

PRACTICE **MOCK**



January 2022 - Week 3

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Contents

NATIONAL AFFAIRS	2
STATES AFFAIRS.....	7
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.....	8
REPORTS & INDICES	12
BUSINESS & ECONOMY.....	17
BANKING & FINANCE.....	20
AWARDS & RECOGNITION	26
BOOKS & AUTHORS.....	28
PERSON IN NEWS	28
OBITUARIES.....	30
SPORTS.....	32
IMPORTANT DAYS	34

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. Union Minister of State for Science & Technology, Jitendra Singh has launched a first-of-its-kind Mobile Covid testing facility, **Mobile Diagnostic Laboratory (I-LAB)**, capable of performing both Reverse Transcriptase-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) & Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) for North-East region.
 - The mobile facility is first launched in **Mizoram** in the virtual presence of Mizoram Chief Minister Pu Zoramthanga.
 - The lab has been developed by the **AMTZ (Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone)** with support from the **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)** under the Ministry of Science & Technology.
 - It can also be utilised for testing other infectious diseases like TB, HIV, etc.
2. Indian Armed Forces has recently selected **Swedish defence company Saab** for the supply of single-shot anti-armour weapon **AT4**. AT4 will be used by the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force.

AT4-

 - AT4 will be operated by a single soldier.
 - The AT4 systems are combat-proven across the world.
 - They are lightweight, single-shot, and fully disposable.
 - It weighs around 9 kg and has an effective range of 200m.
3. The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently approved the infusion of **Rs 1,500 crore** in the **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)**. This will enable IREDA to lend Rs 12,000 crore to the renewable energy sector and will help IREDA to create renewable energy capacity of 3,500 to 4,000 MW.
 - IREDA is a mini ratna company under the *Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)*.
 - It was set up in **1987** as a specialised non-banking finance agency for the renewable energy sector.
4. Minister of State for Culture, **Meenakshi Lekhi** has launched the '**North East on Wheels Expedition**' in New Delhi to promote the Culture of the North-eastern States.
 - The Bike Expedition will be organized from 8th to 16th April 2022.
 - 75 Bikers participating in this expedition will be selected from all over the country and will cover about 9000 km in the North East Region in 6 groups.
 - The expedition will also promote the '**Dekho Apna Desh**' initiative of the Ministry of Tourism.

5. Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya has released a **Commemorative Postal Stamp** on COVID-19 Vaccine to mark the **first anniversary** of India's National Covid-19 Vaccination program, which began on **16th January 2021**. This stamp signifies the remarkable work done by the frontline healthcare workers and scientific community across the country in protecting the people against the COVID pandemic.
- The stamp of denomination **500 paise (Rs 5)** features a health worker inoculating a senior citizen with Covaxin, a vaccine of Covid-19.
 - **Covaxin and Covishield** are India's indigenous vaccine for COVID-19.
6. Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has recently inaugurated **Madhavbaug's (Vaidya Sane Ayurved Labs Ltd)**, Power MAP, during a virtual ceremony. It is **India's first Intelligent Chronic Disease Patients Habit Tracking System**. It integrates various medical services like pathology labs, exercise experts, and other specialized consultants through mibPULSE, an all-in-1 health monitoring app built for patients.
7. **National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj** (NIRDPR), Hyderabad has recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG), New Delhi to promote inclusive good governance, strengthening of local institutions, and effective implementation of government programmes.
8. **Indian Army** has recently signed its first contract worth **Rs 96 crore** with **Anadron Systems Pvt Ltd** under Make-II for Maneuverable Expendable Aerial Target.
9. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has recently initiated a new project called the **Digital Government Mission** to speed up citizen services delivery through the help of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). The reason behind this project is to offer government services to citizens without them having to apply or wait for it.
10. The International Co-Operative Alliance Asia And Pacific (ICAAP) and National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) have released a policy recommendation handbook on **SAHAKAR PRAGYA Good Practices for Cooperatives**.
- The handbook has been developed by Laxmanrao Inamdar National Academy for Cooperative Research and Development (LINAC) of NCDC.
 - The Handbook is a compendium of guidelines, resources, methodologies, key learning, case studies of the best performing cooperatives in India and abroad and the outcome and impact.

11. The Indian Navy's long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft **P8I** has recently participated in the multinational anti-submarine warfare exercise '**Sea Dragon-22**' that concluded at **Guam, USA**.
- The exercise is aimed to enhance interoperability among participating nations by evolving common tactics in response to emerging traditional and non-traditional security challenges in maritime domain.
 - Aircraft from six navies -- the US, India, Japan, Canada, Australia and South Korea have participated in the exercise. These aircraft included P8A, P8I, P1, CP140 Aurora and P3C Orion maritime reconnaissance aircraft.
12. The Government of India has merged the flame of the **Amar Jawan Jyoti** at Delhi's India Gate with the flame at the adjoining **National War Memorial** on 21st January 2022. The ceremony was conducted by the Integrated Defence Staff chief, Air Marshal **Balabhadra Radha Krishna**.
- The decision to merge the two flames is taken keeping in mind that flame at Amar Jawan Jyoti payed homage to the **martyrs of 1971** but none of their names are present there, while names of all Indian martyrs from all the wars, including 1971 and wars before and after it are housed at the National War Memorial.
 - ❖ **Amar Jawan Jyoti**: It was inaugurated on the **Republic Day of 1972** by the then Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi**. It was lit in memory of soldiers who laid their lives during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war.
 - ❖ **National War Memorial**: It was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **25th February 2019**. The eternal torch of this memorial burns at the heart of the Smarak Stambh, the main pillar of the memorial, inside the Amar Chakra. The names of **25,942 soldiers** have been inscribed in golden letters on granite tablets.
13. Union Minister of Commerce & Industry **Piyush Goyal** has recently addressed the **16th edition of India Digital Summit, 2022** through a video conference. It has been organized by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) under the theme "**Supercharging Startups**".
- He has also unveiled '**LEAP**' - "Leverage, Encourage, Access & Promote" as the way forward for Startups.
14. **Ministry of Defence** has recently launched an online portal named "**Raksha Pension Shikayat Nivaran Portal**" to resolve pension-related grievances of ex-servicemen (ESM) and their dependents. The portal will allow them to lodge grievances directly with the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW).
- Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh has also announced that the DESW has allotted **Rs 320 crore** to **Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF)** to clear all backlog of pending

applications for welfare schemes, especially education and marriage grants for widows or dependent children of ESM.

- 15. Common Services Centres (CSC)** has launched the **"Yogyata"** mobile phone application to provide vocational education and skill enhancement opportunities to youth and citizens in rural areas.
- The app will leverage CSCs massive reach and penetration in the target group while providing an opportunity to access courses that add skills and educational qualifications to increase employability by offering courses like Cyber Security, CAD, and 3D printing etc.
 - It will help in providing industry-based skills to youth in rural areas.
- 16. The Open Data Week** has been observed by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** from **17th January to 21st January 2022** to promote the significance of data in the current digital world.
- The Open data Week has showed the benefits of open data such as innovation, transparency and efficiency.
 - The week is divided into 2 segments.
 - During the **first segment**, the ministry has uploaded Application Programming Interface (APIs), dataset visualization and data blogs on the smart city open data portal between 17th January and 20th January.
 - During the **second segment**, Data Day has been celebrated i.e. on 21st January.
 - All the 100 smart cities of India have participated in the event.
- 17. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** has recently organised a 6-day long **26th CISO Deep Dive Training program** under Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative. The training is aimed to equip participants with better understanding of emerging cyber threat landscape, understand best practices in cyber security.
- This program has been organized from 17th January to 22nd January 2022 for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and frontline IT officials from various Ministries & Departments, Government & Semi-Government organisations from Central and State Governments, PSUs, banks, among others.
 - It will cover topics such as Governance Risk and Compliance and Data Privacy, Network Security, End Point Security, Application and Data Security, Cloud Security, Mobile Security, Cryptography, Cyber Security related provisions in IT Act.
- 18. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)** to link vocational education and training with higher education.

- The agreement has been made to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4.4 and National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to increase the gross enrolment ratio in higher education including vocational education to 50% by 2035.
- The memorandum has been signed for a period of **ten years** and is subject to renewal on mutual agreement.
- The beneficiaries of the programme include trainees attached to the National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs), Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKKs) and Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS).
- With this partnership, a total of 32 NSTIs, more than 3,000 Government ITIs, 500 PMKKs and nearly 300 JSS will be associated with IGNOU as registration centres, examination centres and work centres for hands-on training.
- A Project Steering Committee with representatives from both MSDE and IGNOU will monitor and review the progress of the programme.

STATES AFFAIRS

- 19.** The Chief Minister of **Himachal Pradesh** Jai Ram Thakur has recently launched **Apna Kangra App** and Apna Kangra hamper, a product handcrafted by self-help groups, at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh. The app aims to provide a hassle-free experience for tourists and to boost sales of local handicrafts.
- He has also inaugurated **Radhe Krishna Cow Sanctuary** at Luthan in Jawalamukhi Vidhan Sabha area of Kangra district.
- 20.** The Government of **Odisha** has recently partnered with the United Nations (UN) **World Food Programme (WFP)** to improve the food security of small and marginal farmers of India by enhancing their resilience to climate change.
- 21.** The administration of **Jammu & Kashmir** has recently declared **Jerri settlement or Jerri hamlet** in Reasi district as the **first 'Milk Village'** of the Union Territory. The administration has also sanctioned 57 more dairy farms under the Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDS) for the hamlet. The village, which houses 73 individual dairy units with 370 cows, will give the local farmers financial security.
- Under the IDDS, dairy units of five animals are provided with a 50 percent subsidy.
 - The scheme also has a provision for milking machine, bulk milk cooling unit at 50 percent subsidy (maximum Rs 5 lakh), paneer making machine, khoya making, Dahi making, cream separator, ice cream making machine, butter and ghee making machine (max subsidy Rs 3.5 lakh), milk van (maximum subsidy Rs 2 lakh), milk ATM subsidy of Rs 5 lakh.

22. The state government of **Karnataka** has recently launched **India's first AVGC (animation, visual effects, gaming, and comics) Centre of Excellence** in Mahadevapura, Bangalore, Karnataka.
- Karnataka, which is the first in India to bring an AVGC policy in 2012, also became the first state to set up the first center of excellence in AVGC.
23. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently inaugurated the **new Circuit House** near **Somnath Temple** in **Gujarat** via video conferencing. The new facility has been built at a cost of **Rs.30 crore**. This new facility has VIP and deluxe rooms, suites, conference room, auditorium hall, etc.
24. **Kumbalangi** village of Kerala has recently become **India's first sanitary-napkin-free village**. It is also India's first model tourism village situated in the Ernakulam district of Kerala.
- The achievement is part of a unique campaign underway in the Ernakulam constituency. The initiative titled '**Avalkayi**', meaning 'for her' is being implemented in the constituency, following a tie-up with HLL Management Academy's '**Thingal**' scheme and Indian Oil Corporation. In this initiative, menstrual cups, a total of 5000 will be distributed to women aged 18 and above.
25. **Delhi Police** has recently launched its first podcast '**Kissa Khaki Ka**' to celebrate the extraordinary services rendered by members of Delhi Police personnel cutting across all ranks. It aims to establish communication with the masses through its unheard stories of crimes, investigations, heart and humanity.
- The podcast will be narrated by well-known media educator **Vartika Nanda**, who has also been working on prison reforms through her radio program initiatives.
 - It will be available on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

26. **Israel and the United States** have recently completed a successful flight test of the **Arrow-3 ballistic missile system** outside the Earth's atmosphere.
- The Arrow 3 is a U.S.-Israeli-built missile defence interceptor designed to defeat medium-range ballistic missiles.
 - The Arrow system is partly financed by the United States.
 - It was developed and produced by Israeli Aerospace Industries in partnership with Boeing.
27. India has recently offered a new Line of Credit (LOC) of **USD 500 million** to Sri Lanka for the purchase of **petroleum products** as the country is struggling with fuel and energy crisis.

- 28. Denmark** has signed an agreement with **India** to initiate joint research and development on **green fuels** including green hydrogen during the Joint Science and Technology Committee meeting held virtually.
- 29.** The Oxford University Press (OUP) has recently declared '**Anxiety**' as the Children's Word of the Year 2021, based on their recent research. Apart from "anxiety" (21%), "Challenging" (19%), "isolate" (14%), "Wellbeing" (13%) and "resilience" (12%) were the children's top five words.
- 30.** Indonesia has recently passed a law to shift its capital from **Jakarta to East Kalimantan**, and will be called '**Nusantara**' (situated to the east of Borneo Island). The plan to shift the capital was announced in 2019 by President Joko Widodo.
- Nusantara means '**archipelago**'. It represents philosophical, sociological and historical aspects.
 - Nusantara is rich in biodiversity.
 - The new capital will be located in the North Penajam Paser and Kutai Kartanegara regions.
- 31.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently addressed the **World Economic Forum's (WEF's) Davos Agenda Summit 2022** via video-conferencing.
- He has proposed the 'P-3' approach i.e. '**Pro Planet People**' that underlines India's climate change commitments at the global forum.
 - He further said that making LIFE into a mass movement can be a strong foundation for P-3.
 - LIFE i.e. '**Lifestyle for Environment**', is a vision of resilient and sustainable lifestyle that will come handy in dealing with the climate crisis and other unpredictable challenges of the future.
- 32.** The week-long digital summit has begun with a special address by Chinese President Xi Jinping.
- Davos Agenda 2022 summit:**
- It is being held digitally from 17th January to 21st January 2022, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The theme of the event is "**The State of the World.**"
 - It will be the first global platform for Heads of state and government as well as CEOs and other leaders to share their visions for 2022 on critical collective challenges and how to address them.
 - The three main areas of concern at the summit are Climate Action, Pandemic Recovery, and Economic and Social Resilience.

33. The **Russian** defence forces has recently unveiled a new **Tupolev Tu-160M** strategic missile-carrying bomber. It is also known as "**White Swan**". The bomber has been designed to carry nuclear war heads. It is one of the most heaviest supersonic military aircraft.
34. Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** and Prime Minister of Mauritius **Pravind Jugnauth** have virtually inaugurated India-assisted social housing units' projects in Mauritius and virtually laid the foundation stone for the Civil Service College and 8 MW Solar PV Farm project in Mauritius.
- MoU between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius regarding Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of Small Development Projects.
 - Agreement for **USD 190 million** Line of Credit between **Export Import Bank of India (EXIM)** and **SBM (Mauritius)** Infrastructure Development Company Ltd for the ongoing Metro Express Project and other Infrastructure projects.
35. *The Government of the Republic of **Mauritius** has also decided to name one of the major metro stations as **Mahatma Gandhi station** in order to pay gratitude to India's support for the Metro Express project.*
36. The US Treasury has recently minted coins, featuring the late American author and activist **Maya Angelou**, the first black woman to appear on the **US 25-cent coin** known as a quarter. The new coin features George Washington's visage on the "heads" side, while the "tails" side honours Angelou by evoking one of her most famous works, the autobiography "**I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.**"
37. India has recently granted a **USD 900 million** loan to **Sri Lanka** to build up its depleted foreign reserves and for food imports, amidst a shortage of almost all essential commodities in the island nation.
- Sri Lanka is currently experiencing a shortage of almost all essentials due to a shortage of dollars to pay for the imports.
38. **Philippines** has become the first foreign country to place an order for the purchase of the **BrahMos Shore-Based cruise Missile System** for its navy. The estimated deal cost is worth **\$374.9 million**. The BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd will supply the missile, under the Shore-Based Anti-Ship Missile System Acquisition Project, for Philippine Navy. This agreement will give a big boost to India's defence manufacturing system.

39. The government of **United Kingdom** has launched the formal Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with India. This negotiation is described as a 'golden opportunity' to put British businesses at the "front of the queue" of the Indian economy.
- Both countries agreed to an early harvest scheme or a limited trade agreement to lower tariffs on a small set of goods apart from easing rules for select services.
 - Further, they agreed to avoid "sensitive issues" and focus on areas where there is more complementarity.
 - Also, a target of doubling the trade between India and the United Kingdom (UK) by 2030 has also been set.
40. **South Africa** has recently launched the indigenously developed first **Maritime Domain Awareness Satellite constellation (MDASat)** from Cape Canaveral in the United States (US) as part of SpaceX's Transporter-3 mission.
41. **Indian Navy** and **Russian Navy** have recently participated in the **PASSEX exercise** held at the port of Cochin, in the Arabian Sea.
- The Indian Navy's indigenously designed and built guided-missile destroyer, **INS Kochi**, has participated in the exercise.
 - Russian Federation Navy has been represented by RFS Admiral Tributs, Russian Naval Missile Cruiser Varyag, and Russian Tanker Boris Butoma.
42. **Iran's** paramilitary Revolutionary Guard has recently launched its **first** solid-fuel satellite carrier rocket into space that is made of a cost-efficient composite material instead of metal. It is the first time Iran used a solid-fuel rocket rather than a liquid-fuel one.
43. The 15th meeting of the BRICS Science Technology Innovation (STI) Steering Committee has decided that India will host five high level events:
- BRICS Startups Forum's
 - Working Groups meeting on Energy, Biotechnology & Biomedicine
 - ICT & High-Performance Computing
 - Launching of BRICS innovation Launchpad as a microsite (Knowledge Hub)
 - STIEP (Science, Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Partnership) Working Group Meeting
44. During the meeting, India has handed over the chairmanship to China. **China** will be the **Chair for 2022** and will host the **14th BRICS Summit** in 2022. The theme for BRICS 2022 is "**Foster High-Quality BRICS Partnership Usher in a New Era for Global Development**".
- India was the chair of the BRICS for 2021.

- The **first BRICS Sherpas meeting** of 2022 has been held virtually from 18th to 19th January 2022. Presently, **Sanjay Bhattacharya** is the BRICS Sherpa of India.

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REPORTS & INDICES

45. According to the global rating survey released by the Morning Consult Political Intelligence, Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has topped the list of Most Popular World Leaders with an approval rating of **71 percent**. Andrés Manuel López Obrador, President of Mexico has ranked 2nd with 66% rating, followed by Mario Draghi, Prime Minister of Italy with 60% rating.
46. The **National Stock Exchange of India** has emerged as the world's largest derivatives exchange for the third consecutive year in 2021 in terms of the number of contracts traded, based on the statistics maintained by the Futures Industry Association (FIA).
- NSE is also ranked **fourth** by the number of trades in cash equities, as per the statistics maintained by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE) for 2021.

Rank	Stock Exchange	Country	Total trading volume
1	National Stock Exchange (NSE)	India	17.26 billion
2	B3 Exchange	Brazil	8.76 billion
3	CME Group	United States	4.94 billion

NSE has also launched **Nifty India Defence index**, which aims to track the performance of portfolio of stocks that broadly represent the Defence theme.

- The base date of the Index is 2nd April 2018 and the base value is 100.

47. According to Oxfam India, **"Inequality Kills"** report, the wealth of India's richest families reached to a record high in 2021. In the report, India was described as a **'very unequal,'**

country, as the top 10 people in India holds **57 percent** of the wealth. On the other hand, the share of the bottom half is **13 percent**.

- The report states that 84% of Indian households witnessed an income decline amid the covid-19 pandemic.
- The richest 98 Indians own the same wealth as the bottom 552 million people.
- The number of Indian billionaires increased from 102 to 142, during 2021.
- The wealth of the top 100 families is Rs 57.3 trillion.

India State of Forest Report 2021

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, has released the '**India State of Forest Report 2021**'. This report has been prepared by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) which has been mandated to assess the forest and tree resources of the country.

- This is the **17th edition** of the report.
- This report is being published biennially since 1987.

Key Findings of the Report:

- ❖ The total forest and tree cover in India is now **8,09,537 sq km** (24.62% of the geographical area)
 - Total forest cover is 7,13,789 sq km, (21.71 per cent of the geographical area), an increase from 21.67% in 2019.
 - Tree cover is 95,748 sq km (2.91 per cent of the geographical area), increased by 721 sq km.
- ❖ **Increase/ Decrease in forest cover:**
 - Top five states in terms of increase in forest cover are **Andhra Pradesh** (647 sq km), Telangana (632 sq km), Odisha (537 sq km), Karnataka (155 sq km) and Jharkhand (110 sq km).
 - **Arunachal Pradesh** lost the maximum forest cover of 257 sq km, followed by Manipur which lost 249 sq km, Nagaland 235 sq km, Mizoram 186 sq km and Meghalaya 73 sq km.
- ❖ **States with maximum forest cover:**
 - Area-wise, **Madhya Pradesh** has the largest forest cover in the country followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra.
 - Top five states in terms of forest cover as a percentage of total geographical area are **Mizoram** (84.53%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.33%), Meghalaya (76.00%), Manipur (74.34%) and Nagaland (73.90%).

- 17 states/UTs have above 33 per cent of the geographical area under forest cover.
 - Out of these states and UTs, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya have more than 75 per cent forest cover.
- ❖ **Mangrove cover in the country:**
- There is an increase of 17 sq km in mangrove cover in the country as compared to the previous assessment of 2019.
 - Total mangrove cover in the country is **4,992 sq km**.
 - Top three states showing mangrove cover increase are Odisha (8 sq km) followed by Maharashtra (4 sq km) and Karnataka (3 sq km).
- ❖ **Total Carbon Stock:**
- The total carbon stock in the country's forests is estimated to be **7,204 million tonnes**, an increase of 79.4 million tonnes since 2019.
 - Forest carbon stock is the amount of carbon that has been sequestered from the atmosphere and is now stored within the forest ecosystem, mainly within living biomass and soil, and to a lesser extent also in dead wood and litter.
- ❖ Bamboo forests have grown from 13,882 million culms (stems) in 2019 to 53,336 million culms in 2021.
- ❖ There is a 1,582 sq km decline in moderately dense forests, or “natural forests”.
- ❖ The Northeast states account for 7.98% of total geographical area but 23.75% of total forest cover.
- ❖ **Forest fires:**
- The survey has found that **35.46 %** of the forest cover is prone to forest fires.
 - Out of this, 2.81 % is extremely prone, 7.85% is very highly prone and 11.51 % is highly prone
 - The highest numbers of fires were detected in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ By 2030, 45-64% of forests in India will experience the effects of climate change and rising temperatures.

New Features of ISFR 2021:

It has for the first time assessed **forest cover in tiger reserves, tiger corridors and the Gir forest** which houses the Asiatic lion.

- ❖ The forest cover in tiger corridors has increased by **37.15 sq km** (0.32%) between 2011-2021, but decreased by **22.6 sq km** (0.04%) in tiger reserves.
- ❖ Forest cover has increased in 20 tiger reserves in these 10 years, and decreased in 32.

- ❖ Buxa (West Bengal), Anamalai (Tamil Nadu) and Indravati reserves (Chhattisgarh) have shown an increase in forest cover while the highest losses have been found in Kawal (Telangana), Bhadra (Karnataka) and the Sunderbans reserves (West Bengal).
- ❖ **Pakke Tiger Reserve** in Arunachal Pradesh has the highest forest cover, at nearly 97%.

A new initiative of FSI has also been documented in the form of a chapter, where the **'Above Ground Biomass'** has been estimated. FSI, in collaboration with Space Application Centre (SAC), ISRO, Ahmedabad, initiated a special study for estimation of Above Ground Biomass (AGB) at pan-India level, using L- band of Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) data.

48. The **Global Risks Report 2022**, an annual report, has been released by the **World Economic Forum**. It tracks global risk perceptions among risk experts and world leaders in business, government, and civil society.

- It examines risks across five categories: economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal, and technological.
- As per the report, Cyber security, pandemic, climate change and space advancements are the emerging risks to the global economy.

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

Key highlights:

- The **Chandigarh** office of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Ombudsman Scheme has received the highest banking-related complaints, followed by Kanpur and Delhi. Most of the complaints from customers are related to ATM and debit cards, mobile and online banking, and credit cards.
- As per the report, the volume of complaints received under all the three ombudsman schemes has increased **22.27 percent** on an annualized basis and has stood at 3,03,107 during the reported period.
- The banking ombudsman scheme has accounted for **90.13 percent** of the total complaints (2,73,204) received under the three ombudsman schemes.

- The disposal rate has improved significantly to 96.67 percent during the July-March 2020-21 period, a five-year high.
- The scheme for NBFCs has seen an approx. 39% jump. The major areas of complaints were non-adherence to Fair Practices Code, non-observance to RBI directions and levy of charges without prior notice, accounting for 75.32 percent of the complaints
- Around 74% of the complaints are settled through mutual settlement or through ombudsman mediation process.

50. The United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2022 report has projected India's GDP to grow at **6.5%** in **FY22**, a decline from the 8.4% GDP estimate in FY21. UN has projected the growth rate for **FY23** at **5.9%**.

On a calendar year basis, UN has projected India's GDP as follows:

- 2021 – 9.0 percent
- 2022 – 6.7 percent
- 2023 – 6.1 percent

51. The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** has recently released its report titled **“World Employment and Social Outlook”**.

Key highlights:

- As per the report, Global unemployment is projected to stand at **207 million in 2022** falling from 214 million in 2021. It is almost 21 million more than 2019.
- Total hours worked in 2022 will be about 2% below than the pre-pandemic level.
- There will be deficiency of **52 million** full-time equivalent jobs in 2022.
- Estimates suggest that the pandemic has pushed as many as 77 million children and adults into extreme poverty (living on less than \$1.90 per day in purchasing power parity) with the number of children's accounting for 50%.
- Lower middle-income countries saw the largest decline in manufacturing employment.

52. The **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** has recently published **‘Investment Trends Monitor’**. As per the report, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to India have decreased by **26 percent** in 2021 mainly because large Mergers & Acquisition deals recorded in 2020 were not repeated.

- Global FDI flows showed a strong rebound in 2021, growing **77 percent** to an estimated USD 1.65 trillion, from USD 929 billion in 2020. Of the total increase in global FDI flows in 2021 (USD 718 billion), more than USD 500 billion, or almost three quarters, was recorded in developed economies.
- FDI flows in developing economies has increased by 30 percent to nearly USD 870 billion.

- FDI flows to South Asia has decreased 24 percent to USD 54 billion in 2021 from USD 71 billion in 2020.

53. The early 2022 edition of bi-annual **Electricity Market Report** has been published by the **International Energy Agency (IEA)**. As per the report, India's annual power consumption will grow at an annual rate of **6.5%** during **2022-24**.

- India clocked the highest **10%** Y-o-Y growth in power demand during the 2021 calendar year (CY).
- The global electricity demand rose **6%** year-on-year in 2021.
- Nations are largely turning to fossil fuels to meet the increase in electricity demand as Covid-19 lockdown restrictions are lifting.
- Global energy intensity fell 1.9% year-on-year – a drop only half as steep as the level needed to lay the foundation for net-zero by 2050.
- While electricity generation from renewables was up 6% year-on-year in 2021, generation from coal was up by 9%, led by markets including China and India, with coal serving more than half of the increase in demand.

As per the report of IEA, India is expected to overtake China as the world's **third-largest ethanol consumer** after the US and Brazil by **2026** as it accelerates the transformation towards a clean energy ecosystem.

- Ethanol demand has tripled in India between 2017 and 2021.
- India in 2021 has brought forward its 20% ethanol blending target (current blending of ethanol with petrol is 8.5%) with gasoline from 2030 to 2025 and aims to start selling 20% blends in 2023.

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BUSINESS & ECONOMY

54. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has partnered with the Canada Running Series (CRS) as the new title sponsor and official IT services and technology consulting partner of the **Toronto Waterfront Marathon** and Virtual Race through November 2026.

- This partnership aims to modernise marathon running in Canada through a new official Toronto Waterfront Marathon race app, which will offer a carbon footprint calculator for attendees to track and offset their impact on the environment when attending the race.

- 55.** Bharti Group-backed low earth satellite (LEO) firm **OneWeb and Hughes Network Systems** have signed a strategic **six-year** pact to provide satellite broadband services in India. The services will be provided by Hughes Communications India Private Ltd (HCIPL), which is a joint venture between Hughes and Bharti Airtel.
- 56. AgNext Technologies** has collaborated with **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)** to organise a virtual training and awareness programme on quality assessment of pulses for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) of **Maharashtra**.
- The programme aimed to train FPOs about the different market quality standards for toor dal.
 - AgNext used its 'SpecX Visio' device for physical quality assessment of the pulses.
 - AgNext has engaged with five FPOs in the state to create awareness about quality standards of pulses, particularly toor, for the upcoming procurement season.
 - **Amazon India** has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **NIF Incubation and Entrepreneurship Council (NIFientreC)**, a Technology Business Incubator (TBI) hosted by the National Innovation Foundation (NIF), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology, to accelerate grassroots innovation, local economy, and livelihoods across rural India.
 - India Energy Exchange (IEX) has recently divested **4.93%** equity stake in Indian Gas Exchange (IGX) to Indian Oil Corporation (IOC).
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- 59.** Union Minister for Heavy Industries, Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey has recently launched **India's first Coal to Methanol (CTM)** pilot plant in the **Hyderabad** unit of **Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)**.
- The plant has a capacity of 0.25 TPD (tonnes per day).
 - It has been indigenously designed, developed and installed by BHEL.
 - It is currently producing methanol with purity of more than 99 percent from high-ash Indian coal.

- This conversion of high-ash Indian coal to methanol through the gasification route is the first-of-its-kind technology demonstration in India.

- 60.** The **International Financial Services Centers Authority (IFSCA)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Insurance Institute of India (III) for capacity building of professionals in the insurance sector in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs).
- 61. Flipkart** has recently announced the evolution of its flagship startup accelerator programme, Flipkart Leap. It has launched two new programmes - **Flipkart Leap Ahead (FLA)** and **Flipkart Leap Innovation Network (FLIN)** on the occasion of National Start-up Day (16th January).
- Flipkart Leap Ahead will invest in seed-stage start-ups that have disruptive business models and are innovating in areas that are a priority for the Flipkart group.
 - The Flipkart Leap Innovation Network program has been designed to enable a broader set of start-ups to engage with Flipkart's product and tech teams.
- The Flipkart Leap program graduated its first cohort in July 2021 with eight startups.*
- 62. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** has recently signed a contract with the **Government of Mauritius** for the export of one **Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH Mk-III)** for the Mauritius police force. ALH Mk-III is a multi-role, multi-mission versatile helicopter in 5.5 tonne category.
- 63. ReNew Power** has signed an agreement with US headquartered **Fluence** to form a new Joint Venture (JV) which will provide energy storage solutions in India. The 50:50 JV will target the country's storage market, which is estimated to grow to 27 GW by 2030. The first project the JV will cater to is a **150 MWh** battery-based energy storage system (BESS) for ReNew Powers' 300 MW Peak Power Project in Karnataka.
- 64. Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd** has signed a joint development agreement with **Africa50**, a pan-African infrastructure investment platform, to develop Africa's first public-private partnership (PPP) mode transmission project in Kenya, "**Kenya Transmission Project**".
- The project involves the development, financing, construction, and operation of the 400kV Lessos - Loosuk and 220kV Kisumu - Musaga transmission lines under a PPP framework.

- 65. Reliance Industries (RIL)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of **Gujarat** for a total investment of **Rs 5.955 lakh crore** as part of Investment Promotion Activity for Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2022.
- RIL has proposed to invest Rs 5 lakh crore in the State over the span of 10 to 15 years to set up 100 GW Renewable Energy Power Plant and Green Hydrogen Eco-System development.
 - RIL will develop an eco-system for assisting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and encourage entrepreneurs to embrace new technologies and innovations leading to captive use of Renewable Energy and Green Hydrogen.
- 66.** MSME lending platform **Indifi Technologies** has recently collaborated with **Google Pay** to provide instant loans to eligible medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs) merchants on the Google Pay platform.
- This collaboration aims to address the problem of meeting the working capital management of MSMEs and to help small merchants thrive in their business journey.
 - The loans will be in the range of **Rs 2.5 to Rs 3 lakh**.
- 67.** The bilateral trade between **India and China** has crossed **\$125.6 billion** in 2021 from \$92.8 billion in 2019.
- India's imports from China - **\$97.5 billion** (greater than the total trade in 2019) and **exports** - \$28.9 billion.
 - Medical supplies from Oxygen concentrators to PPEs, over last 2 years have contributed to the surge in import.
 - Exports (56%) have risen much greater than imports (30%) (as compared to 2019)

India's major imports from China:

- Electrical and mechanical machinery
- Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs)
- Auto Components

India's major exports to China:

- Iron Ore
- Cotton
- Other raw material based commodities

- 68. Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd**, the retail unit of Reliance Industries Ltd, has acquired **54% stake** in robotics start-up **Addverb Technologies** for **\$132 million** (Rs.983 crore approximately).

BANKING & FINANCE

69. Central Depository Services (India) Ltd (CDSL) has recently announced that its wholly-owned subsidiary CDSL Ventures Ltd (CVL) has received approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to set up an accreditation agency for accreditation of eligible Investors. This accreditation agency will be valid for a period of **three years** with effect from **1st February 2022**.

- *Accredited investors may avail of flexibility in minimum investment amount (lower ticket size) or concessions from specific regulatory requirements applicable to investment products, subject to conditions applicable for specific products or services.*

70. Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (KMBL) has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **GIFT SEZ Limited**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gujarat International Finance Tech-City Co. Ltd, to enable both to work together towards greater enhancement of the financial services eco-system for alternative investment funds and global custody services.

- The aim will be to ease market access and cross-border activities for the fund management community.
- Both KMBL and GIFT SEZ will jointly work to promote GIFT IFSC jurisdiction for AIF fund structures, hold seminars and knowledge series, expand financial infrastructure including custodian activities like setting up of global custody services

71. Indian Bank has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IIM-Kozhikode's Business incubator Laboratory for Innovation Venturing and Entrepreneurship (LIVE) to financially support early-stage startups.

- Under the MoU, a startup funding scheme, '**IndSpring Board**' has been launched.
- Under this scheme loans up to **Rs, 50 Crore** will be disbursed to the startups.

72. Yes Asset Management Company has been renamed as **White Oak Capital Asset Management Company** with effect from 12th January 2022. In accordance with this, YES Mutual Fund schemes have been changed to White Oak Capital schemes. YES MF has three schemes – YES Overnight Fund, YES Liquid Fund and YES Ultra Short-term Fund.

73. Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL) has become the largest and fastest-growing Unified Payments Interface (UPI) beneficiary bank in India. It becomes the first beneficiary bank in the country to achieve the landmark of over 926 million UPI transactions in a single month.

- Beneficiary banks are the banks of the account holder who is receiving money. Paytm Payments Bank has also gained rapid traction as a remitter bank for UPI payments.
- While **State Bank of India (SBI)** has topped the chart of being the biggest remitter in December 2021, according to data released by the National Payments Corporation of

India (NPCI). State Bank of India followed PPBL as the second-largest beneficiary with 664.89 million transactions.

- 74. Torus Kling Blockchain IFSC**, a joint venture between Cosmea Financial Holdings and Kling Trading India, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with **India INX** to launch the first **bitcoin and ethereum futures exchange-traded funds (ETFs)** in India.
- 75. Marwadi Financial Services (MFS)** has partnered with **NSDL Payments Bank** to offer its clients an integrated 3-in-1 savings account that combines the features of savings, demat and trading accounts.
- Using this account, investors will be able to transfer funds in real time and execute trades in almost no time.
 - It will provide the additional advantage to users of availing savings interest on funds lying idle in their trading account.
- 76. ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company** has recently partnered with the US-based First Trust Advisors to launch a slew of global Fund of Funds (FoF).
- Under the agreement, ICICI Prudential AMC will first launch a strategic metal & energy equity fund of funds, which will invest in an offshore fund managed by First Trust Advisors.
 - The fund will open for subscription on 17th January 2022 and will close on 31st January 2022.
- 77. Axis Bank**, one of the largest private bank in Asia, and **CRMNEXT**, the leading CRM for banks, have won the IBS Intelligence Global FinTech Innovation Awards 2021 for the "Best CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System Implementation".
- The bank has implemented CRMNEXT for sales and service modernisation and it also enables smarter lead processing automated routing, complete tracking, and visibility.
 - With CRMNEXT, the bank can now generate dynamic personalized offers with real-time visibility on eligibility.
- 78.** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has recently amended the **SEBI (Settlements Proceedings) Regulations, 2018**, called the SEBI (Settlement Proceedings) (Amendment) Regulations, 2022 and has reduced the timeline for filing settlement applications to just **60 days** from the current 180 days in its effort to make the system more efficient.

Thus, a settlement application can be filed within 60 days of the date of receipt of the show-cause notice. However, an additional 120 days can be availed by the applicants in case they pay an additional 25% over the settlement charges.

Note: The settlement mechanism is a tool for ensuring speedy and efficient resolution of disputes. Under this, an alleged wrongdoer can settle a pending case with the regulator without admission or denial of guilt by paying a settlement fee.

Other Amendments (January 2022):

- The time period for submission of revised settlement terms form, after the internal committee (IC), has been rationalised to **15 days**. This will be from the date of the IC meeting. The current rule allows 10 days plus additional 20 days.
- SEBI has rationalised the proceeding conversion factor (PCF) values range as **0.40 to 1.50**. Currently, the PCF values range from 0.65 to 1.20 depending upon the stage at which an application for settlement is filed.
- SEBI has also amended norms governing foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) and stated that it could provide an exemption from strict enforcement of the regulations in other cases.

79. E-commerce platform **Snapdeal** has partnered with Bank of Baroda subsidiary **BoB Financial Solutions** and **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** to launch a co-branded contactless RuPay credit card.

- This partnership aims to popularise the adoption & usage of credit cards among the growing number of online buyers from India's smaller cities and towns.
- The Snapdeal-BoB co-branded contactless card, powered by RuPay, will be rolled out to users by March 2022.

80. Fintech company **Lendingkart** has recently collaborated with **Canara Bank** to provide low-cost business loans of up to **Rs.10 lakh** to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across the country.

- **Aim:** To broaden the support provided to the MSME borrowers for enhancing financial inclusion under the Reserve Bank's Priority Sector initiative.
- The loans will be provided through the digital platform "Lendingkart 2gthr" platform using 'zero touch' technology.

81. Fintech firm **MobiKwik** has recently collaborated with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) **Bharat BillPay** to launch '**ClickPay**' for its customers. With this, the MobiKwik customers will be able to pay recurring online bills, such as mobile, gas, water, electricity, DTH, insurance and loan EMIs using their mobile phones.

- ClickPay is a two-step payment feature wherein the billers generate a unique payment link within the bill-pay message and send it to the customer allowing them to make payments directly on the payment page.
- 82.** The **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** has recently sanctioned financial assistance of **Rs.650 crore** to **AU Small Finance Bank** and **Jana Small Finance Bank**. The Small Finance Banks (SFBs) will use this assistance to support small-sized non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), microfinance institutions (MFIs), and micro entrepreneurs.
- 83.** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has conducted a **variable rate repo (VRR) auctions** on 20th January 2022 for infusing liquidity, instead of using variable rate reverse repo operations (VRRR) to suck out cash. This measure has been taken because larger goods and services tax (GST) collection tightened liquidity recently.
- RBI has proposed to lend the banking system **Rs 50,000 crore** in a day, while it received bids for Rs 65,700 crore.
 - Cut-off rate was **4.06 percent** and weighted average rate **4.10 percent**.
 - Both are higher than repo rate of 4 percent.
 - Weighted average call money rate reached to **4.3587 percent** on January 20, showing liquidity stress in banking system.
 - This rate is used by banks for the purpose of interbank lending.
- 84.** The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has recently launched a mobile app '**Saaṛthi**' based on **investor education** in Mumbai. Maharashtra.
- It will create awareness among the investors about the basics of the security market.
 - The purpose of this app will be to provide investors with information on securities market fundamentals, KYC procedure, trading and settlement, mutual funds, latest market developments.
 - The app will be available in **Hindi and English** languages.
- 85.** **Federal Bank and Equirus Wealth** have recently launched a '**US dollar offshore fund**' for their customers. This is in collaboration with SCUBE Capital, a global fund management company based out of Singapore.
- NRI and resident customers of Federal Bank can invest in this fund that offers a portfolio return (IRR) guidance of ~ **\$6.50%** per annum with a fund tenor of **three years** from the date of fund closure with an option to extend by one year.

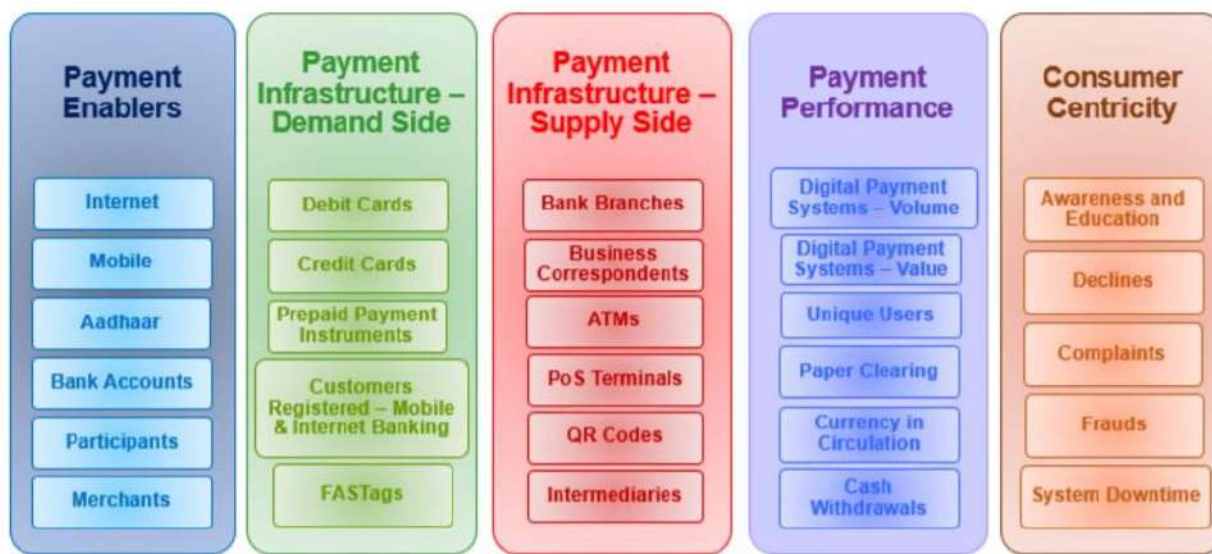
86. The Reserve Bank of India has recently released the Digital Payment Index (DPI) for September 2021. As per the index, the digital payments has increased by **39.64%** to

304.06 in **September 2021** as against 270.59 in March 2021 and 217.74 in September 2020.

Period	RBI - DPI Index
March 2018 (Base)	100
March 2019	153.47
September 2019	173.49
March 2020	207.84
September 2020	217.74
March 2021	270.59
September 2021	304.06

- It is the index launched by RBI in January 2021 with **March 2018** as the base period (DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100).
- It comprises of **5 broad parameters** that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods.
 - 1) Payment Enablers (weight 25%),
 - 2) Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors (10%),
 - 3) Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors (15%),
 - 4) Payment Performance (45%) and
 - 5) Consumer Centricity (5%).

RBI-Digital Payments Index – Parameters and Sub-parameters



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AWARDS & RECOGNITION

87. NIRAMAI Health Analytix Pvt. Ltd. and InnAccel Technologies Pvt. Ltd., two Department of Biotechnology (DBT) - Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)-supported start-ups based in India, have recently received the World Bank Group and Consumer Technology Association's Global Women's Health Tech Awards 2022. The winners have been announced at the Consumer Electronic Show 2022, held in Las Vegas, USA.

- NIRAMAI Health Analytix Pvt. Ltd has won this award for its novel software-based medical device that detects early-stage **breast cancer** in a simple and private way on women of all age groups and breast densities, addressing a critical unmet need in cancer screening.
- InnAccel Technologies Pvt Ltd. has won this prestigious award for developing **Fetal Lite**, a next-generation, AI-powered fetal heart rate (FHR) monitor based on fetal ECG signal extraction technology for mothers in labour or post 37 weeks of gestation.

88. A young Lavni artist from Maharashtra, **Sumit Bhale** of Fulbari taluka has recently won a gold medal at the International Folk Art Festival in Dubai.

89. The Genesis Prize Foundation has named **Dr Albert Bourla**, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chairman of Pfizer, as the **2022 Genesis Prize** Laureate for his efforts in leading the development of the COVID-19 vaccine. The President of Israel Isaac Herzog will present the Genesis Prize to Dr Albert Bourla at a ceremony in Jerusalem which is set to be held on 29th June 2022.

90. Legendary **West Indies Captain Sir Clive Lloyd** has received the **knighthood** from Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge at Windsor Castle, for his services towards the game of cricket.

- He led the West Indies to victory over Australia at Lords in the final of the inaugural Cricket World Cup tournament in 1975.
- He was inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame in 2009.

91. India's **Navdeep Kaur** has won the award for the **Best National Costume** at the prestigious Mrs World 2022 beauty pageant in Las Vegas, USA. She has represented India at the

international stage after winning the title of Mrs India World in 2021. She hails from **Kansbahal**, a small town near **Odisha's Steel City Rourkela**.

92. Chennai-based **Rhapsody Music Foundation** has won the QS-Wharton Reimagine Education Awards 2021 under the Arts and Humanities category (Gold).

- Rhapsody Music Foundation was founded by Anil Srinivasan, an acclaimed classical pianist, in 2013.
- The foundation focussed on Educational technology space with its proprietary platform “Cocoon” to offer creative intelligence to children.
- **Lockdown Learning** of Tata Steel Foundation has received a Bronze award in Regional-award Asia.

93. The Government of India has recently announced the winners of the **2nd edition** of the **National Startup Awards 2021**. A total of **46 Startups** have been recognized as winners of the National Startup Awards 2021 along with 1 incubator and 1 accelerator. They have been felicitated for their contribution in their respective sectors.

Key highlights:

- State-wise, **Karnataka** has bagged the highest number of awards, which included 14 out of 46 national startup awards.
- In fintech category's financial inclusion sub-sector, Bengaluru-based **Naffa Innovations Private Limited** (ToneTag) has been declared the winner.
- In fintech category's insurance sub-sector, **Umbo Idtech Private Limited** has won the award.
- In Robotics sub-sector, Sagar Defence has won the award.
- In the women-led start-up category, Jaipur-headquartered **Frontier Markets** has won the award.
- In Industry 4.0 category's Internet of things sub-category, **Repos lot India Private Limited** has won the award.

The second edition of the awards invited applications across **15 sectors** and **49 sub-sectors**.

- The award has been conceived by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**.
- The 2021 edition of the awards has also recognized exceptional Startups innovating solutions to promote Indic languages and to compliment national efforts to combat Covid-19 pandemic.
- All applicants have been evaluated against six broad parameters namely Innovation, Scalability, Economic Impact, Social Impact, Environmental Impact, and Inclusiveness and Diversity.

- The winning startup founders will get a cash prize of **Rs. 5 lakh** and an opportunity to present their solutions to relevant public authorities and corporates. Incubators and accelerators will get **Rs. 15 lakh** as the winning amount.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

94. A new biography titled “**Bose: The Untold Story of an Inconvenient Nationalist**” has been authored by **Chandrachur Ghose**. It is published by Penguin Random House India under its Viking imprint. It will be released in February 2022.
95. Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari has released the book '**The Legend of Birsa Munda**'. The book is authored by **Tuhin A Sinha** and co-authored by **Ankita Verma**. The book depicts the story of a lesser tribal hero, Birsa Munda, who courageously fought against the oppressive British Raj for the rights of his tribal community.

PERSON IN NEWS

96. **Chanchal Kumar** has been appointed as the Managing Director of National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL), under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH). He is appointed in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary. He is a 1992 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, presently Principal Secretary of Bihar's Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.
97. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently approved the appointment of **Ittira Davis** as the managing director and chief executive officer (MD & CEO) of **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (SFB)** for a one-year term with effect from 14th January 2022. The post had been lying vacant since three-month following the sudden exit of incumbent Nitin Chugh.
98. **North Macedonia's** parliament has recently elected **Dimitar Kovacevski**, leader of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), as prime minister after two months of political crisis. The new coalition cabinet, composed of Kovacevski's Social Democrats and two ethnic Albanian parties as junior partners.
99. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has recently approved the appointment of senior bureaucrat **Vikram Dev Dutt** as the chairman and managing director (CMD) of Air India Limited.
- He is an Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer from the 1993 batch officer of the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre.
 - He will succeed **Rajiv Bansal**.

- 100. Roberta Metsola**, a Christian Democrat from **Malta**, has been elected as the **President of the European Union (EU) Parliament**. She is only the third woman elected to the post. She is the European Parliament's youngest president. She has succeeded David Sassoli, who passed away at the age of 65 years.
- 101.** The Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG) has recently appointed Paytm founder & CEO **Vijay Shekhar Sharma** as its UA Ambassador.
- UASG is an international organization that works on developing and recommending standards for languages script which are not currently used for assessing the internet.
 - The group is supported by the global internet body, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).
- 102.** Former Cabinet Minister of Gujarat, **Dileep Sanghani** has been elected as the **17th Chairman** of the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO). He has been serving as the IFFCO vice-chairman since 2019.
- 103.** Professor emeritus, Kurukshetra University **Raghuvendra Tanwar** has been appointed as chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR). He has been appointed for a period of three years from the day he assumes the office of the Chairman of the Council or until further order.
- 104.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently appointed former comptroller and auditor general (CAG) chief **Vinod Rai** as the independent chairman of the Unity Small Finance Bank (USFB).
- Other appointed board members include former RBI official Sandip Ghose, former Syndicate Bank CMD Basant Seth and former RBL Bank chairman Subhash Kutte.
- 105.** Eastern Army Commander Lieutenant General **Manoj Pande** has been appointed as the next Vice Chief of Army Staff. He will be the successor to Lt Gen CP Mohanty who is scheduled to superannuate on 31st January 2022.
- 106.** 37-year old **Shaylyn Ford** of USA has been crowned as the winner of **Mrs World 2022** beauty pageant held in Las Vegas, United States. She has been crowned by the outgoing queen Kate Schneider from Ireland.
- Mrs Jordan Jaclyn Stapp & Mrs UAE Debanjali Kamstra are the runner up.
 - This is the 8th time an American representative won the title of Mrs World.

- **Note:** Mrs Sri Lanka Rosy Senanayake became the first Mrs World in 1984 while Aditi Govitrikar is the first and only Mrs World from India who was crowned in 2001.

107. Narendra Kumar Goenka has been appointed as the new chairman of Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC). He has succeeded A Sakthivel.

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OBITUARIES

- 108.** Noted Bengali Cartoonist **Narayan Debnath** has passed away recently in Kolkata, West Bengal. He was born on 25th November 1925 in Howrah, West Bengal.
- He was known for creating Bengali comic characters 'Bantul The Great', 'Handa Bhonda', 'Bahadur Beral', and 'Nonte Phonte'.
 - He was the first and the only comics' artist from the country to have received the **D.Litt. degree.**
 - He was awarded the **Padma Shri** in 2021.
 - Other creations: Rabi Chobi, Rajar Raja, etc.
- 109. Saturnino de la Fuente García (Spain)**, the world's oldest man, has passed away at the age of **112 years and 341 days**. Guinness World Records named De la Fuente García as the world's oldest person living (male) in September 2021, when he was 112 years and 211 days. He was born on 11th February 1909 in the Puente Castro neighbourhood of León in Spain.
- 110.** Noted environmentalist **Prof M K Prasad** has passed away recently in Kochi, Kerala. He was born in 1932 in Kochi, Kerala. He led the national movement against the Kerala government's move to set up a hydro-power project in Silent Valley in Palakkad district in the 1970s.
- 111. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita**, the former president of Mali, who led the West African country from 2013 until he was ousted in a coup in 2020, has passed away recently in Bamako, Mali.
- 112.** Founder of the Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC), professional mountaineer, and Padma Shri recipient Major **HPS Ahluwalia** has passed away recently.
- He was part of the first Indian expedition to summit Mount Everest in 1965.

- He was awarded the Padma Bhushan (2002) and Padma Shri (1965) for his contributions and received India's second-highest sporting honour, the Arjuna Award (1965).
- Autobiography: "**Higher Than Everest**"

113. Renowned theatre actress **Saoli Mitra** has passed away recently in South Kolkata, West Bengal. She had been suffering from heart related ailments.

- She was the daughter of legendary actor Sombhu Mitra and Tripti Mitra.
- She played Draupadi in Naathvati Anaathbat (which she also wrote and directed), and as Sita on Sitakatha or Bitata Bitangso.
- She founded the Bengali theatre group named 'Pancham Baidik'.

114. Social worker and Padma Shri awardee **Shanti Devi** has passed away recently in Gunupur, in Rayagada district of Odisha. She was born in 1934 in Balasore district of Odisha.

- She was also known as Lugdi Devi.
- She founded the Seva Samaj ashram at Gunupur in Odisha.
- She worked towards the education of tribal girls.

115. Award-winning journalist **Kamal Khan** has passed away recently due to heart attack in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

- He was associated with news channel **NDTV** as Executive Director for over 30 years.
- He had received the **Ramnath Goenka Award** in **2010** and the Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi Award from the President of India.

116. **Toshiki Kaifu**, the former Prime Minister of Japan, has passed away recently in Japan. He was born on 2nd January 1931 in Nagoya, Aichi, Japan. He served as the PM from 1989 to 1991.

117. Renowned **Kathak dancer** Brij Mohan Nath Mishra, popularly known as **Pandit Birju Maharaj**, has passed away recently due to heart attack in New Delhi. He was born on 4th February 1938 in Handia, Uttar Pradesh.

- He was awarded the **Padma Vibhushan**, the country's second-highest civilian award, in **1986**.
- He was a drummer and also a singer par excellence, having command over Thumri, Dadra, Bhajan and Ghazal.

118. **T15 or Collarwali**, the legendary tigress of Madhya Pradesh's **Pench Tiger Reserve** in Chhindwara district who earned the title of "super mom", has passed away recently at the age of 16 due to prolonged illness.

SPORTS

- 119. Kolkata Knight Riders** has recently appointed former Indian team bowling coach **Bharat Arun** as its bowling coach for the forthcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022 season. He has replaced Kyle Mills. He also worked with Royal Challengers Bangalore from 2015 to 2017.
- 120.** The Indian Olympic Association has recently appointed senior vice president of the Indian Olympic Association **Rakesh Anand** as India's Chef de Mission for **Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2022**. The Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2022 will be organized in **Birmingham, UK** from July 28-August 8.
- 121.** The Boxing Federation of India has recently decided to pull out of the **Asian Under-22 Boxing Championship** for men and women in Tashkent, Uzbekistan due to the global surge in COVID-19 cases.
- Asian Under-22 Boxing Championship will be held from **20th January to 30th January 2022** in **Tashkent, Uzbekistan**.
 - It will be organized by the Asian Boxing Confederation.
- 122.** Goalkeeper **Savita Punia** has been named captain of India Women's Hockey team at the upcoming Women's Hockey Asia Cup 2022. Since regular skipper Rani Rampal is recovering from an injury in Bengaluru.
- 123. India** will host the 20th edition of the **AFC Women's football Asian Cup 2022** from 20th January 2022 to 6th February 2022.
- **Host cities:** Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, and Pune
 - **Teams:** 12
- 124.** Indian tennis player **Sania Mirza** has recently announced that she will retire at the end of 2022 season. Her last headline-grabbing win came with Chinese partner Shuai Zhang in women's doubles at the Ostrava Open on 26th September 2021.
- 125.** The 2022 India Open (badminton), officially Yonex-Sunrise India Open 2022, has been held at K. D. Jadhav Indoor Hall in New Delhi, from 11 to 16 January 2022. Indian badminton player **Lakshya Sen** has defeated World Champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore, in the men's singles final of India Open 2022 to secure his maiden Super 500 title. Whereas, **Busanan Ongbamrunphan (Thailand)** has won the women's singles title in the tournament.
- Other winners of India Open 2022:**

Category	Winners
Men's Double	Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (India)
Women's Double	Benyapa Aimsaard and Nuntakarn Aimsaard (Thailand)
Mixed Double	Terry Hee and Tan Wei Han (Singapore)

126. The 2022 Sydney International has been held in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia from 10th to 15th January 2022. This is the 128th edition of the tournament.

Category	Winners
Men's Singles	Aslan Karatsev (Russia)
Women's Singles	Paula Badosa (Spain)
Men's Double	John Peers and Filip Polášek
Women's Double	Anna Danilina and Beatriz Haddad Maia

127. The **Best FIFA Football Awards 2021** ceremony has been held as a virtual TV show from the Home of FIFA in Zurich, Switzerland.

- Poland's **Robert Lewandowski**, Bayern Munich player, has won the **Best FIFA Men's Player Award 2021** after beating out Lionel Messi and Mohamed Salah.
- Spain's **Alexia Putellas** has won the **Best FIFA Women's Player Award 2021** after beating out the Chelsea Superstar Sam Kerr, and her own Barcelona teammate Jenni Hermoso.

Categories	Winners
The Best FIFA Men's Player	Robert Lewandowski (Poland)
The Best FIFA Women's Player	Alexia Putellas (Spain)
FIFA Fan Award	Denmark and Finland Fans
The Best FIFA Men's Coach	Thomas Tuchel (Germany)
The FIFA Best Women's Coach	Emma Hayes (United Kingdom)
FIFA Fair Play Award	Denmark National Team and Staff
Puskas Award	Erik Lamela (Argentina)
The Best FIFA Men's Goalkeeper	Edouard Mendy (France)

The Best FIFA Women's Goalkeeper	Christiane Endler (Chile)
FIFA Best Special Award	Christine Sinclair (Canada)
FIFA Best Special Award	Cristiano Ronaldo (Portugal)

128. Indian cricketer **Smriti Mandhana** has been named in the ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year 2021. She has made in the list for third time in the T20I team of the year after 2018 (opener) and 2019 (number three).

ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year 2021:

Smriti Mandhana (India), Tammy Beaumont (England), Danni Wyatt (England), Gaby Lewis (Ireland), **Nat Sciver (captain) (England)**, Amy Jones (England), Laura Wolvaardt (South Africa), Marizanne Kapp (South Africa), Sophie Ecclestone (England), Loryn Phiri (Zimbabwe), Shabnim Ismail (South Africa).

IMPORTANT DAYS

129. Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) has observed '**Agri Nutri Garden Week**' from **10th to 17th January 2022** through awareness campaign and encouraging establishment of 'Agri Nutri Gardens' in the rural households.

- **Aim:** To support every rural poor household to have Agri Nutri Garden to fulfill the need of the family's nutrition and any excess production can also be sold for income generation.
- A total of 76,664 'Agri Nutri Gardens' were established in this week against the target of 7500.

130. Army Day is observed annually across India on **15th January** to salute the valiant soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country and its citizens. The day is also marked to commemorate the day when General (later Field Marshal) **KM Cariappa** took over the command of the Army from General Sir FRR Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief in 1949 and became the first Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army post Independence.

- The year 2022 marks the **74th Indian Army Day**.

131. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently announced to celebrate **16th January** annually as '**National Start-up Day**'. In 2022, the National Startup Day is celebrated on six themes. They are sustainable development, technology of future, from local to global, building champions in manufacturing, nudging the DNA and growing from roots.

- The day is focused on data collection mechanism in agriculture, healthcare through use of technology, creating agricultural business hubs, tackling issues related to mental health, improving health care related technologies, space sector and job identification.

132. The **NDRF Raising Day** is observed annually on **19th January** by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) in India to highlight the role of the NDRF personnel for their help and assistance during disaster situations in India. In 2022, the day marks the celebration of the **17th NDRF Raising Day**.

133. Kokborok Day (Tripuri language Day) is observed annually in the Indian state of **Tripura** to celebrate the development of the Kokborok language. It is observed on **19 January** every year.

- The Kokborok language is an official language in Tripura.
- This day is chosen to commemorate its initial recognition as an official language in 1979.
- The year 2022 marks the observance of the 44th Kokborok Day.

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