled **“10 Flash Points 20 Years”**.
 - 4) Amar Patnaik**, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, for the book titled **“Institutional Change and Power Asymmetry in the Context of Rural India”**.
 - 5) The **Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) – Forensic Service, Delhi**, has won the SKOCH Award 2021 (Silver) in the Governance category for its work towards combating Crime and Violence against Children. It has been presented on the 78th SKOCH Summit organised with theme of **“State of Governance”**.
- 84.** Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has declared the winners of the third **National Water Awards** for the year 2020. The award comes with a citation, trophy, and cash prize.

- **Uttar Pradesh** has received the **Best State** award in water conservation efforts in the National Water Awards 2020. It is followed by Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu respectively.
- **Muzaffarnagar** in Uttar Pradesh has received the **Best District** award in the northern zone followed by Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar in Punjab.

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

85. The Professor in Clinical Embryology at Kasturba Medical College (KMC) **Dr. Satish Adiga** has been selected by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for its National Award for the year 2020. He will receive **Dr. Subhas Mukherjee Award** from ICMR in recognition for his outstanding contribution to the field of in-vitro fertilization (IVF). He has contributed significantly to both clinical IVF and fertility research.
- Dr. Subhas Mukherjee is the creator of India's first IVF baby and ICMR has instituted the award in his name to recognize the outstanding contribution of IVF experts in the country.
86. The **Kerala Arts and Crafts Village** near Kovalam has won the **2021 International Craft Award** for the **Best Craft Village** of the year by the World Crafts Council International. It is the only award India received in the non-individual category.
87. The **Golden Globe Awards 2022** ceremony has been held to recognize excellence in film, both American and international, and American television. This is the **79th edition** of the annual event, which honored the best in American television, as well as film in 2021 as chosen by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

Category	Winner
Best Motion Picture – Drama	The Power of the Dog
Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy	West Side Story
Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Drama	Nicole Kidman for Being the Ricardos
Best Actor in a Motion Picture – Drama	Will Smith for King Richard
Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy	Rachel Zegler for West Side Story
Best Actor in a Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy	Andrew Garfield for Tick, Tick... BOOM!
Best Actress in a Supporting Role in Any Motion Picture	Ariana DeBose for West Side Story
Best Actor in a Supporting Role in Any Motion Picture	Kodi Smit-McPhee for The Power of the Dog
Best Director – Motion Picture	Jane Campion for The Power of the Dog
Best Screenplay – Motion Picture	Kenneth Branagh for Belfast
Best Picture – Animated	Encanto

Best Picture — Non-English Language	Drive My Car (Japan)
Best Original Score – Motion Picture	Dune
Best Song Motion Picture	No Time to Die, "No Time To Die"
Best Television Series — Drama	Succession
Best Television Series — Musical or Comedy	Hacks
Best Television Motion Picture	The Underground Railroad
Best Actress — Television Motion Picture	Kate Winslet for Mare of Easttown
Best Actor – Television Motion Picture	Michael Keaton for Dopesick
Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Series — Drama	Michaela Jaé Rodriguez for Pose
Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series — Drama	Jeremy Strong for Succession
Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Series — Musical or Comedy	Jean Smart for Hacks
Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series — Musical or Comedy	Jason Sudeikis for Ted Lasso
Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role on Television	Sarah Snook for Succession
Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role on Television	Oh Yeong-su for Squid Game

BOOKS & AUTHORS

88. A new book titled **“Ratan N. Tata: The Authorized Biography”** has been authored by **Thomas Matthew**. The book chronicles the life of one of India's biggest industrialists and philanthropists. It is an authoritative biography with copious details about 84-years-old Ratan Tata's childhood, college years, and his early influences.

- The book will be published by HarperCollins.
- The book will be released in all formats in November 2022.

89. A new book titled **“Indomitable: A Working Woman's Notes on Work, Life and Leadership”** is the autobiography of **Arundhati Bhattacharya**, retired Indian Banker and former Chairperson of State Bank of India (SBI). The book depicts the story of Arundhati's life

as a banker and the challenges she faced in a male-dominated bastion. The book is published by HarperCollins India.

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PERSON IN NEWS

90. The patient, **David Bennett (USA)** has recently become the first person in the world to get a heart transplant from a **genetically-modified pig**. The surgery was conducted by University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM) faculty at the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC). This organ transplant demonstrated for the first time that a genetically-modified animal heart can function like a human heart without immediate rejection by the body.
91. **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** has recently appointed Kuwaiti oil executive **Haitham Al Ghais** as its new secretary-general. He will take the group's reins in August 2022, replacing Mohammad Barkindo.
92. **Sri Lanka batter Danushka Gunathilaka** has recently announced his retirement from Tests cricket to focus on white-ball cricket. He played his last Test game in 2018 with his eight appearances bringing him 299 runs.
- He along with Kusal Mendis and Niroshan Dickwella faced a one-year suspension from playing International Cricket for breaching the bio-bubble protocols, across all three formats.
93. RenewBuy, an online insurance platform, has launched its first 360-degree ad campaign with its brand proposition of "Smart Tech, Right Advice". The company has roped in Indian actor, **Rajkummar Rao**, as its first brand ambassador for the campaign.
- The campaign has been designed and conceptualized by Havas Worldwide India.
 - The campaign ensures consumer's insurance needs through digital led insurance POSP (Point of Sale Person) advisor network.
94. Australian wine brand, **Jacob's Creek** has recently appointed captain of the Indian women's cricket team and Padma Shri awardee **Mithali Raj** as its brand ambassador. Jacob's Creek is the official wine partner for the upcoming ICC Women's World Cup 2022 in New Zealand.

95. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a separate **department for Fintech** (Financial Technology) to further focus and facilitate innovation in the Indian fintech sector. It has been created with effect from 4th January 2022, by subsuming the fintech division of DPSS (Department of Payment and Settlement Systems), Central Office (CO).
- **Ajay Kumar Choudhary**, Executive Director of RBI, will head the department.
 - The department will be administratively attached to the centralized administration division (CAD) of RBI.
96. Eminent rocket scientist **Dr. S Somanath**, who is at present Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), has been appointed as the **10th Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** and Space Secretary.
- His appointment as the Space Secretary and the ISRO Chairman is for a combined tenure of **three years** from the date of joining of the post.
 - He has succeeded Kailasavadivoo Sivan who has completed his extended tenure on 14th January 2022.
97. The Government of India has extended the tenure of **Navrang Saini** as interim Chairperson of **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** for three more months till 5th March 2022.
- Mr. Saini, who is a Whole Time Member of IBBI, was assigned additional charge of Chairperson in addition to his existing duties in October 2021 for three months till 13th January 2022. The post of full-time Chairperson has been lying vacant after M.S. Sahoo retired upon completing a five-year tenure on 30th September 2021.
98. Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor **Urjit Patel** has been appointed as the **Vice-President** of the Beijing-based **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** for a term of 3-years. He will succeed outgoing Vice President D J Pandian, who is in charge of sovereign and non-sovereign lending of the AIIB in South Asia, the Pacific Islands and South-East Asia.
- Urjit Patel served as the **24th Governor** of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) succeeding Raghuram Rajan on September 5, 2016.
99. The International Monetary Fund has recently appointed **Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas** as its next Chief Economist. A French-born University of California- Berkley Economist will succeed **Gita Gopinath** as the IMF's Chief Economist who will be joining the IMF management team in January 2022.
- Initially, P Gourinchas will join the IMF on a part-time basis from 24th January 2022. He will take upon a role on a full-time basis from April 1, 2022.

100. China's senior diplomat **Zhang Ming** has been appointed as the new Secretary-General of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** for a term of 3 years. He has succeeded Vladimir Norov.

- India will assume the presidency of SCO for the first time for 2022-23. India will also host the SCO summit in 2023.

101. Legends League Cricket (LLC) has recently appointed cricketer **Jhulan Goswami** as an ambassador to its 'All Women Match Official Team' to promote women's empowerment initiative of the LLC.

- Shandre Frtiz from South Africa will be the match referee for the entire League.
- Umpires: Shubdha Bhosle Gaikwad, the youngest female umpire in India, Lauren Agenbag from South Africa, Humaira Farah from Pakistan, and Renee Montgomery from Hong Kong.
- *In 2021, Actor **Amitabh Bachchan** was appointed as the Brand Ambassador of LLC and former head coach Ravi Shastri is officiating as Commissioner of the league.*

OBITUARIES

102. Kannada writer Chandrashekhara Patil, popularly known as "Champa", has passed away recently in Bangalore, Karnataka. He was born on 18th June 1939 in Hattimattur, Karnataka. He also served as President of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat (KSP) and Chairman of the Kannada Development Authority.

103. India's oldest female **sloth bear**, whose name was **Gulabo**, has passed away at the Van Vihar National Park and Zoo, located in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Gulabo was the oldest sloth bear of the country. She died at the age of 40. She was rescued from a street performer (Madaari) in May 2006, when she was 25 years. Gulabo was one of the star attractions in the park.

- *Van Vihar National Park is situated next to the famous **Upper Lake** of Bhopal also known as the "Bada Talab" which is a Ramsar Site and one of the two lakes of Bhoj Wetland.*

104. Marilyn Bergman, the Oscar, Emmy, and Grammy-winning **American lyricist** and songwriter has passed away recently in Los Angeles, USA.

- She collaborated with her husband, Alan Bergman for songwriting. Some famous hits are "The Way We Were," "The Windmills of Your Mind," "In the Heat of the Night" and the songs from "Yentl". The pair were nominated for Oscars 16 times and won three times.

- 105.** The president of the European Parliament, **David Sassoli** has passed away recently in Italy. He was born on 30th May 1956, in Florence, Italy.
- 106.** Olympic athlete **Deon Lendore** has passed away recently in an unfortunate car crash in Texas, USA. He won a **bronze medal** in the 4 × 400 metres relay event at the **2012 London Olympics**. He also participated in the 400 meter race at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- 107. Legendary Hollywood actor Sidney Poitier** has passed away recently in California, USA. He was born on 20th February 1927 in Florida, USA. He was a trailblazing actor and a respected humanitarian and diplomat. He was the **first Black man to win the Oscar Award** for best actor for Lilies of the Field in 1963.

SPORTS

- 108.** The All India Sports Council of the Deaf has recently received the approval from the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD) to host the first **World Deaf T20 Cricket Championship** in **Thiruvananthapuram**, Kerala from **January 10 to 20, 2023**. A minimum of eight countries are expected to take part in the championship.
- 109.** Fourteen-year old **Bharath Subramaniam** (Chennai) has recently become India's **73rd chess Grandmaster**, securing the third and final GM norm at the Vergani Cup Open 2022 held in Cattolica, Italy. He scored 6.5 points and ranked 7th overall.
- 110. South African all-rounder Chris Morris** has recently announced his retirement from all forms of cricket and has decided to take up a coaching role with South African domestic side Titans.
- 111.** India-born New Zealand cricketer **Ajaz Patel** has recently won the ICC Player of the Month award for December 2021 following his stupendous 10-wicket haul against Virat Kohli and Co. in the second Test in Mumbai.
- He picked up 14 wickets in the Mumbai Test match in early December 2021 against India, including all 10 in the first innings, to become only the third player in Test history, after Jim Laker and Anil Kumble, to achieve the remarkable milestone.
- 112. IndiaSkills 2021 National Competition** has been organised by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the guidance of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in New Delhi from 7th January to 9th January 2022.

- The closed-door competition witnessed participation in 54 skills such as concrete construction work, beauty therapy, car painting, health and social care, visual merchandising, graphic design technology, wall & floor tiling, welding, among others.
- **Odisha** has secured first place among the 26 states/ union territories with **51 medals**, followed by Maharashtra (30 medals) and Kerala (25 medals).
- The winners of IndiaSkills 2021 Nationals will get a chance to represent the country at World Skills International Competition to be held in Shanghai, China in October 2022.

113. Young shuttler **Tasnim Mir** from Gujarat has recently become the first Indian shuttler to grab the world's no 1 ranking in the under-19 girls singles in the latest BWF junior rankings. She is currently ranked a lowly 602 in the women's singles.

- In Boys singles, Lakshya Sen, Siril Verma, and Aditya Joshi have become the world no 1.

114. Rafael Nadal (Spain) has won the men's singles title by defeating Maxim Cressy in the final of the 2022 Melbourne Summer Set 1, ATP 250 in Hard Court, at Melbourne's Rod Laver Arena. It is his **89th career ATP title** and his first title since 2009 in Australia. The tournament has been organized by Tennis Australia at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Australia.

- Whereas, **Simona Halep (Romania)** has won the women's singles tennis title. It is her 23rd career WTA title and first title in Australia.

IMPORTANT DAYS

115. Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD), also known as Non-Resident Indian Day, is observed annually on **9th January** to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots. The year 2022 marks the **17th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD)**.

Background:

- In the year 1915, Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa on this day. Following his return, the father of the nation began and headed India's freedom struggle and changed the lives of millions of Indians forever.
- The year 2015 marked 100 years of the return of Mahatma Gandhi.

116. World Hindi Day is observed annually on **10th January** to promote the language at the global stage. The day also marks the anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference which was inaugurated on 10th January 1975 in Nagpur, by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

- The celebration of first World Hindi Day was commenced on **10th January 2006** by former Prime Minister **Dr. Manmohan Singh**. This was also the first time that the ministry of external affairs started celebrating the day abroad.

- 117. National Youth Day** is observed annually on **12th January** to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Swami Vivekananda** who always motivated the youth of the country and spoke about the right use of the youth in the development of the country.
- The year 2022 marks the **25th** National Youth Day and the **159th** birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda (12 January 1863).
 - **Theme 2022:** It's all in the mind
 - The decision to celebrate Vivekananda's birthday as National Youth Day was taken in 1984, and it was first observed on 12th January 1985.
- 118. Armed Forces Veterans Day** is observed annually across India on **14th January** to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation. It is observed as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by **Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE**, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 January 1953.
- The year 2022 marks the **6th Armed Forces Veterans Day**.
 - The day was first observed in 2017.
- 119.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently announced to celebrate **26th December** annually as '**Veer Baal Diwas**' as a tribute to the 10th Sikh guru Gobind Singh's four sons who were executed by the Mughals. It has been announced on 9th January 2022 on the occasion of Prakash Parv of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji.
- 120. National Human Trafficking Awareness Day** is observed annually on **11th January** to raise awareness about the prevention of illegal practice of human trafficking and slavery. The day was established by the United States Senate in 2007.
- *In 2010, President Obama dedicated the entire month of January to awareness and prevention of human trafficking.*

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