

# VETRI IAS STUDY CIRCLE

## Current Affairs

(A book for TNPSC Examination)

**JANUARY 2022**



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# Preface



**M. SHUNMUGAM**

Director

Vetrii IAS Study Circle.

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My Dear Aspirants,

Greetings to all of you! "What we think we become" Gautama Buddha. We all have dreams. To make dreams come into reality it takes a lot of determination, dedication, self discipline and continuous effort.

We at VETRII IAS Study Circle are committed to provide the right guidance, quality coaching and help every aspirants to achieve his or her life's cherished goal of becoming a civil servant.

The class room coaching at VETRII IAS Study Circle is meticulously planned to equip the aspirants with all the relevant facts and fundamentals of the subjects. Further the VETRII IAS Study Circle Study materials aim to support the candidate by providing the most relevant study material in a comprehensive manner.

We also thank other family members of Vetrii for making this effort a reality.

We wish the aspirants ALL THE VERY BEST  
for their journey in Civil Services !

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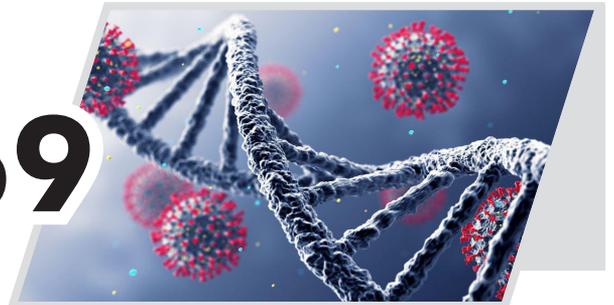
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# 1. HISTORY



## 1.1 IMPORTANT DAYS

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Theme / Remark</b>
<b>01 January</b>	World Family Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Global Family Day is celebrated as a day of peace and sharing on January 1.</li><li>▪ Its aim is to unite and spread a message of peace by considering and promoting the idea that Earth is one Global Family so as to make the world a better place to live for everyone.</li></ul>
<b>01 January</b>	Foundation Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Foundation Day</li></ul>
<b>04 January</b>	World Braille Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ World Braille Day is observed globally by the national and international organisations on January 4.</li><li>▪ The day highlights the importance of Braille as a means of communication for partially sighted and blind People.</li></ul>
<b>06 January</b>	World Day of War Orphans	
<b>08 January</b>	National Vision Board Day	
<b>09 January</b>	Pravasi Bharatiya Divas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, also known as Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day is celebrated to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and Reconnect them with their roots.</li><li>▪ It is celebrated every two years on 09 January.</li></ul>

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
<b>09 January</b>	Guru Gobind Singh Jayanti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This year, January 9th is observed as the birth Anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh.</li> <li>▪ He was born on December 22 as per the Georgian calendar but his birthday is celebrated every year in accordance with the lunar calendar.</li> <li>▪ Gobind Singh Jayanti is also known as the Prakash Parv.</li> </ul>
<b>10 - 16 January</b>	Start Up India Innovation Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry have decided to organise a week-long virtual innovation celebration called 'Startup India Innovation Week' to showcase the spread and depth of entrepreneurship across India.</li> </ul>
<b>10 January</b>	World Hindi Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is celebrated on 10 January to commemorate the First World Hindi Conference.</li> </ul> <p><b>About:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hindi is one of the widely spoken languages in India and other countries like Nepal, Mauritius, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Fiji.</li> <li>▪ The day marks the anniversary of the First World Hindi Conference, held in 1975.</li> <li>▪ On January 10th, 2006 for the first time World Hindi Day was observed by former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.</li> </ul>
<b>11 January</b>	National Human Trafficking Awareness Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. In 2007, the United States Senate ratified the resolution establishing January 11th as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. In 2010, President Obama dedicated the entire month of January to awareness and prevention of human trafficking.</li> </ul>
<b>12 January</b>	National Youth Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The day, January 12, being the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, is observed as National Youth Day also known as Yuva Diwas.</li> <li>▪ The theme for National Youth Day 2022 is "It's all in the mind," a key teaching of Swami Vivekananda.</li> </ul>
<b>13 January</b>	Lohri Festival. Lohri is the first festival of the year 2022.	
<b>14 January</b>	World Logic Day	
<b>14 January</b>	Food Corporation of India Foundation Day	

Date	Day	Theme / Remark
14 January	Armed Forces Veterans Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed on January 14 every year, since 2017.</li> <li>▪ It is celebrated to honour the sacrifice of our Veterans in serving the nation.</li> <li>▪ Armed Forces Veterans Day was called Armistice Day when it was announced and this year, the Nation will celebrate the 6th Armed Forces Veterans Day.</li> <li>▪ Armed Forces Veterans Day recognizes the services rendered by <b>Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE</b>, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the <b>Indian Armed Forces</b>. He retired on January 14 in 1953.</li> <li>▪ Last year (2021), Admiral Karambir Singh released the '<b>Swarnim Vijay Varsh</b>' song dedicated to our brave and courageous soldiers of the 1971 war.</li> </ul>

## 1.2 PROFILE OF STATES

### Kerala:

- First Water Metro ferry handed over to Kochi Metro Rail Limited.
- The first of the 23 fully air-conditioned, battery powered electric ferries of the ₹747crore **Kochi Water Metro Project** was handed over by the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) to the Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL).
- The 50-seater ferry was christened "**Muziris**" – named after what was once a thriving BC-era port – and is said to have been located at Pattanam village located 25 kms from Kochi city.
- This would be the first time in the world that a centrally controlled integrated water transport system comprising a large fleet would be battery powered.
- The ferries would have generator backup, which will take over their operation automatically in the event of any failure of the Battery System.

### India's first Paperless Court:

- The Kerala High Court is all set to become India's First Paperless court.
- Supreme Court judge Justice DY Chandrachud inaugurated the smart court rooms on **1 January 2022**.
- In the 1st phase six courtrooms, including the Chief Justice's room, will be converted into smart courts.
- Also, case files will be made available to the lawyers on the computer screen.

### Mumbai:

#### Mumbai to host India's first Water Taxi Service:

- The Financial Capital of India is set to get a new transportation solution with the commissioning of state-of-the-art water taxi Services.

- The project is a joint initiative of Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT), City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) and Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB).
- Those who had fallen in the defence of Kohima were buried on the battlefield, which later became a permanent CWGC cemetery, with further burials from the surrounding areas.

## Gujarat:

### Kevadia Railway Station Renamed as Ekta Nagar Railway Station:

- 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.

### About:

- Last year, the Ministry of Railways had said tourists visiting the world's tallest statue in Gujarat "Statue of Unity" will be able to experience the rich cultural history of the state at the Kevadiya railway station itself.
- Under the public-private partnership (PPP) initiative, the Vadodara Division of Western Railways had awarded first of its kind contract in the Indian Railways network for the development of an Art Gallery with a Souvenir shop at Gujarat's Kevadiya Railway station.

## Nagaland:

### In Kohima, a Cemetery with a Tennis Court:

- Nagaland's capital Kohima is home to a unique cemetery that also has a tennis court.
- The United Kingdom-based Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) has listed five sites with unusual features.
- The Kohima War Cemetery is one of 23,000 World War Graves across the continents maintained by the CWGC.
- In 1944, following hard fighting in the Burmese jungle, the Japanese forces in the region pushed across the Chindwin River and into India. In their path was the Fourteenth Army, made up of forces from across the Commonwealth.
- The lawn of this house had a tennis court where the British officers played for recreation.
- The Japanese force continued to fight for Kohima before they were finally forced to withdraw in May.

## Himachal Pradesh:

### First LPG enabled & Smoke Free State of the Country:

- Himachal Pradesh became the first state to have 100% LPG coverage, also, smoke-free state.
- This Milestone was achieved due to the **Ujjwala Scheme and Grahini Suvidha Yojana**.
- **Ujjwala Yojana was started by the Centre Government** with the view to free the women of the country from indoor pollution. Along with this, the Himachal government also started the Grihini Suvidha Yojana to benefit as many women as possible, under the scheme.

### About Grihini Suvidha Yojana:

- The Himachal Grihini Suvidha Yojana is a scheme to provide LPG gas connection to houses.
- It was launched on **26 May, 2018** to encourage people to use LPG gas fueled stoves instead of chulhas. This reduces indoor air pollution from the open chulhas.
- The Himachal Grihini Suvidha Yojana was launched to cover those households that were left out by the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana.

### About Ujjwala:

- The scheme was launched on **1<sup>st</sup> May 2016** in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.
- It is a flagship scheme with an objective to make clean cooking fuel such as LPG available to the rural and deprived households which were otherwise using traditional cooking fuels such as firewood, coal, cow-dung cakes etc.

### About Himachal Pradesh:

- **Capital:** Shimla (Summer), Dharamshala (Winter).
- **Governor:** Rajendra Arlekar.
- **Chief Minister:** Jai Ram Thakur.

### Himachal Pradesh's Statehood Day:

- PM Modi on January 25 extended greetings to the people of Himachal Pradesh on the occasion of its Statehood Day.
- On December 18, 1970, the State of Himachal Pradesh Act was passed by Parliament, and the new State came into being on **January 25, 1971**.
- Himachal Pradesh became the 18<sup>th</sup> State of the Indian Union with **Dr.Yashwant Singh Parmar** as its **First Chief Minister**.

### Andhra Pradesh:

#### A.P. to create 13 New Districts

- The Andhra Pradesh Government announced the **formation of 13 districts** at the Republic Day celebrations.
- The New districts will come into force from **Ugadi, Telugu New Year (April 2)**.
- With this, the **total tally of districts** in the State would go up to **26**.

### Manipur:

#### First Goods Train Reaches

#### Manipur:

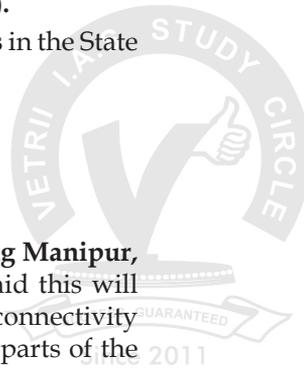
- With the **first freight train reaching Manipur**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said this will enhance the state's commerce and connectivity as goods from there will reach all parts of the country.
- The freight train arrived at the **Rani Gaidinliu station** in the north-eastern state on January 27, days after a **passenger train** from Silchar in Assam reached the Bongaichungpao railway station in Manipur, where assembly polls will be held in two phases on February 27 and March 3.

#### About Manipur:

- Manipur is a state in Northeast India, with the city of Imphal as its capital.
- It is bounded by the Indian states of Nagaland to the north, Mizoram to the south and Assam to the west. It also borders two regions of Myanmar, Sagaing Region to the east and Chin State to the south.
- The Manipur State Constitution Act of 1947 established a democratic form of government,

with the Maharaja continuing as the head of state after the Indian independence.

- **Maharaja Bodhchandra** was summoned to Shillong, to merge the kingdom into the Union of India. He is believed to have signed the merger agreement under duress.
- Thereafter, the legislative assembly was dissolved, and on 15 October 1949 Manipur became part of India.
- It was made a Union Territory in 1956 and a fully-fledged State in 1972 by the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.



## 1.3 DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

### **S-400 missile system to be First deployed in Punjab by February:**

- The Indian Air Force is likely to complete the deployment of the first regiment of the S-400 Triumph Missile System at an airbase in Punjab by February.
- The first regiment of the missile system is being deployed in such a way that it can cover parts of the border with China in the northern Sector as well as the frontier with Pakistan.
- In total, India will get five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems from Russia.

### **'Malabar is the most Complex Naval Exercise'**

- While the Navy gears up to hold its largest multilateral exercise 'Milan' at the end of February, there are requests from several countries for various formats of exercises, defence officials said, pointing out that Malabar is the most complex naval exercise India does with any other country.

#### **About Exercise MILAN:**

- It is a biennial, multilateral naval exercise which started in 1995.
- The Navy has held 10 editions of the Milan Exercise, with the theme of "synergy across the seas" to enhance professional interactions between friendly foreign navies and learn best practices from each other, since 1995.
- It was conducted at the Andaman and Nicobar Command until 2018.
- It is held under the aegis of Eastern Naval Command.

#### **About MALABAR EXERCISE:**

- It is a multilateral war-gaming naval exercise that was started in 1992. It began as a bilateral exercise between the navies of India and the United States.
- Two more editions of the exercise were carried out in 1995 and 1996, after which there was a break until 2002 in the aftermath of India's nuclear tests.

- From 2002 onward, the exercise has been conducted every year.
- Japan and Australia first participated in 2007, and since 2014, India, the US and Japan have Participated in the exercise every year.
- In 2020 Australia joined the Malabar Exercise on India's request in order to contain China in the Indo-Pacific region.
- For the first time in over a decade, Malabar 2020 saw the participation of all four Quad Members.
- It is aimed to support free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and remain committed to a rule based International Order.

### **J&K Police to get Firepower upgrade:**

- Jammu and Kashmir Police personnel will soon get American Sig Sauer assault rifles and pistols to carry out anti-terror operations.
- The Army has already equipped its personnel Guarding the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China with state-of-the-art rifles.
- The **Jammu and Kashmir Police** is probably the **first in the Country** to get the modern weapons, they said, adding that the force will be procuring 500 Sig Sauer-716 rifles and 100 Sig Sauer MPX 9mm pistols.
- The Special operation Group (SoG) and Personnel deployed for the security of protected people will be equipped with the Weapons.

#### **About Line of Control:**

- The Line of Control (LoC) emerged from the 1948 ceasefire line negotiated by the United Nations (UN) after the Kashmir War.
- It was designated as the LoC in 1972, following the Shimla Agreement between the Two Countries.
- LoC is demarcated up to the **Siachen Glacier - the world's Highest Battlefield.**
- LoC is delineated on a map signed by the Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of both armies and has the international sanctity of a legal agreement.

**About Line of Actual Control:**

- LAC is the demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled Territory.
- LAC is different from the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan
- IT is divided into three sectors:
  - ✓ The eastern sector which spans Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim (1346 km)
  - ✓ The middle sector in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh (545 km)
  - ✓ The western sector in Ladakh (1597 km).

**Sea Dragon 2022 Exercise:**

- India and its partners in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or **Quad along with Canada and South Korea** are participating in the multinational exercise Sea Dragon 2022 at Guam in the Western Pacific that began on **January 5, 2022**.
- The six nations that are participating in the exercise are the United States, Australia, Canada, India, Japan and South Korea.
- The exercise, primarily focused on anti-Submarine warfare (ASW) training, will involve more than 270 hours of in-flight training and activities ranging from tracking simulated targets to tracking a US Navy Submarine.
- Each event will be graded and the country scoring the highest points will receive the **Dragon Belt Award**.

**Vikrant heads out for Next Set of Sea Trials:**

- Indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant headed out for the next set of sea trials on January 9 2022.
- The maiden sea trials in August 2021 were to establish propulsion, navigational suite and basic operations, while the second sea trial in October-November 2021 saw the ship being put through various machinery trials and flight trials.

**About INS Vikrant:**

- INS Vikrant, also known as Indigenous Aircraft Carrier 1 (IAC-1).
- Constructed by the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) for the Indian Navy.

- It is the first aircraft carrier to be built in India
- The name Vikrant ("stepping beyond") means "courageous".
- The motto of the ship is "**Jayema Sam Yudhi Sprdhah**", which is taken from Rigveda, means "I defeat those who fight against me". launched on 12 August 2013 -ship started sea trials in August 2021.
- Vikrant is scheduled to be commissioned into service by August 2022, with flight trials of aircraft expected to be completed by mid-2023.

**BrahMos Advanced Variant Test Fired**

- An extended range sea to sea variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was test fired from the recently commissioned stealth Guided missile destroyer INS Visakhapatnam.
- BrahMos is joint collaboration between India and Russia and is capable of being launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air against surface and sea-based targets, with a range capped at 290 km initially.
- The range of the missile was originally Capped at 290 km as per obligations of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).
- Following India's entry into the club in June 2016, officials said the range would be extended to 450 km and to 600 km at a later Stage.
- INS Visakhapatnam, with a displacement of 7,400 tonnes, is the first of four ingeniously designed and built Project15B class stealth guided missile destroyers and was Commissioned in November 2021.

**Indian Navy and Russian Navy conduct PASSEX Exercise in Arabian Sea:**

- Indian Navy and Russian Navy undertook PASSEX (Passage Exercises) at the port of Cochin, in the Arabian Sea.
- The Indian Navy's indigenously designed and built guided-missile destroyer, INS Kochi, took part in the exercise.
- The exercise showcased cohesiveness and interoperability between the two navies and included tactical manoeuvres, cross-deck Helicopter Operations and Sea-man ship Activities.

**Explosion in destroyer INS Ranvir:**

- Three Navy personnel were killed and 11 injured in an explosion aboard the destroyer INS Ranvir at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai.
- INS Ranvir had been on cross coast operational deployment from the Eastern Naval Command since November 2021 and was due to return to the base port shortly.
- INS Ranvir is the fourth of the five Rajput-class destroyers built for the Indian Navy. Ranvir was **Commissioned on 28 October 1986**.
- **Builder:** Mykolayiv Shipyard, Ukraine. Until 2017, it was known as the Shipyard named after 61 Communards.

**India & Japan conducted Maritime Partnership Exercise in Bay of Bengal:**

- A Maritime Partnership Exercise was held between the Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) in the Bay of Bengal on **13 January 2022**.
- The Indian side was represented by Indian Naval Ships (INS) Shivalik and INS Kadmat while JMSDF Ships **Uraga** and **Hirado** participated from the Japanese side.
- Some other Important Exercise of India are:
  - ✓ **Red Flag:** India and US
  - ✓ **Al Nagah:** India and Oman
  - ✓ **'Naseem-Al-Bahr':** India and Oman
  - ✓ **Ekuverin:** India and Maldives
  - ✓ **Garuda Shakti:** India and Indonesia
  - ✓ **Desert Warrior:** India and Egypt

**Extended Range BrahMos Tested:**

- The supersonic cruise missile BrahMos with increased indigenous content and improved performance was successfully flight-tested from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- The missile is capable of being launched from land, sea, subsea and air against surface and sea-based targets and has been long inducted by the Indian Armed Forces.

**About BrahMos:**

- The BrahMos is a joint venture between India (DRDO) and Russia (NPOM) for the development, production and marketing of the supersonic Cruise Missile.
- The BrahMos is a medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from submarine, ships, aircraft or land.
- It is notably one of the fastest supersonic cruise missiles in the world.
- The name BrahMos is a portmanteau formed from the names of two rivers, the Brahmaputra of India and the Moskva of Russia.
- It is the world's fastest anti-ship cruise missile currently in operation.
- In 2019, India upgraded the missile with a new range of 650 km with plans to eventually upgrade all Missiles to a range of 1500 km.

**German warship's visit to Mumbai reflects Berlin's new focus on Indo-Pacific:**

- The German frigate **Bayern F217** sailed into Mumbai port on **January 20** after traversing the South China Sea as part of Berlin's focus on maritime and security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, marking the **first visit by a German warship to India in almost a decade**.



## 1.4 WORLD ORGANISATIONS – PACTS AND SUMMITS

### WEF's online Davos Summit begins on January 17:

- With its high-profile annual meeting getting deferred due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Economic Forum's (WEF) five-day online Davos Agenda summit will begin on January 17 with Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled to deliver his special addresses on the first day itself.
- The forum will also see Chinese President Xi Jinping delivering an address.
- According to WEF Agenda, the virtual plenaries will be aligned with the annual meeting objective of "orienting global leaders on the imperatives of the year ahead".
- This year's theme is "**The State of the World.**"
- Several Heads of state will address the event including Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and EU Commission's chief Ursula von der Leyen.
- WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva, special presidential envoy for the climate of the US John F Kerry, European central bank president Christine Lagarde, and WTO director-general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala are also expected to attend the event.
- The summit will also bring together Government and business leaders, international organisations, and civil society to share their outlooks, insights, and plans relating to the most urgent global issues such as climate change, social contracts, and vaccine equity.
- The Davos Agenda 2022 will mark the launch of several WEF initiatives to accelerate net-zero emissions, the economic opportunity of nature-positive solutions, and cyber resilience.
- Two virtual summits are expected in the online summit - one on Covid-19 and the second on Technology cooperation in the

fourth Industrial Revolution.

- There would be Sessions on energy transition, scaling up Climate Innovation and Latin America outlook.

### About World Economic Forum:

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a Swiss nonprofit Foundation established on 24th January 1971, based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Recognized by the Swiss authorities as the international institution for public-private cooperation.
- **Mission:**
  - ✓ Committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, Academic, and other leaders of society to shape Global, Regional, and industry Agendas.
- **Founder and Executive Chairman:** Klaus Schwab.
- Some major reports published by WEF are:
  - ✓ Energy Transition Index.
  - ✓ Global Competitiveness Report.
  - ✓ Global IT Report - WEF along with INSEAD and Cornell University publishes this report.
  - ✓ Global Gender Gap Report.
  - ✓ Global Risk Report.
  - ✓ Global Travel and Tourism Report.

### 'Cyberattacks Surge as COVID Spurs Digital Push':

- The World Economic Forum's '**Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2022**', released during its online Davos Agenda summit, further showed that each successful cyber breach cost a company \$3.6 million (almost ₹27 crore) last year, while the average share price of the hacked company under-performed the NASDAQ index by close to 3% even six months after the event in case of the breach becoming public.
- The WEF said the global digital economy had surged on the back of the COVID19 pandemic, but so had cybercrime.

**"P3 (Pro-Planet-People) Movement:**

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced the "P3 (Pro-Planet People) movement" to underline India's climate change commitments at World Economic Forum's (WEF) Davos Agenda 2022.
- The World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda Virtual Summit hosted world leaders and heads of important institutions around the world to discuss climate action, pandemic recovery, and socio-Economic Resilience.

**1<sup>st</sup> BRICS Sherpas Meeting of 2022:**

- The first BRICS Sherpas meeting of 2022 was held virtually on January 18-19 2022, with the members thanking India for its BRICS chairmanship in 2021.
- **China** has taken on the rotating **chairmanship of BRICS in 2022**.
- BRICS is a grouping of five major emerging Economies – **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**.
- **Sanjay Bhattacharyya** - India's BRICS Sherpa.

**About BRICS:**

- In 2001, the British Economist **Jim O'Neill** coined the term **BRIC** to describe the four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China.
- The grouping was formalised during the first Meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers in 2006.
- South Africa became the member in **December 2010**, after which it became **BRICS**. The chairmanship of the forum is rotated Annually among the members.
- During the **Sixth BRICS Summit** in Fortaleza (Brazil) in 2014, the agreement establishing the **New Development Bank (NDB - Shanghai, China)** was signed.
- They also signed the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement to provide short-term Liquidity support to the members.
- The first BRICS Sherpa meeting - in 2019 under the Presidency of Brazil in Curitiba, Brazil.

**Who are Sherpas?**

- Sherpa is a personal representative of the head of state or government, preparing an International Summit.

**World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2022 (WESO Trends) Report:**

- The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** has released its World Employment and Social Outlook – **Trends 2022 (WESO Trends) Report**.
- In the WESO 2022, ILO has downgraded its forecast for labour market recovery in 2022.

**About ILO:**

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) is established to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards.
- Established in **1919** by the **Treaty of Versailles** as an affiliated agency of the League of Nations.
- Became the first affiliated specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland
- Received the **Nobel Peace Prize in 1969**.
  - ✓ For improving peace among classes.
  - ✓ Pursuing decent work and justice for workers.
  - ✓ Providing technical assistance to other developing nations.
- **Members:** 187 Countries.
- **Director-General:** Guy Ryder of the United Kingdom since 2012.

**PM to hold Central Asia summit on January 27:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold the **First India Central Asia summit**, in a video conference with five Presidents from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- The major areas of focus for the conference would be trade and connectivity, building development partnerships and enhancing cultural and people to people contacts.
- India extended a \$1 billion Line of Credit (LOC) for development projects in the areas of energy, healthcare, connectivity, IT, and agriculture in 2020.
- India hopes to build on its trilateral working group on Chabahar with Iran and Uzbekistan to strengthen connectivity to the region.

## 1.5 EMINENT PERSONS

### Velu Nachiyar:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid his Tribute to Rani Velu Nachiyar on her Birth anniversary 3 January. He said, she personifies 'Nari Shakti'.

#### About:

- Rani Velu Nachiyar was an 18th century queen from Sivagangai district in Tamil Nadu, who is known as the first queen to have fought against the British colonial Power.
- Velu Nachiyar was born on 3 January in 1730 AD to the royal couple Mannar Sellamuthu Sethupathy and Sakandhimuthal.
- She was trained in archery, horse riding, martial arts, and even handling different weapons. She was also educated in several languages like French, Urdu and English.
- At the age of 16, Velu Nachiyar was married to Sivagangai Mannar Muthuvaduganathur, Following which they had a daughter who was named Vellachi.
- During her reign, the queen also formed a women's only army called Udaiyaal.
- For more than 10 years, Velu Nachiyar proudly ruled Sivagangai before she died in 1796 of an Illness.

### Freedom Fighter K. Ayyappan

#### Pillai Passes Away:

- Born in 1914 to A. Kumara Pillai and Bhargavi Amma in Thiruvananthapuram.
- Mr. Ayyappan Pillai became active in the freedom movement and the Indian National Congress during his student days in the 1930s.
- K Ayyappan Pillai was a member of Sree Mulam Praja Sabha of Travancore.
- Ayyappan Pillai had served as Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Councilor in 1942.
- In 1934, Gandhi advised him to serve the people directly which prompted him to stand for elections in the newly formed legislature of Travancore representing Trivandrum as an Indian National Congress candidate.

- A young Ayyappan Pillai joined the State Congress when it was formed in 1938.
- When the question of Travancore's accession to the Indian Union came up, it was Mr. Ayyappan Pillai who acted as the emissary of Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma to Pattom Thanu Pillai.
- In 1949, he moved to the Praja Socialist Party. In later decades, he associated with the Jan Sangh and joined the BJP when it was formed.
- When India attained Independence, he was asked by the Maharaja to carry on secret negotiations with Indian National Congress and the Government of Travancore in 1947.

### Sidney Poitier:

- Sidney Poitier, who broke through racial barriers as the first Black winner of the Best Actor Oscar for his role in Lilies of the Field (1963), and inspired a generation during the civil rights movement, has died at age 94.
- He was born in Miami on February 20, 1927.
- In 2009, Mr. Poitier was Awarded the Highest U.S. civilian honor, **the Presidential Medal of Freedom**, by President Barack Obama.

### 11 January – Death Anniversary of Lal Bahadur Shastri

#### About:

- He was the second Prime Minister of Independent India.
- He promoted the **White Revolution** – a National Campaign to increase the production and supply of milk – by supporting the Amul milk co-operative of Anand, Gujarat and creating the **National Dairy Development Board**.
- He also promoted the Green Revolution in India in 1965.
- He led the country during the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965. His slogan "**Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan**" ("Hail to the soldier; Hail to the farmer") became very popular during the war.
- The war formally ended with the Tashkent Agreement on 10 January 1966; he died the following Day.

- He was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1966.

### Indian-Origin Captain Harpreet Chandi Reaches South Pole:

- Captain Harpreet Chandi, Indian-origin British Sikh Army officer and physiotherapist, also known as Polar Preet, has created history by becoming the first woman of colour to complete a solo unsupported trek to the South Pole.
- Capt. Chandi announced her history-making feat at the end of Day 40 after travelling 700 miles (1,127 kilometres) while pulling a pulk or sledge with all of her kit and battling temperatures of minus 50 degrees Celsius and wind speeds of around 60mph.

### Sindhutai Sapkal:

- Social Activist and Padma Shri awardee Sindhutai Sapkal passed away in Pune due to a Heart attack at the age of 74 on January 04 2021.
- Sindhutai Sapkal was known as 'Mai' and 'Mother Teresa of Maharashtra'. She ran an orphanage named Sanmati Bal Niketan Sanstha in Pune.
- She was also called as 'Mother of Orphans'.
- A biopic on her life titled "Mee Sindhutai Sapkal" was released in 2010.
- 2017 - Nari Shakti Puraskar from the President Of India. She was awarded the Padma Shri in 2021 in Social Work Category.

### Noted Environmentalist

#### M.K. Prasad Passes Away:

- Professor Prasad, who had served as Pro-Vice Chancellor of Calicut University, was in the forefront of environment protection activities in Kerala.
- He had played a crucial role in creating public awareness across the State for protecting the verdant forests of the Silent Valley during the early 1970s.
- He had played a leadership role in the **Save Silent Valley campaign**, considered the first popular campaign for protecting a forest ecosystem in the State.

- It was the Green campaign led by Mr. Prasad and others highlighting the ecological significance of the evergreen forest of the area that eventually led to the scrapping of the hydel power project proposed by the Kerala State Electricity Board in the area.

- Later, the Silent Valley was notified as a National Park in 1984.
- He had led the popular science movement **Kerala Sastra Sahithya Parishad**, which had undertaken campaigns for popularization of science in everyday life, as its president.
- He had also played a key role in the development of the Integrated Rural Technology Centre in Palakkad.
- He was also involved in the **Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Board of the United Nations** and was associated with the activities of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, the Kerala State Biodiversity Board.

### Pandit Birju Maharaj Passed Away:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin condoled the death of legendary Kathak dancer Pandit Birju Maharaj.

#### About Birju Maharaj:

- Pandit Birju Maharaj (born Brijmohan Nath Mishra; 4 February 1937 - 17 January 2022 in Allahabad) was an Indian dancer, composer, singer and exponent of the Lucknow "Kalka-Bindadin" Gharana of Kathak dance in India.
- He was a descendant of the Maharaj family of Kathak dancers, which includes his two uncles, Shambhu Maharaj and Lachhu Maharaj, and his father and guru, Acchan Maharaj. He also practiced Hindustani classical music and was a vocalist.
- He composed the music, and sang, for two dance sequences in the Satyajit Ray's Shatranj ke Khilari, and choreographed the song Kaahe Chhed Mohe from the 2002 film version of novella Devdas.

#### His Awards and Honors:

- 1964 - Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.
- 1986 - Padma Vibhushan.

**His Film Awards:**

- 2012 - National Film Award for Best Choreography for Unnai Kaanaathu (Vishwaroopam).
- 2016 - Filmfare Award for Best Choreography for Mohe Rang Do Laal (Bajirao Mastani).

**About Classical Dances in India:**

- India is known for its rich cultural legacy. Performing arts like classical dances are integral parts of Indian culture.
- Most of the classical dance forms originated in temples. Worshipping was the Main aim.
- Though every dance form evolved from different regions, their roots are the same. The roots can be traced from the Sanskrit text - 'Natyashastra' by Bharat Muni.
- The first compilation of Natyashastra is dated between 200BCE and 200CE.
- The Sangeet Natak Akademi currently confers Classical Status on eight Indian Classical Dance styles:

Name of Classical Dance	Place of Classical Dance
Bharatanatyam	Tamil Nadu
Kathak	Northern India
Kathakali	Kerala
Kuchipudi	Andhra Pradesh
Manipuri	Manipur
Mohiniyattam	Kerala
Odissi	Odisha
Sattriya	Assam

**Dr. V. Shanta:**

- There was a time when the word 'Cancer' meant only death in the public mind. This perception in the later years was changed by the work of Dr.V. Shanta, who came under the influence of legends S. Krishnamurthi and his mother Muthulakshmi Reddy, a visionary dedicated to social service and reforms.

- Dr. Shanta moved into the campus of the Cancer Institute in 1955 and made this her home until her last days in January 2021.
- She was simple all through her life and followed the Gandhian Lifestyle.

**Cartoonist Narayan Debnath****Passes Away:**

- Narayan Debnath, legendary cartoonist, noted illustrator and litterateur, passed away in Kolkata.
- Mr. Debnath was the creator of some of immortal cartoon characters for Bengali readers such as Bantul the Great, Handa Bhonda and Nonte Fonte that have inspired not only children but generations of Bengalis.
- He was honoured with the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2013 and the Padma Shri in 2021.

**Youngest Woman to fly Solo around the World:**

- The 19-year-old Belgian-British pilot **Zara Rutherford** set a world record as the **youngest woman to fly solo around the world**, touching her small airplane down in western Belgium on January 20 – 155 days after she departed.

**First Indian to Complete Prestigious Nasa programme:**

- **Jahnvi Dangeti**, a young girl from Andhra Pradesh, has just completed **NASA's International Air and Space Program (IASP NASA)** at the Kennedy Space Centre in Alabama, US.
- She is a member of the International Organization of Aspiring Astronauts (IOAA).

**Ayesha Malik:**

- Lahore High Court Justice Ayesha Malik will be **Pakistan's first-ever woman judge of the Supreme Court.**

**World's Oldest Living Man:**

- Guinness World Records holder for the oldest person living (male), **Saturnino de la Fuente Garcia (Spain)** has passed away at the Age of 112 years and 341 days.

- Saturnino claimed the record as the oldest person living (male) in September 2021 when he was exactly 112 years and 211 days. He was born on February 11, 1909.

### Saint Composer Sri Thyagaraja:

- Hundreds of musicians paid homage to saint composer Sri Thyagaraja by singing his 'Pancharatna Kritis' in chorus on the occasion of the 175<sup>th</sup> aradhana of Thyagraja at the saint's samadhi on the banks of Cauvery at Thiruvaiyaru in Thanjavur district.

### About Thyagaraja:

- Saint Tyagaraja was a renowned composer of Carnatic music.
- He has composed thousands of devotional compositions, mostly in Telugu in the praise of Lord Rama.
- He saw the reigns of four kings of Maratha dynasty – Tulaja II (1763-1787), Amarasimha (1787-1798), Serfoji II (1798-1832) and Sivaji II (1832-1855), but he served none of them.
- Tyagaraja introduced several unusual ragas in Carnatic music.
- **Tyagaraja** and his contemporaries, **Shyama Shastri and Muthuswami Dikshitar**, are regarded as the **Trinity of Carnatic music**.
- A sports complex in New Delhi, Thyagaraj Sports Complex, was named after him.
- A crater on the planet Mercury was named after Tyagaraja in 1976.

### Ahobila Math sabha President Passes

#### Away:

- **N.V. Vasudevachariar**, president of the Sri Ahobila Math Samskrita Vidya Abhivardini Sabha, which runs the Sri Ahobila Math Oriental Higher Secondary School, died.
- Mr. Vasudevachariar was a former member of the Central Sanskrit Board and a former member of the Senate of the University of Madras.

### Thich Nhat Hanh:

- Thich Nhat Hanh, the revered Zen Buddhist monk who helped pioneer the concept of mindfulness in the West and socially engaged Buddhism in the East, has died.

### About Thich Nhat Hanh:

- Born as **Nguyen Xuan Bao** in 1926 and ordained at age 16 and went on to found a youth school which trained volunteers to build clinics and infrastructure in villages blighted by war.
- He was the founder of the **Plum Village Tradition**, historically recognized as the main inspiration for engaged Buddhism.
- He coined the term "**Engaged Buddhism**" in his book '**Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire**'.
- He founded the Van Hanh Buddhist University in Vietnam.

### Archaeologist and Epigraphist Nagaswamy Passes away at 92

- **R. Nagaswamy**, the first Director of the Department of Archaeology, died.
- An authority in archaeology, Architecture, Epigraphy, Numismatics, Iconography, south Indian bronzes and Temple Rituals.
- Nagaswamy was born at Kodumudi in Erode district.
- He penned a book, '**Masterpieces of Early South Indian Bronzes**', in 1983 and compiled a coffee table book for the Tamil Nadu government to mark the World Classical Tamil Conference.
- His other important books are on Mamallapuram, published by the Oxford University Press, Uthiramerur and Gangai kondacholapuram. He had also published books in Tamil.

### Linguist S.Y. Shanmugam Passed Away:

- Dr. C. Y. Shanmugam (91 years old), former Senior Director, Center for Linguistic Studies, Chidambaram Annamalai University, Cuddalore District, passed away on January 27.
- He has submitted over 300 research articles nationally. He has written over 40 books.
- He is the recipient of the President's **Tolkappiyar Award and the Kambar Award** of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

### Lala Lajpat Rai Birth Anniversary:

- Born on January 28, 1865 in the Ludhiana district of Punjab, he was a part of the triarchy

political institution **Lal Bal Pal (Extremists)**, who advocated the Swadeshi movement, by boycotting all imported items and promoting the use of Indian made goods in 1907.

- He was influenced by the Hindu reformist movement of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, became a Member of existing Arya Samaj Lahore (founded 1877).
- He founded the **Home Rule League of America in 1917 in New York**.
- He was also elected President of the All-India Trade Union Congress.
- He supported the Non-Cooperation Movement of Gandhi at the Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920.
- He was elected **deputy leader of the Central Legislative Assembly in 1926**.
- He founded **Hindu Relief movement** in 1897 to provide help to the famine -stricken people and thus preventing them falling into the clutches of the missionaries.
- He founded the **Servants of People Society in 1921**.
- His important literary works include Young India, England's Debt to India, Evolution of Japan, India's Will to Freedom, Message of the Bhagavad Gita, Political Future of India, Problem of National Education in India, The Depressed Glasses, and the travelogue 'United States of America'.
- He founded several institutions and organizations such as Hisar Bar Council, Hisar Arya Samaj, Hisar Congress, National DAV Managing Committee.
- He was the **editor of the Arya Gazette**, which he **had founded**.
- He co-founded the Punjab National Bank in 1894.
- His ideologies and contribution in making India an independent country is what earned him the title of **Punjab Kesari** or the Lion of Punjab.
- When the **Simon Commission** visited Lahore on **30 October 1928**, he was leading a silent protest against the Simon Commission in Lahore and gave the movement a slogan "**Go Back Simon**" when he was brutally lathi-

charged by Superintendent of Police, **James Scott**.

- He died of injuries sustained, on 17 November 1928.

### **M V Pasupathi:**

- Senior Tamil Professor M V Pasupathi passed away.
- He has been graduated from Senthamizh College in Thiruppanandal, worked as a tamil Professor and Principal in the same college.
- After his retirement in 2002, he worked as the honorary curator of Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Iyer library, Besant Nagar.
- He was then engaged in compiling antiquities into texts. Among them, he has published a collection of manuscripts related to '**Panavidu thuuthu**'. This will help to facilitate the study of numismatics.
- He has published four collections of essays with respect to U.V Swaminathan's prose.
- Deciphering palm-leaf manuscripts, Ma. Ve Pasupathi has published 40 literary works. He received the prestigious **U Ve Sa award** for this singular work.
- Some his other works are 'Kavinganum Suvainganum', 'Kama Sigarangal', 'Pudhiya Thiruvalluvamalai'.
- He has worked as the editor of 'Kumaragurupar' religious literary monthly Magazine.

## 1.6 SPORTS & GAMES

### U19 Asia Cup 2021:

- India reaffirmed its supremacy in the U19 Asia Cup with a record Eighth Title as it hammered Sri Lanka by nine wickets.

### Mission Paris 2024: Six New Foreign Athletics Coaches:

- India's preparation for the Paris 2024 Olympics is likely to get a lift with the Sports Authority of India (SAI) approving appointments of six new foreign coaches for the country's track and field athletes in a shortened Olympics cycle.
- The six foreign coaches are:
  - Germany's Steffen Reumann**, who is a biomechanics expert, is expected to be roped in as the new coach for rotational throwers like Kamalpreet Kaur and Tejinderpal Pal Singh Toor.
  - Former world champion **Kimmo Kinnunen of Finland** is set to coach the javelin throwers, barring Tokyo gold medallist Neeraj Chopra.
  - Kimmo Kinnunen will be working with the likes of Rohit Yadav, Sahil Silwal and Yashvir Singh in the national camp.
  - Neeraj Chopra will continue to train under personal coach Dr. Klaus Bartonietz, whose contract was extended till 2024 recently.
  - Russia's Tatiana Sibileva**, a former Olympian, is set to be the new race-walking coach.
  - Cuba's Juan Gualberto Napoles Cardenas** is expected to be the new coach for long jumpers.
  - Josef Lisowski**, who is credited for the success of Polish runners, will look to add pace to the progress of Indian sprinters and relay runners who are currently training under coach Galina Bukharina.
  - Men's steeplechase runner Avinash Sable and other middle and long-distance runners will get **Scott Simmons** as their coach.
- Currently, 117 Indian track and field athletes are preparing at the senior national athletics camp for the upcoming Commonwealth and Asian Games.

### National Motorcycle Racing Championship:

- Drawing a close on the 4<sup>th</sup> round of MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship on a high, IDEMITSU Honda SK69 Racing's **Rajiv Sethu** displayed finesse on track and was the second to cross the chequered line in the Pro-Stock 165cc category.
- Ryhana Bee** (RACR Castrol Power Ultimate) regained the title in the girls' category after a two-year gap with one race to spare as the fourth round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship.

### Md Arif Khan in the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) Core Group:

- Sports Ministry's **Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) of India** has approved the inclusion of Alpine Skiing athlete **Md Arif Khan** in the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) Core Group, until the Winter Olympics, scheduled this February in Beijing, China.
- The feat earned Khan the unique distinction of becoming the first Indian to win direct Quota spots in two different Winter Olympics Events.
- He is also the first athlete from the country to seal a berth at the Winter Olympic Games 2022.

### ATP Tennis Tournament ADELAIDE:

- The unseeded pair of Rohan Bopanna and Ramkumar Ramanathan of India beat the top seeds, Ivan Dodig and Marcelo Melo in the double's final of the ATP tennis tournament in Adelaide, Australia.

### New Grandmaster in India:

- Bharath Subramaniam**, who became a Grandmaster at the age of 14 on January 9, is another addition to India's impressive list of Talented youngsters that could challenge the world's strongest players within a few years.
- Arjun Erigaisi, Nihal Sarin and R. Praggnanandhaa have already proved themselves on the global stage.

- The oldest among them is only 18.

### **Tata Group is Title Sponsor:**

- The Tata Group has replaced Vivo as the Title Sponsor for the Indian Premier League 2022 and 2023 Editions.

### **AISCD gets Approval to hold first World Deaf T20 Cricket Championship 2023:**

- The All India Sports Council of the Deaf (AISCD) has got 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 10-20, 2023.
- A minimum of eight countries are expected to take part in the championship and this kind of international event is being held in India with the approval of the ICSD for the first time.

#### **About the AISCD:**

- AISCD is the only Centre-recognized National sports federation for the deaf, while the ICSD is the only international federation recognized as governing body of the deaf sports movement and Deaflympics sanctioned by the International Olympic Committee.

#### **About ICSD:**

- International Committee of Sports for the Deaf  
Founded: 1924;
- International Committee of Sports for the Deaf  
Headquarters: Maryland, USA;
- International Committee of Sports for the Deaf  
President: Rebecca Adam.

### **Kohli steps down as Test Captain:**

- Virat Kohli has stepped down as the Test captain of the Indian national cricket team after seven years, a day after India lost the Test series 1-2 to South Africa at Cape Town.
- He first led the national side in Test cricket in 2014 against Australia.
- In 2021, India also finished as the runners-up in the inaugural ICC World Test Championship.
- India also became a top-ranked Test side in the world.

### **Yonex-Sunrise India Open 2022:**

- India's **Lakshya Sen** secured his maiden Super 500 title by winning the Yonex-Sunrise India Open with a stunning straight-game victory over reigning world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in the men's singles final.
- In the double's final, top doubles pair of **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty** scripted a stunning straight-game win over three-time world champions Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan of Indonesia to become the first men's team from the country to win the **Yonex-Sunrise India Open**.

### **World Rapid Chess:**

- **Nodirbek Abdusattorov** 17-year-old from Uzbekistan won the World Rapid championship in Warsaw, claiming enroute the scalps of Magnus Carlsen and the No 1's last two challengers, Fabiano Caruana and Ian Nepomniachtchi.
- In rapid chess each player has 15 minutes for all moves, plus a 10 second per move increment.
- At 17 years three months Abdusattorov becomes the Youngest ever world Champion in open competition, surpassing Ruslan Ponomarev at 18.

### **9th women National Ice Hockey Championship-2022:**

- In Himachal Pradesh, the 9th women National Ice Hockey Championship-2022 was inaugurated at **Ice Skating Rink, Kaza in Lahaul Spiti district**.
- For the **First Time in the state**, Ice Hockey competition & development camp is being organized at the **National Level**.
- Teams from Himachal Pradesh, Telengana, Ladakh, ITBP Ladakh, Chandigarh & Delhi are participating in this mega event.
- The State Government has already announced the **High-Altitude Sports Center at Kaza** with an estimated cost of Rs. 16 crores.

### **Best FIFA Football Awards 2021:**

- The Best FIFA Football Awards 2021 Ceremony was held virtually in **Zurich, Switzerland** to crown outstanding players for excellent achievement in football.

Spain midfielder Alexia Putellas and Poland/Bayern Munich striker **Robert Lewandowski** were awarded the Best FIFA Players in **women's** and **men's** football respectively.

Lewandowski won the Best FIFA Men's Player Award for the second straight year, after getting the First one in 2020.

### ICC Men's T20I Team of the Year:

Pakistani skipper Babar Azam has been named as the captain of the **ICC Men's T20I team of the year for 2021**.

The ICC Team of the Year recognises the 11 best players in men's cricket who have impressed one and all with their performances in a calendar year, either with the bat, ball or their all-round performance. No Indian male player has found a place in the team of 11.

### Syed Modi Badminton 2022:

Ace Indian shuttler, **PV Sindhu** has bagged the women's singles title at the Syed Modi International Tournament in Lucknow.

Sindhu beat fellow Indian Malvika Bansod 21-13 21-16 to win her second Syed Modi title after 2017.

The 2022 Syed Modi International badminton tournament was held at Babu Banarasi das Indoor Stadium in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh from 18 to 23 January 2022.

### International Cricket Council Announced ICC Awards 2021:

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the winners of the 17<sup>th</sup> Edition of ICC Awards for the year 2021 to recognize and honor the best international cricket players of the previous

12 Months, between January 01, 2021, and December 31, 2021.

**Winners are listed below:**

Category	Winners
ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year	Smriti Mandhana (India)
ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year	Shaheen Afridi (Pakistan)

ICC Umpire of the Year	Marais Erasmus
ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year	Mohammad Rizwan (Pakistan)
ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year	Tammy Beaumont (England)
ICC Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year	Janneman Malan (South Africa)
ICC Emerging Women's Cricketer of the Year	Fatima Sana (Pakistan)
ICC Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year	Zeeshan Maqsood (Oman)
ICC Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year	Andrea-Mae Zepeda (Austria)
ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year	Babar Azam (Pakistan)
ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year	Lizelle Lee (South Africa)
ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year	Joe Root (England)

### AFC Women's football Asian Cup 2022:

India hosts the AFC Women's football Asian Cup India 2022 from 20th January 2022 in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, and Pune.

The tournament will witness 12 teams competing for the trophy. AFC Women's Asian Cup India will also be the final stage of Asian qualification for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

Japan are the defending champions of the Women's Asian Cup, having won it in 2018.

The Indian women's football team has withdrawn from the ongoing AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022.

This is after several players tested positive for COVID-19.

### Asia Cup Hockey 2022:

- Defending champion **India** defeated China 2-0 to **win** a consolation **bronze** at the women's Asia Cup hockey tournament in Muscat (Capital of Oman) on January 28.
- **Japan** (3<sup>rd</sup> title) became the **Champion** by defeating South Korea in the final.

### Winter Olympics 2022:

- The 2022 Winter Olympics, officially the XXIV Olympic Winter Games and commonly known as Beijing 2022, is an upcoming international winter multi-sport event scheduled to take place from **4 to 20 February 2022 in Beijing** and venues near the neighboring towns of Yanqing and Chongli in China.

### Viswanathan Anand to Mentor Indian team for Asian Games:

- Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand will mentor the Indian team that will take part in the Asian Games at Hangzhou, China from September 10, 2022.

### Tata Steel Chess 2022:

- Indian Grandmaster **Arjun Erigaisi** won the **Tata Steel Challengers** event with a round to spare after a draw with Thai Dai Van Nguyen of Czech at Wijk aan Zee, near Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- He is the **Fourth Indian** after P Harikrishna, B Adhiban and Vidit Santhosh Gujrathi to win the Tata Steel Challengers event.
- World **No. 1 Magnus Carlsen** clinched his eighth title in Wijk aan Zee after beating Fabiano Caruana in **Tata Steel Masters event**.

### Australian Open Melbourne 2022:

#### Women's Singles:

- An imperious **Ashleigh Barty** became the first Australian to win her home Grand Slam in 44 years on January 29, halting the charge of fearless American Danielle Collins in straight sets.
- It was a **third Slam title** for the 25-year-old Barty after her breakthrough French Open success in 2019 and Wimbledon last year, joining Serena Williams as the only active players to win Majors on all three surfaces.

- Barty is the **First Women to win a Grand Slam title in her home country** since Stephens at the US Open 2017.

#### Women's Doubles:

- The Czech duo **Barbora Krejčíková** and Katerina **Siniakova** battled through a challenging championship match to win their first **Australian Open title** and add to their growing number of majors.
- They overcame a spirited effort from the unseeded and previously undefeated pair of Anna Danilina of Kazakhstan and Beatriz Haddad Maia of Brazil, winning 6-7(3), 6-4, 6-4 to notch their fourth career Grand Slam women's doubles title.

#### Men's Singles:

- **Rafael Nadal** roared back from two sets down to win a titanic five set duel with Daniil Medvedev and claim a record **21<sup>st</sup> Grand Slam men's** title in the Australian Open final in Melbourne.
- It is the **Fourth Time** in his storied career that Nadal has clawed back to win from two sets down, but the first time in a Slam final.
- It is the second time Nadal has denied Medvedev in a Grand Slam final, winning a five-set epic at the 2019 US Open.
- It was one of the 35-year-old Spanish warrior's greatest title victories in his 29th Grand Slam final as he won his second Australian Open, 13 years after his first in 2009.
- With this win, Nadal reached the milestone of winning at least 2 Grand Slams.
- In the open era, he became the second player to achieve this after Novak Djokovic.

#### From Deuce to Advantage:

- Nadal broke away from a three-way tie to become the **First Man to win 21 Majors**. A list of the Big Three's (Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic) Slam break-up.

#### Rafael Nadal's Winning Records:

- **Australian Open** (2009, 2022) - 2 times.
- **French Open** (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020) - 13 times.
- **Wimbledon** (2008, 2010) - 2 times.
- **US Open** (2010, 2013, 2017, 2019) - 4 times.

**Roger Federer's Winning Records:**

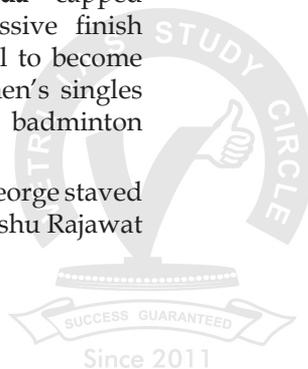
- **Australian Open** (2004, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2017, 2018) – 6 times.
- **French Open** (2009) – 1 time.
- **Wimbledon** (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2017) – 8 times.
- **US Open** (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) – 5 times.

**Novak Djokovic's Winning Records:**

- **Australian Open** (2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021) – 9 times.
- **French Open** (2016, 2021) – 2 times.
- **Wimbledon** (2011, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2019, 2021) – 6 times.
- **US Open** (2011, 2015, 2018) – 3 times.

**Odisha Open Badminton 2022:**

- Fourteen-year-old **Unnati Hooda** capped a splendid run with an impressive finish against a fighting Smit Toshniwal to become the youngest winner of the women's singles title in the \$75,000 Odisha Open badminton tournament at Cuttack.
- For the men's singles title, Kiran George staved off a remarkable rally from Priyanshu Rajawat in Three games.



## 1.7 AWARDS & HONORS

### RedInk Awards:

- Senior Journalist **Prem Shankar Jha** and Reuters' Photo journalist **Danish Siddiqui**, who died while reporting in Afghanistan in July, will be awarded with the top two RedInk awards by the Mumbai Press Club.
- While Jha will get the **lifetime Achievement Award**, Siddiqui will be bestowed upon the **Journalist of the year**, posthumously.
- Instituted by the **Mumbai Press Club** a decade ago, this is the tenth edition of "peer Recognition for excellent writing and Good Journalism".

### 19<sup>th</sup> Chennai International Film Festival Awards:

- Filmmaker Vasanth's film 'Sivaranjaniyum Innum Sila Pengalum' - **Best Tamil Feature Film Award**.
- Actress **Lakshmipriya Chandramouli** - **Special Jury Award**.
- Veteran filmmaker **Singeetham Srinivasa Rao** - **Lifetime Achievement Award**.
- Singer **Sid Sriram - Amitabh Bachchan Youth Icon Award**.

### National Water Awards- 2020:

- Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat announced 3rd National Water Awards-2020.
- A total of 57 awards were announced in 11 Categories including Best States, District, Panchayat and Best Industries.
- In the '**Best State**' category, **Uttar Pradesh** has been awarded **First Prize**, followed by Rajasthan, second and **Tamil Nadu**, **third**.
- Yelerampura Panchayat, Tumakuru District, Karnataka - "**Best Village Panchayat**" - **South Zone**.
- Vellaputhur Panchayat, Chengalpattu District, Tamil Nadu - "**Best Village Panchayat**" - **South Zone - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place**.
- Vapi Urban Local Body, Gujarat - "**Best Urban Local Body**".

- **Madurai Municipal Corporation**, Tamil Nadu - "**Best Urban Local Body**" - **3<sup>rd</sup> Place**.
- Govt. Girls Hr. Secondary School, Kaveripattinam, Tamilnadu - "**Best School**".
- Welspun India Textile Ltd., Gujarat - "**Best Industry**".
- **Hyundai Motor India Ltd.**, Tamil Nadu - "**Best Industry**" - **2<sup>nd</sup> Place**.

### About the Award:

- The National Water Award was launched by the Jal Shakti Ministry in 2018 to recognise and motivate individuals and organizations doing exemplary work in the field of water resources Management.

### First Ever Guinness World Record in Numerology:

- India's one of the top Numerologists, **JC Chaudhry** has achieved the first-ever Guinness World Record in Numerology and the first world record of 2022 by educating about ancient science to around 6000 participants, enthusiasts of numerology joined from the United States, the United Kingdom, Middle East, and India.
- The **Guinness World Record London office** has opened a new category, "Numerology" for this Achievement.

### Ramnath Goenka Award:

- **Zishaan A Latif** won Ramnath Goenka Award in the **Photo Journalism category**.
- He won the award for his photo essay, '**The arduous struggle for inclusion in the NRC**', which was published in The Caravan in October 2019.
- He documented the plight of people who were dropped from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and put a face to an untold Human Story.
- About a month after the NRC list was released, Latif made his way through four districts in Assam, documenting people's struggle for inclusion in the NRC.

**About Ramnath Goenka Award:**

- The Awards honour journalists from print, Broadcast and digital media recognizing their strength of character and integrity while covering news in adverse Circumstances.
- Named after Ramnath Goenka, the awards have been held annually since 2006.

**Who is Ramnath Goenka?**

- Ramnath Goenka (1904–1991) was an Indian newspaper publisher. He launched The Indian Express Newspaper in 1932.
- During the Emergency Period of India, he was one of the few independent businessman Journalists that stood up to the Government Opposing Indira Gandhi.
- He became the Lok Sabha Member in 1971 under the banner of Bhartiya Jan Sangha.

**'Outstanding Investigator Award':**

- Vijay Viswanathan, head and chief diabetologist of MV Hospital for Diabetes Chennai, has been presented the '**Outstanding Investigator Award**' by the US based World India Diabetes Foundation.

**78<sup>th</sup> SKOCH summit – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2022:**

- The summit was organized with the theme "State of Governance".
- The **Forensic Science Laboratory - Forensic Service, Delhi, has won the SKOCH Award 2021 (Silver)**.
- It got the award in the Governance category for its work towards combating Crime and Violence against Children.
- The **SKOCH Literature Award 2021** was presented to the book titled '**Rising to the China Challenge: Winning Through Strategic Patience and Flexible Policies**' authored by leading members of Pune International Centre.
- The book was published in 2021 by Rupa Publications India Ltd.
- The book was based on the 2020 Galwan Valley clash provoked by China.

**About SKOCH:**

- Instituted in 2003, SKOCH Award salutes people, projects and institutions that go the Extra mile to make India a better nation.

- The SKOCH Award covers the best of efforts in digital, financial and social inclusion. It encompasses the best of governance, Inclusive growth, excellence in technology and applications, change management, corporate leadership, corporate governance, citizen services delivery, capacity building, empowerment and other such softer issues that get normally lost in the glamour and the glitz of industry sponsored or advertising Focused jamborees.
- SKOCH Awards are extremely coveted and are India's Highest Civilian Honour in the country conferred by an Independent Organization and amongst its recipients have included regulators, secretaries, union ministers and chief ministers over its twenty year or so long History.

**SKOCH Award for Assam Mission on Malnutrition:**

- A Mission to combat malnourishment among children aged six months to five years has earned the SKOCH Award for southern Assam's Cachar district.
- The project named **Mission Parvarish** saw 704 out of a targeted 800 children recover from the severely acute malnourished stage.
- The programme was launched during the "nutrition month" in 2020.

**Golden Globes Award:**

- "**The Power of the Dog**" and Steven Spielberg's "**West Side Story**" won the top film prizes at an untelevised Golden Globes that was largely ignored by Hollywood.
- Jane Campion's dark Western "The Power of the Dog" became only the second film directed by a **woman to win the best Drama Prize**.
- The film also won for best director and best Supporting actor for Kodi SmitMcPhee.
- **Will Smith and Nicole Kidman** won the prizes for best actor and actress in film dramas for their turns in King Richard and Being the Ricardos.

**Dr. Subhas Mukherjee Award:**

- A professor in the clinical embryology Department at Kasturba Medical College (KMC), under Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Dr. Satish Adiga has been Selected by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for its national award.
- 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.

**About:**

- Dr Subhas Mukherjee Award was instituted by ICMR in the year 2012 in the memory of Dr. Subhas Mukherjee.
- This award is granted to a scientist for outstanding contributions, in the field of assisted reproductive technology, reproductive biology & endocrinology and Reproductive health in general.
- Dr. Subhas Mukherjee was the creator of India's first child using IVF.

**International Craft Award 2021:**

- **Kerala Arts and Crafts Village Organization (KACV) from Kovalam, Kerala was awarded the 'International Craft Award for 2021'** for the best craft village in the world by the World Crafts Council International.
- It is the only award India received in the non-Individual category.
- The KACV was established by the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society (ULCCS) for the State Tourism Department of Kerala.
- Other Awardees are:
  - ✓ **Village of the Year** - 'Kraf Komuniti Ku' in Malaysia.
  - ✓ **Craft Persons of the Year** - Shahrbanoo Arabian (Iran) and Dalavayi Kullayappa (India).
  - ✓ **Next Generation Craft Designers of the year** - Qiling Zhang (China) and Mubin Khatri (India).

- ✓ **The Master Artisans** - Amita Sachdeva (India) and Mubarik Khatri (India).

**12<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Dr. Ambedkar Award 2022:**

- The 2015 film Bajrangi Bhaijaan fame actress, Harshaali Malhotra has been awarded the 12<sup>th</sup> Bharat Ratna Dr. Ambedkar Award 2022.
- She 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.

**Periyar Award and Ambedkar Award:**

- The Tamil Nadu government announced that K. Thirunavukkarasu, a historian documenting the Dravidian movement, and the retired Madras High Court judge, K. Chandru, would be honoured with the Thanthai Periyar Award for Social Justice and the Dr. Ambedkar Award for 2021 respectively.
- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has issued an order to increase the cash prize for both awards to ₹5 lakh, an official release said.
- The awards comprise the cash prize, gold Medal and Citation.

**K. Thirunavukkarasu:**

- ✓ Mr. Thirunavukkarasu's work, '**Needhi Katchi Varalaru**', documents in two volumes the history of the Justice Party since its founding in 1916 until it was named Dravidar Kazhagam in 1944.
- ✓ He has also been commended for his works, '**Dravida Iyakka Vergal**' and '**Dravida Iyakka Thoongal**'.
- ✓ He was a recipient of the Tamil Nadu Government's **Thiru. Vi.Ka. Award**. He Received it from former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi in 2006.

**K. Chandru:**

- ✓ Mr. Chandru has delivered judgments in over 96,000 cases during his service. When he was an advocate, he was the voice of the poor and workers in the Madras High Court.

- ✓ His works, *My Judgments in the Light of Ambedkar* and *Listen to My Case! When Women Approach the Courts of Tamil Nadu*, were widely appreciated.
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government has every year been honouring those who has made an Outstanding contribution to the promotion of social justice with the **Thanthai Periyar Award**.
- ✓ The **Ambedkar Award** is given to an eminent Personality who has contributed to the socio economic and educational development of the **Adi Dravidar** community.
- ✓ The statue of **Thiruvalluvar** in Bengaluru was unveiled by former CMM **Karunanidhi** in 2009.
- These awards carry a prize of Rs 1 lakh each, a Gold Medal, and a citation.

### Global Women's Health Tech Awards:

- **NIRAMAI Health Analytix Pvt Ltd**, and **InnAccel Technologies Pvt Ltd** have received World Bank Group and Consumer Technology Association's **Global Women's Health Tech Awards**.
- The award recognizes innovative startups that leverage tech to improve women's Health and Safety.
- **NIRAMAI Health Analytix** was selected for early-stage **Breast Cancer Medical Device**.

- **InnAccel** was selected for **Fetal Lite**, AI-powered **Fetal Heart Rate (FHR) monitor**.

### About the Award:

- Launched in August 2021.
- The award recognizes innovative startups that use technology to improve women's Health and Safety in Emerging Markets.

### Former West Indies Cricketer Clive Lloyd Receives Knighthood:

- Former West Indies Captain **Clive Lloyd** received Knighthood from **Prince William**, the Duke of Cambridge at Windsor Castle, for his services towards the Game of Cricket.
- A **knighthood** is a title that is given to a man by a British king or queen for his achievements or his service to his country. A man who has been given a knighthood can put 'Sir' in front of his name instead of 'Mr'.
- On the same day, England's world cup-winning captain **Eoin Morgan** was awarded with **CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire)** by Prince William for his services towards the game of cricket.
- The CBE is the highest-ranking Order of the British Empire award, followed by OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) and then MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire).

### Global Private Banking Awards 2021:

- **HDFC Bank** was named as the 'Best Private Bank' in India at the 'Global Private Banking Awards 2021' which was organised by Professional Wealth Management (PWM) in a virtual ceremony. PWM is a wealth management Magazine, published by the Financial Times Group.

#### About HDFC Bank:

- **Headquarters:** Mumbai.
- **Founded:** August 1994.
- **CEO:** Sashidhar Jagdishan.

### Kamaraj and Thiruvalluvar Award 2022:

- The State Government has chosen veteran Congress leader and former TNCC president **Kumari Ananthan** (88) for the **Perunthalaivar Kamaraj Award for 2021**.
- ✓ **Kumari Ananthan** is a senior politician of TN and a close associate of former CM **K Kamaraj**.
- ✓ He introduced Asking questions in Tamil in Parliament and served as a member of the State Assembly.
- ✓ He is well versed in Tamil literature and has authored many books.
- **M Meenakshi Sundaram** (78), who was instrumental in installing a statue of **Thiruvalluvar** in Bengaluru, has been chosen for the **Thiruvalluvar Award**.

### South Indian Bank won UiPath Automation Excellence Awards 2021:

- South Indian Bank (SIB) won the UiPath Automation Excellence Awards 2021 for Best Automation under 'Crisis for Business Continuity'.
- The 2021 edition of the award recognizes the contribution of the individuals and organizations across India and South Asia (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal) for bringing change through Transformative Automation Projects.

### Best National Costume award at Mrs. World 2022 pageant:

- **India's Navdeep Kaur** has won the award for the **Best National Costume** at the prestigious Mrs. World 2022 pageant in Nevada, Las Vegas.
- She is the winner of Mrs. India World 2021, was representing the country at Mrs. World 2022.
- Navdeep hails from a small town near Odisha's Steel City, Rourkela.
- The **"Avant Garde"** outfit was inspired by Kundalini Chakra, which **"symbolizes"** the movement of energy in chakras of the body from the base to the spine up through the crown".
- **Cobra embellishments** on the shoulder were added to represent the **"mystical serpent native to India"**, while the **golden colour** was chosen as it represents **novelty, power and glory**.

### Mrs. World 2022:

- 37 Years old **Shaylyn Ford** was crowned as the winner of Mrs. World 2022.
- She was crowned by the outgoing queen Kate Schneider from Ireland.
- Mrs. Jordan Jaclyn Stapp & Mrs. UAE Debanjali Kamstra were the runner up.
- Shaylyn Ford represented America in the pageant.
- This is the 8<sup>th</sup> time an American representative won the title of Mrs. World.

### Innovation Promotion Group and Suggestion Scheme for Best Innovation in Indian Railways:

- On behalf of the Ministry of Railways, recommendations for the best development works in the Railways received every year from all the Railway Zones and Production Workshops and the best nominations will be rewarded.
- The **best recommendation for the year 2020-2021** has been to awarded to **Southern railway** and **Western railway** for recommending for railway line upgradation and reducing the electricity consumption in the rail engine.
- The first prize of Rs. 3 lakhs are to be distributed between the two railway zones.
- The Southern Railway bagged the first place with ₹1.5 lakh group award for suggesting **"Automatic Gauge Face Greasing Machine"**.
- The **Integral Coach Factory** has bagged the **second prize** in the national innovation award for suggesting a modification in the existing **Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB)** coaches that will not only cut cost but enhance the aesthetics by averting undulations.
- Team ICF suggested replacement of the existing five-piece side wall and three-piece roof sub-assemblies of the LHB coach with one metal assembly respectively.
- The new innovation reduces cost of manufacture of LHB body shells and also reduces the assembly and crane handling time.

### National Arts Festival Awards:

- 7 students from Tamil Nadu have been selected for the prize for the first time in the national level art festival held on behalf of the Union Ministry of Education.
- To boost the artistic skills of School students, Union Ministry of Education in association with National Institute for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has been conducting the National Art Festival for the past seven years.
- This year the competitions were held online at the Anna Centenary Library in Chennai.

- Similarly online competitions in all states including New Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala were conducted.
- Numerous students have participated in nine types of competitions including singing, music, dance, sculpture, and Toy making.
- The 7 students (2 from government school & 5 from private school) selected from Tamil Nadu are:
  - ✓ L. Mukund Bhardwaj - Second Prize, Singing.
  - ✓ S.N. Yazhini - Third Prize, Singing.
  - ✓ R. Madhavi - Third Prize, Playing Musical Instruments.
  - ✓ M. Shakthi Poorani - Folk Dance, Second Prize.
  - ✓ B P Dharanish - Third Prize, Folk Dance.
  - ✓ E. Saranya - Third Prize, Making Traditional Toys.
  - ✓ R. Charan - Third Prize, Making Traditional Toys.

### 11 Cities win Centre's Road Challenge:

- Eleven cities have been selected as the winners of the **Streets for People Challenge** for their pilot projects to make roads more pedestrian friendly, the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs said.
- Aurangabad, Bengaluru, Gurugram, Kochi, Kohima, Nagpur, Pimpri Chinchwad, Pune, Udaipur, Ujjain and Vijayawada were selected on the basis of their pilot projects and would be given ₹50 lakh each as they scale up their proposals.
- The Ministry also announced 10 winners of the pilot stage of the **Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge**. The challenge was also started in **November 2020** and included 70 pilot projects by 25 cities.
- Among the winners were **Bengaluru**, which improved safety of an Anganwadi centre with child specific design standards; **Hubballi-Dharwad**, which started a shared pram service, priority seating for pregnant women 100 buses; and **Jabalpur**.
- Indore, Kakinada, Kochi, Kohima, Rourkela, Vadodara and Warangal were selected as **winners of the pilot stage**.

### IBSi Innovation Awards 2021:

- **Axis Bank & CRMNEXT Solution** won the IBS Intelligence (IBSi) Global FinTech Innovation Awards 2021 for the "**Best CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System Implementation**".
- It is one of the most prominent awards for global bankers and IT (Information Technology) consultants across the world.
- The Axis Bank implemented CRMNEXT for Sales and Service modernisation and it also enables smarter lead processing, automated routing, complete tracking, and visibility.

#### About Axis Bank:

- **Founded:** 3 December 1993.
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai.
- **MD & CEO:** Amitabh Chaudhary.

### Miss Trans Global Crown:

- Kerala Native **Sruthy Sithara** was crowned as Miss Trans Global 2021.
- Sithara received the award on December 1 in her hometown, Vaikom in Kerala, during an online event. She became the **First Indian to win this title**.
- The Physical event, which was scheduled to be held in London, was cancelled this year due to the pandemic.
- She was dedicated the award to her late mother and "**Anannyah Chechi**", referring to **Anannyah Kumari Alex**, the Kerala's **First transgender RJ**.

### UNDP India's First Youth Climate Champion:

- Leading content creator and actor, **Prajakta Koli**, who embraces the moniker **MostlySane**, has become the **first United Nations Development Programme India Youth Climate Champion**.

#### About UNDP:

- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a United Nations organization tasked with helping countries eliminate poverty and achieve sustainable economic growth and human development.
- **Headquarters:** New York, United States.

- **Founded:** 22 November 1965.

### Reimagine Education Award:

- **Rhapsody Music Foundation** (2013) has won the prestigious **Reimagine Education Award**.
- Founded by classical pianist-turned-Education innovation entrepreneur Anil Srinivasan, Rhapsody has been ranked Number 1 in Asia and Number 1 worldwide in the Arts and Humanities category ahead of more than 1500 education innovators.
- The Reimagine Award recognizes innovative approaches that improve student learning Outcomes.

### Kottai Ameer Communal Harmony Award 2021:

- From pledging his wife's jewels to feed migrant workers to donating ambulances, **J. Mohammed Rafi** (47) always believed in brotherhood. It is this belief that fetched the city-based activist Tamil Nadu government's prestigious **Kottai Ameer Communal Harmony Award, 2021**.
- He will be presented a silver medal and Rs 25,000 by Chief Minister MK Stalin on Republic Day in Chennai.

### Netaji Award 2022:

- Former Japan Prime Minister **Shinzo Abe** was conferred with the Netaji Award 2022 by Netaji Research Bureau.
- Consul General of Japan in Kolkata Nakamura Yutaka received the honour on behalf of Mr. Abe at a function at the Elgin Road residence of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his 125th birth anniversary.
- In **January 2021**, India bestowed the **Padma Vibhushan** on former Japanese **Prime Minister Shinzo Abe**, the country's second-highest civilian honour.

### National Awards for the Best Electoral Practices:

- Chief Electoral Officer of Tamil Nadu **Satyabrata Sahoo** has been selected for the national award under the category of **best performing State** for overall performance in various areas of election management during

the **legislative assembly elections in Tamil Nadu during 2021**.

- Sahoo has been invited to receive the award at the national award function to be held at New Delhi on the occasion of **National Voters Day 25<sup>th</sup>**.
- The National Awards for the Best Electoral Practices will be conferred on State and District level officers for their outstanding performance in the conduct of elections in different spheres such as IT initiatives, Security Management, Election Management during Covid-19, Accessible Election and contribution in the field of voter awareness and outreach.

### National Child Award 2022:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with the winners of the **National Child Award, 2022**, and extolled the valour and sacrifice of the four martyred sons of Guru Gobind Singh on January 24.
- He also urged them to follow Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's motto of "**Nation First**".
- Twenty-nine children were given the **Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar** for their exceptional achievements in innovation, Social Science, Education, sports, arts and culture and for demonstrating bravery.
- The Award will be presented every year for the Age group between 5 to 15 years.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave **Digital Certificates to them using block chain-driven technology** for the first time, developed by **IIT Kanpur under the National Blockchain Project** and a cash prize of ₹ 1 lakh credited in their bank account.
- There are 15 boys and 14 girls among the awardees belonging to 21 states and UTs **Winners from Tamil Nadu:**
  - ✓ Vishalini N C in the Innovation Category.
  - ✓ Aswatha Biju in the Innovation Category.

### Padma Awards:

- This Year the President has approved the conferment of 128 Padma Awards comprising four Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 107 Padma Shri Awards.

- As many as 34 awardees are women and the list also includes 10 persons from the category of Foreigners/ Non-Resident Indians and Overseas Citizens of India.
- Guruprasad Mohapatra**, former AAI chairman and DPIIT secretary, was selected for Padma Shri posthumously.
- Padma Vibhushan, part of the Padma series, is the second highest civilian award.
- Radheyshyam Khemka**, President of Gita Press, known for publishing religious Hindu books, has been named for **Padma Vibhushan posthumously**.
- General **Bipin Rawat**, India's first Chief of Defence Staff who died in an air crash recently, and former **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh**, who headed the State during Babri Masjid demolition, were selected for **Padma Vibhushan posthumously** on the eve of Republic Day.
- Congress leader and former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir **Ghulam Nabi Azad** and former West Bengal CM Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee were awarded with **Padma Bhushan**.
- Bharat Biotech's **Suchitra** and **Krishna Ella**, Serum Institute of India's **Cyrus Poonawalla** were accorded with **Padma Bhushan** along with **Natarajan Chandrasekaran**, Chairman of Tata Sons.
- Satya Narayana Nadella**, Chairman and CEO of Microsoft Corporation, **Sundararajan Pichai**, CEO, Google and Alphabet were accorded with **Padma Bhushan**.
- Punjabi singer **Gurmeet Bawa** was given **Padma Bhushan** posthumously.
- Former Union Home Secretary and CAG **Rajiv Mehrishi** was also conferred with **Padma Bhushan**.
- Star para-athlete **Devendra Jhajharia** was named for the prestigious **Padma Bhushan**, the third highest civilian honour in the country.
- Olympian **Neeraj Chopra**, gold medalist at 2021 Tokyo paralympics **Avani Lakhera** and singer **Sonu Nigam** were given **Padma Shri**.

### **Seven persons selected for Padma Shri Awards from T.N. Sowcar Janaki for Art:**

- Legendary actress Sankaramanchi Janaki popularly known as Sowcar Janaki or Shavukaru Janaki has acted in over 400 films across Tamil, Kannada, and Telugu.
- She was a prominent radio artist at 'Akashvani Madras' since her early years.
- Janaki made her debut in 1950 through the Telugu film 'Shavukaru' following which got her the moniker 'Sowcar'.
- Apart from receiving the Filmfare lifetime award (South) in 1984, she has won several accolades.

### **Sirpi Balasubramaniam for Literature and Education:**

- Sirpi Balasubramiam, who hails from Tamil Nadu, India, and is a poet, critic, scholar, and lecturer.
- Born in Aaththupollachi in Coimbatore, he earned his MA and PhD from Annamalai University and Madras University, respectively.
- In 2001, he got the **Sahitya Akademi's Translators Award** for his Tamil translation of Lalithambika Antharjanam's **Agnisakshi** and in 2003 for **Oru Gramathu Nadhi**.
- He has won several awards including the Bharathidasan Award, Government of Tamil Nadu Award among many others.
- Some of his finest works include **Siritha Muthukkal**, **Sooriya Nizhal**, **Oru Gramathu Nadhi**.

### **S Damodaran for Social Work:**

- Born in 1952, Damodaran, was a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Tamil Nadu.
- Prior to being elected to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, he was the President of Thalakkurai Panchayat (1984-1989) and a member of Pollachi North Panchayat Union (1996-2001).

### **AKC Natrajan for Art:**

- AKC comes from a long line of wind instrument players in her Family.
- Kuppuswami Naidu, his grandpa, was a Nagaswaram performer who eventually switched to clarinet.

- Alathur Sri Venkateswara Iyer taught AKC Carnatic music, and Ellupur Sri Natesa Pillai taught him the basics of nagaswaram.
- AKC's first performance dates back to 1946. Even in his early years, he was given numerous opportunities to perform in front of doyens such as Ariyakudi Ramanuja Aiyengar, T. N. Rajarathinam Pillai, and Palakkad Mani Iyer.
- Hailed as the Clarinet Everest, Natarajan is a recipient of the Madras Music Academy's Sangeetha Kalanidhi in 2008.
- He even received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1994.

#### **R Muthukannammal for Art:**

- 82-year-old Muthukannammal is from the Seventh Generation of a family of Sathir dancers from Viralimalai., 28 km from Tiruchy.
- She has been dancing since the age of 8. Her father Ramachandra Nattuvanar has been her tutor. Currently, Muthukannammal teaches Sathir to those interested.
- Muthukannammal is among the last Devadasi Sathir dancer from Viralimalai.
- Sathir, is an ancient dance form. She served the deity at the **Murugan temple** in Viralimalai.
- In 2018, she was honoured with **DakshinaChitra Virudhu**, an annual award presented by the Madras Craft Foundation and the Friends of Dakshinachitra to honour the folk performing artists.

#### **Dr. Veeraswamy Sehiah for Medicine:**

- Seshiah, born in Chennai, is a medical graduate completed his MD Medicine at Stanley Medical College and studied from the great teacher **Prof M Viswanathan, who is the Father of Diabetology in India.**
- He has been honoured with a number of International & national awards in recognition of academic, clinical and research contributions.
- During his service he was recognized as a teacher of par excellence, an astute clinician, academician and researcher, committed to public health initiatives and particularly women's welfare.

#### **Ballesh Bhajantri for Art:**

- Pandit S. Ballesh is an Indian shehnai player who was born Ballappa Sanna Bharamappa Bhajantri on April 1, 1958.
- He, who can perform a variety of styles in his shehnai, aalaapi, and aakaar, including khayal singing, jhala (sitar and sarod), tatkar (kathak dancers), meend & harquatts (sarangi and violin), tone consistency (been), and sweetness (bansuri), began learning from his father and strengthened his musical Foundations.
- Ballesh starred as Shehnai in the Hindi film Raanjhanaa, which featured Oscar winner AR Rahman's music. He also played shehnai in Imtiaz Ali's 2011 Hindi film Rockstar, with music by A.R. Rahman, for the song "The Dichotomy of fame".

#### **Six Army men honored with Shaurya Chakra for Gallantry:**

- **Six Army personnel**, five of them posthumously, have been selected for the **Shaurya Chakra, the third highest peacetime gallantry award**, by the President and Supreme Commander of the Indian armed forces, Ram Nath Kovind.
- The five personnel conferred Shaurya Chakra posthumously are **Naib Subedar M. Sreejith, Sepoy Maruprolu Jaswanth Kumar Reddy, Havildar Anil Kumar Tomar, Havildar Kashiray Bammanalli, Havildar Pinku Kumar.**
- The sixth Shaurya Chakra awardee is **Rifleman Rakesh Sharma.**
- All the six personnel have been awarded the Shaurya Chakra for their role in counterinsurgency operations, of which all five personnel awarded posthumously were for operations in Jammu and Kashmir and along the Line of Control (LoC).
- The sixth Shaurya Chakra awardee, Rifleman Sharma, was part of an ambush that took place after receiving information on the movement of insurgents for extortion and killing of civilians in a village in Assam in May 2021.

## Buddhadeb refuses Padma Bhushan Award

- Former West Bengal Chief Minister and veteran CPI(M) leader Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee refused to accept the Padma Bhushan award conferred on him in the field of Public Affairs.

## Republic Day: 20 Police Officers to get Medals:

- On the occasion of Republic Day, the Centre announced medals to 20 police officers for 'distinguished works' and meritorious service.
- G.Venkataraman**, Additional Director General of Police, Headquarters and C.Sivanarul, Inspector of Police, Special Branch CID, Thanjavur, will receive the '**President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.**'
- Eighteen officers will be awarded the Police Medal for Meritorious Service. They are:**
  - V.Balakrishnan, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Central Zone, Tiruchi,
  - Pradip Kumar, Commissioner of Police, Coimbatore City,
  - R.Sudhakar, IGP, West Zone, Coimbatore,
  - P.Saravanan, Superintendent of Police(SP), Tirunelveli District,
  - P.Kannammal, SP 'Q' Branch CID, Chennai,
  - V.K.Surendranath, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic Planning, Chennai City,
  - D. Karthikeyan, Commandant, Tamil Nadu Special Police XII Battalion, Manimuthar,
  - V.Elangovan, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic Planning, Coimbatore,
  - A. Thomas Prabhakar, Additional Superintendent of Police, NIB CID, Chennai,
  - S. Prabakaran, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Bank Fraud Investigation, Central Crime Branch, Greater Chennai Police,
  - S. Murugavel, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Intelligence Section, Coimbatore City,
  - M.Muralitharan, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Crime Branch CID, OCU, Coimbatore,
  - K.Murugesan, Inspector of Police, Central Crime Branch, Greater Chennai Police,
  - K.Anna Durai, Inspector of Police,

'Q' Branch CID, Chennai,

- D.Shanmugam, Inspector of Police, Vigilance and Anti-Corruption, Cuddalore,
- G.Sivaganesan, Sub Inspector of Police, Special Task Force, Erode,
- R.Ganesan, Special Sub-Inspector of Police, Special Intelligence Unit, Tiruchi,
- R.Pasupathi, Special Sub Inspector of Police, Special Branch CID, Headquarters.

## Genesis Prize 2022:

- Albert Bourla** has been awarded the prestigious Genesis Prize 2022
- He is the Chairman and Chief Executive of Pfizer.
- He has been awarded for his efforts in leading the development of a COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine).
- Genesis Prize is widely referred to as the "**Jewish Nobel Prize**".



## 1.8 BOOKS & AUTHORS

### Arundhati Bhattacharya's

#### Autobiography:

- HarperCollins is set to publish **"Indomitable: A Working Woman's Notes on Life, Work and Leadership"** the autobiography of Arundhati Bhattacharya, retired Indian banker and former first-ever woman Chairperson of the State Bank of India.

#### "The \$10 Trillion Dream":

- The former finance secretary of India, Subhash Chandra Garg has announced his debut book named **"The \$10 Trillion Dream"**.
- It is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI).

### TN CM Releases Book by an

#### Eight-year-old:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin released a book, **"The Adventures of Shing and Shang in Mystery Island"**, written by an Eight-Year-old Magizhini Ilanchezhian.

### The Legend of Birsa Munda:

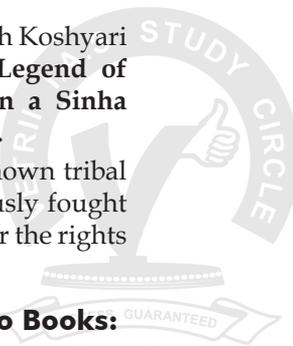
- Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari has released a book titled **"The Legend of Birsa Munda"**, authored by Tuhin a Sinha and co-authored by Ankita Verma.
- The Book is the story of a lesser-known tribal hero, Birsa Munda, who courageously fought against the oppressive British Raj for the rights of his tribal community.

### TN Governor Ravi Launches Two Books:

- Governor R.N. Ravi received the book **'The Authentic Yoga'** by P.Y. Deshpande and **'Tales from the Vedas and Upanishads Retold'** by Daaji Kamlesh Patel Heartfulness Institute in Chennai.

### Ruskin Bond:

- A new book titled **"A Little Book of India: Celebrating 75 years of Independence"** authored by Ruskin Bond was released, marking 75 years of India's Independence.
- The book is the blend of "physical and spiritual" attributes of India and also highlights the last 75 years of India's progress as a nation.
- It is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI).



## 1.9 LATEST HISTORICAL EVENTS

### Mahatma Gandhi's favourite Poem

#### "Vaishnav Jan To":

- "Vaishnava Jana To" is a Hindu bhajan, written in the 15th century by the poet Narsinh Mehta in the Gujarati language.
- The poem speaks about the life, ideals and Mentality of a Vaishnava jana (a follower of Vaishnavism).
- He is especially revered in Gujarati literature, where he is acclaimed as its Adi Kavi (Sanskrit for "first among poets").

#### About Narsinh Mehta:

- Narsinh Mehta, also known as Narsi Mehta or Narsi Bhagat, was a 15th-century poet-saint of Gujarat, India, notable as a bhakta, an exponent of Vaishnava poetry.
- "Vaishnav Jan To" was Mahatma Gandhi's favorite and was rendered as a bhajan in his Sabarmati ashram.
- Narsinh Mehta was born in a Nagar Brahmin family at Talaja and later moved to Junagadh in Saurashtra peninsula of modern-day Gujarat.

### Veer Baal Diwas to be observed on Dec.

#### 26:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that December 26 shall henceforth be marked as Veer Baal Diwas to pay homage to the courage of the Sahibzades, four sons of Guru Gobind Singh, the last Sikh guru.
- While all four were martyred, the date has been chosen as it was the day observed as the martyrdom day of the Sahibzadas Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, who were killed at the tender age of six and nine in Sirhind by Mughal forces.

#### About Guru Gobind Singh:

- Guru Gobind Singh, born as Gobind Rai, was the tenth Sikh Guru, a spiritual leader, warrior, poet and philosopher.
- He formally became the leader and protector of the Sikhs at the age of nine after his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, was killed by Aurangzeb for refusing to convert to Islam.

- He was responsible for institutionalizing the Khalsa, who played a significant role in protecting the Sikhs after his death.
- Guru Gobind Singh Ji declared Guru Granth Sahib as Sikhism's holy scripture in 1708, before his Death.

### 50<sup>th</sup> Statehood Day of Tripura, Meghalaya & Manipur:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and others greeted Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur on the 50th Statehood Day and hailed the northeast states for their "vibrant contribution" to the nation.
- All the three states were formed on **January 21** five decades back on this day in **1972**, after Meghalaya and Manipur as per the **North East Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971**.
- Among these, Tripura used to be a princely state and was merged with the Indian Union in 1949.

### Picture book on Unsung Heroes is out:

- A pictorial book telling the stories of 20 unsung women freedom fighters was released by the Culture Ministry on 27 January 2022.
- The book was brought out in partnership with Amar Chitra Katha.
- Minister of State for Culture Meenakshi Lekhi said Rani Abbakka had thwarted Portuguese attacks for several decades. She said the stories were being brought to light under the "Prime Minister's vision" as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, the celebration of 75 years of Independence.
- **The book contains Stories of**
  - ✓ **Matangiri Hazra**, a freedom fighter from Bengal who laid down her life in the struggle;
  - ✓ **Gulab Kaur**, who fought against the British rule after abandoning her own dreams of a life abroad;
  - ✓ **Padmaja Naidu**, Sarojini Naidu's daughter and a freedom fighter in her own right;

- ✓ **Velu Nachiyar**, the first Indian queen to wage war against the East India Company; and
- ✓ **Jhalkari Bai**, a soldier and adviser to the Rani of Jhansi.

Vetrii IAS Study Circle



Vetrii IAS Study Circle

## 1.10 CULTURAL PANORAMA

### Losar Festival of Ladakh:

- Losar festival of Ladakh is a religious festival Celebrated by the Tibetan Buddhists.
- The Losar is a 15 days festival, from the start of the Tibetan Lunar calendar, marking the 1st day of the 11 months in the Tibetan Calendar which is on December 27.
- The festivities began with the celebration of Birth and Nirvana Anniversary Je Tsongkhapa.

### About Losar Festival:

- The Losar festival originated in Tibet.
- It dates back to pre – Buddhist era, around 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- Incense burning custom is followed in Bon Religion.
- With the Arrival of Lord Buddha in Tibet, this Custom merged with the Harvest Festival and the Losar Festival Emerged.
- This happened during the reign of **Pude Gungyal**. He was the **ninth Tibetan king**.

### 18<sup>th</sup> Kachai Lemon Festival begins in Manipur 2022:

- The 18th edition of the two days long Kachai Lemon Festival began in Manipur at the Local Ground of Kachai Village in Ukhrul district.
- The Kachai Lemon Festival is organised annually to promote this unique kind of lemon fruit and to Encourage Lemon Farmers.
- This year the festival is being organised under the theme '**Organic Kachai Lemon for Safe Environment and Rural Transformation**'.
- Kachai Lemon of Manipur has been accorded Geographical Indication (GI) registration tag.

### 'North East on Wheels Expedition' launched to Promote Culture of Northeastern States:

- Minister of State for Culture, Meenakshi Lekhi has launched the 'North East on Wheels Expedition' in New Delhi to promote the Culture of Northeastern States.
- The **Bike Expedition** is scheduled between **8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> April** this year to mark the celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

- 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.
- The Riders will also carry the message of the importance of Road Safety.

### 9<sup>th</sup> Edition of North East Festival

#### Concludes:

- The 9th Edition of the North East Festival concluded in Guwahati, Assam.
- The main purpose of this festival is to promote and highlight the commercial and tourism potential of the North East region.

### Gangasagar Mela Festival 2022:

- The Gangasagar Mela was inaugurated by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on January 12, 2022 following strict COVID-19 protocols after receiving approval from the Calcutta High Court.
- Gangasagar Mela 2022 or Ganga Sagar Yatra or Ganga Snan is an annual gathering of Hindu pilgrims, **India's 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest Fair Celebration in West Bengal**.
- Gangasagar mela is the festival of India celebrated during 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> January every year attracts thousands of pilgrimages from all around the world.
- **The hosting state of West Bengal** receives this fair with great pride and with devout.
- The festival is held during the winter time of the year, it finds thousands of devotees coming over to seek righteousness at **Sagar Island's southern tip** in West Bengal.

### Tripura Celebrated 44<sup>th</sup> Kokborok Day:

- Kokborok Day, also known as the Tripuri Language Day is annually celebrated across the Indian State of Tripura on **19<sup>th</sup> January** with an aim to develop the **Kokborok (Tripuri or Tiprakok) Language**.

- The day commemorates the initial recognition of Kokborok as the official language in 1979.
- In 1979, **Kokborok**, along with **Bengali and English**, was declared an **official language of the state of Tripura**.

#### **International Folk Art Festival:**

- Lavni artist from Maharashtra, Sumit Bhale of Fulbari taluka has won a gold medal at the International Folk Art Festival in Dubai.
- Lavani is a genre of music popular in Maharashtra.
- It is a combination of traditional song and dance.
- It is particularly performed to the beats of Dholki, a Percussion Instrument.



## 1.11 INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

### Sri Lanka to Ink Pact with India to develop Oil Tanks:

- Sri Lanka announced its decision to sign three lease agreements on developing the strategic Trincomalee oil tank farm with India, after the Rajapaksa administration negotiated a “suitable” deal for 16 months.
- The Announcement, signaling forward Movement in a long dragging project, is significant for New Delhi following a year of Diplomatic strain beginning early 2021, when Sri Lanka unilaterally cancelled a tripartite agreement to develop a Colombo port Terminal with India and Japan.
- The **Trincomalee project** pertains to some 100 oil storage tanks – built by the British during Second World War – in Sri Lanka’s eastern Trincomalee district.
- It has dominated bilateral talks for decades, from the time of the **Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987**, but has seen little progress.
- Lease extended as per the new deal, 14 Tanks currently operated by the Indian Oil Corporation subsidiary, Lanka IOC, will be leased to the company for 50 years.
- Further, 24 tanks will be given to the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), while 61 will be developed in a joint venture, with the CPC holding 51% stakes, and Lanka IOC, the remaining 49%

### India, Pak exchange list of Nuclear Installations:

- India and Pakistan exchanged a list of their Nuclear installations that cannot be attacked in case of an escalation in hostilities, as part of an annual ritual that has been in practice between the two neighbours for more than three decades.
- The lists of nuclear installation and facilities were exchanged as per the provisions of the Article-II of the Agreement on Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities, signed on December 31, 1988 and ratified on 27 January 1991.

- The agreement was signed between the leaders Benazir Bhutto, then Pakistan's Prime Minister and Rajiv Gandhi the then Prime Minister of India in 1988 and the agreement was ratified during Chandrasekhar as the PM of India and Nawaz Sharif as the PM of Pakistan in 1991.
- According to this agreement, both countries have to inform each other of the nuclear Facilities.

### China Constructing Bridge on Pangong lake in Ladakh:

- China is constructing a bridge in eastern Ladakh connecting the north and south banks of Pangong Tso (lake), which will significantly bring down the time for the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) to move troops and equipment between the two Sectors.
- The new bridge between the closest points on two banks, which is around 500 m, will bring down the movement time between the two sectors from around 12 hours to three or four Hours.
- The bridge is located around 25 km ahead of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- The bridge is in China’s territory and the Indian Army would have to now factor this in its operational plans.
- India holds one-third of the 135km long **boomerang shaped lake** located at an altitude of over 14,000 feet.
- The lake, a glacial melt, has mountain spurs of the Chang Chenmo range jutting down, referred to as fingers.

### Pangong Tso Lake

- Pangong Lake is located in the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- It is situated at a height of almost 4,350m and is the world’s highest saltwater lake.
- Extending to almost 160km, one-third of the Pangong Lake lies in India and the other two-thirds in China.

### **Pakistan ready to host SAARC Summit:**

- Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said that his country was ready to host the 19th SAARC Summit and India can join it virtually if the leadership in New Delhi is not willing to visit Islamabad.
- SAARC - a regional grouping comprising Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka - has not been very effective since 2016 and its biennial summits have not taken place since the last one in Kathmandu in 2014.
- The 2016 SAARC Summit was originally planned to be held in Islamabad on November 15-19, 2016.
- But after a terror attack on an Indian Army Camp in Uri in Jammu and Kashmir on September 18 that year, India expressed its inability to participate in the summit due to "prevailing circumstances".
- The summit was called off after Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan also declined to participate in the Islamabad meet.

### **About SAARC:**

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985.
- Afghanistan became the newest member of SAARC at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit in 2005.
- The Headquarters and Secretariat of the Association are at Kathmandu, Nepal.
- There are currently nine Observers to SAARC, namely: (i) Australia; (ii) China; (iii) the European Union; (iv) Iran; (v) Japan; (vi) the Republic of Korea; (vii) Mauritius; (viii) Myanmar; and (ix) the United States of America.

### **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Nepal:**

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Nepal for construction of bridge over Mahakali River at Dharchula (India)- Dharchula (Nepal).

- With the signing of MoU, diplomatic relation between the two countries will further improve.

### **India Tops Sri Lanka's Tourism List:**

- India topped Sri Lanka's tourist arrivals in December and the entire year, according to data published by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA).
- Tourism sector – third largest foreign exchange earner for Sri Lanka.
- For December 2020, Sri Lanka recorded 89,506 tourist arrivals, of whom 23,566 or 26.3 % were from India, signaling that India had regained its spot as the largest source market in its tourism sector.
- From January 2021 to December 2021, 56,268 tourists – about 42 % of the visitors – arrived in Colombo from India, again the highest number from a country recorded last year, following Russia, the U.K. and Germany.

### **Sri Lanka Launches Luxury Train Service in Jaffna with India's Assistance:**

- Sri Lanka has launched a luxury Train Service connecting the country's Tamil-dominated **Jaffna district to the capital city Colombo** with the help of a Line of Credit offered by India, in another significant landmark in Bilateral ties.
- The intercity rail service with all facilities was launched on January 9 for passengers travelling from **Colombo's Mount Lavinia suburb to Jaffna's Kankesanthurai port suburb in the north**, covering a distance of Approximately 386 kms.
- India had provided AC Diesel Multiple Units (AC DMUs) under the loan Facility.

### **India extends \$900 mn aid to Sri Lanka:**

- India confirmed a \$400 million currency swap with Sri Lanka while deferring another \$500 million due for settlement to the Asian Clearing Union (ACU), in a move aimed at helping the island nation witnessing an Unprecedented economic crisis.
- The announcement on RBI assistance includes deferring the payment of \$500 that Sri Lanka owes to the ACU, a regional initiative with

the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

### **India extends \$500-mn credit to Sri Lanka for Fuel Imports:**

- India extended a \$500million Line of Credit (LOC) to Sri Lanka for urgent fuel imports, just days after providing \$900 million relief to the island nation, which is facing one of its worst Economic Downturns.

### **Tamil Sri Lankan Legislators on Implementing 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment:**

- Prominent Tamil legislators from Sri Lanka's Northern province have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking India's intervention in ensuring a lasting political solution to the long-standing Tamil issue and the implementation of the contentious 13th Amendment.
- The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment was the result of the **Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, inked by the then Sri Lankan President JR Jayawardena and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.**
- It provides for the devolution of power to the Tamil community in Sri Lanka.
- India has continually reaffirmed its commitment to protect the rights of Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community through the full implementation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, early convening of Provincial Council elections and achieving reconciliation.
- The amendment also confirms **Tamil as an official language of the Island nation alongside Sinhalese, with English as a 'link language'.**
- It was also the result of the 13th amendment that the Northern and Eastern regions got independent Provincial Councils.
- However, the ruling Sri Lanka People's Party's Sinhala majority hardliners have been advocating for a total abolition of the island's Provincial Council system.
- Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka is **Gopal Baglay.**

### **Social Housing Project in Mauritius:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Mauritian counterpart Pravind Kumar Jugnauth jointly inaugurated a **Social Housing Project in the island nation.**
- In the virtual ceremony, both leaders also laid the foundation stone for two other projects including the construction of a **college for training of civil servants** and an **8-megawatt Solar Power Project**, which will help mitigate the climate challenges that Mauritius faces as an island country.
- In 2020, India contributed 10% of Mauritius total imports and ranked third among their countries of imports.
- An agreement was reached on extending a \$190 million line of credit from India to Mauritius for the metro project.
- Prime Minister Jugnauth Announced that **the major metro station in their country will be named after Mahatma Gandhi.**
- India and Mauritius are united by history, ancestry, culture, language and the shared waters of the Indian Ocean.

### **Xi offers Central Asian Nations \$500mn**

- Two days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi, hosts India's first virtual summit with Central Asian leaders, China's President Xi Jinping offered \$500 million in assistance to the region and pledged to ramp up trade.
- Mr. Xi chaired his own virtual summit with Central Asian leaders, two days ahead of Mr. Modi hosting a first of its kind virtual summit with the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

### **India probes China, Vietnam over 'Dumping' of Vinyl Tiles:**

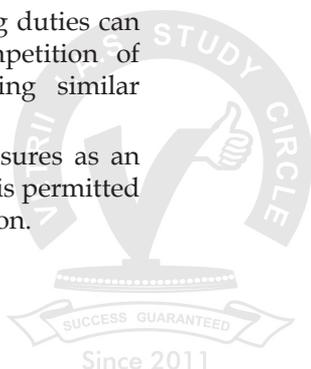
- India has initiated an antidumping probe against imports of a certain type of tiles, used for covering the Floors in residential and commercial buildings, from China, Taiwan and Vietnam following a complaint by Domestic Players.
- The Commerce Ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) is probing the alleged dumping of

“vinyl tiles other than in roll or sheet form”.

**About Anti-Dumping Duty:**

▪ **Dumping:**

- ✓ It is a protectionist tariff that a domestic Government imposes on foreign imports that it believes are priced below fair market value.
- ✓ Dumping is said to occur when the goods are exported by a country to another country at a price lower than the price it normally charges in its own home market.
- ✓ This is an unfair trade practice which can have a distortive effect on international trade.
- ✓ Imposition of Anti-dumping duty is a measure to rectify the situation arising out of the dumping of goods and its trade distortive effect.
- ✓ In the long-term, anti-dumping duties can reduce the international competition of Domestic companies producing similar Goods.
- ✓ The use of anti-dumping measures as an instrument of fair competition is permitted by the World Trade Organisation.



## 1.12 APPOINTMENTS- WHO - IS WHO

### New Coast Guard Chief:

- V.S. Pathania took over as the 24th Director General (DG) of the Indian Coast Guard on December 31 from Krishnaswamy Natarajan who Retired from service.

### Indian-Origin in Tesla Autopilot Team:

- Indian-origin **Ashok Elluswamy** has been roped in as the first employee of Tesla autopilot team, the electric car maker's and CEP Elon Musk said.
- Musk, who has been using social media to recruit people said, Ashok is the head of Autopilot Engineering.

### Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee:

- The United Nations announced that **T. S. Tirumurti**, India's Permanent Representative to the UNSC, has been made the chairman of the Counter Terrorism Committee of the United Nations Security Council.
- The Counter Terrorism Committee of the United Nations takes big steps against Terrorism in the world and now that India is the chairman of that committee.
- The Counter terrorism committee is of a Greater significance for India, because, India has been pitching pertinent measures to fight Terrorism across the global platform.
- India last chaired the committee in 2012.
- India will chair three important Communities at the UNSC in 2021-22. The three committees are- **Taliban Sanctions Committee, Counter-terrorism Committee and Libya Sanctions Committee.**

### About Counter-Terrorism Committee:

- Counter-Terrorism Committee is a subsidiary body of United Nations Security Council.
- It is a 15-member committee, established in the aftermath of 9/11 attack in United States to monitor the UNSC resolution 1373.
- The resolution was adopted mandates all States to criminalize assistance for terrorist activities, share information on Groups planning terrorist attacks and deny financial

support & safe haven to Terrorists.

### New IIT-M Director:

- V. Kamakoti, who has been appointed as the new director of **IIT Madras**, said his immediate priority would be to augment the skill sets for indigenous technology development, addressing local and Global requirements, Aligning with the objectives of the National Education Policy.
- Mr. Kamakoti, who designed India's first indigenously developed microprocessor "**Shakti**", will take over from Bhaskar Ramamurthi as the Director of Indian Institute of Technology Madras. Mr. Ramamurthi had served the institute for 10 Years.
- **IIT Delhi's** next director will be **Rangan Banerjee**, currently the Forbes Marshall Chair Professor in IIT Bombay's Department of Energy Science and Engineering at IIT Bombay, which he helped to start in 2007.
- IIT Bombay is also the current home of **IIT Indore's next Director Suhas S. Joshi**. He currently heads the Department of Mechanical Engineering at IIT Bombay.
- **Laxmidhar Behera**, a Robotics professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering at IIT Kanpur, has been appointed the **next Director of IIT Mandi**.

### New Chairman of ISRO:

- Eminent rocket scientist **S. Somanath** has been appointed Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Space Secretary.
- Dr. Somanath is taking over the reins of ISRO at a critical juncture when sweeping reforms and critical missions are set to define the Forward journey of the storied space agency.
- He has been serving as the Director of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) and the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST).

### **Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR):**

- Professor emeritus, Kurukshetra University, **Raghuvendra Tanwar** has been appointed as chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR).
- Tanwar appointment is for a period of three Years from the day he assumes the office of the Chairman of the Council or until further order.
- Tanwar, who joined Kurukshetra University as a lecturer in August 1977, has an outstanding academic record, with two gold medals in MA History.

#### **About ICHR:**

- The Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) is an captive body of the Ministry of Education established by an Administrative Order.
- The ICHR is based in Delhi, with regional centres in Pune (Maharashtra), Bengaluru (Karnataka), and Guwahati (Assam).
- Its First Chairman was the historian Ram Sharan Sharma.
- Founded: 27 March 1972.

### **New TAHDCO Chairman:**

- Chief Minister MK Stalin issued orders to appoint former Dairy minister U Mathivanan as Chairman of Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Ltd.

#### **About TAHDCO:**

- Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Limited (TAHDCO) was incorporated in 1974 under the Companies Act, 1956 with the objective to improve socio economic status in Tamilnadu.
- For the economic development of Scheduled Caste, the TAHDCO has been implementing many programmes / schemes with financial assistance from Special Central Assistance.
- The Government of Tamil Nadu and the Government of India contribute to the Share Capital of the Corporation in the ratio 51:49 respectively.
- Bank loans are arranged with TAHDCO subsidy for self-employment under Entrepreneur Development Programme

(EDP), Self-Employment Programme for youth (SEPY) Schemes.

#### **Main Activities of the Corporation:**

- To implement economic development schemes for the Welfare of Scheduled Caste / ST in the State.
- To provide skill development training to youth belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes for job / self-employment.
- To undertake Construction activities entrusted by the Government.

### **New MD of NHIDCL:**

- **Chanchal Kumar** has been appointed as the Managing Director, 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.

#### **About NHIDCL:**

- **Founded:** 2014.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.

### **Zakir Hussain made Adviser to Music Schools:**

- Bharatanatyam dancer A. Zakir Hussain has been appointed as an advisor for all 17 district music schools under the Tamil Nadu Government's Arts and Culture Department.

### **Centre Appoints New CEA:**

- The Centre on January 28 appointed **V. Anantha Nageswaran** as the Chief Economic Advisor (CEA). His predecessor - Krishnamurthy Subramanian.
- The appointment comes two days before the presentation of the Economic Survey (2021-22) on January 31.
- The CEA is usually responsible for drafting the Economic Survey presented on the eve of the Budget.
- But the Economy Survey of 2021-22 is prepared by the Principal Economic Adviser Mr. Sanjeev Sanyal.

# 2. POLITICAL SCIENCE

## 2.1 PUBLIC AWARENESS & GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### Gram Ujala Scheme:

- The Gram UJALA Programme - an ambitious scheme offering the world's cheapest LED bulbs in rural areas at a mere Rs. 10 launched on March 24, 2021 by the Union Ministry of Power.
- 7 watt and 12-watt LED bulbs with 3 years Warranty will be given to rural consumers against submission of working Incandescent bulbs.
  - ✓ Each household will get up to 5 LEDs.
  - ✓ Participating rural households will also have Meters installed in their houses to account for usage.
- The LED bulbs are offered by state-run Energy Efficiency Services Ltd's (EESL's) subsidiary Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL).
- EESL is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Power.

### Financing Mechanism:

- The Programme will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such Programme in India.
- The revenue earned from carbon credits will contribute Rs. 60 per LED bulb piece, with the balance Rs. 10 to be paid by the rural Consumer.
- **Carbon credit** (or "carbon offsets") are certificates generated by projects or activities that reduce, avoid, or destroy greenhouse Gases.

### Parliamentary Panel on Marriage Age has only One-Woman MP:

- The parliamentary panel assigned to examine the landmark bill which seeks to raise the legal age of marriage for women to 21 has only one-woman MP out of 31 members.
- The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, which will have wider influence over society especially females, was introduced in Lok Sabha during the winter session and referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports.
- According to the members' list of the parliamentary standing committee, led by senior BJP leader Vinay Sahasrabudhe, available on the Rajya Sabha website, **TMC MP Sushmita Dev** is the only woman among the 31 members.

### About Parliament Standing Committees:

- Indian Constitution mentions two kinds of Parliamentary Committees - Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees.
- Any subject related to these committees is dealt with Article 118 (1) of the Indian Constitution.
- A Standing Committee is a group of Members of Parliament (MPs) in the Indian Parliament.
- It is a permanent and regular committee that is established according to the requirements of an act of Parliament or the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business from Time to time.
- The main objective of the standing Committees is to secure more accountability of the Executive (that is., Council of Ministers) to the Parliament, particularly financial Accountability.

- Each standing committee consists of 31 members (21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha).
- The term of office of each standing committee is one year from the date of its constitution.
- Out of the 24 standing committees, 8 work under the Rajya Sabha and 16 under the Lok Sabha.

### **English is the Language of Court, says Gujarat HC:**

- A Division Bench of the Gujarat High Court has asked a journalist facing contempt of court proceedings to speak only in English as that was the language in the Higher Judiciary.

#### **About:**

- **Section 7 of the Official Languages Act, 1963**, provides that the use of Hindi or official language of a State in addition to the English language may be authorized, with the consent of the President of India, by the Governor of the State for purpose of judgments etc. made by the High Court for that State.
- Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have already been granted the right to use Hindi in their High Courts.
- The same right has been withheld from Tamil Nadu and Gujarat and Chhattisgarh which sought permission to use Tamil, Gujarati and Hindi respectively.
- **What the Constitution says?**
  - ✓ **Article 348 (1)** of the Constitution of India provides that all proceedings in the Supreme Court and in every High court shall be in English Language until Parliament by law otherwise provides.
  - ✓ Under **Article 348 (2)**, the Governor of the State may, with the previous consent of the President, authorize the use of the Hindi language or any other language used for any official purpose of the State, in the proceedings of the High Court having its principal seat in that State provided that decrees, judgments or orders passed by such High Courts shall be in English.

### **POSH Act: HC Guidelines Challenged:**

- A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging guidelines issued by the Bombay High Court in cases under the Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, which include a blanket bar on parties and Advocates from sharing records, including orders and judgments, with the media.

### **About Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013:**

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (prevention, prohibition and redressal) Act, 2013 defines sexual harassment as one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behavior. Such as
  1. Physical contact and advances
  2. A demand or request for sexual favors
  3. Making sexually coloured remarks
  4. Showing pornography
  5. Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.
- The workplace includes any government or private sector organisations, establishment, etc.
- It also covers unorganized and domestic workers, hospitals, any sports institute, stadium or complex, any place visited by the employee during her course of Employment, etc.

### **Govt. says ₹8 Lakh EWS Cap Derived after Study:**

- The Supreme Court wondered how the Union government came up with the ₹8 lakh annual income limit within just three days of introducing 10% reservation for the economically weaker sections (EWS) of society.
- The Constitution (One Hundred and Third) Amendment Act introducing EWS quota came into force on **January 14, 2019**.

**About:**

- The 10% EWS quota was introduced under the 103rd Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019 by amending Articles 15 and 16.
- It inserted **Article 15 (6)** and **Article 16 (6)**.
- The Amendment under Article 15(6) enables the State to make special provisions for the Advancement of any economically weaker section of citizens, including reservations in Educational institutions.
- **Article 16 (6)** is added to provide reservations to people from economically weaker sections in Government Posts.
- It was enacted to promote the welfare of the poor not covered by the 50% reservation policy for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC).
- It enables both Centre and the states to provide reservation to the EWS of society.

**Law Ministry Approves Increase of poll Expenditure by Candidates:**

- The Union ministry of law and justice Approved raising the election expenditure ceiling by a candidate to a maximum of ₹95 lakh in Parliamentary elections and ₹40 lakhs in assembly elections, increasing them from the earlier limits of ₹77 lakh and ₹30.8 lakhs.
- The increase comes at a time when five states are headed for assembly polls - Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa - even as a sharply rising third wave of Covid-19 cases has raised the clamour for political rallies to be conducted virtually to avoid the spread of the infection.
- The ceiling for parliamentary constituencies was at the time raised to ₹77 lakh, from the 2014 limit of ₹70 lakh, and assembly polls to ₹30.8 lakhs from ₹28 lakh in larger states.
- With the revision, candidates in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab - classified among large states - will therefore be able to spend ₹40 lakh in the upcoming polls, while those in Goa and Manipur - classified as small states - will have to adhere to a limit of ₹28 lakh.

- In exercise of the powers conferred by the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the central government, after consulting the Election Commission of India, hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, namely, the Government said in a gazette notification.
- These rules may be called the Conduct of Elections (Amendment) Rules, 2022.
- They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

**Polls in Five States from February 10 to March 7:**

- Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur will be held between February 10 and March 7, the Election Commission of India announced.
- The counting of votes for all 690 constituencies across the five States, where a total of 18.34 crore citizens are eligible to vote, will be held on March 10.
- The Commission banned all physical Campaigning till January 15 due to the rise in COVID19 cases across the country.
- The current Chief Election Commissioner is Sushil Chandra.

**About Election Commission of India:**

- The Election Commission of India is an Autonomous constitutional authority Responsible for administering Union and State election processes in India.
- The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, and State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.
- Part XV of the Indian constitution deals with elections, and establishes a commission for these Matters.
- The Election Commission was established in accordance with the Constitution on 25th January 1950.
- Article 324 to 329 of the constitution deals with powers, function, tenure, eligibility, etc. of the commission and the members.

**Articles related to Elections**

1. 324- Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.
2. 325- No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
3. 326- Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the basis of adult suffrage.
4. 327- Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.
5. 328- Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.
6. 329- Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.

**Structure of the Commission:**

1. Originally the commission had only One election commissioner but after the Election Commissioner Amendment Act 1989, it has been made a multi-member body.
2. The commission consists of one Chief Election Commissioner and Two Election Commissioners.
3. The secretariat of the commission is located in New Delhi.
4. At the state level election commission is helped by Chief Electoral Officer who is an IAS rank Officer.
5. The President appoints Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners.
6. They have a fixed tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
7. They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court of India.
8. The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed from office only through a process of removal similar to that of a Supreme Court judge for by Parliament.

**Special Protection Group Act:**

- The **Special Protection Group Act, 1988** was passed by the parliament after the assassination of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

- It aimed to provide for Regulation of an Armed force of the Union for providing security to the Prime Minister of India and the former Prime Ministers of India and members of their immediate families.
- It was extended to all former Prime Ministers and their immediate families after former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was Assassinated.
- Special Protection Group (Amendment) Act, 2019 is an act passed by Indian parliament in 2019 which reduces Special Protection Group cover to only Prime Minister, former Prime Minister and their immediate family members **up to 5 years** after ceasing post if they are residing at the residence Allotted.

**Apply for Citizenship under CAA, says HC:**

- The Guwahati High Court has asked a man declared a foreigner by a tribunal in 2017 to apply for citizenship under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019.
- The Foreigners' Tribunal II of the district had in May 2017 declared him a foreigner who came to India illegally from Bangladesh on or after March 25, 1971.
- The petitioner entered West Bengal with his father Boloram Paul and grandfather Chintaharan Paul 57 years ago from East Pakistan, which became Bangladesh on March 26, 1971.
- The two-judge bench of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Justice Malasri Nandi observed that the petitioner entered India in 1964 without any valid documents but was given Shelter by this country.
- Though he was given shelter does not mean that he is a legal migrant as he did not possess any valid document/passport to enter India.
- The court said the bar to his citizenship by registration was lifted by the CAA 2019 and thus the petitioner can apply for Citizenship by registration.

**About Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019:**

- The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 seeks to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955.

- The Citizenship Act, 1955 provides various ways in which citizenship may be acquired. It provides for citizenship by birth, descent, registration, naturalization and by Incorporation of the territory into India.
- The Bill amends the Act to provide that the Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, who entered India on or before December 31, 2014, will not be treated as Illegal Migrants.
- In order to get this benefit, they must have also been exempted from the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 by the central government.
- The 1920 Act mandates foreigners to carry Passport, while the 1946 Act regulates the entry and departure of foreigners in India.
- The Act allows a person to apply for citizenship by registration or naturalization if the person meets certain qualifications.
- For instance, if a person resides in India for a year and if one of his parents is a former Indian citizen, he may apply for citizenship by registration.
- To obtain citizenship by naturalization, one of the qualifications is that the person must have resided in India or have been in the service of the central government for at least 11 years before applying for citizenship.
- The Bill creates an exception for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, with regard to this qualification. For these groups of persons, the 11 years' requirement will be reduced to five years.
- On acquiring Citizenship: (i) such persons will be deemed to be citizens of India from the date of their entry into India, and (ii) all legal proceedings against them in respect of their illegal migration or citizenship will be closed.

### **Centre's Response awaited on law on Interfaith Marriages:**

- The law that Governs interfaith marriages in the country, the **Special Marriage Act (SMA)**, 1954 is being challenged for endangering the lives of young couples who seek refuge under it.
- More than a Year after a writ petition was moved before the Supreme Court, seeking striking down of several of its provisions, the Union Government is yet to submit its response.

### **About the Special Marriage Act (SMA), 1954:**

- The Special Marriage Act is the legislation made to validate and register interreligious and inter-caste Marriages in India.
- It allows two individuals to solemnize their marriage through a civil contract.
- No Religious formalities are needed to be carried out under the Act.

### **Draft Notification for Extended Producer Responsibility:**

- The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change released the draft notification for regulations for the **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** for Waste Tyres.
- The draft will be effective from the new fiscal Year.
- EPR means responsibility of producer of tyres to ensure environmentally safe management of Waste Tyres.

### **Govt. extends tenure of IPO-bound LIC's Chairman for 1 Year:**

- The Government has extended the tenure of chairman of IPO-bound Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) by one more year with a view to facilitate smooth listing of the insurance behemoth.
- Besides, the government has also extended the tenure of one of the managing directors, Raj Kumar, for one year.
- With the extension, M R Kumar will continue as chairman of LIC till March 2023
- This is the second extension for the LIC chairman.

## 2.2 GOVT.WELFARE ORIENTED GOVT. SCHEMES THEIR UTILITY

### Modi releases Aid for Farmers:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released over ₹20,900 crores to more than 10.09 crore farmers across India as the 10th instalment of Financial aid under the PMKISAN scheme.
- The money is transferred directly to the bank account of the beneficiaries.
- Prime Minister also released an equity grant of more than ₹14 crore's to about 351 farmer producer organisations (FPOs), benefiting 1.24 lakh farmers.

### About PM KISAN SCHEME:

- Under the scheme, the Centre transfers an Amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal Instalments of Rs. 2000, directly into the bank accounts of all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings.
- It was launched in February 2019.
- **Funding and Implementation:**
  - ✓ It is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% Funding from the Government of India.
  - ✓ It is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- **Identification of Beneficiaries:**
  - ✓ The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiary farmer families' rests with the State / UT Governments.
- **Objective:**
  - ✓ To supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of each Crop Cycle.
- To protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming Activities.

### Atal Pension Yojana (APY):

- The Journey of the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) over six-and-a-half years since its inception has been substantive with 3.68 Crore Enrolments.
- The performance in this financial year has been good as more than 65 lakh subscribers Enrolled which is the highest ever enrolment during the same period since the launch of the scheme.
- Apart from enrolments, the male-to-female subscription ratio of 56:44 is improving, and assets under management stand at around ₹20,000 crore.

### About Atal Pension Yojana:

- Atal Pension Yojana, formerly known as Swavalamban Yojana is a government-backed pension scheme in India, primarily targeted at the unorganized sector.
- It was mentioned in the year 2015 Budget speech by the Finance Minister Arun Jaitley.
- It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 9 May 2015 in Kolkata.
- **Administered By:** Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority through National Pension System (NPS).
- **Eligibility:** Any citizen of India can join the APY scheme. The age of the subscriber should be between 18-40 years.
- **Benefits:**
  - ✓ It provides a minimum guaranteed pension ranging from Rs 1000 to Rs 5000 on attaining 60 years of age.
  - ✓ The amount of pension is guaranteed for lifetime to the spouse on death of the Subscriber.
  - ✓ In the event of death of both the subscriber and the spouse, the entire pension corpus is paid to the nominee.
- **Tax Benefits:**
  - ✓ Contributions to the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) are eligible for tax benefits similar to the National Pension System (NPS).

## Deposits in Jan Dhan Accounts Cross Rs 1.5 Lakh Crore:

- Deposits in bank accounts opened under the Jan Dhan Yojana, launched by the Government about seven and a half years ago, have crossed Rs 1.5 lakh crore.
- According to the latest Finance Ministry data, the total balance in over 44.23 crore Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts stood at Rs 1,50,939.36 crore at the end of December 2021.
- **PMJDY, the National Mission for Financial Inclusion**, completed seven years of implementation in August last year.

### About Jan Dhan Yojana:

- This was Announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day address on 15 August 2014 and launched on August 28<sup>th</sup> 2014.
- During the first year of the scheme, 17.90 crore PMJDY accounts were opened.
- **Objective of Jan Dhan Accounts:**
  - ✓ The government's flagship scheme objectives include ensuring access to financial products and services at Affordable Prices.
  - ✓ Benefits such as scholarships, COVID relief funds, subsidies and pensions are credited to bank accounts, including Jan Dhan accounts, through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

## Higher Coverage Under Crop Insurance Scheme for Samba Season:

- Around four lakhs more acres have been brought under the fold of the Prime Minister's Crop Insurance Scheme - PMFBY for the Samba cultivation season of 2021-22, compared to the corresponding period last year.

### About Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY):

- It provides a comprehensive insurance cover against failure of the crop thus helping in stabilising the Income of the Farmers.
- PMFBY was launched on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
- The prescribed premium is 2% to be paid by Farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all

Rabi crops. In the case of annual commercial and horticultural crops, the premium is 5%.

- The scheme was compulsory for loanee farmers availing Crop Loan/Kisan Credit Card (KCC) account for notified crops and voluntary for others.

### PMFBY 2.0:

- In order to ensure more efficient and effective implementation of the scheme, the central government had revamped PMFBY in the 2020 Kharif Season.
- This overhauled PMFBY is often called PMFBY 2.0, it has the following features:
  - ✓ **Completely Voluntary:** Enrolment 100% Voluntary for all farmers from 2020 Kharif.
  - ✓ **Limit to Central Subsidy:** The Cabinet has decided to cap the Centre's premium subsidy under the Scheme for Premium rates up to 30% for unirrigated areas/crops and 25% for irrigated Areas/Crops.
  - ✓ **More Flexibility to States:** The government has given the flexibility to states/UTs to Implement PMFBY and given them the option to select any number of additional risk Covers/features.
  - ✓ **Investing in ICE Activities:** Insurance companies have to now spend 0.5% of the Total premium collected on information, Education and communication (IEC) Activities.

### Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission:

- **Telangana** stood **first** in the implementation of the Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM).
- In **Telangana**, in as many as 17 clusters (12 non-tribal and five tribal), the programme was being implemented.
- **Sangareddy** and **Kamareddy** districts stood in the first two positions among the 300 Clusters across the country where the programme was being implemented.
- **Tamil Nadu** and **Gujarat** took the second and third positions respectively.

**About:**

- SPMRM is a scheme launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) on February 21 2016 to deliver integrated project based infrastructure in the rural areas, which will also include development of economic activities and skill development.
- A predecessor to SPMRM was the Provision of Urban Amenities to Rural Areas (PURA), announced in 2003.
- Large parts of rural areas in the country are not stand-alone settlements but part of a cluster of settlements, which are relatively proximate to each other. These clusters typically illustrate potential for growth, have Economic drivers and derive locational and Competitive advantages. These clusters once developed can then be classified as 'Rurban'.
- **Mission's Objectives:** Bridging the rural-Urban divide-viz: economic, technological and those related to facilities and services.
- **Rurban Clusters:** There are 2 categories of clusters: Non-Tribal and Tribal.
- They are identified across the country's rural areas showing increasing signs of urbanization - i.e. increase in population density, high levels of non-farm employment, presence of growing economic activities and other socioeconomic parameters.
- For the purposes of SPMRM, Rurban areas refer to a cluster of 15-20 villages having about 30 to 40 lakh population.
- The clusters will be geographically contiguous Gram Panchayats with a population of about 25000 to 50000 in plain and coastal areas and a population of 5000 to 15000 in desert, hilly or tribal areas.

**Role of states:**

- The State Government identifies the clusters in accordance with the Framework for Implementation prepared by the MoRD.
- **Funding:** SPMRM is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS).
- The Mission has 2 fund streams: Convergence through various schemes (Central sector, centrally sponsored schemes, State sector/ sponsored schemes/ programmes, CSR funds etc) and Critical Gap Funds (CGF).

**Veer Gatha Project:**

- The Government of India launched "Veer Gatha Project" as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav under which government has been introducing several events to mark to 75th year of India's independence.
- Veer Gatha project was launched to inspire the school children in India, by making them aware with stories of war heroes and brave hearts.
- 25 students have been selected as the winners of this project.
- Under it, students were motivated to do activities and projects, based on gallantry award winners.
- This project was organised from October 21, 2021 to November 21, 2021 across India.
- The Veer Gatha Project was organised by Ministry of Education, Department of School Education & Literacy and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).
- The Super 25 will be felicitated on January 25, 2022, after they will arrive in New Delhi. They will also witness the Republic Day parade as special guests of Ministry of Defence. Furthermore, they will also receive a cash prize of Rs.10,000.

**Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi:**

- The farmers who are the institutional landholders are ineligible to get incentive under the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme.
- They are waiting to be declared as the beneficiaries under the scheme for 3 years.

**About PM KISAN SCHEME:**

- Under the scheme, the Centre transfers an amount of Rs 6000 per year, in three equal instalments, directly into the bank accounts of all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings.
- It was launched on 24 February 2019.

**Funding and Implementation:**

- It is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India.
- It is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

**Identification of Beneficiaries:**

- The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiary farmer family rests with the State / UT Governments.

**Objective:**

- ✓ To supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of each crop cycle.
- ✓ To protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.

**PM-KISAN Mobile App:**

- The PM-KISAN Mobile App developed and designed by the National Informatics Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has been launched.
- The farmers can view the status of their application, update or carry out corrections of their Aadhaar cards and also check the history of credits to their Bank Accounts.

**Special Camps to Register Workers on E-Shram Portal:**

- Union Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav said special camps would be organised to register brick kiln, plantation, forestry and other unorganised sector workers on the Centre's E-Shram portal.

**About e-Shram Portal:**

- The Ministry of Labour and Employment launched the e-Shram portal on August 26, 2021.

**Aim:**

- ✓ To register 38 crore unorganized workers such as construction labourers, migrant workforce, street vendors, and domestic workers, among others.
- ✓ The workers will be issued an e-Shram card containing a 12-digit unique number.
- ✓ If a worker is registered on the e-SHRAM portal and meets with an accident, he will be eligible for Rs 2.0 Lakh on death or permanent disability and Rs 1.0 lakh on

partial disability.

**Implementation:**

- ✓ Government in States/UTs will conduct registration of unorganized workers across the country. **Status of Unorganised Sector in India:**

- ✓ The Ministry of Labour and Employment has categorized the unorganized labour force under four groups:

**Occupation:**

- ✓ Small and marginal farmers, landless agricultural labourers, sharecroppers, fishermen, those engaged in animal husbandry, beedi making, etc.

**Nature of Employment:**

- ✓ Attached agricultural labourers, bonded labourers, migrant workers, contract and casual laborer's come under this category.

**Specially Distressed Category:**

- ✓ Toddy tappers, scavengers, carriers of head loads, drivers of animal driven vehicles, loaders and Unloaders.

**Service Category:**

- ✓ Midwives, Domestic workers, Fishermen and women, Barbers, Vegetable and fruit vendors, Newspaper vendors etc.



# 3. GEOGRAPHY

## 3.1 GEOGRAPHICAL LANDMARKS

### GI tag sought for Kumbakonam

#### Vetrilai, Thovalai Manikka Malai:

- Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai has received applications seeking GI tag for two famous products from Tamil Nadu – Kumbakonam Vetrilai and Thovalai Manikka Malai.
- The application for **Kumbakonam Vetrilai** was filed by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore.
  - ✓ **Kumbakonam betel leaves** were heart shaped and grown in the Cauvery delta region by small and marginal farmers.
  - ✓ It is particularly grown in Ayyampettai, Rajagiri, Pandaravadai and Swamimalai in Thanjavur district.
- The Application for **Thovalai Manikka Malai** was given by the Thovalai Manikkamaalai Kaivinai Kalaingargal Nalasangam, Kanniyakumari.
  - ✓ Thovalai Manikka Malai is a special type of garland that is made only in Thovalai, a small village in Kanniyakumari.
  - ✓ The flowers used in this particular garland are positioned in a way that when folded they look like a gem.
  - ✓ **Palani Pandaram** invented the technique of Manikka Malai.

## 3.2 ENVIRONMENT ECOLOGY

### Two New Plant Varieties in Kerala:

- Researchers from SNM College Maliankara, the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, and the Payyanur College have reported two new plant species from the biodiversity rich Western Ghats regions in Thiruvananthapuram and Wayanad districts of Kerala.
- They have been christened **Fimbristylis sunilii** and **Neanotis prabhuii**, Taxonomy Journal Phytotaxa.
- Collected from the grasslands of Ponmudi Hills, Thiruvananthapuram, **Fimbristylis sunilii** has been named after plant taxonomist C.N. Sunil, retired professor and research Guide of Botany, SNM College.
- A perennial plant of the Cyperaceae family, it stands 2059 cm tall and was collected from an Elevation of 1,100 metres.
- **Neanotis prabhuii** is a prostrate perennial herb named after **K.M. Prabhu kumar**, Senior Scientist at CSIRNBRI, Lucknow, in recognition of his research on flowering Plants of the Western Ghats.
- Discovered in the Chembra Peak Grasslands of Wayanad, it hails from the Family Rubiaceae and grows on high altitude grasslands.
- **Neanotis prabhuii** grows up to 70 cm in length and is many flowered with the petals pale pink in colour.

### Kaziranga Elevated Road Plan Awaits nod:

- The Assam Government is awaiting the Centre's clearance for an elevated road over nine corridors used by the animals of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve usually during high floods. The 35km elevated road will run along an existing Arterial Highway.

### About Kaziranga National Park:

- There are 104 existing national parks in India covering an area of 43,716 km<sup>2</sup>, which is 1.33% of the geographical area of the country (National Wildlife Database, Dec. 2020).

- Kaziranga National Park is a protected area in the northeast Indian state of Assam Established in 1905.
- Spread across the floodplains of the Brahmaputra River, its forests, wetlands and Grasslands are home to tigers, elephants.
- World's largest population of Indian one-Horned rhinoceroses.
- Kaziranga was declared as Tiger Reserve in 2006.

### Researchers Discover Two Rare Flower Flies:

- Researchers have discovered two new species of very rare wasp-like flower flies from north-Eastern India and the Western Ghats.
- The newly discovered species, **Monoceromyia flavoscutata** and **Monoceromyia nigra**, belong to the Syrphidae family.
- Anooj S.S, an assistant professor of Entomology at the Kerala Agricultural University, Padannakkad explained that the new species, *M. flavoscutata*, discovered from Thadiyankudisai in Dindigul district, Tamil Nadu, was named after its yellow-coloured thoracic ends and can be differentiated from the closely resembling species based on the colouration of the thorax and the wing vein characters, whereas the other new species, *M. nigra* discovered from West Siang of Basar district of Arunachal Pradesh, differed from the other species based on thoracic, abdominal and facial Colouration and wing vein character.
- It was named as *nigra* based on the black-Coloured thorax.

### Ambergris worth Rs 6.5 Crore was Seized:

- The seizure of whale 'Ambergris' in the Southern Districts has increased in the last few months. Ambergris worth Rs 6.5 crore was seized near Thiruchendur.

### What is Ambergris?

- ✓ Whales over the age of 20 spew wax-like substance produced in their bodies through their mouths. **This is ambergris.**

- Ambergris, which floats in the sea, is used to make high quality perfumes in countries including Dubai.
- Its value in the international market is Rs 1 crore per kg.
- The sale of Ambergris is banned in India under the Wildlife Protection Act .
- It includes the Shivalik Hills and Gangetic plain landscape, Central Indian Landscape and Eastern Ghats, Western Ghats landscape, North Eastern Hills and Brahmaputra flood plains, and Sundarbans.

### 'Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India':

### Gharials to Return to Orang National Park:

- The gharial, wiped out from the Brahmaputra River system in the 1950s, could be the prime beneficiary of a process to expand an Assam Tiger Reserve.
- Orang, on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra River, is strategic to the Kaziranga Orang Riverine Landscape.
- Tigers and rhinos are known to use the islands in this riverine landscape, about 180 km long, to hop between Orang and Kaziranga.
- The government is pursuing a policy for the reintroduction of the gharial that became locally extinct more than six decades ago.
- The Gangetic dolphin is also expected to be a beneficiary of the final notification of the addition to Orang. The landscape has 16 species of turtles that need more conservation.
- **Orang was recognised as a tiger reserve in 2016.**
- Other national parks in Assam are Kaziranga, Manas, Nameri, DibruSaikhowa, Raimona and Dehing Patkai.

### Water bodies in the Tiger-Bearing Areas of India:

- The 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was held under the chairmanship of the union minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change Bhupender Yadav.
- During the meeting, the union minister released a **Water Atlas**.
- The water atlas maps all the water bodies in the tiger-bearing areas of India.
- Landscape-wise information has been outlined in this **water atlas**.

- The union minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change has launched the '**Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India**' under which 50 of these big cats will be Introduced in the next Five Years.

- The action plan was launched at the 19th meeting of the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**.

- The Government is preparing to translocate the First Batch of eight from South Africa and Namibia to Kuno - Palpur National Park in Madhya Pradesh soon after the situation linked to the current third wave of Covid-19 becomes normal, and total 50 in various parks over a period of Five Years.

### About the Cheetah:

- The cheetah, *Acinonyx jubatus*, is one of the oldest of the big cat species, with ancestors that can be traced back more than five million Years to the Miocene era.
- The cheetah is also the world's Fastest Land Mammal. It is listed as vulnerable in IUCN red listed Species.
- The country's last spotted feline died in Chhattisgarh in 1947. Later, the cheetah was declared extinct in India in 1952.

### Asian Waterbird Census

- Recently, the Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) found lower waterbird species diversity at East Delhi's Sanjay Lake when compared to the count from the past three years.

### About Asian Waterbird Census:

- This citizen-science event is a part of the global International Waterbird Census (IWC) that supports the conservation and management of wetlands and waterbirds worldwide.
- The AWC is conducted in January each year and is coordinated by the Wetlands International South Asia and the Bombay

Natural History Society in India. Although the recommended dates for the AWC are 1 - 16 January 2022, counts from any dates in January and February are welcomed.

- It is an integral part of the Global waterbird monitoring programme, the International Waterbird Census (IWC), coordinated by Wetlands International.
- It runs in parallel with other regional programmes of the International Waterbird Census in Africa, Europe, West Asia, the Neotropics and the Caribbean.
- It was initiated in 1987 in the Indian subcontinent and since has grown rapidly to cover major region of Asia.
- It is the longest-running Citizen science Initiative.

### India's oldest Sloth Bears 'Gulabo' Passes Away:

- 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.
- The Van Vihar National Park, located on the Banks of Bhopal's Upper Lake, also runs a Rescue and breeding centre for Sloth Bears.
- Van Vihar National Park was established on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1979.

### Forest, tree cover in India up by 2,261 sq. Km in Two Years:

- Forest and tree cover in the country has increased by 2,261 square kilometres since the last assessment in 2019, according to the India State of Forest Report 2021.
- The report found that there had been a 1,540 sq. km increase in forest cover and 721 sq. km increase in tree cover since the last report in 2019.
- Increase in forest cover has been observed in open forest followed by very dense forest.

**Top three States** showing increase in forest cover are Andhra Pradesh (647 sq. km) followed by Telangana (632 sq. km) and Odisha (537 sq. km).

- Madhya Pradesh** had the **largest forest cover**, followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra.
- The **top five States in terms of forest cover** as a percentage of their total geographical area were Mizoram (84.53%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.33%), Meghalaya (76%), Manipur (74.34%) & Nagaland (73.90%).
- The total mangrove cover in the country had increased by 17 sq. km, to reach 4,992 sq. km.
- The Total Carbon stock in forests was estimated to be 7,204 million tonnes, an increase of 79.4 Million tonnes from 2019.

### Sixth Warmest Year:

- Year 2021 tied with 2018 as the sixth warmest on record, find studies conducted by NASA and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- Global Temperatures were 0.85 degrees Celsius warmer in 2021 than the average for the baseline period from 1951 to the present.
- Earth was about 1.1 degrees Celsius warmer than Preindustrial Levels.

### Tonga Volcanic Eruption:

- An undersea volcano erupted in spectacular fashion near the Pacific nation of Tonga on January 15, sending large tsunami waves crashing across the shore and people rushing to higher Ground.
- A Tsunami Advisory was in effect for Hawaii, Alaska and the U.S. Pacific coast.

### Shockwave from Tonga Volcanic Eruption Recorded in Chennai

- The Shockwave Generated by the massive Volcanic Eruption in Tonga in the Pacific Ocean which was felt in many parts of the Globe, was recorded in Chennai as well, which is located 12,000 km Away.
- It was recorded as a blip in the atmospheric pressure that suddenly spiked by around two hectopascals (hPa) around 8.15 p.m. in

Chennai on January 15, around 10 hours after the eruption happened in Tonga.

- The eruption of the submarine volcano, believed to be one of the largest in Recent History.

#### **About the Volcano:**

- The underwater volcano erupted in Tonga (a country in the Pacific Ocean) is called the "Hunga Tonga Hunga Haapai" volcano.
- **Hunga Tonga and Hunga Haapai** were two separate islands. The volcanic eruption merged the two islands.
- The volcano in the island is a part of Kermadec Islands Volcanic arc located in the South Pacific Ocean.

#### **Super Mom Tigress Who Gave Birth To 29 Cubs Dies in MP's Pench Reserve:**

- The T-15 tigress from Madhya Pradesh's Pench Tiger Reserve has died.
- **Collarwali**, a name given to her by the locals of that area, died due to old age. She was more than 16 years old.
- She was also one of the most photographed Tigresses in the world.
- The Super Mom was Popularly Called, 'Mataram' (the Mother of Pench).

#### **About Pench Tiger Reserve:**

- The Reserve is located in the southern reaches of the Satpura hills in the Seoni and Chhindwara districts in Madhya Pradesh, and continues in Nagpur District in Maharashtra as a separate Sanctuary.
- The Reserve is named after the Pench river that flows through the National Park.
- Pench National Park was created as a wildlife sanctuary in 1977. Soon after in 1983, its status was elevated to that of a National Park. The year 1992 brought to Pench the official identity of a Tiger Reserve.
- Other Tiger Reserves in Madhya Pradesh include Kanha National Park, Bandhavgarh National Park, Panna National Park, Satpura National Park, Sanjay-Dubri National Park.

#### **Miss Kerala in Endangered List:**

- A section of aquarists and ornamental fish breeders are surprised that the **Denison barb**

(**Miss Kerala**), a native freshwater fish species commonly found in parts of Karnataka and Kerala, has been included in Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2021. The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in December last.

- **Sahyadria Denisonii** (Scientific name of Denison Barb) is found in almost 11 rivers of Kerala and Karnataka with some of the **Highest endemic aquatic fauna** in the country.

#### **Kerala gets its First ever Scientific Bird Atlas:**

- The **Kerala Bird Atlas (KBA)**, the first of its kind State level bird atlas in India, has created solid baseline data about the distribution and abundance of bird species across all major habitats, giving an impetus to futuristic studies.

▪ Conducted as a citizen science driven exercise with the participation of over 1000 volunteers of the birdwatching community, the KBA has been prepared based on systematic surveys held twice over 60 days a year during the wet (July to September) and dry (January to March) seasons between 2015 and 2020.

- The KBA accounts for nearly three lakh records of 361 species, including 94 very rare species, 103 rare species, 110 common species, 44 very common species, and 10 most abundant species.

▪ It is Arguably **Asia's largest bird atlas** in terms of geographical extent, sampling effort and species coverage derived from the aggregation of 25,000 checklists.

- It was found that the species count was higher during the dry season than in the wet season while species richness and evenness were higher in the northern and central districts than in the southern districts.

#### **Combat Climate Change through Technology-led Carbon Capture and Utilisation Solutions:**

- Experts from India and US discussed the challenges and opportunities to combat climate change through technology-led Carbon Capture and Utilisation solutions at the Indo-US Scoping Workshop on Carbon

Capture held on 21st January 2022, jointly organized by DST India and DoE USA.

- Dr. S Chandrasekhar, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt of India, said that at the recently concluded COP-26 at Glasgow, the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi brought forth the country's remarkable performance as well as ambitions to meet the climate goals despite being one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The PM has given a mandate for all of us to become a net-zero Emissions nation by the year 2070.
- Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS)** is among one such key pathways to reduce emissions while continuing to develop sustainably at an unprecedented pace.
- CCUS clearly aligns with five of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely, **Climate action; clean energy; industry, innovation, and infrastructure; responsible consumption and production; and partnerships to achieve the goals,**" he said at the first workshop on thematic of Carbon Capture.

### New Species of Rain Frog:

- A New Species of rain frog, discovered in the **Panama jungle**, has been named after Swedish Environmental Activist **Greta Thunberg**.
- The species has been named as **Pristimantis gretathunbergae**, or popularly known as the **Greta Thunberg Rain frog**.

### Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve Bags TX2 Award:

- Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR)** in Erode district has been given the prestigious TX2 award after its tiger numbers doubled to 80 since 2010.
- Apart from the STR, the **Bardia National Park in Nepal** has won this year's TX2 award for doubling the population of wild tigers.
- The awards are presented by the Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA|TS), Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Global Tiger Forum (GTF), IUCN's Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP), Panthera, UNDP, The Lion's Share, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and WWF.

- They celebrate the 10th anniversary of all 13 tiger range countries committed to doubling the Global population of wild tigers by 2022.

**Sathyamangalam wildlife sanctuary** was declared a **tiger reserve in 2013** and the reserve that spread across 1,411.60 sq km is an important link between the Nilgiris and Eastern Ghats.

- The Nilgiri biosphere landscape that this reserve is part of is currently the home to the Largest Tiger population in the world.

- It is connected to other well-established tiger habitats like Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Bandipur Tiger Reserve and BR Hills Tiger Reserve.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation:

- It was recently organized by the **Government of Malaysia** and the Global Tiger Forum.

- This conference is an important event for reviewing progress towards the Global Tiger Recovery Programme and commitments to tiger conservation.

- India will facilitate Tiger Range Countries towards the finalization of the New Delhi declaration for the Global Tiger Summit to be held at Vladivostok, Russia later this year.

- A **"Pre-Tiger Summit"** meeting was held at New Delhi in 2010.

- The draft declaration on tiger conservation for Global Tiger Summit was finalized.

### Parasitic plant found in Nicobar Eco hotspot:

- A new genus of a parasitic flowering plant has recently been discovered from the Nicobar Group of islands. The genus **Septemeranthus** Grows on the plant species **Horsfieldia glabra (Blume) Warb.**

- The parasitic flowering plants have a modified root structure spread on the stem of the tree and are anchored inside the bark of the host tree.

- The plant was found on the periphery of the tropical forest in one of the biodiversity hotspots referred to as the **Nicobar group of islands** separated from the Andaman group of Islands.



# 4. ECONOMICS

## 4.1 NEW ECONOMIC POLICY & GOVT. SECTOR

### 'India to surpass Japan as Asia's 2<sup>nd</sup> Largest Economy by 2030'

- India is likely to overtake Japan as Asia's second largest economy by 2030 when its GDP is also projected to surpass that of Germany and the U.K. to rank as the world's No.3, IHS Markit said in a report.
- Currently, **India is the Sixth Largest Economy**, behind the U.S., China, Japan, Germany and U.K.
- India's nominal GDP is forecast to rise from \$2.7 trillion in 2021 to \$8.4 trillion by 2030.
- By 2030, the Indian economy would also be larger in size than the largest Western European Economies of Germany, France and the U.K.
- Gold bond Issue Priced at ₹4,786/gm:
- The issue price for the Next tranche of Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2021-22, which will open for subscription for five days, has been fixed at ₹4,786 per gram, the RBI said.
- The Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2021-22 Series IX will be open for subscription for the period January 10-14, 2022.
- The Government of India has decided to offer a Discount of ₹50 per gram less than the nominal value to investors applying online and the payment made through digital mode.

### About Sovereign Gold Bonds Scheme:

- Sovereign Gold bonds are issued by the RBI on behalf of the government. They are Government securities denominated in Grams of gold. They are substitutes for holding Physical gold.
- The sovereign gold bond scheme was launched in November 2015. Its objective is to reduce the Demand for physical gold and shift a part of the domestic savings (used for the purchase of gold) into financial savings.
- Buy and Sale:** Investors have to pay the issue price in cash and the bonds will be redeemed (bought back by the issuer) in cash on maturity.
- Issue price is the price at which bonds are offered for sale when they First become Available to the public.
- The Government will pay an interest at the Rate of 2.5% per annum. The interest is payable semi-annually.
- Tenure:** Sovereign gold bonds have a tenure of eight years, with exit options are available from the fifth year.
- Eligibility:** The Bonds will be restricted for sale to resident individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs), Trusts, Universities and Charitable Institutions.
- The Minimum permissible investment unit is 1 gram of gold.

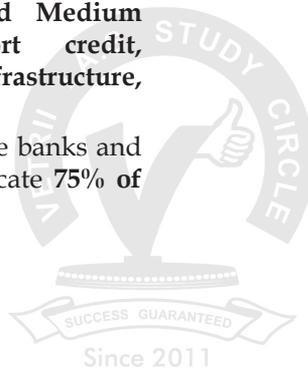
### EVs in RBI's Priority Sector Lending:

- NITI Aayog has proposed government to include electric vehicles in the Reserve Bank of India's priority-sector lending guidelines.
- NITI Aayog, in its report on EVs with Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and RMI India said, banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) in India have the potential to achieve an electric vehicle (EV) financing market size of Rs 40,000 crore by 2025 and Rs 3.7 lakh crore by 2030.

- Priority-sector lending aims to expand Financial access and support employment Opportunities in India.
- It has suggested in the report that electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and commercial four-wheelers are early segments to prioritize under PSL.
- Further, it suggests recognition of EVs as an infrastructure sub-sector by the ministry of finance and the incorporation of EVs as a separate reporting category under the RBI.

**About Priority Sector Lending (PSL):**

- The RBI mandates all scheduled commercial banks and foreign banks (with a sizable presence in India) are mandated to set aside **40%** of their **Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANDC)** for lending to the priority sectors.
- **Priority sectors** identified by RBI are - **Agriculture, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), export credit, education, housing, social infrastructure, Renewable energy.**
- Regional rural banks, co-operative banks and small finance banks have to allocate **75%** of ANDC to PSL.



## 4.2 CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIAN ECONOMY

### Core sector output rose 3.1% in November

- Output of eight core sectors rose by 3.1% in November as against a contraction of 1.1% in the same month last year.
- Barring crude oil and cement, all other sectors recorded positive growth in November.
- In October, these core sectors' output had grown by 8.4%.
- According to the data, coal production expanded by 8.2%, natural gas by 23.7%, refinery products 4.3%, fertilizers by 2.5%, steel by 0.8%, and electricity climbed 1.5% in November.
- The growth rate of the eight infrastructure sectors – coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilizers, steel, cement and electricity – stood at 13.7% during April, November this fiscal as against a contraction of 11.1% during the same period last fiscal.

### Wheat Exports Jumped to \$872 mn in April-Oct.

- India's wheat exports jumped to \$872 million during April-October period in the current fiscal on account of healthy demand, with Bangladesh emerging as the top destination.
- India's wheat exports are mainly to neighboring countries, with Bangladesh having the largest share of more than 54% in both volume and value terms in fiscal year FY21.

### 'India spent record \$55.7 bn on Gold Imports in 2021'

- India splurged a record \$55.7 billion on Gold imports in 2021, buying more than double the previous year's tonnage as a price drop favored retail buyers and pent-up demand emerged for weddings that were delayed when the pandemic first hit.
- India is the world's second biggest gold consuming nation.

### Apple is first firm to touch \$3 TN in value:

- Apple Inc. became the first company with a \$3 trillion stock market value, lifted by investor confidence that the iPhone maker will keep introducing bestselling products as it explores new markets such as automated cars and virtual reality.

### NSO Estimates FY22 GDP Growth at 9.2%

- India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow by 9.2% in the current financial year following last fiscal's 7.3% contraction, the National Statistical Office (NSO) said in its first advance estimates of economic output released, amid concerns over the likely impact of a third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- GDP at constant prices (2011-12) in the year 2021-22 is estimated at ₹147.54 lakh crore, as against the provisional estimate of GDP for the year 2020-21 of ₹135.13 lakh crore.
- Real GVA at Basic Prices is estimated at ₹135.22 lakh crore in 2021-22, as against ₹124.53 lakh crore in 2020-21, showing a growth of 8.6%.
- Agriculture sector is estimated to grow at 3.9% in FY22 (3.6%).
- The electricity, water supply and other utility services category is estimated to grow at 8.5% (1.9%), while construction is expected to grow 10.7% (8.6%).
- Trade, hotels, transport, communication and broadcasting services are projected to grow at 11.9% against a sharp contraction of 18.2% last year.

### Indian Exports up 33% to \$7.63 Billion during Jan 1-7 Period:

- The country's exports grew 33.16 per cent to \$7.63 billion during January 1-7 period on account of healthy performance by various sectors, including engineering, petroleum and gems and jewellery, according to preliminary data from the Commerce Ministry.

- Imports, excluding petroleum, increased in the period under review by 29.88 per cent over the Same Period of 2020-21.

### Retail Inflation Accelerates to 5.59%:

- Retail inflation quickened to 5.59% in December due to an uptick in food prices, while India's industrial output grew at a subdued 1.4% in November 2021, according to data from the National Statistical Office (NSO).
- The inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) compares with 4.91% seen a Month earlier and 4.59% in December 2020.
- Consumer food price inflation accelerated to 4.05% in December, as against 1.87% seen in November 2021.
- The increase relative to the previous month was primarily led by food and beverages, and clothing and footwear, with a welcome moderation in the prints for fuel and light.

### What is Inflation?

- Inflation refers to the rise in the prices of most Goods and services of daily or common use, such as food, clothing, housing, recreation, Transport, consumer staples, etc.
- Inflation measures the average price change in a basket of commodities and services over time.
- In India, inflation is primarily measured by two main indices – WPI (Wholesale Price Index) and CPI (Consumer Price Index) which measure wholesale and retail-level price changes, respectively.

### About Consumer Price Index:

- It measures price changes from the Perspective of a retail buyer.
- The CPI calculates the difference in the price of commodities and services such as food, Medical care, education, electronics etc, which Indian consumers buy for use.
- The CPI has several sub-groups including food and beverages, fuel and light, housing and clothing, bedding and footwear.
- Four types of CPI are as follows:
  - CPI for Industrial Workers (IW).
  - CPI for Agricultural Labourer (AL).
  - CPI for Rural Labourer (RL).

- CPI (Rural/Urban/Combined).

- Of these, the first three are compiled by the Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Fourth is compiled by the National Statistical Office (NSO) in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- Base Year for CPI is 2012.
- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) uses CPI data to control inflation.

### About NSO:

- The Government order dated 23rd May 2019 has merged the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) to form an overarching body - National Statistical Office (NSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- It is the central statistical agency of the Government mandated under the Statistical Services Act 1980.
- The order states that the proposed NSO would be headed by Secretary (Statistics and Programme Implementation).
- NSO was first envisaged by Rangarajan Commission to implement and maintain statistical standards and coordinate statistical activities of Central and State agencies as laid down by the National Statistical Commission (NSC).
- It is responsible for the development of arrangements for providing statistical information services to meet the needs of the Government and other users for information on which to base policy, planning, monitoring and Management Decisions.
- Its services include collecting, compiling and disseminating official Statistical Information.
- All business operations in NSO are done in compliance with international standards, Procedures and best practices.

### World Bank retains India's Economic Growth Forecast at 8.3% for 2021-22:

- The World Bank has retained India's Economic Growth forecast for the current fiscal at 8.3 per cent as the recovery is yet to become broad-based.

- As per the first advanced estimates of the national income released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) last week, the Economy is projected to grow at 9.2 per cent in 2021-22, surpassing pre-COVID level in Actual terms, mainly on account of improved performance, especially in farm, mining and manufacturing sectors.
- Further, the report said that growth forecast has been upgraded for 2022-23 and 2023-24 to 8.7 per cent and 6.8 per cent, respectively.
- The upward revision reflects an improving investment outlook with private investment, particularly manufacturing, benefiting from the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, and increases in Infrastructure Investment.

### **UN Report Projects Global Economy Growth to slow in 2022, 2023:**

- The global economy is projected to grow by 4% in 2022 - down from 5.5% last year - and expand 3.5% in 2023 amid new waves of COVID-19 infections, labor market challenges, supply-chain constraints and rising inflation, according to a U.N. report.
- **The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2022 report** said 2021 growth momentum - following a contraction of 3.4% in 2020 - began to slow by the end of the year, including in big Economies like China, the European Union and the United States, as the effects of fiscal and monetary stimuli faded and major Supply-chain disruptions surfaced.
- The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2022 is a report produced by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), in partnership with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and **the five United Nations Regional Commissions:**
- Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESWA). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) also contributed to

the report.

### **About United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA):**

- It was formed in the year 1948.
- It is the development pillar of the United Nations.
- UN DESA is a pioneer of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- It brings the global community together to work towards common solutions to the World's most pressing problems.
- It helps countries translate their global commitments into national action in the Economic, social and Environmental Spheres.
- About UNCTAD:
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was established in 1964 to promote development-friendly Integration of developing countries into the World Economy.
- UNCTAD is a permanent intergovernmental body headquartered at **Geneva in Switzerland.**
- Some of the reports published by it are:
  - Trade and Development Report
  - World Investment Report
  - The Least Developed Countries Report
  - Information and Economy Report
  - Technology and Innovation Report
  - Commodities and Development Report.

### **IMF cuts India's GDP Forecast to 9 per cent in FY22:**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut India's economic growth forecast to 9 per cent for the current fiscal year ending March 31, joining a host of agencies which have downgraded their projections on concerns over the impact of a spread of new variant of coronavirus on business activity and mobility.
- In its latest update of World Economic Outlook, the Washington-based international Financial Institution, which had in October last year projected a 9.5 per cent GDP growth for India, put the forecast for the next fiscal FY23 (April 2022 to March 2023) at 7.1 per cent.

- The Indian economy had contracted by 7.3 per cent in the 2020-21 fiscal year. The IMF's forecast for the current financial year is less than 9.2 per cent that the government's Central Statistics Office has predicted and 9.5 per cent that the Reserve Bank of India has estimated.

#### **About INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND**

##### **(IMF):**

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial institution, headquartered in Washington, D.C., consisting of 190 countries.
- Formed in 1944, started on 27 December 1945, at the Bretton Woods Conference primarily by the ideas of Harry Dexter White and John Maynard Keynes, it came into formal existence in 1945 with 29 member countries and the goal of reconstructing the international monetary system.
- **President:** Kristalina Georgieva

#### **India's Exports to China jump 34%:**

- India's exports to China have increased about 34 per cent to USD 22.9 billion in 2021 from USD 17.1 billion in 2019, according to data from the Commerce Ministry.
- Imports, on the other hand, rose 28 per cent to USD 87.5 billion in 2021 as against USD 68.4 billion in 2019.
- The trade deficit has increased to USD 64.5 billion last year as compared with USD 51.2 billion in 2019.

## 4.3 MONEY & BANKING

### Foreign owned assets in India rose by \$37 bn in Q2: RBI data:

- Indian residents' overseas financial assets rose \$31.9 billion, almost three-fourths of which came from build-up in reserve assets.
- This partly reflects the allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in August 2021, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said.
- The regulator released data relating to India's International Investment Position (IIP).
- The International Monetary Fund describes a nation's IIP as showing the value of financial assets of residents of an economy that are claims on non-residents, or are gold bullion held as reserve assets and of the liabilities of residents to non-residents.

### About International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial institution, headquartered in Washington, D.C., consisting of 190 countries.
- Formed in 1944, started on 27 December 1945, at the Bretton Woods Conference primarily by the ideas of Harry Dexter White and John Maynard Keynes, it came into formal existence in 1945 with 29 member countries and the goal of reconstructing the international monetary system.
- **President:** Kristalina Georgieva

### RBI Approves Small, Offline e-payments:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come out with the framework for facilitating small value digital payments in offline mode, a move that would promote digital payments in semiurban and rural Areas.
- The framework incorporates feedback received from the pilot experiments on offline transactions conducted in different parts of the country between September 2020 and June 2021.
- An offline digital payment does not require Internet or Telecom connectivity.

- Under this new framework, such payments can be carried out face-to-face (proximity mode) using any channel or instrument like Cards, wallets and mobile devices.
- Such transactions would not require an Additional Factor of Authentication. Since the transactions are offline, alerts (by way of SMS and / or email) will be received by the customer after a time lag.
- There is a limit of ₹200 per transaction and an overall limit of ₹2,000 until the balance in the account is replenished. The RBI said the Framework took effect 'Immediately'.

### SBI, ICICI, HDFC Bank continue to remain Systemically Important Banks: RBI

- The RBI said state-owned SBI, along with Private Sector lenders ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank continue to be Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) or institutions which are 'too big to fail'.
- SIBs are perceived as banks that are 'too big to fail' (TBTF).
- This perception of TBTF creates an expectation of government support for these banks in times of distress. Due to this perception, these lenders enjoy certain advantages in the Funding Markets.
- SBI, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank continue to be identified as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs), under the same bucketing structure as in the 2020 list of D-SIBs.
- The current update is based on data collected from banks as on March 31, 2021.
- The additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) requirement for D-SIBs was phased-in from April 1, 2016 and became fully effective from April 1, 2019.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had Announced SBI and ICICI Bank as D-SIBs in 2015 and 2016.
- HDFC Bank was classified as a D-SIB in 2017.
- The framework for dealing with D-SIBs was Issued in July 2014.

- The framework requires the RBI to disclose the names of banks designated as **D-SIBs starting from 2015** and place these lenders in appropriate buckets depending upon their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs).
- The Reserve Bank of India said that State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank will remain as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) and therefore will have to maintain additional common equity tier 1 (CET1) capital ratios in the same manner Prescribed in 2020.
- For SBI, the additional CET1 requirement is maintained at 0.6% of the bank's risk weighted assets, while for HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank, the requirement is kept at 0.2%.
- The additional CET1 requirement is in addition to the capital conservation buffer and was prescribed to strengthen these Bank's Capital.
- The capital conservation buffer, at 2.5% of a bank's total exposures, is in addition to the 4.5% Minimum Requirement for Common Equity Tier 1 capital.

### **LazyPay tie-up with SBM Bank India to Launch LazyCard:**

- LazyPay, a Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) solution by PayU Finance, announced its partnership with SBM Bank India to launch **LazyCard**, a prepaid payment instrument backed by a credit line that works on the Visa Payment network.
- LazyCard reaches over 62 million pre-approved users of LazyPay, with a credit limit of up to 5 lakhs.

### **About SBM Bank India:**

- SBM Bank (India) Ltd. incorporated on 1st December 2018, is an Indian private sector Bank headquartered in Mumbai, India.
- It is the first-ever foreign bank in India, licensed to operate as a Scheduled Commercial Bank by the Reserve Bank of India in virtue of a wholly-owned subsidiary Model.
- SBM Bank (India) Ltd. is a step-down subsidiary of State Bank of Mauritius.

## 4.4 PUBLIC FINANCE: FISCAL POLICY

### GST Council defers Tax Rate increase on Textiles:

- The GST was retained the status quo and not go to 12% from 5% in the case of textiles.
- Various States such as Gujarat, West Bengal, Delhi, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu had opposed the move to raise the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate on textiles to 12% with effect from January 1, 2022.
- However, a similar demand for footwear was not considered and the sector will attract GST of 12% from January 1, irrespective of prices.

### Current Account Slips to Deficit in Q2:

- India's Balance of Payments (BoP) position moved to a deficit of \$9.6 billion in the Quarter ended September (Q2), as widening trade deficit weighed.
- At 1.3% of GDP, this compares with a surplus of \$6.6 billion in the immediately previous Quarter and with a surplus of \$15.3 billion a year earlier.
- The deficit in the **Current Account** in Q2 was mainly due to widening of trade deficit to \$44.4 billion from \$30.7 billion in the preceding quarter and an increase in net outgo of Investment Income.

### About Current Account:

- A country's Current Account records the value of exports and imports of both Goods and services and international transfers of capital.
- It is one of the three components of its **Balance of Payments (BoP)**, the others being the **capital account and the Financial Account**.
- Current account measures the nation's earnings and spendings abroad and it consists of the balance of trade, net primary income or factor income (earnings on foreign investments minus payments made to foreign investors) and net unilateral transfers, that have taken place over a given period of time.

### Forex Reserves down by USD 1.466 bn to USD 633.614 bn:

- The Country's Foreign Exchange Reserves declined by USD 1.466 billion to USD 633.614 billion in the week ended December 31, RBI data showed.
- During the reporting week ended December 31, the decline in foreign exchange reserves was on account of a fall in foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves.
- Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of Appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the Foreign exchange reserves.
- Gold reserves rose by USD 14 million to USD 39.405 billion in the reporting week.
- The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) remained unchanged at USD 19.114 billion in the reporting week.
- The country's reserve position with the IMF was also unchanged at USD 5.207 billion in the reporting week.

### About Foreign Exchange Reserves:

- Foreign exchange reserves are assets held on reserve by a central bank in foreign currencies, which can include bonds, treasury bills and other government securities.
- It needs to be noted that most foreign exchange reserves are held in US dollars.
- **India's Forex Reserve include:**
  1. Foreign Currency Assets
  2. Gold reserves
  3. Special Drawing Rights
  4. Reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

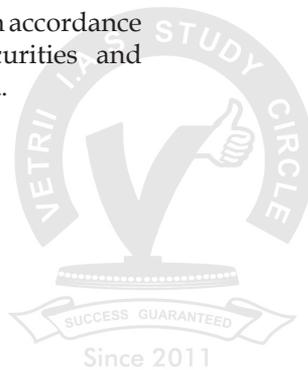
## Saa᳚Thi Mobile App on Investor

### Education:

- The New App Saa᳚Thi aims to empower investors with accurate knowledge about the securities market.
- The App will cater largely to individual investors, who have recently entered the markets and carry out trading via their mobile phones.
- The app will be helpful in easily accessing all the relevant information like the basic concepts of Securities Market, KYC Process, trading and settlement, mutual funds, recent market developments, investor grievances redressal mechanism, etc.
- It is currently available in Hindi and English.

### About SEBI:

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India was established on **April 12, 1992** in accordance with the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992.
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai.
- **Chairperson:** Ajay Tyagi.



## 4.5 PUBLIC FINANCE: TAX STRUCTURE IN INDIA

### November's GST Revenues:

- November's GST revenues were the second Highest since the introduction of this indirect Tax regime in July 2017.
- While revenues from domestic transactions were up 5% year-on-year in December, there was a significant variation among collections in States, with revenues falling by 4% in Tamil Nadu and by 2% in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.
- West Bengal and Bihar both saw a 10% decline in revenues, while Uttar Pradesh recorded a marginal 2% rise.
- Maharashtra, on the other hand, clocked a healthy 11% growth while Karnataka revenues rose 12%.

### About GST:

- Goods and Service tax has been implemented by the Union government on 1st July 2017 all over the country, through 101st Constitutional Amendment act.
- Goods and services are divided into five different tax slabs for collection of tax: 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%.
- The revenue Loss incurred by the States because of the implementation of GST will be given compensation for five years from the Implementation of GST.
- **Goods kept outside the GST:**
  - ✓ Alcohol for human consumption (i.e., not for commercial use).
  - ✓ Petrol and petroleum products (GST will apply at a later date), i.e., petroleum crude, high-speed diesel, motor spirit (petrol), natural gas, aviation turbine fuel.

### Centre releases Rs 95,082 Crore to States as January Tax Devolution:

- The finance ministry released Rs 95,082 crore to states, which includes an advance instalment of tax devolution of Rs 47,541 crore, almost double of their entitlement during the month of January.
- With the release of the second advance installment, the states would have received an additional amount of Rs 90,082 crore under tax devolution over and above what has been budgeted to be released till January, 2022.
- Among those, Tamil Nadu's share of Rs.1939.19 crore of first instalment and second instalment of Rs.1939.19 crore, total Rs.3878.38 crore has been released by Centre to Tamil Nadu as tax devolution.
- Among the states received the tax devolution, **Uttar Pradesh received the highest Amount** (17,056.66 crore) followed by Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh.
- State which received **lowest** share among larger state category is **Himachal Pradesh** (789 crores).

## 4.6 MONEY & BANKING

### Most Preferred UPI Beneficiary Bank in India:

- **Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL)** became the largest and fastest-growing 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.
- **While State Bank of India (SBI)** 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**.

### First Telecom Company to roll-out UPI AUTOPAY:

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and **Reliance Jio** have announced that UPI AUTOPAY has now been introduced for the telecom industry with Jio.
- Jio's integration with **UPI AUTOPAY** has made it the **first player** in the telecom industry to go live with the unique e-mandate feature that was **launched by NPCI**.
- Using the UPI AutoPay launched by NPCI, customers can now enable recurring e-mandate using any UPI application for recurring payments such as mobile bills, electricity bills, EMI payments, entertainment/OTT subscriptions, insurance, mutual funds among others.

### About NPCI:

- **Founded:** 2008.
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- **MD & CEO:** Dilip Asbe.

### Digital Payments Index for September 2021:

- The RBI's Digital Payment Index, which shows the deepening of payments through digital modes in India, rose by 39.64 per cent to 304.06 in September 2021 against 217.74 in the year-ago month.
- RBI has introduced Digital Payments Index in January 2021 with March 2018 as the base year to capture the extent of digitization of payments across the country.
- RBI has **started publishing** the Digital Payments Index (DPI) on a **semi-annual basis** from March 2021 onwards with a lag of 4 months. This means that the DPI will be released by RBI for March and September every year in the months of July and January respectively.
- The **RBI-DPI comprises five broad parameters** that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods, viz. payment enablers (with 25 per cent weight), payment infrastructure—demand-side factors (10 per cent), payment infrastructure—supply-side factors (15 per cent), payment performance (45 per cent) and consumer centricity (5 per cent).

### About Reserve Bank of India:

- The Reserve Bank of India was established on April 1, 1935 in accordance with the provisions of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.
- The Central Office of the Reserve Bank was initially established in Kolkata but was permanently moved to Mumbai in 1937. The Central Office is where the Governor sits and where policies are formulated.
- Though originally privately owned, since nationalisation in 1949, the Reserve Bank is fully owned by the Government of India.



# 5. SCIENCE

## 5.1 LATEST INVENTIONS ON SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### World's First artificial intelligence-Equipped Judge:

- China has created a judge equipped with artificial intelligence, which is the first of its kind in the world.
- This AI-equipped judge gives 97 percent correct decisions after listening to verbal Arguments.
- It is produced by Shanghai Pudong People's Procuratorate which is the busy Prosecution Office.
- It has been built using thousands of cases from around the world. These cases are from the year 2015 to 2020.

### Researchers find Anticancer Activity in Marine Seagrass:

- Researchers have found scientific evidence of a **strong anti-cancer activity** in the ethyl acetate fraction of **Halodule uninervis**, a **Species of seagrass found in the coastal Region of Mandapam close to Rameswaram in southern Tamil Nadu.**
- The study, claimed to be the first of its kind, was aimed at evaluating the **invitro anti-cancer activity of ethyl acetate fraction** of this seagrass species against various human cancer cell lines, including malignant melanoma, lung, cervix, carcinoma and colorectal cancers.

### "Yogyata" Application:

- The Common Services Centers (CSC) has recently launched the "Yogyata" mobile phone application. It aims to provide vocational education and skill enhancement opportunities to youth and other citizens in rural areas.
- It includes the access to courses like Cyber Security, CAD and 3D printing, to increase employability The training content is on a continuous learning mode and the courses are yearly subscription-based.

## 5.2 LATEST DISCOVERIES IN HEALTH SCIENCE

### India's Serum Institute Applies for full approval of Covishield Vaccine:

- Serum Institute of India has applied to the country's drug regulator and the health ministry for full approval of its COVID-19 vaccine Covishield, the company's chief Executive said.
- Serum Institute, which produces AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine under the brand name Covishield, has supplied more than 1.25 billion doses of the shot in India.

### ICMR Approves India-made kit to Detect Omicron:

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has approved a testing kit for detecting the Omicron variant of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.
- The kit is manufactured by Tata Medical and Diagnostics and is named **OmiSure**.
- The RT-PCR kit, OmiSure, was earlier sent to the ICMR for approval after continued Testing. The kit will be used to confirm the Omicron in patients with its S-Gene Target Failure (SGTF) strategy.
- The kit currently in use to detect Omicron in India has been developed by the U.S.-based scientific instrumentation company Thermo Fisher. It, too, uses the SGTF strategy to detect the variant.

### New Coronavirus Variant 'IHU' identified in France:

- As the world grapples with the highly mutated Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2, scientists have identified a new strain of the COVID-19 causing virus in Southern France.
- Known as 'IHU', the **B.1.640.2** variant has been reported by researchers at institute IHU Mediterranee Infection in at least 12 cases, and has been linked to travel to African Country Cameroon.
- The B.1.640.2 has not been identified in other countries so far or labelled a variant under investigation by the World Health Organization (WHO).

### About WHO:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for International Public Health.
- Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it has six regional offices and 150 field offices Worldwide.
- The WHO was established on 7 April 1948.
- Director-General: Tedros Adhanom.

### Sonowal bats for AYUSH Immunity kit:

- The Ministry of AYUSH has developed an Ayurvedic kit for increasing immunity to combat the variants of COVID19 named **Ayuraksha Kit**.
- The kit comprising Chyavanprash, Sanshmani Vati, Anu Taila and Ayush Kwath to increase immunity in the fight against the Coronavirus.

### Xenotransplantation:

- A US man has become the first person in the world to get a heart transplant from a Genetically-modified pig. David Bennett, 57, is doing well three days after the experimental seven-hour procedure in Baltimore.
- The possibility of using animal organs for so-called xenotransplantation to meet the Demand has long been considered, and using pig heart valves is Already Common.

### New 'Deltacron' Covid Variant:

- Cyprus has detected a new variant dubbed as "Deltacron", that has a similar genetic background to the Delta variant, coupled with 10 mutations from Omicron.

### About Cyprus:

- **Capital:** Nicosia.
- **Currency:** Euro.
- **Continent:** Europe.
- **President:** Nicos Anastasiades.

### Covid Vaccine for 12-14 Age Group:

- India may begin inoculating children in the 12-14 age group against COVID19 in March as the 15-17 population is likely to get fully vaccinated by then, N.K. Arora, Chairman of

the COVID19 working group of the **National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI)**.

- NTAGI is the highest advisory body on immunization in the country which consists of independent experts who provide recommendations on vaccines after reviewing data on disease burden, Efficacy and cost-effectiveness of vaccines.

### **Omicron in Community Transmission: INSACOG**

- Omicron is now in community transmission in India and has become dominant in multiple metros, where new cases have been rising exponentially, the Indian SARSCoV2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) said.
- INSACOG, jointly initiated by the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry, the Department of Biotechnology and others, is a consortium of 38 laboratories monitoring the genomic variations in SARSCoV2, the novel Coronavirus causing COVID19.

### **Omicron Testing Kit – OM:**

- The CSIR - Central Drug Research Institute has developed an indigenous RT-PCR diagnostic kit, 'Om'.
- This is for the testing of the Omicron variant of Coronavirus.
- It is the first kit made by any government institution.
- And it is the third to be made indigenously, for specific testing of Omicron.

### **About CSIR:**

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research abbreviated as CSIR was established by the Government of India on 26 September 1942 as an Autonomous body that has emerged as the largest research and development organisations in India.
- Though it is mainly funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology, it operates as an autonomous body through the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- Since 18 October 2018, Shekhar C. Mande is the Director General of CSIR-cum-Secretary DSIR.

### **NeoCov Coronavirus:**

- A team of Wuhan researchers found a new kind of coronavirus, **NeoCov**, among bats in South Africa.
- In a study, the researchers said that the virus may pose a threat to humans in the future (1 out of 3 may die).
- The virus is closely related to the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), a viral disease that was first identified in Saudi Arabia in 2012.
- According to the study, NeoCov can penetrate human cells in the same way as the COVID-19 virus.
- NeoCov is only one mutation away from becoming dangerous for humans.

### **Portable Device to Detect Oral Cancer:**

- Scientists from IIT Kharagpur have developed a portable, inexpensive device for detecting oral cancer. The estimated cost per device is within USD500.
- The new technology enables a clinician in a community health centre detect potential vulnerable cases early enough, during the First Examination.

## 5.3 SPACE

### 'ISRO gearing up for Multiple Space Missions in 2022'

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is gearing up for a number of missions in 2022 including the launch of the first unmanned mission of Gaganyaan, its Chairman, K. Sivan said. In his New Year's message for 2022, Mr. Sivan said ISRO had a number of missions to execute this year.
- These include
  - ✓ The launch of the Earth Observation Satellites, EOS4 and EOS6 on board the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).
  - ✓ The EOS02 on board the maiden flight of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV).
  - ✓ Chandrayaan 03, Aditya L1, XpoSat, IRNSS and technology demonstration Missions with indigenously developed Advanced Technologies.
- ISRO has delivered the Sband SAR payload to NASA for NISAR [NASA ISRO SAR] mission. The NISAR mission, scheduled for launch in 2023, is optimized for studying hazards and global environmental change and can help manage natural resources better and provide information to scientists to better understand the effects and pace of Climate Change.
- A Venus mission, DISHA –a twin Aeronomy satellite mission and TRISHNA, an ISROCNES [Centre national detudes spatiales] Mission in 2024.

### China's lunar probe finds First on-site Evidence of Water on Moon's Surface:

- China's Chang'e 5 lunar lander has found the first-ever on-site evidence of water on the surface of the moon, lending new evidence to the dryness of the satellite.
- The study published in the peer-reviewed Journal Science Advances revealed that the lunar soil at the landing site contains less than 120 parts-per-million (ppm) water or 120 grams water per ton, and a light, vesicular rock carries 180 ppm, which are much drier

than that on Earth.

- The presence of water had been confirmed by remote observation but the lander has now Detected signs of water in rocks and soil.
- A device on-board the lunar lander measured the spectral reflectance of the regolith and the rock and detected water on the spot for the First Time.
- The Chang'e-5 spacecraft landed on one of the youngest mare basalts located at a mid-High latitude on the moon.

### About Change'e 5:

- Chang'e 5 is the fifth lunar exploration mission of the Chinese Lunar Exploration Program, and China's first lunar sample-Return Mission.
- Like its predecessors, the spacecraft is named after the Chinese moon goddess **Chang'e**.
- It was launched on **23 November 2020** from Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site on Hainan Island, landed on the Moon on **1 December 2020**, collected 1731 g of lunar and returned to the Earth on 16 December 2020.
- Chang'e-5 was the first lunar sample-return Mission since the Soviet Union's Luna 24 in 1976.
- The mission made China the third country to return samples from the Moon after the United States and the Soviet Union.

### Qualification test of Cryogenic

### Engine for Gaganyaan Successful:

- The Indian Space Research Organisation Successfully conducted the qualification test, for 720 seconds, of cryogenic engine for the Gaganyaan programme at the ISRO Propulsion Complex at Mahendragiri. ISRO said the performance met the objectives and the parameters closely matched with the predictions.
- This successful longduration test is a major Milestone for the human space programme – Gaganyaan. It ensures the reliability and robustness of the cryogenic engine for induction into the human rated launch vehicle for Gaganyaan.

**About Gaganyaan Mission:**

- Gaganyaan is a mission by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- **Under the Gaganyaan Schedule:**
  - ✓ Three flights will be sent into orbit.
  - ✓ There will be two unmanned flights and one Human spaceflight.
- The Gaganyaan system module, called the Orbital Module will have three Indian Astronauts, including a woman.
- It will circle Earth at a low-earth-orbit at an Altitude of 300-400 km from earth for 5-7 days.
- **Launch Vehicle:**
  - ✓ GSLV Mk III, also called the LVM-3 (Launch Vehicle Mark-3,) the three-stage heavy lift launch vehicle, will be used to launch Gaganyaan as it has the necessary payload capability.

**James Webb Space Telescope Snapped in Its Orbit 15 Lakh Kms away From Earth:**

- The **Rome-based Virtual Telescope Project** has released a picture of the James Webb Space Telescope among the stars after the latter just arrived at its destination on **January 25**.
- According to project manager Gianluca Masi's report, Webb was imaged just when it entered its orbit at the second Lagrange point after travelling 1.5 million kilometres after its launch on December 25.
- On January 25, Webb entered its orbit at the second Lagrange point, a location that has been chosen for its gravitational stability and to save the telescope's instruments from the Sun's heat.
- Built at a cost of \$10 billion, Webb has been touted as the successor of NASA-ESA's Hubble Space Telescope which will follow up on the findings of the latter.
- Scientists also say that it is the most powerful telescope ever built and has the highest level of sensitivity to the infrared wavelength of light.
- The telescope, in the simplest of terms, is a time machine that would peer 13 billion years ago to Answer Questions about the origins of the Universe.

## 5.4 NEW SCIENTIFIC LABORATORIES/OBSERVATORIES/ CENTRES

### Indian Army Sets Up Quantum Research Laboratory:

- The Indian Army created a quantum laboratory at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE) in Mhow, in the state of Madhya Pradesh with the support from the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).
- The officials said that the Army has set up a quantum computing laboratory and a centre for artificial intelligence (AI) at the institute.





# 6. NATIONAL – DIARY OF EVENT

## Sale of Electoral Bonds 2022:

- The sale of the 19<sup>th</sup> tranche of electoral bonds will begin from January 1, 2022.
- The issuance of these bonds was approved by the central government, ahead of the Assembly elections in next few months. The sale will go on till January 10.
- The elections are due in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Goa.
- "State Bank of India (SBI), in the XIX Phase of sale, has been authorized to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 29 Authorized Branches with effect from January 1 to January 10, 2022," the finance ministry said in a statement.
- The 29 specified SBI branches are in cities, such as Lucknow, Shimla, Dehradun Kolkata, Guwahati, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Patna, New Delhi, Chandigarh, Srinagar, Gandhinagar, Bhopal, Raipur, and Mumbai.

## About Electoral Bonds:

- Electoral Bond is a financial instrument for making donations to political parties.
- The sale of the first batch of electoral bonds took place from March 1-10, 2018.
- The 18<sup>th</sup> tranche of the bond sale took place from September 1 to September 10, 2021.
- The bonds are issued in multiples of Rs. 1,000, Rs. 10,000, Rs. 1 lakh, Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore without any maximum limit.
- State Bank of India is the only bank authorized to issue and encash these bonds, which are valid for fifteen days from the date of issuance.
- These bonds are redeemable in the designated Account of a registered political party.
- The bonds are available for purchase by any person (who is a citizen of India or incorporated or established in India) for a period of ten days

each in the months of January, April, July and October as may be specified by the Central Government.

- A person being an individual can buy bonds, either singly or jointly with other individuals.
- Donor's name is not mentioned on the bond.

## Oxfam India says work in 16 States will be Affected:

- Oxfam India said that the Central Government's refusal to renew its Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) registration would severely affect the Organization's ongoing crucial humanitarian and social work in 16 States.
- According to the list released by the MHA on January 1, 2022, Oxfam India's FCRA registration renewal request has been denied, restricting the flow of foreign funds to the Organisations.

## Budget 2022: Govt may Hike Agri

### Credit Target:

- With a view to give a boost to the agriculture sector, the government is likely to raise farm credit target to about Rs 18 lakh crore in the Budget 2022-23 to be presented on 1st February.
- For the current financial year, the Government has set a credit target of Rs 16.5 Lakh Crore.

## India Appeals against WTO Dispute panel ruling on Sugar Export Subsidies:

- India has appealed against a ruling of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) trade dispute settlement panel which ruled that the country's domestic support measures for sugar and sugarcane are inconsistent with Global trade norms.

- The appeal was filed by India in the **WTO's Appellate Body**, which is the final authority on such **Trade Disputes**.
- India has stated that the **WTO's dispute** panel ruling has made certain "erroneous" findings about domestic schemes to support sugarcane producers and exports and the findings of the panel are completely "unacceptable" to it.
- The panel in its ruling on December 14, 2021 recommended India to withdraw its alleged prohibited subsidies under the Production Assistance, the Buffer Stock, and the Marketing and Transportation Schemes within 120 days from the adoption of this report.
- Ruling in favour of Brazil, Australia and Guatemala in their trade dispute against India over New Delhi's sugar subsidies, the WTO panel has stated that the support measures are inconsistent with WTO trade rules.
- "atma-nirbhartha", India needs to allow private collaboration, wherever it is possible, with stringent quality controls.
- The Vice President virtually laid the Foundation stone of the "**Towed Array Integration Facility**", essential for the development of towed array sonar systems, which is critical to underwater defence.
  - ✓ The towed array sonar system is expected to enhance the Navy's capabilities to detect Quieter Enemy Submarines Underwater.
- The Vice President said NPOL's role towards national security is paramount as all warships or conventional submarines in the fleet of the Indian Navy are equipped with NPOL-developed sonars.
- Formed in the Southern Naval Command in 1952, NPOL later became part of DRDO in 1958. It will be celebrating its 70th year of Inception in 2022.

#### **About WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION:**

- The World Trade Organization (WTO) is an intergovernmental organization that regulates and facilitates international trade between nations.
- It officially commenced operations on 1 January 1995, pursuant to the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement, thus replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that had been established in 1948.
- The WTO is the world's largest international Economic organization, with 164 member states representing over 96% of global trade and global GDP.
- The WTO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Purpose:** Reduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade.
- **Director-General:** Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.
- She is the first woman and first African to lead the World Trade Organization as Director-General.
- In the fight against the global pandemic, India's National Vaccination Programme has been one of the most successful and largest vaccination programmes when compared to many developed western nations with significantly low population base to Vaccinate, said the Union Health Ministry.
- Since the start of the national COVID-19 vaccination drive on January 16 last year, India has administered to over 90 per cent of its eligible citizens first doses and 65 per cent second doses.
- In the vaccination drive, so far, the country has achieved several milestones, which have no precedent in the world, including administering over 100 crore doses in less than nine months, administering 2.51 crore doses in a single day and several times Administering one crore doses in a day, the ministry said.
- Compared with other developed nations, India has done a better job in administering Covid vaccination to its eligible adult citizen of 93.7 crore (as per the RGI (Registrar General of India)) across all its states and UTs (union territories).

#### **Make India Self-Reliant in all domains: Naidu**

- Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu while inaugurating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the **Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL)** in Kochi, said, to achieve

- **Table Source the Coverage of Vaccines to the Eligible Population**

FIRST DOSE	SECOND DOSE
India - 93.7%	India - 65%
America - 73.2%	America - 61.5%
Britian - 75.9%	Britain - 69.5%
France - 78.3%	France -73.2%
Spain - 84.7%	Spain - 81%

**Kalpna Chawla Centre for Research in Space Science & Technology (KCCRSST):**

- Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh Kalpana Chawla Centre for Research in Space Science & Technology (KCCRSST) at Chandigarh University, Gharuan, the first of its kind in North India.
- The union minister also launched Chandigarh University's Defence Scholarship Scheme, worth Rs 10 Crore, for the wards of Defence Personnel of the three services.
- The centre was established with the objective of training students in space science and satellite development and to meet future challenges in the area of space research, this state-of-the-art space centre would be the Ground Control Station (GCS) for the Chandigarh University's Student Satellite (CUSAT), an in-house developed nano-satellite being designed by the students of Chandigarh University, and a Geo Spatial Centre for research, besides other important Projects.
- It may be mentioned here that CUSAT will be among the 75 student-built satellites to be launched into space on the eve of the 75th Independence Day in 2022.

**Census Data Collection Deferred:**

- The first phase of census and the collection of details to update the National Population Register (NPR) have been postponed at least till September.
- The Registrar General of India (RGI) had in December informed the States that the freezing of boundaries of districts, subdistricts, tehsils, talukas and police stations had been postponed till June 2022.
- Freezing of boundary limits of administrative units, at least three months prior to the exercise, is a prerequisite for conducting the census.

**Census in India**

- The decennial (once in 10 years) Census is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs
- First Census was conducted in 1881
- Sixteenth Census - Census 2021
- Census 2021 was postponed owing to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic.
- However, it will be the first digital Census, also with a provision for self-enumeration.
- It is for the first time that information of Households headed by a person from the Transgender Community and members living in the family will be collected. - Earlier there was a column for male and female only.

- The Chandigarh University has joined the list of 13 institutes like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur, IIT Bombay and became the first university in North India to design and develop its own satellite.
- With the launch of CUSAT, Punjab will become the first border state in India to have its Own Satellite in space.

**States told to share Intel on Common Grid:**

- The Union Government has asked the States to share more intelligence inputs through the Multi Agency Centre (MAC), a common counter-terrorism grid under the Intelligence Bureau that was made operational in 2001 Following the Kargil War.
- At a high-level meet, Union Home Minister Amit Shah asked the Directors-General of Police to share adequate information and actionable inputs through the MAC.

- As many as 28 organisations, including the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), armed forces and State police, are part of the platform. Various security agencies share real-time intelligence inputs on the MAC.
- All the States have a Subsidiary Multi Agency Centre (SMAC) located in the capitals.

### Road named after PM Modi:

- The road connecting Tsomgo Lake and Nathula Border in Sikkim with the capital Gangtok has been named after Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "Narendra Modi Marg".
- This newly constructed road has been Officially inaugurated by Governor Ganga Prasad.
- The old route connecting the Nathula Border with the capital Gangtok has been Named after former Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.
- Officials said the 19.51-km-long road has been operational for commuters for a year, but now it has been officially inaugurated by the Governor.

### DRDO 64<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has observed the 64<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day of its establishment on January 01, 2022.
- DRDO was established with just 10 Laboratories to enhance the research work in the Defence sector.
- At that time, it was tasked with designing and developing cutting edge defence Technologies for the Indian Armed Forces.
- As of now, DRDO is working in multiple cutting-edge military technology areas, which include aeronautics, armaments, combat vehicles, electronics, instrumentation, engineering systems, missiles, materials, naval systems, advanced computing, simulation, cyber, life sciences and other technologies for defence.

### About DRDO:

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is the premier agency under the Department of Defence Research and Development in Ministry of Defence

of the Government of India, charged with the military's research and development, Headquartered in Delhi, India.

- DRDO was formed in 1958 from the Amalgamation of the then already functioning Technical Development Establishment (TDEs) of the Indian Army and the Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO).
- Chairman:** Dr G. Satheesh Reddy.

### Tamilisai inaugurates Central Kitchen at Lawspet:

- Lieutenant Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan inaugurated the modernised kitchen of the Akshaya Patra Foundation at Lawspet.
- The Education Department had signed an agreement with the foundation, a non-profit wing of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, in 2018, for the supply of nutritious mid-day meals to 50,800 children Studying in 291 schools in Puducherry.
- The kitchen was constructed at a cost of around ₹15 crore with the support from the New India Assurance Corporation Limited and the General Insurance Corporation of India.

### PM Modi lays foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi lays the foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University in Meerut.
- The University will be established at Salawa and Kaili villages of Sardhana town in Meerut at an estimated cost of about 700 Crore rupees.
- The University will have the capacity of Training 1080 sportspersons including 540 female and 540 Male Sportspersons.

### Energy Transition Advisory Committee:

- The Energy Transition Advisory Committee was formed by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. It is headed by Tarun Kapoor, former Secretary of Petroleum Ministry.
- It will focus on increasing the share of clean Energy sources such as hydrogen, biofuel, Nuclear, geothermal, tidal in the energy mix of the country.

**Why was the committee formed?**

- ✓ To help India achieve its net zero emission Target by 2070.
- ✓ To create an energy transition road map (within 6 months).
- ✓ To create a step – by – step plan for moving from Fossil fuels to Green Energy.

**Digi Zone**

- Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has inaugurated “Digi Zone”, at Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai, as part of its effort to enhance its digital footprint.
- LIC’s Digi Zone can be used by the customers to purchase policies online, pay the premium and avail of other services.

**First Open Rock Museum Inaugurated:**

- Union Minister of State for Science & Technology Jitendra Singh inaugurated India’s first open rock museum on the campus of the CSIR National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI).
- About 46 different types of rocks of ages ranging from 3.3 billion years to around 55 million years, have been displayed in a garden with descriptions giving their Economic and scientific importance.
- The rocks have been sourced from Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir and others.
- The country was celebrating 75 years of Independence and CSIR celebrating 80 years of its Formation.

**About National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI):**

- The National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) is a geoscientific research organization established in 1961 under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), India’s largest Research and Development Organization.
- **Location:** Hyderabad, Telangana.

**MHA forms Committee to Probe into PM Modi’s Security Breach in Punjab:**

- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has constituted a committee to enquire into the serious lapses in the security arrangements during Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s visit to Ferozepur, Punjab on 05.01.2022.
- 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.

**Centre Releases Revenue Deficit Grant to 17 States:**

- The Central government released Rs 9,871 Crore as revenue deficit grant to 17 states including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.
- This was the 10<sup>th</sup> instalment of the Post Devolution Revenue Deficit (PDRD) grant Released to the states.
- The Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grants are provided to the States as per the recommendations of the **Fifteenth Finance Commission** to meet the gap in Revenue Accounts of the States post devolution.
- The eligibility of States to receive this grant and the quantum of grant was decided by the Commission based on the gap between assessment of revenue and expenditure of the State after taking into account the assessed devolution for the Financial Year 2021-22.

**About Finance Commission:**

- The Finance Commission (FC) is a constitutional body, that determines the method and formula for distributing the tax proceeds between the Centre and states, and among the states as per the Constitutional Arrangement and Present Requirements.
- Under Article 280 of the Constitution, the President of India is required to constitute a Finance Commission at an Interval of five Years or earlier.

- The 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission was constituted by the President of India in November 2017, under the chairmanship of NK Singh.
- Its recommendations will cover a period of Five years from the year 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- As many as 13,737 out of 14,200 villages in the State are on the ODF Plus list, which is 96.74%.
- This was followed by **Tamil Nadu** with 4,432 villages (35.39%) and **Karnataka** with 1,511 villages (5.59%). **Gujarat** took the 17th Position with only 83 villages (0.45%).

### **Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute in Kolkata:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the second campus of Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute (CNCI) in Kolkata on January 7 via video conferencing.
- The second campus of CNCI has been built in line with Modi's vision to expand and upgrade health facilities in all parts of the Country.
- Around Rs 400 crore was provided by the Union government and the rest by the West Bengal Government in the ratio of 75:25.

### **Government Approves ₹12,031 Crore in Green Energy Push:**

- The Government cleared a ₹12,031 crore plan to set up infrastructure to transmit electricity from renewable energy projects as it seeks to Boost the output from green sources and meet half of the nation's energy requirement from them by 2030.
- The investment Approval by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) is for the second phase of the green energy corridor, which will help supply 20 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy to the national grid from Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
- The project is Expected to help India meet the climate commitments it made at the COP-26 summit in Glasgow.
- The CCEA's decision adds strength to India's efforts of achieving the target of 450GW in the Renewable Energy Sector.

### **Telangana tops in Highest Number of ODF villages:**

- **Telangana** stood first in the country in the list of the Highest Number of **Open Defecation Free (ODF Plus) villages** under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase-II programme till December 31, 2021.

### **Jammu and Kashmir set to have district-level Good Governance Index:**

- Jammu and Kashmir will soon become the First Union Territory to have a district-level Good Governance Index, Union minister Jitendra Singh announced.
- The Centre will set up the index and the department of administrative reforms and public grievances will carry out this task in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Government.
- The framework of the proposed Index has been finalised with the technical support from the Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad.
- The framework will have 58 indicators that Assess different aspects of development and District Administration.

### **Modi's vision of a 'Sweet Revolution':**

- To harness export potential of honey in line with the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of a 'Sweet Revolution' through promotion of beekeeping and allied activities, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has been giving thrust on boosting exports through ensuring quality production and market expansion to newer countries.
- At present, India's natural honey exports are majorly dependent on one market - the United States, which accounts for more than 80 per cent of the exports.
- APEDA is working with the exporters to deal with the challenges such as higher Freight cost, limited availability of containers in peak honey export season, higher Nuclear Magnetic Resonance test costs and inadequate Export incentives.

- India exported 59,999 metric tonnes (MT) of natural honey worth Rs. 716 crore (US \$ 96.77 million) during 2020-21, with the United States taking a major share at 44,881 MT.
- Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh and Canada were the other top destinations for Indian honey. **India started its first organized exports in the year 1996-97.**
- India ranks 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> in the world in Honey producing and exporting countries respectively.
- China, Turkey, Canada, Argentina, Iran and USA are among the major honey-producing countries, accounting for 50% of total world Production.
- North East Region and Maharashtra are the Key areas for natural honey production in the country.
- Around 50% of the honey produced in India is consumed domestically and the rest is Exported across the globe.
- The Government of India approved Allocation of Rs 500 crore for the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM) for three years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

#### **About National Beekeeping and Honey**

##### **Mission (NBHM):**

- The mission was announced as part of the Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiative in February 2021.
- NBHM aims for the overall promotion & development of scientific beekeeping in the country to achieve the goal of 'Sweet Revolution' which is being implemented through National Bee Board (NBB).
- There is a budget of Rs.170 crore for the Mini Mission.
- The purpose is for developing beekeeping in the country, developing honey clusters, Improving quality and productivity of honey and also increasing exports.

##### **About APEDA:**

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act, 1985.

- It functions under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Headquarters:** in New Delhi.

#### **SC permits NEET Counselling Under Present OBC, EWS Quota:**

- The Supreme Court allowed National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) counselling to proceed so as to not "dislocate" Medical admissions this year.
- The court also upheld the 27% reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) and 10% for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in the All-India Quota (AIQ) seats in accordance with a July 29, 2021 government order.
- The ₹8 Lakh Gross Annual Family Income Limit criterion for identifying the EWS, as originally notified by a January 2019 official Memorandum and recommended for retention by the government appointed former Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey led Expert Committee on December 31, 2021, would be now implemented for the admission year 2021-2022.

#### **India to Export Mango to U.S. after Hiatus:**

- India did not export mangoes to the U.S. for two and a half years as the U.S. phytosanitary Inspectors did not visit during 2020 and 2021.
- The new Agreement also covers Pomegranate. Both items will begin arriving in the U.S. from February. Under this agreement, India will import alfalfa hay and cherries from the U.S. from April.
- Mango and pomegranate exports will start from January-February 2022 and Pomegranate arils exports from April 2022.
- The development comes months after the 12<sup>th</sup> India-USA TPF (Trade Policy Forum) Meeting held on November 23, 2021.

##### **About Mango:**

- India is the **world's largest producer** of Mangoes.
- China and Thailand stood at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> position among mango producing countries in the world.

- **Uttar Pradesh (23.47%)** tops the list of Mangoes producing states. Other major producing states are Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Bihar and Gujarat.
- In the year 1950, Mango fruits were adopted as the **National Fruit of India**.
- **22 July** is celebrated as **National Mango Day** or Mango Day.
- Salem is known as the **Mango city in India**.

### **No need for lockdown, says Soumya Swaminathan:**

- The World Health Organization's Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan said lockdowns were not needed since there was a better understanding of the novel Coronavirus that causes COVID19.
- The three Cs – Close contact, Crowds and Close settings – were the key to the spread of the disease, she said, urging people to wear Masks.

### **Startup India Innovation Week:**

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has decided to organize a week-long virtual innovation celebration called '**Startup India Innovation Week**'.
- This is to showcase the spread and depth of Entrepreneurship across India.
- The virtual event is organized from January 10 to January 16, 2022.
- The event also aims to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> year of India's independence 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

### **Former RBI Governor Urjit Patel Joins Beijing based AIIB:**

- Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Urjit Patel has been appointed vice president of the Beijing based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).
- Mr. Patel will serve a three-year term as one of the multilateral development bank's five vice-presidents, and will take the place of Former Gujarat Chief Secretary D.J. Pandian who had been, as Vice-president, leading the AIIB's investment operations and all sovereign and

non-sovereign lending in South and Southeast Asia.

- The AIIB has approved more loans for India than any other member of the bank.
- China is its biggest shareholder and India is the second largest.
- The U.S. and Japan are not among its 105 Members.
- The AIIB has funded 28 projects in India Amounting to \$6.7 billion.

### **About Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank:**

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank that aims to improve economic and social Outcomes in Asia.
- The bank currently has 105 members.
- **President:** Jin Liqun of China.
- It is established by the AIIB Articles of Agreement (entered into force Dec. 25, 2015) which is a multilateral treaty.
- It is headquartered in Beijing and began its operations in 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
- Fourteen of the G-20 nations are AIIB members including France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom.

### **No PM photo in Vaccination**

#### **Certificates in Poll bound States**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's name and photo will be removed from the COVID19 vaccination certificates issued in the five poll bound States since the model code of conduct has come into force there.
- Union Health Ministry would apply the necessary filters on the CoWIN platform to remove Mr. Modi's photo from the certificates issued to people in Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

### **India's Passport Rank Improves to 83 from 90**

- India's passport power has improved this Quarter compared to 2021. It now ranks at 83<sup>rd</sup> position in the Henley Passport Index, Climbing seven places from 90<sup>th</sup> rank last Year.

- However, in 2020, its rank stood at 84 while in 2016, India was ranked 85th along with Mali and Uzbekistan.
- Japan and Singapore top the index.
- The current rankings are for first quarter of 2022 and India shares the position with Sao Tome and Principe in Central Africa, behind Rwanda and Uganda.
- Since 2005, Henley Passport Index ranks world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without prior visa and is based on data from International Air Transport Association (IATA). Growing disparity India now has visa free access to 60 destinations worldwide with Oman and Armenia being the latest Additions.
- India has added 35 more destinations since 2006.
- PM Modi said that the role of the MSME sector is very important in creating 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.
- It is very important our MSME use the technologies that are changing the world. The new MSME centre is an important step in that direction.
- Following the inauguration of the festival by Modi, the National Youth Summit will take place in which panel discussions on four themes -
  - ✓ Environment, climate and sustainable Development Goals (SDG) led growth;
  - ✓ Technology, entrepreneurship and Innovation;
  - ✓ Indigeneous and ancient wisdom;
  - ✓ National character, nation building and home grown; will happen.

### 25<sup>th</sup> National Youth Festival:

- The festival organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports from January 12 to 16 in Puducherry will mark India's 75<sup>th</sup> year of independence.
- The National Youth Festival is aimed at Shaping the minds of India's youth and Transforming them into a "united force for Nation building."
- It aims to bring Diverse cultures of India and integrate them into a united thread of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'.
- The prime minister also inaugurated a technology centre of the MSME ministry and Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Manimandapam via video conference.

### Perunthalaivar Kamarajar ManiMandapam:

- It is an auditorium with an open-air theatre in Puducherry .
- The auditorium, which can accommodate more than 1000 people, would primarily be used for Educational Purposes.

### Technology Centre of the MSME Ministry:

- The technology centre has been built at a cost of nearly ₹122 crore with a focus on the Electronic system design and manufacturing (ESDM) sector.
- It will cater to the skill development of Youth and also train around 6,400 trainees per year.

### World's third-largest Start-up Ecosystem:

- India became the third-largest start-up ecosystem in the world, said Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant on January 09.
- Youth from the diaspora have a massive role to play; potential for India 2.0 comes from tech Innovation by youth, said Kant.

### Amitabh Kant says policy should be pro-innovation, light touch:

- Speaking at an event organised by Microsoft India, Kant pointed out India is creating **Three Unicorns a month**.
- Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said the country's policies need to be pro-innovation, light touch and progressive, as also they should be benchmarked against the world's best.

### India's first "Mobile Honey Processing Van":

- 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.
- The Mobile Van 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.
- In line with the Prime Minister's dream of "Sweet Kranti" (Sweet Revolution) through honey production, the KVIC has come up with this unique innovation to enable beekeepers and farmers to get a fair prices for their Honey Production.
- KVIC has designed the innovative Mobile Honey Processing Van that will process beekeepers' honey at their doorsteps and thus save them the hassle and the cost of taking the honey to processing plants in far off cities for Processing.
- Drawing from the words of Sri Aurobindo, whose 150th anniversary also coincided with the NYF, that "a brave, frank, clean hearted, courageous and aspiring youth is the only foundation on which the future nation can be built," Mr. Modi said he believed that the nation's youth were not only a "demographic dividend" but "drivers of development" and Proponents of democratic values.
- The Prime Minister also gave a call to the Youth to espouse a "vocal for local" motto as a fitting tribute to the great sons that the country had produced.

### What's Indians searched for in 2021:

- According to Google Trends, the Indian Premier league was the most searched topic in India in 2021.
- Along with cricket, other sporting events such as the Tokyo Olympics, the Euro Cup and copa America also garnered wide Interest.
- However, these topics trended only when the events were streamed live. On the other hand, CoWIN and COVID-19 vaccine, which were among the top trends last year, garnered sustained interest throughout the year, especially after the country's vaccination drive opened up for all adults in May.
- Among movies, Jai Bhim was the most searched, and among personalities Neeraj Chopra and Aryan Khan were widely searched.

### Indu Malhotra Panel to Probe Security Breach:

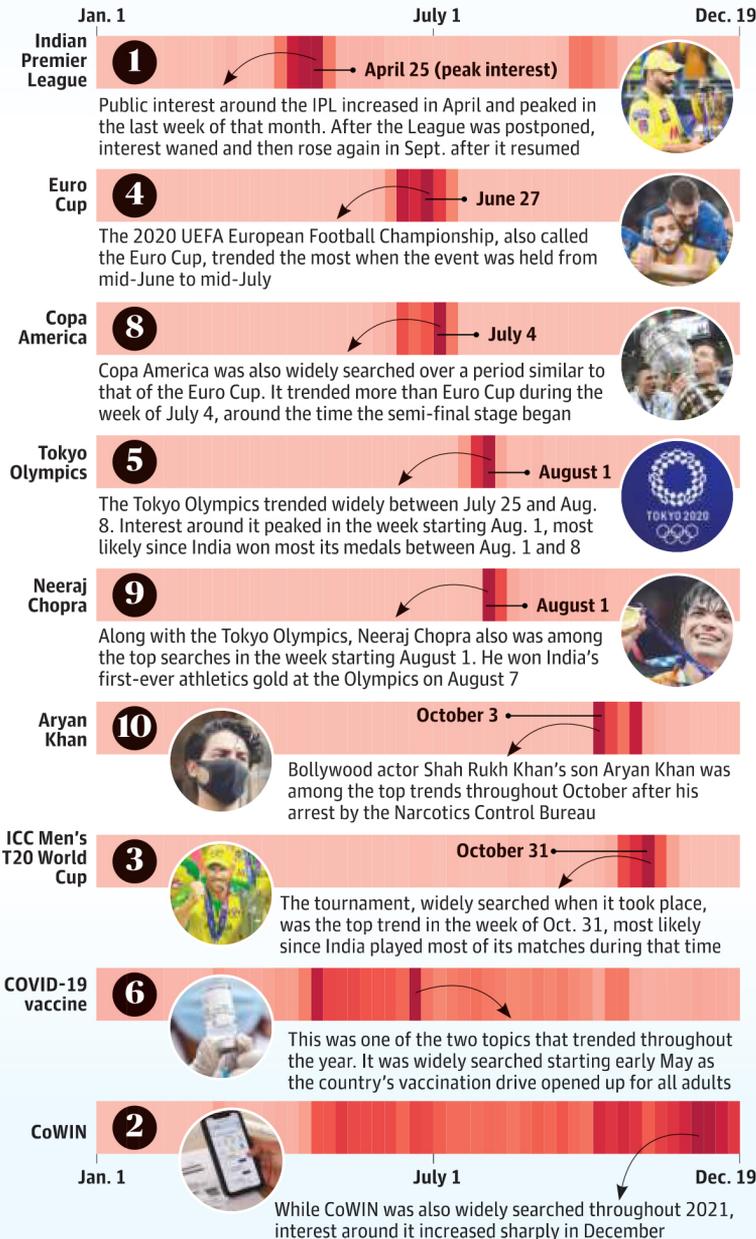
- The Supreme Court appointed a committee Chaired by its former judge Indu Malhotra to inquire into a security breach that led to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's convoy being stuck on a flyover in Punjab on January 5.

### Modi exhorts youth to Adopt Motto of

#### 'Compete & Conquer':

- Foreseeing the dawn of the Golden Age of startups in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued a call to the country's youth to adopt the motto of "Compete and Conquer" as their guiding principle in life.
- Inaugurating, in virtual mode, the 25<sup>th</sup> National Youth Festival (NYF) hosted by the Union Territory of Puducherry, Mr. Modi said the evolution of the startup ecosystem that had grown to over 50,000 units, about 10,000 of them initiated during Six to seven months of the COVID19 Pandemic, reflected the "can do" spirit of the youth of today.
- The Government had initiated several Schemes focused on creating space for the Youth to translate their ideas and develop their skills such as MUDRA, StartUp India, StandUp India and the Atal Incubation centres, the Prime Minister said.

**1. Most googled** | The chart shows the most searched terms by Indians in 2021. The darker the shade, the higher the popularity of the topic/trend at that specific time. The darkest shade represents the peak popularity of a search term last year. The lightest shade corresponds to nearly no searches for that term on a date. The topics are arranged chronologically based on their peak popularity, and the number indicates the overall popularity rank



**2. Search categories**

The table lists the 10 most searched topics under a category. For instance, under the search category "how to," the topic that found the most interest was "How to register for COVID vaccine". Similarly, under the search category "near me", the topic that was searched the most was "COVID vaccine near me"

**NEAR ME** | 1. COVID vaccine near me | 2. COVID test near me | 3. Food delivery near me | 4. Oxygen cylinder near me | 5. Covid hospital near me | 6. Tiffin service near me | 7. CT scan near me | 8. Takeout restaurants near me | 9. Fastag near me | 10. Driving school near me

**HOW TO...** | 1. How to register for COVID vaccine | 2. How to download vaccination certificate | 3. How to increase oxygen level | 4. How to link PAN with AADHAAR | 5. How to make oxygen at home | 6. How to buy dogecoin in India | 7. How to make banana bread | 8. How to check IPO allotment status | 9. How to invest in bitcoin | 10. How to calculate percentage of marks

**WHAT IS...** | 1. What is black fungus | 2. What is the factorial of hundred | 3. What is Taliban | 4. What is happening in Afghanistan | 5. What is remdesivir | 6. What is the square root of 4 | 7. What is steroid | 8. What is toolkit | 9. What is Squid Game | 10. What is delta plus variant

**MOVIES** | 1. Jai Bhim | 2. Shershaah | 3. Radhe | 4. Bell Bottom | 5. Eternals | 6. Master | 7. Sooryavanshi | 8. Godzilla vs Kong | 9. Drishyam 2 | 10. Bhuj: The Pride of India

**NEWS EVENTS** | 1. Tokyo Olympics | 2. Black Fungus | 3. Afghanistan news | 4. West Bengal elections | 5. Tropical cyclone Tauktae | 6. Lockdown | 7. Suez Canal Crisis | 8. Farmers Protest | 9. Bird Flu | 10. Cyclone Yaas

**PERSONALITIES** | 1. Neeraj Chopra | 2. Aryan Khan | 3. Shehnaaz Gill | 4. Raj Kundra | 5. Elon Musk | 6. Vicky Kaushal | 7. P.V. Sindhu | 8. Bajrang Punia | 9. Sushil Kumar | 10. Natasha Dalal

**SPORTS EVENTS** | 1. Indian Premier League | 2. ICC T20 World Cup | 3. Euro Cup | 4. Tokyo Olympics | 5. Copa America | 6. Wimbledon | 7. Paralympics | 8. French Open | 9. La Liga | 10. English Premier League

### MIOT Opens Eye Care facility at Seychelles:

- MIOT Hospitals opened an eye care facility in Seychelles on January 14 2022.
- **Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan** inaugurated the MIOT International Total Eye Care.
- **Indian High Commissioner for Seychelles General Dalbir Singh** Suhag was present.
- Created in collaboration with Visus Optical Seychelles, it was the **first such facility set up by an Indian hospital in Seychelles.**
- Prithvi Mohandas is the managing director of MIOT Hospitals.

### Republic Day Celebrations will now begin every year from January 23:

- Republic Day celebrations will now begin every year from January 23 instead of January 24 to include the Birth Anniversary of Subash Chandra Bose.
- This is in line with the Narendra Modi government's focus on commemorating important aspects of India's history and culture, they said, noting it had earlier started celebrating Bose's birth anniversary as "**Parakram Divas**" on **January 23.**
- Other such days, observance of which have become a yearly affair, are
  - ✓ August 14 as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day,
  - ✓ October 31 as National Unity Day (birth anniversary of Sardar Patel),
  - ✓ November 15 as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Birsa Munda's birth anniversary),
  - ✓ November 26 as Constitution Day and
  - ✓ December 26 as Veer Baal Divas (a tribute to the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh).

### Odisha Tops Medal Chart in National Skill Competition:

- Odisha topped the medal chart with 51 Winners, followed by Maharashtra, 30 and Kerala, 25 winners, at the India Skills 2021 National Competition organized by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in New Delhi from January 7 to

January 9.

- Odisha won 10 gold, 18 silver, nine bronze and 14 medallions in the country's biggest skill competition.
- 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 and floor tiling, welding, among others.

### AI-driven Start-Up for Water Purification by IIT Alumni:

- Union Minister of State of Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh has launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Start-Up by Indian Institute Technology (IIT) alumni for water purification through innovative technology with financial support from Technology Development Board (TDB).
- The facility aims to provide clean drinking water at a price much lesser than the market price.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between TDB, a statutory body of the Department of S&T and Swajal Water Private Limited.
- The Gurugram based company's patented system, '**Clairvoyant**' uses artificial intelligence to optimise purification systems and predict future breakdowns.

### India's First Sanitary-Napkin Free Village:

- Kerala's **Kumbalangi in Kochi** is set to become the country's first sanitary napkin-free panchayat.
- This move is a part of the 'Avalkayi' initiative, which is being implemented in the Ernakulam parliamentary constituency, in association with the "**Thingal Scheme**" of HLL Management Academy's and Indian Oil Corporation.
- Under this initiative, 5000 menstrual cups will be distributed to women aged 18 and above in Kumbalangi village.

## Hyderabad bids to host Formula

### E World Championship:

- Hyderabad officially bids as a candidate to host the Formula E World championship exclusively for electric cars, scheduled to be held between November 2022 and February 2023.
- The race may be held on the 2.37-km track in and around the Secretariat Complex in Hyderabad.

### Commemorative Postal Stamp on the Covid-19 Vaccination:

- The government of India has released a commemorative postal stamp on the Covid-19 vaccination on January 16 to mark the first anniversary of the country's national immunization programme against the virus.
- The commemorative stamp design features a healthcare worker inoculating a senior citizen with COVID-19 vaccine, along with an image of 'COVAXIN' vial.
- This stamp signifies the remarkable work done by our frontline healthcare workers and scientific community across the country in protecting the people against the COVID pandemic.

### Cabinet Approved the infusion of ₹1500 crore in IREDA:

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the infusion of ₹1500 crore in Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd (IREDA).
- The investment will help generate 10,200 jobs and reduce carbon emissions equivalent to approximately 7.49 million tons per year.
- The additional equity infusion will enable the mini-ratna company under the ministry of new and renewable energy to lend Approximately ₹12,000 crore to the renewable energy sector, helping meet the sector's debt requirement for additional capacity of 3,500–4,000 MW.
- The equity infusion will also enhance the specialized non-banking finance agency's net worth, which will help it in additional financing, thus contributing better to the Government's targets. It will also improve the

capital-to-risk weighted assets ratio to facilitate its lending and Borrowing Operations.

- But according to the Reserve Bank of India, the loan can only be lent on 20% of the net worth. The net worth of IREDA is ₹3000 crore. It can lend loans up to ₹600 crore only.
- Separately, the Union cabinet approved a scheme for grant of ex-gratia of ₹973.74 crore, the difference between compound interest and simple interest for six months to borrowers in specified loan accounts.
- The government had approved the scheme for six months during the first wave of the covid pandemic between 1 March and 31 August 2020.
- State Bank of India, the nodal agency under the scheme for consequent reimbursement to lending institutions, told the government that it had received consolidated claims of ₹6473.74 crore, higher than the allocated amount, and has therefore sought additional allocation of the Balance Amount.

### About IREDA:

- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) is a Mini Ratna (Category – I) Government of India Enterprise under the administrative control of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- IREDA is a Public Limited Government Company established as a Non-Banking Financial Institution on 11 March 1987 engaged in promoting, developing and extending financial assistance for setting up projects relating to new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency/conservation.
- Motto: "ENERGY FOR EVER".
- Headquarters: New Delhi.

### India Telecom User Base Grows to 1.19 billion: TRAI

- Telecom subscriber base in the country grew marginally to 1,191.05 million at November end with Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel expanding their user base, according to TRAI data.
- Reliance Jio has also topped BSNL as top fixed line broadband subscriber and now leads the segment with 4.34 million customers

which had been dominated by the state-run telecom since its inception about 20 years ago.

- **Reliance Jio led the growth in mobile segment** with net addition of 20,19,362 customers taking its total subscriber base to over 428 million.
- Bharti Airtel added 13,18,251 new Mobile Subscribers.
- Vodafone Idea (VIL) continued to lose subscribers.

#### **About TRAI:**

- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was established with effect from **20<sup>th</sup> February 1997** by an Act of Parliament, called the **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997**, to regulate telecom services, including fixation/revision of tariffs for telecom services which were earlier vested in the Central Government.
- TRAI's mission is to create and nurture Conditions for Growth of telecommunications in the country in a manner and at a pace which will enable India to play a leading role in emerging Global Information Society.
- One of the main objectives of TRAI is to provide a fair and transparent policy environment which promotes a level playing field and facilitates fair competition.
- **The TRAI Act was amended** by an ordinance, **effective from 24 January 2000, establishing a Telecommunications Dispute Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT)** to take over the adjudicatory and disputes functions from TRAI.
- TDSAT was set up to adjudicate any dispute between a licensor and a licensee, between two or more service providers, between a service provider and a group of consumers, and to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction, decision or order of TRAI.

#### **Crimes Committed against Women 2021:**

- There was a 30% rise in complaints of crimes against women in 2021 as compared to 2020 when 23,722 complaints were received.
- Nearly 31,000 complaints of crimes committed against women were received by the National Commission for Women (NCW) last year, the

highest since 2014, with over half of them from Uttar Pradesh.

#### **About National Commission for Women:**

- It was set up as a statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.
- Its mission is to strive towards enabling women to achieve equality and equal participation in all spheres of life by securing her due rights and entitlements through suitable policy formulation, legislative measures, etc.
- **Its functions are to:**
  - ✓ Review the constitutional and legal safeguards for women.
  - ✓ Recommend remedial legislative measures.
  - ✓ Facilitate redressal of grievances.
  - ✓ Advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women.
- **The First Commission** was constituted on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1992 with Mrs. Jayanti Patnaik as the Chairperson.
- **The Second Commission** was constituted on July 1995 with Dr. (Mrs.) Mohini Giri as the Chairperson.
- **The Third Commission** was constituted on January 1999 with Mrs. Vibha Parthasarathy as the Chairperson.
- **Current Chairperson is Rekha Sharma** since August 7, 2021.

#### **SWAYAM-NPTEL Online Certification Courses for January 2022:**

- NPTEL is currently offering 593 courses across Engineering, Sciences, Management, Humanities and Social Sciences through the SWAYAM platform.
- All those candidates who are interested can now apply for these courses by enrolling themselves for free of cost by visiting the official website; i.e. [swayam.gov.in/NPTEL](http://swayam.gov.in/NPTEL).
- Some of the most popular courses offered this time include Data Science for Engineers, Electrical Vehicles, programming courses such as Python, Java, C and C++.
- An array of new courses has also been introduced for the January 2022 term including a course on Hindustani Music,

Multidisciplinary courses such as Research Methodology for students in research, Basic Course in Ornithology, Oral Biology for students in Dental Studies, Blockchain and its Applications, and Online Privacy, among others.

- Introduction to Machine Learning course is offered in Tamil and Signals and Systems course is offered in Hindi this Semester.

#### **About SWAYAM:**

- **Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)**, was launched on **July 9, 2017** by the Ministry of Human Resource Development to provide one integrated platform and portal for online courses.
- Former President Shri Pranab Mukherjee launched SWAYAM and SWAYAM Prabha.
- **SWAYAM** is a programme initiated by Government of India and designed to achieve the three cardinal principles of Education Policy viz., access, equity and quality.
- The objective of this effort is to take the best teaching learning resources to all, including the most disadvantaged.
- SWAYAM seeks to bridge the digital divide for students who have hitherto remained untouched by the digital revolution and have not been able to join the mainstream of the knowledge economy.
- Courses delivered through SWAYAM are available free of cost to the learners, however learners wanting a SWAYAM certificate should register for the final proctored exams that come at a fee.
- The study material on the central government's e-learning platform, Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM), is being translated into eight regional Indian languages, These eight languages–Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, and Telugu.
- The Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) platform has 521 courses translated into vernacular languages. The maximum number of courses (130) has been translated in Hindi, followed by Tamil with 94 courses and Gujarati with 57 courses.

- The **current SWAYAM platform is developed by Ministry of Education** and NPTEL, IIT Madras with the help of Google Inc. and Persistent Systems Ltd.

#### **SWAYAM Prabha:**

- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resources Development to provide **32 High Quality Educational Channels** through DTH across the length and breadth of the country on 24X7 basis.
- It has curriculum-based course content covering Diverse Disciplines.
- This is primarily aimed at making quality learning resources accessible to remote areas where internet availability is still a challenge.
- The DTH channels are using the **GSAT-15 satellite** for programme telecasts.

#### **About NPTEL:**

- National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) is a project of MHRD initiated by seven Indian Institutes of Technology (Bombay, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Madras, Guwahati and Roorkee) along with the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore in 2003, to provide quality education to anyone interested in learning from the IITs.
- The main goal was to create web and video courses in all major branches of engineering and physical sciences at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels and management courses at the Postgraduate Level.

#### **National Disaster Response Force:**

- The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is an Indian specialized force constituted "for the purpose of special response to a threatening disaster situation or disaster" under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- NDRF was constituted with 8 Battalions in 2006.
- At present, National Disaster Response Force consist of 16 battalions from the BSF, CISF, CRPF, ITBP, SSB and Assam Rifles with each Battalion consisting of 1149 personnel.
- These NDRF battalions are located at 16 different locations in the country based on the vulnerability profile of country and to cut down the response time for their deployment

at disaster site.

- NDRF is functioning under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, within the overall command, control and leadership of the Director General, NDRF.
- **Current Director General:** Atul Karwal.

### 'Seema Bhawani' of BSF:

- 'Seema Bhawani' is the **all-women biker** team of the Border Security Force (BSF). The team will showcase their talent on the Republic Day 2022, for the second time.
- Over 100 female troops from different ranks are taking part in the event.
- Seema Bhawani team was formed in the year **2016** and they participated in the Republic Day parade in **2018**, for the first time.

### Open Data Week 2022:

- The **Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** announced the "Open Data Week" that will see participation from all the 100 smart cities, a move aimed at ensuring a collaborative effort towards making Indian Cities "data smart".
- The Open Data Week will be conducted during the third week of January from **17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022**.
- It is divided into **two segments** –
  - ✓ The uploading of datasets, visualization, APIs and data blogs on the Smart Cities Open Data Portal from **January 17 to January 20**.
  - ✓ The celebration of a "Data Day" by all smart cities on **January 21**.

### Amar Jawan Jyoti now Merged with War Memorial flame:

- The Iconic **Amar Jawan Jyoti (AJJ)**, was **Inaugurated after the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh** by former Prime Minister **Indira Gandhi**.
- Jyoti was "merged" with the flame at the National War Memorial (NWM).
- The NWM, **inaugurated in February 2019**, is located at the 'C' Hexagon near India Gate and was built in memory of the soldiers who laid down their lives for the country in the post-

Independence period.

- **India Gate, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens**, was unveiled by **Lord Irwin on February 12, 1931**.
- It was built to honor over 83,000 soldiers of British India who died from 1914 to 1921.
- The AJJ was set up to pay homage for the soldiers who laid down their lives in the 1971 War.
- The memorial of the unknown soldier, an **inverted bayonet with a helmet structure**, along with the AJJ was inaugurated under the arch of India Gate by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on **January 26, 1972** to commemorate India's victory in the 1971 war

### The study: 'Indian Tech Startup Ecosystem: Year of The Titans'

- Startups raised a record \$24.1 billion in 2021, a two-fold increase over preCOVID19 levels, according to a new study by NASSCOM and Zinnov.
- According to the study, '**Indian Tech Startup Ecosystem: Year of The Titans**', more than 2250 startups were added in 2021, over 600 more than what was added in the previous year.
- It added that while the U.S. remains the **leading source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Startups**.

### Statue of Subhash Chandra Bose to be installed at India Gate:

- Ahead of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's 125<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Announced that his statue will be installed at India Gate to honor his contribution to the independence movement. Until the installation is completed, the prime minister will unveil the **hologram statue of Netaji on 23<sup>rd</sup> January**, Netaji's birth Anniversary.

### Many Freedom Fighters Recognized now: PM

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a hologram of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at India Gate, where a grand statue of the freedom fighter would be placed soon.

- Marking Netaji's 125th birth anniversary, the hologram was installed under the canopy where a statue of King George V had stood till its removal in 1968.
- He cited his government's decisions, including observing
- **Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas** in honour of tribal freedom fighter **Bhagwan Birsa Munda**,
- Constructing the **Statue of Unity** in honour of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**
- Naming an island in the Andamans after Netaji, as steps in that direction.
- Mr. Modi conferred the **Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabhandhan Puraskar, or awards for disaster management**, for 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 on individuals and institutes for their work in Disaster Management.

### **PM Modi holds meeting with DMs:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked district magistrates to work on time-bound targets to increase ease of living for people and asserted that the country's goal today is to achieve 100 percent saturation of services and facilities.
- Modi also called for a direct and emotional connection between administration and the public to ensure '**top to bottom**' as well as '**bottom to top**' Governance Flow.
- Modi said the teamwork of Centre, states and local Administration was yielding good results in aspirational districts.
- The prime minister said that these districts have proved that due to the elimination of silos in implementation, optimum utilization of resources takes place.
- **Launched by the prime minister** in January 2018, the **Aspirational Districts Programme** aims to quickly and effectively transform 112 most under-developed districts across the country.
- The prime minister said various ministries and departments of the government have prepared a list of 142 districts that are not so much lagging in development but are weak on one or two parameters.
- This is a new challenge for all the Governments – the government of India, the state government, the district administration, and the Government Machinery.
- PM called for time-bound targets for taking roads to all the villages of the districts, Ayushman Bharat cards, bank accounts to every person, Ujjwala gas connection, insurance, pension housing for everyone.
- Modi also pitched for a two-year vision for every district.
- He suggested that every district can identify 10 tasks to be completed in the next three months to improve ease of living for common people.
- Similarly, five tasks may be associated with the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, he added.
- The Prime Minister said the country is witnessing a silent revolution in the form of Digital India and no district should be left behind in this.
- He pointed out the importance of digital infrastructure reaching every village and becoming a means of door-step delivery of services and facilities.
- Modi also asked NITI Aayog to devise a mode of regular interaction between the district DMs.

### **New India before 100<sup>th</sup> Year of Independence:**

- After unveiling the hologram statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at India Gate, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that his government has a target to build a new India before the 100th year of Independence.
- PM Modi also said "Netaji used to say '**Never lose faith in the dream of independent India**'. There is no power in the world that can shake India".
- He also advised people to move ahead in their lives by taking inspiration from the '**Can Do, Will Do**' spirit of Netaji as he refused to bow before the British.

### Gandhi's 'favourite' hymn being dropped from Beating Retreat:

- One of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite hymns "Abide with Me" has been dropped from this year's Beating Retreat ceremony on January 29.
- "Abide With Me", written by Scottish Anglican poet and hymnologist **Henry Francis Lyte in 1847**, has been part of the Beating Retreat ceremony since 1950.
- The Centre had in 2020 also planned to drop "Abide with Me" from the Beating Retreat ceremony but had later retained it after a huge uproar.
- For this year's ceremony, the hymn has been replaced by the popular patriotic song '**Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon**', which was written by **Kavi Pradeep** to commemorate the supreme sacrifice made by the Indian soldiers during the **1962 Indo-China war**.

### "Statue of Equality" gets Final Touches"

- Work is going apace on the 216 ft tall statue of the 11th century reformer and Vaishnavite saint, **Sri Ramanuja** in a sitting position, to be unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the sprawling 40-acre ashram of Sri Tridandi Chinna Jeer Swamy in Muchintal on the outskirts of **Hyderabad on February 5 2022**.
- The '**Statue of Equality**', as it is called, is being installed to mark the 1000<sup>th</sup> birth Anniversary of Sri Ramanuja.
- It was built of panchaloha, a combination of gold, silver, copper, brass and zinc, by the **Aerospun Corporation in China** and shipped to India.
- It is the **second largest in the world in sitting position** of the saint.
- The monument will be surrounded by 108 "Divya Desams" of Sri Vaishnavite tradition (model temples) like Tirumala, Srirangam, Kanchi, Ahobhilam, Badrinath, Mukthinath, Ayodhya, Brindavan, Kumbakonam and others.
- The idols of deities and structures were constructed in the shape at the existing temples.

- Statue of Sri Ramanuja made of 120 kg gold, representing the years he lived, will be inaugurated by President Ramnath Kovind by performing the first puja on February 13 2022.

### 'India can make \$300bn Electronics by 2026'

- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, in association with ICEA, released a 5-year roadmap and Vision Document for the electronics sector, titled "\$300 bn Sustainable Electronics Manufacturing & Exports by 2026."
- This roadmap is the second volume of a two-part Vision Document – the first of which titled "Increasing India's Electronics Exports and Share in GVCs" was released in November 2021.
- It is lower than the target of \$400 billion by 2025 set as per the National Policy on Electronics (NPE) 2019.

### About National Policy on Electronics (NPE) 2019.:

- The Policy envisions Positioning India as a global hub for **Electronics System Design and Manufacturing - (ESDM)** by encouraging and driving capabilities in the country for developing core components, including chipsets, and creating an enabling Environment for the industry to compete Globally.
- **Targets:** Promote domestic manufacturing and export in the entire value-chain of ESDM for economic development to achieve a turnover of USD 400 billion (approximately INR 26,00,000 crore) by 2025.
- The National Policy of Electronics 2019 (NPE 2019) replaces the National Policy of Electronics 2012 (NPE 2012).

### Revamped CGHS website and Mobile App Launched:

- Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya on January 24 launched the upgraded CGHS (Central Government Health Scheme) website and MyCGHS app.
- The launch of the revamped CGHS website linked with a mobile app is an important and timely step towards catering to India's

increasing digital penetration. The website has several updated features which shall hugely aid beneficiaries.

- With the newly provided feature of teleconsultation, the CGHS beneficiaries can seek expert advice directly through teleconsultation, he said. With these improved facilities, the CGHS aims to further increase its outreach to beneficiaries with ease of providing various facilities.
- The website has been developed in accordance with **Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW)** and has user friendly features including aid for visually impaired persons like audio play of the text and option to increase the font size etc.
- The website also has a link to beneficiary login for accessing online facilities such as tracking of medical claims, grievances, status and downloading of CGHS card, accessing history of medicines, online appointment system and various other facilities.
- The CGHS is the nodal healthcare provider to Central government employees, pensioners and certain other categories of beneficiaries and their dependents enrolled under the scheme.

### **Nagaland - Assam Border Dispute:**

- Nagaland and Assam share about 512 km boundary and disputes along the border between the two states are believed to have been going on from 1963 after Nagaland attained statehood.

### **About Nagaland:**

- Nagaland is a state in northeastern India.
- It is bordered by the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Assam to the west, Manipur to the south and the Sagaing Region of Myanmar to the east.
- Its capital city is Kohima and its largest city is Dimapur.
- Nagaland became the 16th state of India on 1 December 1963.
- After elections in January 1964, the first democratically elected Nagaland Legislative Assembly was constituted on 11 February 1964.

### **India's first state to launch AVGC Center of Excellence:**

- The Government of **Karnataka** has launched India's first **AVGC Center of Excellence (CoE) (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics)** in Mahadevapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- It is also the **biggest centre in Asia**.

### **India's first Para-Badminton Academy:**

- India's first para-badminton Academy has been set up in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**.
- It has all the advanced equipment and facilities.
- The set-up will improve India's medal prospects at the **2024 Paralympics** to be held in **Paris, France at Stade de France stadium**.
- The badminton centre has been **launched** by the head national coach of the Indian para-badminton team, **Gaurav Khanna**, in association with **Ageas Federal Life Insurance**.

### **Centre to remind States again of IAS Cadre Rules**

- The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) will send another reminder to States to respond to its proposal to amend the Indian Administrative Service (Cadre) Rules, 1954, with which Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officers could be deputed to the Union government and Ministries without necessarily taking the State government's nod.
- So far, 16 States have responded. Seven States – Haryana, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Arunachal Pradesh, all governed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) – have given their consent to the proposal.
- Five States – Odisha, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and West Bengal – have responded to the DoPT, opposing the amendments.
- The Chief Ministers of three other States – Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana – have written to the Prime Minister to register their opposition.

**About All India Services:**

- The All-India Services (AIS) comprises the three civil services of India:
  - ✓ Indian Administrative Service (IAS);
  - ✓ Indian Police Service (IPS); and
  - ✓ Indian Forest Service (IFoS).
- AIS officers are recruited by the Union Government (by UPSC) and their services are allotted under various State Cadres
- However, the Cadre Controlling Authority of AIS is the Union Government.
- The DoPT is the cadre controlling authority of IAS officers.
- Cadre controlling authority for deputation of Indian Police Service and Indian Forest Service Officers (IFoS) is the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Environment Ministry respectively.
- As per Article 312 of the Indian Constitution, the Parliament is entitled to create one or more All India services (including an All-India Judicial Service) common to the Union and the States.
- The recruitment to all these services is made by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

**Decommissioned INS Khukri to be Converted into Museum**

- **INS Khukri**, the lead ship of the Indian Navy's Khukri class missile corvettes which was decommissioned last December, was handed over to the **Diu Administration** to be converted into a museum.
- Built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, Khukri was commissioned on August 23, 1989 in Mumbai by the then Defence Minister Krishna Chandra Pant

**Indian IT firms outpace US competitors in Brand Finance IT Services ranking:**

- **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** has become the second most valued brand in the information technology (IT) services sector globally, while **Accenture** retains the title of the **world's most valuable and strongest IT services brand**, according to Brand Finance.

- **Infosys has emerged as the fastest growing IT services brand** following 52 per cent brand value growth since last year and 80 per cent since 2020 to \$12.8 billion, earning it third spot, the brand valuation consultancy said in its latest Global 500 IT Services Ranking report.
- TCS and Infosys have pushed **IBM to fourth spot** from second. IBM's brand value now stands at \$10.6 billion, a decline of 34 per cent from last year and 50 per cent since 2020.
- The US technology major's brand value has fallen significantly after the divestment of Kyndryl.
- Apart from TCS and Infosys, there are four more Indian companies in the top 25 IT services brands - Wipro (7th), HCL (8th), Tech Mahindra (15th) and L&T Infotech (22nd).

**Air India Back to Tata Group:**

- The Union Government on 27 January 2022 transferred its shares in Air India, along with control and management, to the Tata Sons subsidiary **Talace**.
- The airline has been a public sector undertaking from **1953**.
- The transaction covers Air India, Air India Express and the Government's entire 50% stake in a Ground Handling company **AI SATS**.
- Tata Group founder **J.R.D Tata** launched the **Nation's First Air** carrier as **Tata Airlines in 1932** which is now Air India.
- When Air India merged with Indian Airlines in 2007-08, it started incurring losses.
- Tata Sons have paid ₹2700 crore in cash for the airline, along with taking on a debt of ₹15,300 crore.
- Of the total debt and liabilities of Air India of ₹77,396 crore, the government will absorb ₹62,096 crore.
- Tatas will get Air India's fleet of 141 planes, along with ownership of iconic brands like Air India, Indian Airlines and the Maharajah.
- As many as 13,500 permanent and contractual employees will also move to the Tata fold and have to be retained at least for one year.

### **TVS Motor Co. buys 75% of Swiss EV firm:**

- TVS Motor Co. has acquired 75% stake in Switzerland's largest e-bike player **Swiss E-Mobility Group** for \$100 million.
- The acquisition has been made in an all-cash deal through TVS Motor (Singapore) Pte Ltd.
- This is the second acquisition by TVS Motor in recent times after the buyout of majority stake in e-mobility firm EGO Movement – also Swiss – in September.
- Asserting that the firm was planning to buy the remaining stake next year, Sudarshan Venu, JMD, TVS Motor, said: "We see this as a key driver of our growth in Europe and other developed markets."

### **6% of MSMEs owned by SC Entrepreneurs**

- **Maharashtra tops India's list** in the number of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) owned by entrepreneurs from the Scheduled Castes with as many as 96,805 enterprises. Generally, the proportion of enterprises owned by Scheduled Caste entrepreneurs in the overall national tally of MSMEs is 6%.
- **Tamil Nadu** with 42,997 enterprises and **Rajasthan** with 38,517 units occupy the **second** and **third** slots, according to the data furnished by the Office of the Development Commissioner in the Union Ministry of MSME.
- The fourth, fifth and sixth slots belong to Uttar Pradesh (36,913 units), Karnataka (28,803 enterprises) and Punjab (24,503 units) respectively.
- As on January 23, 2022, the number of SC owned enterprises at the all-India level was 4,53,972, of which micro enterprises accounted for 4,50,835, small 3,004 and medium 133.
- The Udyam system of registration, which came into force on July 1, 2020, is a prerequisite for any MSME (regardless of the social category of ownership) to avail itself of concessions or benefits from the Central and State governments and the last date for migration to Udyam has been extended up to March 31, 2022.

### **Philippines inks \$375 mn BrahMos Missile Deal:**

- India got its first ever export order for BrahMos Missiles when the Philippines' Defence Ministry signed a USD 374 million contract with the BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd (BAPL) to supply undisclosed number of missiles.
- BrahMos Aerospace, an India-Russia joint venture, produces the supersonic cruise missile BrahMos that can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft, or from land Platforms.
- The **BAPL (BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd)** signed a contract with the Department of National Defence of the Republic of Philippines on January 28, 2022, for supply of shore-based anti-ship missile system to Philippines.

### **Swachhata Start-Up Challenge:**

- Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched the Swachhata Start-Up Challenge to encourage innovative start-ups to transform the Sanitation and waste Management Sector.
- The challenge has been launched in partnership with Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Agence Française de Développement (AFD). It seeks to promote enterprise development under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0).

### **India to convert 150 villages into 'Villages of Excellence' with Technical help from Israel:**

- The Centre on January 28 said it has decided to convert as many as 150 villages into '**Villages of Excellence**' in 12 States with technical assistance from the Israel Government.
- Already, the Israel Government has established **29 Centre of Excellence (CoEs)** in 12 States, which are producing more than 25 million vegetable plants, over 3,87,000 quality fruit plants and can train more than 1.2 lakh farmers per year.
- The 150 villages that are located around CoEs will be converted into 'Villages of Excellence.' "Out of which, 75 villages are being taken up in the first year to commemorate the 75th year of India's independence, where India and

Israel will work together," Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar conveyed in a meeting with new Israeli Ambassador to India Naor Gilon on January 27.

- The Ambassador of Israel, Mr. Gilon evinced interest in further collaboration with agri-research body ICAR and making available the latest technologies available with Israel.

### India, Oman to hold 10<sup>th</sup> Military Cooperation Meeting:

- After a gap of three years, India and Oman are set to hold a meeting of the Joint Military Cooperation Committee (JMCC) during the visit of Mohammed Nasser Al Zaabi, Secretary General, Ministry of Defence of Oman.
- The JMCC is the highest forum of Engagement between India and Oman in the field of defence that evaluates and provides guidance to the overall framework of defence exchanges between the two sides.
- The JMCC was to hold discussions annually, but a meeting could not be organised since 2018, when the meeting of the 9th JMCC was held in Oman.
- Defence exchanges between the two countries are guided by a framework MoU (Memorandum of Understanding), which was renewed in 2021.

### India's largest EV Charging Station:

- India's largest electric vehicle (EV) charging station with a capacity of 100 charging points for 4 wheelers, was opened at Delhi-Jaipur National Highway in Gurugram.
- Previously, India's largest EV charging station was situated in Navi Mumbai with 16 AC & 4 DC charging ports for EVs.
- The new EV charging station has been developed by tech-piloting company **Alektrify Private Limited**.

### Budget 2022:

- The Budget Session of Parliament will commence on January 31 and is scheduled to conclude on April 8. The President will be addressing both the Houses of Parliament assembled together on January 31.

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will table the Economic Survey for 2021-22 in the Lok Sabha on Jan 31 soon after the President's Address to both Houses of Parliament. She will present the Union Budget for the fourth time, for the next financial year beginning April 1, 2022, on February 1.

### National Commission for Women's Foundation Day programme:

- "Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address 30th National Commission for Women (NCW) Foundation Day programme on January 31 at 4.30 p.m. via video conferencing.
- The theme of the programme is '**She the Change Maker**', aimed at celebrating the achievements of women in different fields.

### PM's address in the 85<sup>th</sup> Episode of 'Mann Ki Baat':

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation on January 30 in this year's first episode of 2022 of his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat'.
- The 85th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', which is broadcast on the last Sunday of every month, was aired at 11.30am on the entire network of All India Radio and Doordarshan and also on AIR News and mobile app.
- PM said, in the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the country is re-establishing its national symbols through these efforts. We saw that the 'Amar Jawan Jyoti' near India Gate and the Jyoti lit at the 'National War Memorial' in the vicinity, were merged. At the 'National War Memorial', the names of all the bravehearts of the country who have been martyred since Independence have been inscribed.
- The 'Amar Jawan Jyoti' lit at the memorial is a symbol of the immortality of the martyrs".
- More than one crore children have written to me through their 'Mann Ki Baat' post cards.
- I have shortlisted some postcards for the listeners of 'Mann Ki Baat' which I want to share with you. Like this one is the post card of **Riddhima Swargiyari from Guwahati, Assam**.

- Riddhima is a student of class 7<sup>th</sup> and she has written that she wants to see an India in the 100<sup>th</sup> year of independence which is the cleanest country in the world, completely free of terrorism, included in the 100 percent literate countries, zero accident country, and be capable of food security with sustainable Technology.
- I have also got a post card of **Navya Verma of Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.**
- Navya has written that her dream for 2047 is of an India where everyone has a dignified life, where farmers are prosperous and there is no corruption.
- Navya, your dream for the country is very commendable. The country is also moving rapidly in this direction. You talked about a corruption free India. Corruption hollows the country like a termite. Why wait for 2047 to get rid of it? All of us countrymen, today's youth have to do this work together, as soon as possible and for this it is very important that we give priority to our duties. Where duty is felt, Duty is paramount, corruption cannot even think of entering there.
- The awareness about education is visible at every level in the society. The example of Taimmal ji living in **Udumalpet block of Trippur district** of Tamil Nadu is very inspiring.
- **Taimmal ji** does not have any land of her own. For years, her family is making a living by selling coconut water. Taimmal ji, who had accumulated some capital by selling coconut water, **donated one lakh rupees** to the school in which her children are studying, to improve the condition of the classrooms and to fix the school Infrastructure.



# 7. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

## Population will Increase by 7.4 crore in a Year:

- According to the US Census Bureau today, on January 1, 2022, the world's population has increased by 780 million people, which represents an increase of 0.9 percent.
- With this, the US Census Bureau has estimated that, this year, 4.3 children will be born worldwide every second, while 2 people will die every one second.
- The Census Bureau estimates that, in the last one year, the population of America has increased by 7 lakh 70 thousand and on New Year's Day 2022, the population of America has increased to 33.24 million.
- The Census Bureau estimates that there has been a 0.2 percent increase in the population between this year's New Year's compared to Last year's New Year's.

## BRICS New Development Bank:

- The BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) announced that it will add Egypt as its new member. NDB was established by BRICS nations, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, in the year 2015.
- Egypt is the fourth new member admitted into NDB, after Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Uruguay. Marcos Troyjo is the President of the NDB.

## About New Development Bank:

- It is a multilateral development bank jointly founded by the BRICS countries at the 6th BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil in 2014.
- It was formed to support infrastructure and sustainable development efforts in BRICS and other underserved, emerging economies for faster development through innovation and cutting-edge technology.

- It is headquartered at Shanghai, China. In 2018, the NDB received observer status in the United Nations General Assembly, establishing a firm basis for active and fruitful cooperation with the UN.

## UK Ex-PM Tony Blair Becomes Sir Tony:

- Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has been awarded a knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II and becomes to be called as 'Sir' from January 1 2022.
- Blair has been appointed as the member of the "Order of the Garter", England's oldest and most senior honour which is made as a Personal choice of the Monarch.
- The Ceremonial Order, founded in 1348, is recognition of significant Public Service, and is made prime ministerial advice as with other New Year honours.

## World Powers vow to Stop Spread of Nuclear Weapons:

- Five Global Nuclear Powers pledged to prevent atomic weapons spreading and to avoid nuclear conflict, in a rare joint statement ahead of a review of a key nuclear treaty later this year. "We believe strongly that the further spread of such weapons must be prevented," said permanent UN Security Council members China, France, Russia, the U.K. and U.S.
- The statement was issued after the latest review of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear weapons (NPT) – which first came into force in 1970 – was postponed from its scheduled date of January 4 to later in the year due to the COVID19 pandemic.

## 'India, Israel in Talks for free Trade Agreement'

- India is in dialogue with Israel for concluding a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said.
- The announcement coincides with the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic ties between the two countries.
- Both sides are currently in talks to mark the Occasion with high-level visits and new Agreements.
- Mr. Goyal also informed that bilateral free trade agreements are being negotiated with the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada.
- He said the agreement with the UAE was 'close to finalization' while the FTA with Australia was at a 'very advanced stage.'
- The FTAs would cover a wide range of sectors such as agricultural Products and Pharmaceuticals.

## India wants WTO meet on COVID Package:

- India has sought an emergency meeting of the General Council of the World Trade Organization (WTO) this month in Geneva to deliberate upon the world trade body's proposed response package, including patent waiver proposal, to deal with the pandemic Amid rising coronavirus infections globally.
- The General Council is WTO's highest Decision-making body in Geneva.
- Expressing disappointment over no progress on TRIPs (Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) waiver proposal to deal with the pandemic, India has called for including this proposal into WTO's Proposed response package.
- In October 2020, India and South Africa submitted the first proposal, suggesting a waiver for all WTO members on the implementation of certain provisions of the TRIPs agreement in relation to the prevention, containment or treatment of COVID19.

## About TRIPS:

- TRIPs came into effect in January 1995.
- It frames the IP system in terms of Innovation, technology transfer and public welfare.
- The TRIPs Council is responsible for administering and monitoring the operation of the TRIPs Agreement.
- TRIPs was negotiated during the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1986-1994.
- The TRIPs Agreement is also described as a "Berne and Paris-plus" Agreement.

## World's longest Metro line Opened in Shanghai:

- On December 31, 2021, World's longest Metro Line was opened in China's Shanghai Province.
- With this, the total length of metro network in Shanghai has extended to 831 km.
- Shanghai continues to be the longest network Across the world.

## NATO to hold Foreign Ministers Meeting over Ukraine:

- NATO announced that the alliance will hold a virtual meeting of foreign ministers from the 30 member nations on 7th January 2022 to assess the situation in Ukraine and upcoming talks with Russia to ease the tension between the Cold War foes.
- The meeting will be chaired by the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg.

## About North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO):

- **Formation:**
  - ✓ NATO was established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of 4th April, 1949, by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.
- **Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium.

### ▪ Political and Military Alliance:

- ✓ NATO's primary goals are the collective defence of its members and the maintenance of a democratic peace in the North Atlantic Area.
- ✓ The collective defence principle enshrined in NATO's Article V states that "an attack against one ally is considered as an attack against all allies".

### ▪ NATO's Forces:

- ✓ NATO has a military and civilian headquarters and an integrated military command structure but very few forces or assets are exclusively its own.
- ✓ Most forces remain under full national command and control until member countries agree to undertake NATO-Related Tasks.

### ▪ NATO's Decisions:

- ✓ A "NATO decision" is the expression of the collective will of all 30 member countries since all decisions are taken by consensus.

### Second Successful test Flight of a Hypersonic Missile:

- North Korea claimed to have conducted the Second successful test flight of a hypersonic Missile, days after leader Kim Jong Un vowed to bolster his military forces despite Pandemic-related difficulties.
- The launch is the North's first known Weapons test in about two months, indicates the country will press ahead with plans to modernize its nuclear and missile arsenals rather than return to disarmament talks Anytime soon.

### The Council of European Union:

- On 1 January 2022, France, for the first time in 14 years, will take over the presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) from Slovenia.
- France will hold the presidency of the Council of the EU for six months from 1 January to 30 June 2022.
- The presidency of the council is responsible for conducting meetings, determining the Agenda, and facilitating dialogues with other EU institutions.
- Each Member State holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union for six months on a Rotational Basis.

### India Hails Statement by 5 world Powers to Stop Nuclear Weapons:

- India welcomed a joint pledge by the US, the UK, China, Russia and France to prevent the spread of atomic weapons and reaffirmed its nuclear doctrine of maintaining a credible Minimum deterrence based on a 'no first use' Policy and Commitment to Universal nuclear Disarmament.

### India, U.K. kick off talks for Free Trade Agreement:

- India stands to gain from this Multidimensional Economic Partnership with exports growth in leather, textiles, Jewellery, processed agri products.
- The bilateral trade of \$50 billion is expected to double to \$100 billion in 10 years.
- A joint statement quoted both sides as saying they would consider the option of an 'Interim Agreement' while negotiations for a comprehensive pact continue.

<b>History of Budget</b>		
<b>Historical Status</b>	<b>Budget Year</b>	<b>Presented by Finance Minister</b>
India's First Budget	April 7, 1860.	Scottish economist and politician James Wilson from East India Company presented it to the British Crown.
First Budget of Independent India	November 26, 1947	R.K. Shanmugam Shetty.
Longest Budget Speech (2 hrs, 42 min)	February 1, 2020	Nirmala Sitharaman.
Most no of words in Budget Speech- 18,650 words	1991	Manmohan Singh.
Most no of words in Budget Speech-18,604 words	2018	Arun Jaitley.
Least no of Words in Budget Speech- (800 words)	1977	S M Patel.
First Paperless Budget	2021-22	Nirmala Sitharaman.

<b>Special Name of Budget</b>	<b>Budget Year</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Black Budget	1973-74	Fiscal deficit of Rs. 550 Crores.
Carrot & Stick Budget	Feb. 28, 1986	It offered both rewards and punishment.
Epochal Budget	1991	Economic Liberalisation.
Dream Budget	1997-98	Slashed marginal income tax rate for individuals & Companies, slashed customs duty. (Chidambaram -Finance Minister)
Millenium Budget	2000	Laid the road map for the growth of India's Information Technology (IT) industry. (Yashwant Sinha)
RollBack Budget	2002-03	Several Proposals were withdrawn or rolled back. (Yashwant Sinha)
Once-in-a-Century Budget	Feb 1, 2021-22.	To revive Asia's 3rd largest economy by investing in infrastructure & health care.

**Best Time to Invest in India: PM Modi**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda.
- During his speech, he talked about some of the pressing issues like Covid, climate change, cryptocurrency, reforms and initiatives taken by his government for ease of doing business.
- He also said India is promoting 'Ease of Doing Business' by reducing our corporate tax rate making it most competitive. This is the best time to invest in India.
- India's focus is not only on easing the processes, but also on incentivizing investment and production.
- India is making policies, taking decisions regarding the present as well as the goals of the next 25 years. In this period, India has set the Goals of high growth, a saturation of welfare, and wellness.
- This period of growth will also be green, it will also be clean, it will also be sustainable, it will also be reliable.

**Rising sea levels prompt Indonesia to Relocate Capital:**

- Indonesia's parliament passed a law approving the relocation of its capital from slowly sinking Jakarta to a site 2,000 kilometers away on the **jungle-clad Borneo Island** that will be named "Nusantara".
- The new capital will cover about 56,180 hectares in East Kalimantan province on the Indonesian part of Borneo.

**Global list for On-time Performance Airports for 2021:**

- **Chennai International Airport** has been **ranked eight** for on-time performance among large international airports globally for 2021 by **Cirium** – an organization that provides aviation data to the travel, finance, aerospace and Aviation Industries.
- It is the only **Indian airport ranked in the top 10**.
- The top three are **Miami Airport in the United States, Fukuoka Airport and Haneda Airport from Japan** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively.

- The on-time departures to 70 routes globally analysed by Cirium is 89.32 per cent for Chennai. Current Chennai Airport Director is Dr Sharad Kumar.

**First Black Woman to appear on US Coin:**

- The US Treasury has minted coins featuring **poet Maya Angelou** – the first black woman ever featured on the US 25-cent coin known as a Quarter.
- Angelou, a poet and activist, was the first black woman to write and perform a poem at a Presidential Inauguration.

**Roberta Metsola takes over EU Parliament Presidency:**

- Roberta Metsola, a Christian Democrat from Malta, was elected president of the European Union's parliament.
- She is the European Parliament's **youngest president**.

**About European Union's Parliament:**

- **Headquarters:** Strasbourg, France;
- **Founded:** 10 September 1952, Europe.

**Swiss Gold Exports:**

- Switzerland is the world's largest gold refining centre and transit hub. Its trade data showed a 2020 plunge in exports to Asia, where most gold is sold as jewellery, and huge shipments to the U.S. and Britain, where investors cluster.
- In 2021, exports to India surged to 507 tonnes, up from 148 tonnes in 2020 and the most since 2015.

**20<sup>th</sup> Dhaka International Film Festival:**

- P.S Vinodraj directed film Koozhangal from India won the best film award in the Asian Film Competition section at the 20th Dhaka International Film Festival.
- Information and Broadcasting Minister of Bangladesh Hasan Mahmud gave away the awards as Chief Guest during the concluding session organized at the National Museum auditorium in Dhaka.

## West African bloc Suspends Burkina Faso after Military Coup:

- West Africa's main regional bloc (ECOWAS) on January 28 suspended Burkina Faso from its Governing bodies over this week's military coup but stopped short of imposing any sanctions.

### About Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS):

- Established on **May 28 1975 via the treaty of Lagos.**
- ECOWAS (also known as **CEDEAO in French**) is a 15-member regional group with a mandate of promoting economic integration in all fields of activity of the constituting countries.
- Member countries making up ECOWAS are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.
- **Mali was suspended in 2020 and Guinea in 2021** from the bloc.

### Brand Finance Global 500-2022 Report:

- **Apple** holds on to **world's most valuable brand title** with record valuation at more than US\$355 billion (the highest brand value ever recorded in the Brand Finance Global 500 ranking history), followed by Amazon and Google.
- New entrant **TikTok (18<sup>th</sup>)** named **world's Fastest-growing** brand, up 215%, leading Global revolution in media consumption.
- **US and China** continue to dominate claiming 2/3 of brand value in ranking, while UK sees fastest growth out of top 10 countries, up 47%, following Shell's HQ move.
- **Microsoft's Satya Nadella** comes out top in Brand Finance Brand Guardianship Index 2022 of **World's top 250 CEOs.**
- Development of COVID-19 vaccines sees pharma named fastest-growing industry, while tourism sector remains below pre-pandemic valuation.
- **WeChat** named **world's strongest brand** for second consecutive year with top score of 93.3 out of 100 and elite AAA+ rating.

- **Tech** remained the **most valuable industry** in the list in terms of sector followed by Retail, Banking, Media and Telecoms in top 5 respectively.
- The **Indian conglomerate Tata Group** has emerged as the most valuable brand from India and also in South Asia. It is the **only brand from the country** in the top 100.
- **The Global Rank of Tata Group 78.**
- **Brands in the top 10:**
  - ✓ Apple , Amazon, Google, Microsoft,
  - ✓ Walmart, Samsung, Facebook,
  - ✓ Industrial and Commercial Bank of China
  - ✓ Huawei, Verizon.

### Gehri dosti, says Israel PM about ties with India:

- Israel and India have a "gehri dosti" (deep friendship), Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has said and thanked his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, for his "deep commitment" to the "strong and robust friendship".
- The two nations celebrated 30 years of Establishment of Diplomatic relations.
- Though India had recognised Israel on September 17, 1950, full-fledged diplomatic relations between the countries were established on January 29, 1992.



# 8. TAMILNADU AFFAIRS

## **CM opens Medical Centres at 7 Temples:**

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin Virtually inaugurated Medical Centres at seven temples on behalf of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department for the benefit of Devotees.
- The temples are Subramaniaswamy Temple in Tiruchendur, Arunachaleswarar Temple in Tiruvannamalai, Angala Parameswari Temple in Melmalayanur, Lakshmi Narasimhaswamy Temple in Sholinghur, Subramaniaswamy Temple in Maruthamalai, Subramaniaswamy Temple at Tiruttani and Dhandayuthapaniswamy Temple at Palani.
- In these medical centres, besides basic amenities, first aid and basic treatment would be provided with oxygen cylinders, beds and Lifesaving Medicines.

## **'Singara Chennai 2.0 Veedhi Vizha':**

- The Greater Chennai Corporation launched Singara Chennai 2.0 Veedhi Vizha, a cycling and walking initiative for residents.
- The festival will continue till January 26.
- As part of the festival, the Corporation has invited residents to take up the walking and Cycling challenge this year.
- **Nalamigu Chennai** is one of the main themes of the Singara Chennai vision.
- To celebrate 75 years of Independence, the Government has already encouraged line agencies to organise various events that would also motivate people towards a Healthy Lifestyle.
- The initiative is also part of the walking and cycling challenge among 75 cities in the country. The number of registrations in Chennai has crossed 1,000 because of the participation of cycling clubs.

- For participation, Chennai residents are Requested to register in the Strava app.
- When participants record their activity on Strava app, it will automatically be tracked as part of the challenge.

## **Governor Inaugurates Mega Isai Vizha:**

- Governor R.N. Ravi inaugurated the Mega Isai Vizha (Season-5) organised by Tamil Cultural Academy at Narada Gana Sabha in Chennai on January 1, 2022.
- Governor R.N. Ravi presented the "Isai Chemmal" award to vocalist Aruna Sairam.

## **22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of Thiruvalluvar Statue in Kanniyakumari:**

- The Thiruvalluvar Statue, or the Valluvar Statue, is a 41-metre-tall (133 ft) stone sculpture of the Tamil poet and philosopher Valluvar, author of the Tirukkural, an ancient Tamil work on Dharma and morality.
- It is located atop a small island near the town of Kanyakumari on the southernmost point of the Indian peninsula on the Coromandel Coast, where two seas (the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea) and an ocean (the Indian Ocean) meet.
- The statue was sculpted by the Indian Sculptor **V. Ganapati Sthapati**, who also created the Iraivan Temple, and was unveiled on the millennium day of 1 January 2000 by the then Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi.
- It is currently the 25<sup>th</sup> tallest statue in India.

## **Tamil Nadu's borrowings 17% lower so far, this Financial Year:**

- Tamil Nadu's market borrowings in the First Nine Months of the 2021-22 financial year have been about 17% lower than last year, amid improving revenue.

- The State has borrowed ₹52,000 Crores in April-December 2021, compared with ₹63,000 crores in the same period during the Previous Financial Year.
- The borrowings have been done through the auction of State Government Securities or State Development Loans.
- Tamil Nadu's revenue has rebounded after the Second wave of COVID19.
- Its total revenue receipts increased about 22% to ₹1,18,992.48 crore in April-November 2021, from ₹97,635.78 crore in the same Period Last Year.
- The total revenue receipts include tax Revenue, non-tax revenue, grants-in-aid and contributions.
- Tax revenue comes from the State's own direct sources like the State GST, stamps and registration fees, land revenue, tax on petroleum products and revenue from liquor sales and the State's share in the Central and other taxes and duties.
- The revenue receipts got a boost with the Union Government devolving ₹3,878.38 crore to the State in November last.
- The State also got ₹8,095 crores in back-to-back GST compensation loan from the Union Government for 2021-22.
- Tamil Nadu's revenue expenditure stood at ₹1,26,862.35 crore in April-November 2021.
- As a result, the revenue deficit (which implies revenue expenditure which is higher than revenue receipts) stood at about ₹ 7,869.87 crore as in November 2021, lower than ₹10,126.14 crore posted in October 2021.

#### **About SDL:**

- State Development Loans (SDLs) are sovereign securities issued by various State Governments to raise funds from the market.
- In India, the Central Government issues both treasury bills and bonds or dated securities while the State Governments issue only bonds or dated securities, which are called the State Development Loans (SDLs). G-Secs carry practically no risk of default and, hence, are called risk-free gilt-edged instruments.

#### **Tiruvannamalai Creates 1,121 Farm Ponds in a Month:**

- Tapping the workforce, mostly women laborer's, under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the district administration in Tiruvannamalai has created 1,121 farm ponds in a month's time as part of its efforts on water conservation.

#### **About MGNREGA Scheme:**

- MGNREGA is one of the largest work Guarantee programmes in the world.

#### **Objective:**

- ✓ The primary objective of the scheme is to guarantee 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any Rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work.

#### **Legal Right to Work:**

- ✓ Unlike earlier employment guarantee schemes, the act aims at addressing the causes of chronic poverty through a rights-based framework.
- ✓ At least one-third of beneficiaries have to be women.
- ✓ Wages must be paid according to the statutory minimum wages specified for agricultural laborers in the state under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.

#### **Demand-Driven Scheme:**

- ✓ The most important part of MGNREGA's design is its legally-backed guarantee for any rural adult to get work within 15 days of demanding it, failing which an 'unemployment allowance' must be given.
- ✓ This demand-driven scheme enables the self-selection of workers.

#### **Decentralised Planning:**

- ✓ There is an emphasis on strengthening the process of decentralization by giving a significant role in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in planning and implementing these works.
- ✓ The act mandates Gram sabhas to recommend the works that are to be undertaken and at least 50% of the works must be executed by them.

### **Survey to ascertain how many Sri Lankan Tamils want Indian Citizenship:**

- A panel constituted by the Tamil Nadu Government, tasked to find durable solutions for short and long-term issues facing the Sri Lankan Tamils living in and out of camps across the State, has decided to undertake a survey to ascertain how many among them want Indian citizenship.
- The Advisory Committee, which was constituted by the State Government following the announcement made by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in the Assembly last Year.
- After a survey, the State Government would then request the Union Home Ministry to consider the case of Sri Lankan Tamils and make necessary provisions in the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, to facilitate Indian Citizenship for them.
- About 50% of the camp population wanted Indian citizenship on the grounds of their Indian origin and citizenship by birth for their children.
- MP Kalanidhi Veerasamy insisted on removing the 'illegal migrants' tag from Sri Lankan Tamils, which he contended was the main obstacle to their legal demand for Indian citizenship.
- Tamils from Sri Lanka could be categorized under multiple categories – those who arrived after the signing of the Sirimavo-Shastri Pact and Sirimavo-Gandhi Pact, those who came after the holocaust, those who arrived during the war between the Sri Lankan Government and rebel forces, and children of these persons, who were born in Tamil Nadu, among others.
- As of July 1 2021, a total of 58,668 persons from 18,937 families living inside camps and 34,123 persons from 13,553 families of Sri Lankan origin were living outside the camps across Tamil Nadu.

### **About Sirima – Shastri Pact:**

- The Sirima-Shastri Pact or Srimavo-Shastri Pact (also known as the Indo-Ceylon Agreement and Bandaranaike-Shastri Pact) was an agreement that was signed between Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, and Lal Bahadur Shastri, the

Prime Minister of India, on 30 October 1964. Officially, it was known as Agreement on Persons of Indian Origin in Ceylon.

- It was a significant agreement in determining the status and future of people of Indian origin in Ceylon.

### **About Sirima- Gandhi Pact:**

- The Sirima-Gandhi Pact or Srimavo-Gandhi Pact was an agreement that was signed between Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, and Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, on 28 June 1974.
- It was a follow-up agreement of Sirima-Shastri Pact that left 150,000 people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka to future account. Sirima-Shastri Pact agreed to grant Ceylonese citizenship to 300,000 Indian population in Sri Lanka and 525,000 people Repatriation to India.
- The pact is considered one of the good relationship factors between India and Sri Lanka since it contributed to solve the issues of stateless Indian origin people in Sri Lanka.

### **CM meets expert panel on Flood prevention in Chennai**

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin chaired a meeting of the Chennai Flood Disaster Mitigation and Management Committee.
- **Committee Head:** V. Thiruppugazh
- In October last year, the State government constituted the committee, which noted that Chennai was prone to natural disasters and Cyclones.
- Chennai's terrain was flat with most of the area at an average elevation of two metres above the Mean Sea Level and some of them were even below the sea level, according to a Government Order.

### **'Humayun Mahal restoration to be completed by August'**

- The project to restore the historic Humayun Mahal in Chempauk Palace complex is expected to be completed by August.
- Nearly 85% of the work to restore the fire-hit heritage structure has been completed.

- Public Works Minister E.V. Velu inspected the ₹41.12 crore work being taken up at Humayun Mahal on Wallajah Road.
- The 250-year-old Humayun Mahal was built in Indo-Saracenic style of architecture between 1868 and 1871.
- It functioned as Revenue department's headquarters during the British era and then had various State government offices, including Horticulture and Revenue, Functioning in the building.
- In the consumption of Petrol, Tamil Nadu Ranks third in India. To reduce the usage of Petrol, mixing of 20 % ethanol is being promoted.
- Apart from sugarcane, the Central Government has allowed production of ethanol from produces such as maize, rice etc.

### **About Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY):**

### **T.N. Assembly Session:**

- The first session of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly for the year is set to commence with the customary Governor's address to the House in Kalaivanar Arangam on Wallajah Salai in Chennai on January 5.
- Assembly Speaker M. Appavu called on Governor R.N. Ravi at the Raj Bhavan and extended the traditional invitation to him to deliver the inaugural address.

### **Food Secretary held Review**

#### **Meeting in UDHAGAMANDALAM:**

- Shri. Sudhanshu Pandey IAS, Secretary (Department of Food Public Distribution), Govt. of India, held a review meeting for Tamil Nadu at Udhagamandalam regarding the implementation of the Central Government Schemes with State Government.
- He has told the district administration to interact with owners of tea estates in the Nilgiris and help migrant workers enroll in the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' Programme. The migrants should be encouraged to register on 'Mera Ration' app.
- While reviewing the PMGKAY scheme, it was observed that State needs to gear up its distribution of the entire allocation of the Foodgrains made by Government of India.
- State Government was also advised to get the verification of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) card holders done to data cleaning, de-duplication so that all the eligible and Genuine people are extended the benefit of Food grains at the subsidized rate.

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (Prime Minister's Food Security Scheme for the Poor) is a food security welfare scheme announced by the Government of India in 26 March 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic in India.

The program is operated by the Department of Food and Public Distribution under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

The scheme aims to feed the poorest citizens of India by providing grain through the Public Distribution System, to all the priority households (ration card holders and those identified by the Antyodaya Anna Yojana scheme).

PMGKAY provides 5 kg of rice or wheat (according to regional dietary preferences) per person and 1 kg of dal to each family holding a ration card.

The scale of this welfare scheme makes it the largest food security program in the world.

### **About National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013:**

▪ **Notified on:** 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2013.

#### **Objective:**

- ✓ To provide for food and nutritional security in the human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantities of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity.

#### **Coverage:**

- ✓ 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

- ✓ Overall, NFSA caters to 67% of the total population.
- **Eligibility:**
  - ✓ Priority Households to be covered under TPDS, according to guidelines by the State Government.
  - ✓ Households covered under existing Antyodaya Anna Yojana.
- **Provisions:**
  - ✓ 5 Kgs of food grains per person per month at Rs. 3/2/1 per Kg for rice/wheat/coarse Grains.
  - ✓ The existing AAY household will continue to receive 35 Kgs of food grains per household Per month.
  - ✓ Meal and maternity benefit of not less than Rs. 6,000 to pregnant women and lactating mothers during pregnancy and six months after the child birth.
  - ✓ Meals for children up to 14 years of age.
  - ✓ Food security allowance to beneficiaries in case of non-supply of entitled food grains or Meals.
  - ✓ Setting up of grievance redressal mechanisms at the district and state level.

### Startup to Upskill Disadvantaged Youth:

- GUVI, an online technical learning platform, will offer upskilling courses for free to over one million disadvantaged youngsters in the Country.
- The beneficiaries will receive courses on Python programming and advanced AI in English, Tamil, Hindi and Telugu among Other Languages.
- Union Higher Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan lauded GUVI for contributing to the efforts of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in upskilling Economically Disadvantaged Youth.

### Stalin Distributes Uniforms to staff, Priests of Temples:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launched the Scheme to provide uniforms and dhoti-angavasthram to Archakas, Bhattacharyas, Odhuvars and Poosaris and staff of temples

under the purview of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department.

- A total of 52,803 persons, including around 7000 women, who work as priests, temple staff and Odhuvars would receive the clothes.
- The male priests would get two sets each of dhoti-angavasthram with mayil kann and the women will receive maroon-coloured saris with yellow borders.

### Electorate in Tamil Nadu Crosses 6.36

#### Crore:

- As per the final electoral rolls published, the total electorate in the State stands at 6,36,25,813, which includes 3,23,91,250 women, 3,12,26,759 men and 7,804 persons from the third gender, the Chief Electoral Officer said.
- **Shozhinganallur Assembly constituency** in Chengalpattu district continues to have the highest number of electors – 7,11,755, including 3,55,394 women and 122 members of the third gender, followed by Kavundampalayam in Coimbatore district with 4,76,467 electors. It includes 2,39,021 women, 2,37,305 men and 141 from the third Gender.
- **Kilvelur constituency** in Nagapattinam district has the **lowest number of voters** – 1,78,517, including 91,613 women, 86,893 Men and 11 from the third gender.
- **Chennai District has 40.8 Lakh Voters:**
  - ✓ Chennai district has 40,80,578 voters, according to the final electoral rolls released after the completion of the Special Summary Revision 2022.
  - ✓ According to a release from the Greater Chennai Corporation, there are 26,540 more voters in the district now than compared to the number of voters in draft electoral rolls that was released on November 1, 2021.
  - ✓ Among the voters, 20,04,860 were men, 20,74,616 women and 1,102 persons who Identified themselves as others.
  - ✓ There were 69,756 more women than men. Of the 16 Assembly constituencies in **Chennai, Velachery has the highest Number** of 3,17,349 voters and **Harbour has the lowest number** of 1,78,665 voters.

- ✓ Harbour is the only constituency in Chennai where men voters (92,978), outnumber women (85,626).

### Customary Address of Governor R.N.

#### Ravi to the Tamil Nadu

#### Legislative Assembly:

- The State Government urged the Centre to release funds totaling about ₹6230 crore from the **National Disaster Response Fund** Immediately to ameliorate the effects of Damage caused by the recent heavy rain and Flooding.
- In order to carry out mining in an Ecologically sustainable manner and mobilize revenue for the government, a 'Natural Resources Management Plan' would be formulated.
- A detailed action plan titled 'Towards One Trillion Dollar Economy' would be prepared to ensure that the State Government's vision of 'One Trillion Dollar Economy' by 2030 is realized.
- The State Government also urged the GST Council and the Union Finance Ministry to continue the GST compensation at least till June 30, 2024, contending that the State's Revenues were yet to recover from the pandemic.
- Since the introduction of GST, the State was not able to realise the high growth of tax collections that it had witnessed during the VAT regime.
- The GST compensation will be ceased to exist on June 30, 2022 as of now.
- **Proceeding's Webcast:**
  - ✓ Besides the regular live telecast of the Governor's Address in the House by DD Podhigai, a YouTube channel of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations web streamed the proceedings.
  - ✓ For the first time, the videos of Question Hour, scheduled on January 6 and 7, and the Chief Minister's reply to the debate on the motion of thanks to the Governor's address to the House, scheduled on the last day of the sitting, will be made available through DD Podhigai.

### About National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF):

- National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005.
- It is defined in Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act).
- It is placed in the "Public Account" of Government of India under "reserve funds not bearing interest".
  - ✓ **Public Accounts:** It was constituted under Article 266 (2) of the Constitution. It accounts for flows for those transactions where the Government is merely acting as a banker eg. provident funds, small savings etc. These funds do not belong to the government and have to be paid back at some time.
- Expenditures from it are not required to be approved by the Parliament.
- It is managed by the Central Government for meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation due to any Threatening disaster situation or disaster.
- It supplements the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not Available in the SDRF.

### Agro-Industrial Corridor project to Commence Next Year:

- Governor R.N. Ravi said the agro-industrial corridor project would commence next year.
- The project would address the industrial infrastructure deficit in Cauvery delta districts by promoting agro based industries.
- The medical devices industry has been identified as a sunrise sector and in order to develop a comprehensive ecosystem for this industry, a **Medical Devices Park** is being established over 150 acres. The State will also be setting up the **Nation's First Largescale Furniture Park over 1100 acres in Thoothukudi.**
- These two parks would generate Employment for around three lakh persons.

- The government has declared **January 12** as 'World Tamil Diaspora Day', which will be marked by Special Events Every Year.

### **T.N. may Clip Governor's Powers to Appoint VCs**

- After Maharashtra and West Bengal sought to vest the Government with more powers in the appointment of Vice-chancellors to the State universities, the Tamil Nadu Government is exploring options to empower itself to make the Appointment instead of the Governor.
- At present, Vice-chancellors are appointed by the Governor, in his capacity as the Chancellor of the State universities, from a shortlist of three names submitted by a search committee.

#### **About:**

- **Article 154** of the Constitution of India vests the executive power of the state in Governor.
- One of the executive powers of the Governor is that he acts as the chancellor of universities in the state. He also appoints the Vice Chancellors of universities in the state.

### **Bills to Create New Local bodies introduced in Assembly**

- Municipal Administration Minister K.N. Nehru introduced the bills for creation of Municipal Corporations for Cuddalore, Kancheepuram, Sivakasi, Karur, Tambaram and Kumbakonam.
- He said considering the rapid pace of urbanization in the State, it was imperative to Reorganize the urban local bodies.
- As per the 2011 Census, 48.5% of people in the State lived in urban areas.
- "Over 53% of the people in the State live in Urban areas now" he added.
- The total number of municipalities in Tamilnadu is increased from 15 to 21.

### **TNPSC to Recruit for State PSUs:**

- The Assembly passed a Bill to entrust the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) with the additional function of recruiting candidates for certain posts in the State public sector undertakings, Corporations and Statutory boards.

### **Supplementary Budget Estimates Presented**

- Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan presented the first supplementary Estimates Amounting to ₹3,719.65 crore for 2021-22 in the Assembly.
- They represent 1% of the total spend of the state.

### **Term of Cooperative Societies cut to 3 Years:**

- The Tamil Nadu Assembly passed the Bill to further amend the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Societies Act, 1983 to reduce the term of the office of the board of directors of cooperative societies from Five Years to Three Years.

### **Forest Department to Digitize Various Activities:**

- As part of the Tamil Nadu Digital Forests initiative, the Forest Department has decided to digitize various activities.
- A sum of ₹33.10 crore has been sanctioned for the next two years to take up a digital GPS survey of forest blocks to prepare the necessary geo-database with details of the boundaries. Also strengthening of information technology infrastructure and end-to-end computerization of the Department will be taken up simultaneously
- The digitization of forest boundaries will help to identify the encroachments.
- Realtime monitoring of forest fires and wildlife degradation would also be carried out.
- The aim was to create a centralized repository of spatial database.
- Geotagging of all forestry development activities and forests, monitoring of plantation activities, climate impact assessment, wildlife Corridor monitoring, human wildlife conflict Reporting could be done.
- The digitization would also be useful for Delineation of wildlife corridors, Eco sensitive zones, wetlands and zones of influence.

### Temple Advisory Committee:

- The Tamil Nadu Government constituted a state level advisory committee for all major Hindu temples under the purview of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department.
- A Government order said Chief Minister M.K. Stalin will be the committee's chairman and HR&CE Minister P.K. Sekarbabu will be its vice chairman.
- The HR&CE Secretary will be a member, and the HR&CE Commissioner the member Secretary.
- The committee will oversee the maintenance of major temples with an annual income of over ₹10 lakhs.
- The Members will hold office for Three Years.

### Participation of Visually Impaired in Co-operative Union Elections:

- A bill was passed in the Assembly stating that the visually impaired people are eligible to contest in the Co-operative Union elections.
- Anyone who is illiterate in Tamil or English or any other language declared by the Government under the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Societies Act is eligible to be elected or appointed as a member of the Board of Directors of any registered Co-operative Society.
- Under this rule, in the election held in 2013 for the Co-operative Societies, the applications filed by the visually impaired Candidates at the time were rejected by Election Officials.
- Therefore, legislation has been enacted to ensure that visually impaired and physically handicapped persons are eligible to be elected and appointed as members of any of the registered co-operative Societies.

### ASI's Decision to set up Tamil EpiGraph Office Welcomed:

- CPM state secretary K Balakrishnan welcomed the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) decision to change the ASI's Southern Region Deputy Superintendent office into Tamil Epigraph Deputy Superintendent office as it would help the scholars and researchers to

access Unpublished inscriptions.

- He urged the union government to bring all the Tamil inscriptions and related documents kept at Mysore Central Archaeological Department office to the Chennai office and to make all necessary arrangements including appointment of adequate staff for the Chennai office to preserve and maintain the inscriptions.
- Tamil inscriptions, manuscripts and archaeological symbols were all Unmaintained and unprinted and preserved by the Mysore Central Archaeological Office, making them unusable by Tamil researchers and Activists.
- It is to note that Madras HC had already Passed an appropriate order to preserve the Tamil Inscriptions.

### Scheme to Promote Lentil Cultivation:

- Tamil Nadu Government has initiated a Scheme to promote lentil cultivation (black Gram / green lentils).
- A scheme to provide agricultural inputs to encourage farmers to cultivate pulses on rice fallow areas after harvesting samba and thaladi crops was launched.
- Cultivation of pulses on such land areas is planned on 11 lakh acres this year. Five farmers from Chengalpattu and Tiruvallur districts received agricultural inputs from the CM at the secretariat.
- The inputs include certified seeds, bio Fertilizers and Micronutrients.
- Also, the pulses thus produced will be procured by Minimum Support Price through regulated markets. The scheme aims to protect the soil and environment and increase farmers' income.

### New App among Bunch of Goodies for TN Farmers:

- Chief Minister MK Stalin announced a raft of schemes for farmers including e-vaadagai, a mobile app to rent farm equipment, scheme to provide agricultural inputs to cultivate pulses on rice fallow areas, and sustainable cotton cultivation mission to increase cotton Production.

- Through the Uzhavan mobile app, farmers can also learn about the State Agricultural Engineering Department's latest initiatives and schemes, and get their doubts cleared. They can also use the app to get details of rent of equipment and conditions for using them.
- Stalin also launched a scheme to provide 2,118 pieces of agricultural machinery for a total subsidy of Rs 50.73 crore, and presented Machinery to five farmers at the secretariat.
- The equipment is being given to women SC/ST farmers at 50 per cent subsidy and other farmers at 40 per cent subsidy. This scheme will be implemented in all districts except Chennai.
- The CM also inaugurated new buildings for the Tamil Nadu State Agricultural Marketing Board in Kanniyakumari, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Theni, Krishnagiri, Tenkasi, Perambalur, and Thiruvavur districts.
- Under the Sustainable Cotton Cultivation Mission, long-staple cotton variety, which is in high demand, will be cultivated on 25,000 Hectares using integrated methods.
- At the secretariat, five farmers received inputs for cotton cultivation from the chief Minister. Farmers who produce seeds of long-staple cotton varieties will get an incentive of Rs 60 per kg.
- **Subsidised Machinery:**
  - ✓ A new scheme will provide 2,118 pieces of agricultural machinery on a total subsidy of Rs 50.73 crore.
  - ✓ Women SC/ST farmers will get it at 50% subsidy, and others at 40%subsidy.

### Essay Competition on Ahimsa:

- In memory of Mahatma Gandhi and thousands of freedom fighters, the Chennai based Gandhi Peace Foundation will organise an essay competition on the subject "The Ahimsa Abundant in Me".
- Those in the age group of 10 to 25 may send their essays not exceeding 500 words based on how they manage their day-to-day Problems creatively by adopting ahimsa.

### Tamil Nadu should set up a 'Citizens' Information Portal':

- Leading economist Jean Dreze has made a strong case for the creation of a Citizens' Information Portal (CIS) in Tamil Nadu, saying that it would facilitate social audits and other efforts to curb corruption.
- Mr. Dreze, a member of the State Advisory Council, said though Tamil Nadu, like the Centre, had a user-friendly facility for online Right to Information (RTI) queries, "it was Only for one department so far."
- In a letter to the Chief Minister, he proposed extending the facility to all departments as the first step towards transparent governance. He explained that the online facility of the Central Government had made it possible not only to file RTI queries but also to monitor their progress, pay fees if any, file appeals etc.

### State Government Fixes basic Price for Sale of River Sand:

- The State Government has fixed the basic Cost of river sand as ₹1000 per unit and plans to take steps to open new sand quarries and Government depots in two months.
- According to a Government Order, approved building plans have been made mandatory for customers to book river sand Loads.
- Besides online booking, buyers may also pay in cash at the special bank extension counters to be established at government sand depots.
- Customers will also have to provide the registration number of vehicles at the time of booking, which will be verified by the Water Resources Department (WRD) during Delivery.
- The functioning of the quarries and depots will be monitored through CCTV cameras Round the clock.
- A centralized control room will be set up for real time monitoring of sand quarry activities across the State.

## T.N. Hopes to meet its Rice Production Target:

- For 2021-22, the State has fixed an overall target of 125 lakh tonnes of grain, including 42 lakh Tonnes of millets and 7.5 lakh tonnes of pulses.
- For the three previous years (from 2018-19 to 2020-21), the State's rice production ranged from 61.32 lakh tonnes in 2018-19 to 72.83 in 2020-21.

- According to the Reserve Bank of India's publication, Handbook of Statistics on Indian Economy for 2020-21, Tamil Nadu's highest rice production since 2001-02 was 75.17 lakh tonnes during 2015-16.
- The officials are of the view that given the Government's Emphasis on millets and pulses, their Production will help the State meet its overall Grain Target.

Season	Normal Coverage	Coverage Achieved during 2020-21	Target fixed for 2021-22	Coverage achieved during 2021-22 (till Jan, 3, 2022)
Kar/Kuruvai/Sornavari (KKS)				
Cauvery Delta	1.19	1.668	1.439	1.984
Non-Delta Region	1.649	1.351	1.608	2.121
KKS Total	2.839	3.019	3.047	4.105
Samba/Thaladi/Pishanam (STP)				
Cauvery Delta	5.213	5.455	5.419	5.389
Non-Delta region	7.313	8.22	8.578	9.399
STP Total	12.526	13.675	13.997	14.788
Navarai / Kodai (NK)				
Cauvery Delta	0.35	0.002	0.32	0.006
Non-Delta region	1.865	0.614	1.886	0.734
NK Total	2.215	0.616	2.206	0.74
Grand Total	17.58	17.31	19.25	19.633
Source: State Agriculture Department			*in Lakh Hectares	

### T.N. likely to Borrow ₹25,800 Crores in Q4, 2022:

- The Tamil Nadu Government has indicated that it will borrow ₹25,800 crores in Q4 (January-March) of the financial year 2021-22 by auctioning bonds, called State Development Loans, according to the Reserve Bank of India's borrowing calendar.
- This is marginally higher than the about ₹25,000 crores borrowed during the same period last year.
- From April to December 2021, the State had borrowed ₹52,000 crores, slightly higher than the ₹51,950 crores indicated for the period.
- However, it was 17% lower than ₹63,000 crores borrowed during April - December 2020.
- The State Development Loans are the Major source of borrowing for the States to fund their fiscal deficit that arises when total Expenditure exceeds Total Revenue.
- Excluding the GST compensation of ₹8,095 crore received as back-to-back loan, Tamil Nadu's fiscal deficit is estimated to be ₹92,529.43 crore in 2021-22, which is 4.33% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
- Accepting the 15th Finance Commission's recommendations, the Union government has allowed the States to borrow up to 4% of the GSDP for 2021-22, with an additional 0.5% limit for those undertaking critical power sector reforms. And one of the reforms is the introduction of direct benefit transfer to all Farmers.
- The Tamil Nadu Government has urged the Union Government to continue the GST Compensation at least till June 30, 2024.

### New Appointments in Tamil Nadu:

- IAS officer **Sudeep Jain** has been posted as Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Minerals Ltd.
- S. Arunraj will be posted as Executive Director of the Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu Ltd.
- G. Prakash has been posted as Commissioner of Milk Production and Dairy Development.

- N. Subbaiyan will continue holding the post of Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd.

### Nemmeli Third Desalination plant to be ready by April 2023:

- Nearly 32% of the work on the third desalination plant at Nemmeli along the East Coast Road with a capacity to treat 150 million litres a day (mld) of seawater has been completed.
- Work is in progress to simultaneously lay a pipeline to supply treated water to various south Chennai and suburban areas, catering to 9 lakh population.
- The plant is expected to be ready by April next year.
- The ₹1,259.38 crore project is being implemented under the AMRUT scheme and with financial assistance from KFW (German Development Bank).

### ISBACON 2022:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said entrepreneurs should focus on new industries while consolidating their position in the existing Sectors.
- In the wake of the pandemic, entrepreneurs should equip themselves to face new challenges.
- Inaugurating ISBACON 2022, the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual conference of **Indian Science and Technology Entrepreneurs Parks and Business Incubator Association (ISBA)** in Chennai, Mr. Stalin said: "We welcome major industries. At the same time, we are giving importance to MSMEs."

### CM declares Chikkaiah Naicker College in Erode as a Government College:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin declared Chikkaiah Naicker College (CNC) in the city as a Government college.
- The college was started in **1954** by **Thanthai Periyar**.
- The College continues to be under the control of the State Government from 1998 and the Joint Director of Collegiate Education, Coimbatore region, is administering its Activities.

- There has been a demand for over 20 years to convert it as a government college and the State Government now declares it as a Government College.
- Post conversion, the government would own 35.8% of the telecom carrier. This follows the reform package announced by the Government last year.

### Digital Philatelic Exhibition:

- The Department of Posts, Tamil Nadu Circle, has Organised the 13<sup>th</sup> State-level philately Exhibition in digital mode.
- Called 'TN Digipex 2022', the virtual Exhibition being Organised in association with the South India Philatelists' Association, was inaugurated on January 7 and completed on January 10.
- "India's rich Cultural Heritage" is the theme of the Exhibition.
- The exhibition was being held in digital mode for the first time to promote philatelists' collection and to help the youth appreciate the Country's Culture and Heritage.

### IIT Madras Tech Fest Shastra 2022:

- Shastra 2022, the annual festival of IIT Madras will be taking place virtually from January 13 and 16.
- Shastra is student-run technical festival that comprises events and competitions in diverse disciplines that ranges from Aeronautics and Biotechnology to Business.
- This Edition's Summit will focus on gaming and Gaming Technology.
- The event would encourage the young minds to solve various industrial and societal-related problems in diverse disciplines.
- Many events of the 22nd edition of Shastra, one of India's biggest Annual student-run technical festival, are free to access for the public.
- The theme for this year's edition is "Code to Chaos."

### Govt. to hold 35.8% stake in Vodafone Idea:

- The Board of Directors of Vodafone Idea Ltd. approved the conversion of interest – related to spectrum auction instalments and on adjusted gross revenue dues to the Centre – into equity.

- The Net Present Value of this interest is expected to be about ₹16,000 crores.

### CM's Economic Advisory Council member for Universal Basic Income:

- Member of Economic Advisory Council to the Chief Minister Arvind Subramanian said he was in favour of the State introducing a Universal basic income scheme.
- An idea of a minimum basic income would help complete Tamil Nadu's social safety net Project and help in individuals realizing their Potential.
- Mr. Subramanian said Tamil Nadu had a Successful social development model and currently beneficiaries were targeted based on particular criteria.
- His personal view is universal basic income is one more step where one can look at the leakages happening and rationalize and design a well targeted minimum income Programme.
- His idea was a quasi-universal basic income model where the rich were excluded and the Rest covered.
- Despite having the technology and talent, Chennai had only three Unicorns (startups valued over \$1 billion) out of 80 in India, he added. Unicorns were the boom sector in India in the last three years and Tamil Nadu lagged behind in this dynamic sector. However, he said, that alone would not be enough and the State needed to focus on Export-oriented labour-intensive sectors.
- It was important to address the resource constraint faced by the State with high deficits and most of the revenue going towards interest payments.
- Two big areas which needed reforms were Property tax sector and power sector.

### Government notifies rules for Preparing Regional Plans:

- The Tamil Nadu government has notified the Regional Plan (Preparation, Publication and Sanction) Rules, 2021, under the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971.
- According to the notification, within 18 Months of the constitution of the Regional Planning Authority (RPA), it should prepare a land and building use map for the regional planning area and for the different parts of the Regional Area.
- Within two years of the preparation of the land and building use map, the RPA should prepare a draft regional plan for the regional planning area in consultation with the Development and local planning authorities.
- The draft regional plan would have the Location of the region, its historic evolution, topography, geology and geomorphology, hydrology (surface and ground water), climate, administrative profile, functional areas and the ratio of urban and rural Development, among others.
- It would also have the extent of use of land for residential, industrial, commercial, Agricultural and recreational purpose or as forest or for mineral exploitation, and Tentative land requirement projections from various sectors for various zones.
- On receiving the draft regional plan from the RPA through the Director, the Government will either give its consent or direct the RPA to make modifications in the regional Plan.
- After the draft is published and objections and suggestions are received and issues are sorted out, it will be notified in the Gazette of Tamil Nadu.

### CM lays Foundation for Kalaignar Memorial Library in Madurai:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin virtually laid the foundation for the Kalaignar Memorial Library in Madurai, to be constructed at a cost of ₹99 crores.

### PM opens 11 New Medical Colleges in T.N:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually Inaugurated a record 11 new government Medical colleges across Tamil Nadu.
- The colleges, established in Ariyalur, Dindigul, Kallakurichi, Krishnagiri, Nagapattinam, Namakkal, Ramanathapuram, the Nilgiris, Tiruppur, Tiruvallur and Virudhunagar, would have a cumulative annual intake of 1,450 MBBS students.
- Mr. Modi, after inauguration speaking from New Delhi, said it was for the first time that 11 medical colleges were being inaugurated in one State.
- The previous record was nine medical colleges in Uttar Pradesh.
- The cost of constructing the new colleges in Tamil Nadu was shared by the Centre (₹2,145 crore) and the State (₹1934.6 crore).
- Mr. Modi said that in 2014, there were 387 medical colleges, but the number had gone up to 596.
- In 2014, India had around 82,000 medical Undergraduate and postgraduate seats.
- In the last seven years, this number had gone up to around 1.48 lakh.
- The Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Infrastructure Mission is aimed at addressing the critical gaps in health infrastructure and Health research, especially in districts.
- A support of over ₹3000 crore would be provided to Tamil Nadu in the next five years, he added.

### NEW CICT CAMPUS in TN:

- The Establishment of a new campus of the CICT in Chennai is in line with the Prime Minister's vision to protect and preserve Indian heritage and promote classical Languages.
- The new campus is fully funded by the Union Government and is built at a cost of Rs 24 Crore.
- The new campus is equipped with a spacious library, an e-library, seminar halls and a Multimedia hall.

- The institute library has a rich collection of over 45,000 ancient Tamil books.
- It also aims to translate and publish 'Thirukkural' in various Indian as well as 100 Foreign languages.
- After inaugurating the campus, PM urged the tamil speaking youth to translate English Content into their mother tongue.
- He informed that the government is Developing an AI based language translation tool to translate English online courses into 12 Indian languages including Tamil.
- Recently, the Tamil Nadu Government entered into an Agreement with United India Insurance Company to implement the CMCHIS for five more years at a total cost of ₹1248 crore.

### **CM Releases Govt. 'Report Card', says 2,619 files have been Cleared:**

- Presenting the 'report card' of his Government, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said
  - ✓ He had cleared 2,619 of the 2,683 files that came to him since he assumed office in May last Year.
  - ✓ His government had cleared within 100 days over 2.5 lakh petitions he had received during his Electoral Campaign.
  - ✓ Over 2.15 crore families had received COVID19 relief assistance of ₹4000 each.
  - ✓ While 2.15 crore families had received the dry rations distributed by the government as part of the COVID19 relief kit, 50 lakh people benefited from the Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam scheme.
  - ✓ Under the Illam Thedi Kalvi scheme, 80,138 centres were set up, and 1,73,792 lakh children who dropped out of school were identified and reenrolled.
  - ✓ The Dearness Allowance for over 18.30 lakh State government employees, teachers and pensioners was increased, and gold loans were waived, benefiting 13.50 lakh families.

### **Helplines Opened for Interstate Migrant Workers:**

- The Tamil Nadu Government has requested interstate migrant workers to stick to their Workplaces without any fear or anxiety over the third wave of the COVID19 pandemic.
- It has opened control rooms in nine districts and Announced Helplines.
- The helplines are **04424321438 and 04424321408** which function from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

### **TN CM Calls for Unity Among Tamil Diaspora:**

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin called for unity among the global Tamil diaspora and urged them to overlook divisions in Tamil Nadu.
- He invited them to visit Tamil Nadu with their children to show them the rich cultural Heritage of the Tamils.
- He was speaking virtually at the World Tamil Diaspora Day (January 12) celebration organised by the Commissionerate of Rehabilitation and Welfare of Non-resident Tamils.

### **31,000 COVID19 Patients covered under CMCHIS:**

- The treatment of 31,145 COVID19 patients was covered under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS) at a cost of nearly ₹382 crore.
- A total of 1,600 hospitals – 714 Government hospitals and 886 Private Hospitals – were being empanelled under the CMCHIS.

### **Chief Minister Launches Distribution of Enhanced Pension to Retired Priests:**

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launched the distribution of enhanced pension to eligible retired priests, who had served in temples including the ones that do not come under the control of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department.
- The move is expected to benefit a total of 1,904 retired priests across the State.
- The Chief Minister also launched various Schemes to distribute marriage assistance to Eligible women through the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department.

- For 2021-22, ₹762.23 crore has been sanctioned, and this is expected to benefit over 94,700 women, including 53,599 degree or Diploma holders and 41,101 others.
- The beneficiaries are given an 8 gram gold coin along with cash assistance, depending on their educational qualifications.
- The Marriage assistance schemes are aimed at promoting the education of girl children, preventing child marriage and encouraging Social Reform.

### Magizh Kanitham:

- Samagra Shiksha will organise “Magizh Kanitham”, a virtual training programme, on January 21 and 22 for mathematics teachers from government schools, in a bid to make learning the subject simple and fun for Students.
- The programme, which will cover Classes VI to VIII, will help teachers use interactive tools and aids to dispel the fear in students about the Subject.

### Tools to Test ties with the Past

- Archaeological excavations at Keeladi and last year’s carbon dating analysis of rice with soil found in a burial urn at Sivakalai, which indicated the Thambirabarani civilisation Dates back to 3,200 years, have reignited an Interest in the ancientness of Tamil civilisation.
- The State is now using scientific Methodologies, along with literary evidence, to ensure the findings are irrefutable and stand intellectual scrutiny globally.
- Normally, the process would be to excavate, exhibit, and corroborate with literary sources.
- **An Ancient DNA Lab** is being set up at **Madurai Kamaraj University** in collaboration with international agencies. Samples are being sent to Florida for carbon dating.
- This year, three sites will be added to the excavation list – Tulukkapattinam and Vembakottai to validate the cultural significance of Adichanallur and Sivakalai; and Perumbalai that is on the erstwhile Kongu Nadu border.

- Efforts are on to undertake undersea explorations through a reconnaissance Survey at Korkai, an ancient port.
- This will be a multimodal agency operation involving the National Institute of Ocean Technology and the Indian Maritime University.
- Focus on Archaeology
  - ✓ Excavation sites in Tamil Nadu include Korkai, Sivakalai, Keeladi, Adichanallur, Gangaikondacholapuram, Myladumparai and Kodumanal.
  - ✓ Funding for Archaeology has been Increased from few lakhs to Rs. 5 crores with separate Allocations for documentation and scientific analysis.
  - ✓ State-of-the-art Museums are being built at Keeladi and Tirunelveli to display the Cultural Heritage of the Vaigai and Porunai river valleys.
  - ✓ TN Chief Minister M K Stalin has said excavations would be carried out in other states and countries in search of Tamil roots.
  - ✓ They include the ancient port city of Muziris, now known as Pattanam in Kerala; Quseir-al-Qadim and Berenice in Egypt; and Khor Rori in Oman.
  - ✓ The research will help to establish the Tamil's trade relations with these countries.

### History of Reservation in Tamil Nadu:

- The recent Supreme Court order permitting 27% quota for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the all India quota for admissions to the undergraduate medical courses has been hailed by almost the entire political spectrum in Tamil Nadu as a milestone in the History of social justice.
- The words, ‘**Social Justice**,’ may even sound Cliched to some but a look at the evolution of the reservation system reveals how the idea is an important chapter in the contemporary Politics in Tamil Nadu.
- It all began with a decision taken at a meeting at the Victoria Public Hall in Chennai in November 1916 to form an organisation to voice the grievances of nonBrahmins.

Among those present were **T.M. Nair and P. Theagaraya Chetti**.

- The meeting paved the way for the Establishment of the **Justice Party**.
- A month later, the leaders unveiled a Document, called '**Non Brahmin Manifesto**'. Thus began the campaign for getting a Rightful share of the Non Brahmins in public life and in Government services. Four years later, the Justice Party came to power in the Elections to the Legislative Council, which was how the legislature was called.
- It had its moments of success in September 1921 and August 1922 when two Government orders (GOs), famously called "**Communal GOs**", were issued.
- In his Politics and Social Conflict in South India, the Non Brahman Movement and Tamil Separatism, 1916-1929,' American historian Eugene F Irschick mentions the party "pursued its demands doggedly, for it realised that the implementation of Government Orders to redistribute Government appointments in favour of Non-Brahmans would fulfil some of the party's first Articulated ideas – administrative power, social position and Economic Security."
- In the first GO, six broad classifications – Brahmins, Non-Brahmin Hindus, Indian Christians, Muhammadans (Muslims), European & Anglo Indians, and Others – were created.
- The second GO pointed out that Non Brahmin Hindus constituted 48% of the new appointments made in the six months ending December 1921.
- Six years later, when P. Subbaroyan was the Chief Minister, a scheme of quota was designed under which Non Brahmins would get 5 out of 12 posts (41.67%) and Brahmins, Anglo Indians Christians and Muslims 2 each (16.67%).
- Depressed Classes, now called Scheduled Castes, would get 1 out of 12 (8.33%). This development was described by R. Kannan, UN diplomat, in his book "**Anna: The Life and Times of C.N. Annadurai**", as the basis for the present scheme of reservation.
- Three Months after Independence, when Omandur P. Ramaswami Reddiar of the Congress was the Chief Minister, an exclusive category – Backward Hindus – was created, with 14.29% of the seats earmarked for them.
- After the Constitution was adopted in 1950, the Madras High Court and then the Supreme Court quashed the scheme of reservation on the Grounds of violation of the principle of equality.
- Agitations organised by Dravidar Kazhagam founder 'Periyar' E.V. Ramasamy Naicker and pressure exerted by K. Kamaraj, a towering figure of the Congress, on the Central government made possible the first Constitutional amendment.
- In September 1951, the Scheduled Castes (SCs)/the Scheduled Tribes (STs) were provided with 15% and the BCs with 25%.
- Kamaraj, as Chief Minister, had got ready the list of 'More Backward' among the BCs after a study.
- A GO issued in January 1957 stipulated that on a par with those of the SCs, educational concessions alone need be granted to 58 Communities identified in the list.
- Thirty two years later, when DMK leader M. Karunanidhi was the Chief Minister, this list became the basis for the creation of the category – Most Backward Classes (MBCs) – which got 20% out of 50% for the BCs.
- Following the recommendations made by the **First Backward Classes Commission** (1969-70), headed by **A.N. Sattanathan**, Chief Minister Karunanidhi, in May 1971, announced 31% quota for the BCs and 18% for the SCs/STs.
- In February 1980, the AIADMK Government, led by M.G. Ramachandran, which had unsuccessfully tried to introduce the creamy layer concept among the BCs, hiked the quantum of reservation to 50%. In the wake of the Supreme Court's verdict in **1992 in the Mandal Commission** case, the State's 69% quota system had to get a constitutional safeguard, which became a reality in 1994 owing to the efforts of the then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa (AIADMK) and Prime Minister

P.V. Narasimha Rao (Congress).

- During the fifth innings of Karunanidhi as Chief Minister (2006-11), Arunthathiyars and Muslims were given internal quotas of 3% and 3.5% within the overall quota for the SCs and the BCs respectively.

### **NGT Directs Govt. to Stop Work on Fish Landing centre in Thoothukudi:**

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has Directed the Tamil Nadu Government to stop Further construction of a fish landing centre and associated structures at Singithurai in Thoothukudi district, which was undertaken without requisite clearance under the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2011.

### **About Coastal Regulation Zone:**

- In India, the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Rules govern human and industrial activity close to the coastline, in order to protect the Fragile ecosystems near the sea.
- They restrict certain kinds of activities – like large constructions, setting up of new industries, storage or disposal of hazardous material, mining, reclamation and bunding – within a certain distance from the coastline.
- Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification was first issued in 1991 by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 with the mandate to take measures to protect and conserve our coastal Environment.
- Several amendments were made in the CRZ 1991 notification which was consolidated and issued in the CRZ 2011 notification. The CRZ 2011 notification took into account the Issues of CRZ 1991.

### **Objectives of CRZ 2011:**

- ✓ To conserve and protect coastal stretches;
- ✓ To ensure livelihood security to the fishing & local communities living in the coastal areas;
- ✓ To promote development in a sustainable manner based on scientific principles, taking into Account Natural Hazards and sea-level rise.

- In December 2018, Union cabinet approved the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2018.
- ✓ Shailesh Nayak Committee was constituted in June 2014, and it submitted its report in January 2015.

### **T.N. will Install Pennycuick's Statue in U.K:**

- The Tamil Nadu Government will install a statue of Col. Pennycuick in Camberley, United Kingdom, the birthplace of the British Army Engineer, who was Instrumental in constructing the Mullaiperiyar reservoir.
- Marking the Birth Anniversary of the late architect of the reservoir, Mr. Stalin said that the government would take steps to install the statue at the city's central park, after obtaining necessary Permission from the U.K. Government.
- Col. Pennycuick built the dam in 1895 which had resulted in farmers carrying out Cultivation on over 2 Lakh Acres of land.
- Apart from this, the reservoir has also been a prime source of drinking water in the region.
- As a mark of respect, late Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi had unveiled Col. Pennycuick's statue on the Public Works Department campus in Tallakulam, Madurai on **January 15, 2000.**

### **Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam:**

- Since the launch of Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam Scheme on August 5 2021 in Tamil Nadu, the beneficiaries of the scheme crossed over 45 lakhs.
- This scheme has been made to provide door-to-door health facilities among the people of the state who are above 45 years of age.
- Under the Door Step Health Care Scheme, door-to-door checkups and medicines will be provided to the people.
- To bring development in all the health Facilities delivered through this scheme, the Government has covered 1172 health sub centres, 189 Primary health centers and 50 Community Health Centres.

- This Scheme has been launched in seven districts namely- Thanjavur, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Tiruchi, Coimbatore, Chennai and Salem.
- The Scheme will hinge on women public health workers, women health volunteers (WHVs), Physiotherapists and Nurses, who will Provide Healthcare at the Doorstep.

### Mayorship Reserved for SC Woman Candidate:

- The Tamil Nadu Government issued orders to reserve the Chennai Mayor post for a woman belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC) when ordinary elections are conducted for the urban local bodies in 2022.
- It also reserved the mayor posts in Tambaram and Avadi Municipal Corporations for a SC (Women) and SC (General) respectively.
- This will be the first time a woman from the SC community will be elected as Mayor of Chennai when “indirect elections” are held for the urban local bodies this year.
- The mayor posts in nine Corporations – Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Dindigul, Erode, Kancheepuram, Karur, Madurai, Sivakasi and Vellore have been reserved for Women (General) candidates.
- The mayor post in other 9 Corporations - Trichy, Salem, Tirunelveli, Tiruppur, Thanjavur, Thoothukudi, Hosur, Nagercoil, Kumbakonam are reserved for General category.
- The State government also reserved the post of chairperson of 10 municipalities to SC (General) candidates, 10 Municipalities to SC (Women), one Municipality to woman from the Scheduled Tribes (ST) and 58 others to Women (General).
- It also reserved 288 chairperson posts in town panchayats – two for ST (Women), one for ST (General), 43 for SC (Women), 42 for SC (General) and 200 for Women (General).
- There are 21 Municipal Corporations in Tamil Nadu. Among them, Cuddalore, Sivakasi, Kumbakonam, Tambaram, Karur, Hosur, Nagercoil and Avadi Corporations are facing the election for the First Time.

### TN is the most Attractive

#### Investment Destination:

- **Tamil Nadu** has emerged as the most attractive investment destination in the first nine months of FY22.
- The State is the **highest net gainer** in terms of Investment during April to December 2021.
- The State attracted investment worth ₹1,43,902 crore during this period against ₹36,292 crore in the same period last year – a net gain of ₹1,07,610 crore.
- **Gujarat** came **second** with a net gain of ₹77,892 crore and Telangana third (₹65,288 crore), says a report by Projects Today.
- Some of the companies that have committed investment in Tamil Nadu include Tata Group; JSW Renew; Hindustan Unilever; TVS Motor; Adani and Larsen & Toubro.

### CM asks Home Minister to Release NDRF aid:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah reiterating his request to urgently release the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) assistance for the damages caused by the recent floods.

### About National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF):

- National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005.
- It is placed in the “Public Account” of Government of India under “reserve funds not bearing interest.
- **Public Accounts:** It was constituted under Article 266 (2) of the Constitution. It accounts for flows for those transactions where the government is merely acting as a banker eg. provident funds, small savings etc. These Funds do not belong to the Government and have to be paid back at some time.
- Expenditures from it are not required to be approved by the Parliament.
- It is managed by the Central Government for meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation due to any threatening

disaster situation or disaster.

- It supplements the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in the SDRF.

### Central Institute of Classical Tamil Releases Eight Books:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin released eight books published by the Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT) in Chennai when he visited its new premises at Perumbakkam.
- Minister for Industries (who holds the portfolio of Tamil Official Language and Culture) Thangam Thennarasu received the first copies of the books.
- **The books are:**
  - ✓ Tholkappiya Aayvu, Dheivachchilayaar Uraineri, Ayngurunooru Kurinji, Ayngurunooru Paalai, Vaaymozhi Vaaypattu Kotpaattu Nokkil Sanga Ilakkiyam, Puthiya Nokkil Kalabirar Varalaaru, Dravidian Comparative Grammar - II and A Historical Grammar of Tamil.

### About CICT:

- The Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT) is an autonomous Institute of higher research functioning under the Ministry of education, Government of India.
- This is an Institute constituted specifically for carrying out higher research Classical Tamil at international levels not to be found elsewhere globally.
- This unique Institute is functioning in Chennai from May 19, 2008. Earlier, from March, 2006 to May 18, 2008, the Institute was functioning in the campus of the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore and it was called Centre for Excellence of Classical Tamil.
- The CICT is engaged in several research activities aimed at establishing the ancientness and uniqueness of Tamil and of Classical Tamil in particular and in propagating its Findings Globally.

### Northern districts ahead in Readmitting 'Out of School Children':

- Northern districts of Tamil Nadu account for about 40% of 1.77 lakh children who have been brought back to the system of schooling.
- In what is billed as the first of its intervention, an exercise is under way to take back those who have fallen into the category of "Out of school children (OoSC)."
- In the School Education Department's initiative of readmitting the children, Tiruvallur district topped in the State with 14,526 children, followed by Chennai – 9,833 and Chengalpattu – 9,359.
- The annual OoSC survey carried out five months ago covered 5,37,587 children.

### CM asks Planning Panel to Monitor Schemes:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin called upon the members of the State Planning Commission (SPC) to come up with comprehensive suggestions for the development of the State. He urged them to monitor whether the welfare schemes implemented by the Government reached the people at the grassroots.
- SPC Vice Chairperson J. Jeyaranjan made a presentation on the functions of the commission, new policies, information on the department wise reviews, field visits.
- Chairing the review meeting Stalin pointed out: "We have to agree that our development is not equally distributed. Industrial growth differs between districts and so is education. While poverty is low in some districts, it is high in other districts."

### About State Planning Commission of Tamil Nadu:

- The State Planning Commission was constituted on 25-05-1971 to help Government to implement its policies effectively by more efficient utilization of the material, capital and human resources within the State and outside it.
- The state Government has changed the name of the State Planning Commission into State Development Policy Council on 23-04-2020.

- Again, the Tamil Nadu government on August 25, 2021 renamed the State Development Policy Council as the State Planning Commission.
- The SDPC was tasked with preparing short, medium and long-term plans and strategy documents, monitoring, evaluation and policy advocacy, creating policy coherence and implementation of special programmes.

### 'Reservation of Mayor post based on Census 2011, Legal Provisions'

- The scheme of reservation, worked out for the post of Mayor for 12 municipal corporations out of 21 in Tamil Nadu, is based on the data of Census 2011 and the legal provisions relevant to urban local bodies, according to a senior Government Official.

### Anna Centenary Library Restoration Underway:

- The Anna Centenary Library in Kotturpuram is all set to get an overhaul.
- In the next six months, visitors here will be welcomed by a sea of changes that include an LED wall displaying events and programmes, special light settings, refurbished floors, and new furniture.
- A major chunk from Rs 29 crore would be spent to repair and improve the infrastructure in the library. The government allotted Rs 6.5 crore to buy new books, e-books and e-journals for the next three years.
- The library was **inaugurated** by the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **M. Karunanidhi on 15 September 2010**, named after the former chief minister of Tamil Nadu, **C. N. Annadurai**.
- Built on 8 acres of land, the 9-floor library houses a total area of 333,140 sq. ft and has a capacity to accommodate 1.2 million books, it is the **largest library in South Asia**.
- The library was designed by **C. N. Raghavendran**.
- In **July 2010**, the library building received the **LEED NC Gold rating** from IGBC becoming the **first library building in Asia** to reach this. This project has achieved 43 LEED points, highest amongst any Government buildings in Tamil Nadu thus far.

### Foundation stone laid for Bharathi Centre at Kadayam:

- Speaker M. Appavu laid the foundation stone for Bharathi Centre to be built at Kadayam in Tenkasi district, the native place of the poet's wife Chellammal, on an outlay of ₹2 crore.
- The centre, to be built by Sevalaya, a non-Governmental Organisation, will come up on Kadayam library premises, where life-size bronze statues of Bharathi and Chellammal will also be installed.

### Fourth Police Commission in Tamil Nadu:

- Tamilnadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has issued orders to constitute the Fourth Police Commission which will be headed by retired Madras High court Judge **C.T. Selvam**.
- The state government order said that the Tamil Nadu Government is determined to ensure a crime-free environment.
- It further stated that the Police department is playing an important role in maintaining law and order in the state.
- In a bid to improve the relationship between the police and the general public, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government had set up three police commissions, **1969, 1989, and 2006** respectively.
- Senior IPS officer Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal will function as the panel's Member-Secretary.
- The Police Commission will extensively examine measures towards the welfare of police personnel and various other aspects related to policing and will submit its recommendations within a time frame.

### Progressive Policies put the State in Pole Position

- Continuation, improvisation and expansion of early progressive policies to take education to the masses have catapulted Tamil Nadu to an enviable position in the knowledge Economy.
- The Congress's K. Kamaraj had not only taken schools to the villages but launched the farsighted **noon-meal scheme** to ensure retention of students.

- The scheme, improvised and expanded by the successive regimes, has become an acclaimed universal model to attract students to schools and Prevent Dropouts.
  - Consistency on the State's two language policy drafted to oppose the Centre's attempted Hindi imposition, brought with it a byproduct, English proficiency, a key driver of global employment opportunities.
  - If this prepared Graduates for the corporate world, privatization of engineering education by the M.G. Ramachandran regime, despite its critical drawbacks, ensured Tamil Nadu was ready with qualified manpower to supply to the information technology sector in its early years.
  - Three other factors facilitated this upward mobility for families that did not belong to the socially privileged classes.
  - First, the affirmative communal reservation policy driven by the core understanding of the political class that not family vocation but education is empowerment.
  - Second, the vision to create necessary infrastructure for the IT and manufacturing sectors when the time was ripe by the M. Karunanidhi (DMK) dispensation during 1996-2001.
  - Third, the Tamil Nadu Placement Programme launched during Jayalalithaa's regime (2001-06) that brought competent job aspirants under one platform and reversed the lopsided recruitment policy of corporates of heading to city colleges for talent hunting.
  - In school education, Tamil Nadu was a model for activity-based learning, and the Uniform System of School education (USS or Samacheer Kalvi) has to an extent bridged the disparity in the quality of Education.
- The state has 587 engineering and Architectural colleges.
  - It has 495 Polytechnic institutions and 14 hotel management/catering institutions.
  - There are 887 arts and science Colleges, 649 Colleges of education, 11 Physical education colleges, and two schools of Social Work.

### What is GER?

- Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) or Gross Enrolment Index (GEI) is a statistical measure used in the education sector, to determine the number of students enrolled in school at several different grade levels (like elementary, middle school and high school), and use it to show the ratio of the number of students who live in that country to those who qualify for the particular grade level.

### T.N. to Conduct Reconnaissance Survey in Sea off Korkai Coast:

- A reconnaissance survey in the sea off the coast of Korkai in Thoothukudi district, which finds mention in Sangam literature, will be undertaken by the Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department in collaboration with the Indian Maritime University & National Institute of Ocean Technology.
- The offshore explorations would be undertaken near the estuary where the Thamirabarani joins the sea, and are aimed at exploring the archaeological value of the ancient port of Korkai.
- From the first week of February, archaeological excavations would be undertaken at seven sites across the State, he added.
- **The excavations would be undertaken in**
  - ✓ Keeladi and nearby locations (Konthagai, Agaram and Manalur) in Sivaganga district (Phase VIII);
  - ✓ Sivagalai in Thoothukudi district (Phase III)
  - ✓ Gangaikondacholapuram in Ariyalur district (Phase II)
  - ✓ Mayiladumparai in Krishnagiri district (Phase II)

### Track Record of GER in TN:

- T.N.'s Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is 51.4 as against the national Average of 27.1.
- GER of women is 51 against national average of 27.3.
- GER of SC men and women are 38.8 and 40.4 respectively, and of ST men and women are 43.8 and 37.7 respectively, which are almost double the National Average.

- ✓ Vembakkottai in Virudhunagar district (Phase I)
- ✓ Thullukkarpatti in Tirunelveli district (Phase I)
- ✓ and Perumpalai in Dharmapuri district (Phase I)
- ✓ These excavations would go on till September.

### Silent Revolution in R & D in Tamil Nadu:

- A silent revolution in the research and development (R&D) space has been on in Tamil Nadu in recent years.
- Industry captains say the State's progress has remained an untold story, and there is potential to make it a hub for innovation.
- According to statistics from the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, Tamil Nadu's R&D spend stood at ₹668 crore in financial year 2017-18, accounting for about 9.5% of ₹7,264.81 crore spent in India.
- This was the second highest, after Gujarat, which accounted for 10.9%.
- The State has 751 R&D institutions as of 2021 and 2,742 patents were filed in 2017-18 accounting for 17.6% of the 15,550 applications filed by Indian nationals. Only Maharashtra, with 24.6% of patents, was ahead.
- French glass and building materials maker **Saint-Gobain** explored at least four different States where it had a manufacturing footprint to set up an R&D centre.
- The company set up its R&D facility in 2012 and moved into a permanent place at IIT Madras Research Park in 2016 and has done 120 patents, including 26 filed last year.
- The roots of R&D go way back to the establishment of Central Leather Research Institute in Chennai in 1948, as a constituent laboratory of the **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIRCLRI)**.
- **Tamil Nadu** is among the first three positions in India in automotive, auto components, general Engineering, space tech, software, wind energy, healthcare, cotton spinning and readymade Garments.

### Electric Vehicle Wave in Chennai:

- **Tamil Nadu**, known as the **Detroit of Asia** for over two decades with the presence of Major automobile manufacturing units and allied industries in and around Chennai, has quickly embraced the Electric Vehicle (EV) wave.
- In the last six months, the TN CM M.K. Stalin has inked 10 memoranda of understanding in the EV space, entailing an investment of ₹6,541 crore and jobs for 26,865 people.
- **Mobility Park:** A first of its kind ₹300 crore EV future mobility park is coming up at Soolagiri in Krishnagiri.

### Eight lakh incentive to Chess Grandmaster:

- The CM also handed over a cheque for ₹8 lakh as an incentive to Bharat Subramaniam, a native of Tamil Nadu who became the Chess Grandmaster this year.
- Minister for Sports Development Siva V. Meyyanathan was present.

### Ennum Ezhuthum Mission:

- The Tamil Nadu Government Recently Announced a **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Programme** called the **Ennum Ezhuthum Mission**, to be implemented in 2022-2023 in government schools across the state over the next five years.
- Working with children in Class 1, 2 and 3, the ambitious project aims to ensure that by 2025, all students in Tamil Nadu's government schools are able to have reading and arithmetic skills appropriate for their level by age 8 (or Class 3).
- Madhi Foundation, an NGO is collaborating **with the Tamil Nadu Government** to implement the Ennum Ezhuthum Mission. **Merlia Shaukath** is the founder of Madhi Foundation.
- The field Experiment of the programme has begun in Tamil Nadu.
- A curriculum manual containing Tamil, Mathematics and English subjects is currently being developed for this purpose.

## A Steady Growth of SC Entrepreneurs

- Tamil Nadu, a front ranking State in the sector of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), is witnessing a steady growth of entrepreneurs from the Scheduled Castes.
- Though the number of the SC entrepreneurs is not proportionate to the share of the community in the population, it is growing.
- In fact, as per the 4th All India Census of MSMEs (registered sector) census undertaken in 2006-07 and published in 2011, the State had the highest number of SC owned enterprises with 18,120, about 15.24% of such units at the all-India level.
- Under the schemes **New Entrepreneur cum Enterprise Development Scheme (NEEDS) and Unemployed Youth Employment Generation Programme (UYEGP)** the SC participants are given support.
- The SC entrepreneurs refer to the arrangement by the Central government wherein out of the 25% target of annual procurement from MSMEs, 4% should be set aside for SC enterprises.

### Status of Scheduled Castes owned MSMEs as on June 30, 2020:

- They pertained to those units registered under the Udyog Aadhar Memorandum (UAM), which was in existence between September 2015 and June 2020.
- Udyam replaced UAM in July 2020.

### Tamil Nadu enjoys a Pride of Place at the all-India Level:

- Ranked third nationally, Tamil Nadu has an estimated Number of 49.48 lakh MSMEs with 8% share, providing employment to 96.73 lakh persons.
- After the launch of **Udyam**, Tamil Nadu has been placed second with 5,48,504 registered MSMEs and 10.8% of all the enterprises registered across the country till the end of September 2021.

## Concessions & Incentives for SC Entrepreneurs:

- SC/Scheduled Tribes account for 19% of aspirants under the New Entrepreneur-cum-Enterprise Development Scheme (NEEDS), a Tamil Nadu Government Scheme.
- Annually, 1,000 Candidates are chosen to **assist the educated youth to become First Generation Entrepreneurs.**
- State government provides an additional capital subsidy of 5% on the value of Eligible plant and Machinery subject to a Maximum of 5 Lakh.
- In the allotment of plots or sheds by the Tamil Nadu small Industries Development Corporation, Priority is shown to the extends of 20% for SC/ST and transgender.
- Under Unemployed Youth Employment Generation Programme (UYEGP), a Programme of the state government, and Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), a Central Scheme, the beneficiary contribution is kept at 5%.
- While the upper age limit is fixed at 45 Under the UYEGP, the Centre, through PMEGP, provides a subsidy of 25% of the Project cost for enterprises set up in Urban areas and 35% for enterprises in Rural Areas.

Item	Micro	Small	Medium
Tamilnadu	51,016	4,927	104
Proportion of SC-owned enterprises in the State's total MSME enterprises belonging to all Social Categories	5.26%	3.7%	2.40%

Proportion of SC-owned enterprises of Tamil Nadu in all-India figure of SC-owned enterprises	6%	8.20%	6.30%
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### Semmozhi Tamil Awards Presented to 10 Scholars:

- The awards are presented by the Kalignar M. Karunanidhi Tamil Aivu Arakkatalai, which was set up by the former Chief Minister after the Central Institute of Classical Tamil was set up in 2008.
- The award was instituted in 2009 with Prof. Asko Parpola from Finland being its first recipient at the World Classical Tamil Conference in Coimbatore in 2010.
- The award carries a cheque for ₹10 lakh, a citation plaque and a bronze replica of the Donor
- There are two foreigners in the list - V.S. Rajam (USA) and Ulrike Niklas (Germany)
- **The 10 scholars are:**

### Keeladi Excavations Documented:

- The Archaeological excavations at Keeladi in Sivaganga district have highlighted how urbanised the Vaigai valley was as early as the 6th Century B.C.
- Now, an artist has documented the lives and work of the men and women involved in the excavation.

▪ V. Saranraj's photographs have been displayed, under the title, 'Keeladi,' as part of the **Chennai Photo Biennale (CPB) Edition-III** at the Roja Muthiah Research Library at Taramani.

- They showcase the role of these workers in the excavation and the steps involved in the process before artefacts were presented.
- From measuring the site to digging, probing, accessing historical objects, carefully collecting and cleaning them and the tools that were used, the photographs have documented it all.

### Tamil Nadu will Execute Water Project: Minister

- Water Resources Minister Durai Murugan asserted that Tamil Nadu had the right to execute, legally and on humanitarian grounds, the second phase of the Hogenakkal combined drinking water project.

### CLAPP Rolled out for Police:

- A new android app has been launched for Greater Chennai police personnel to apply for Leave and to get it sanctioned immediately.
- Called "**CLAPP (Complete Leave APP)**", the app has been designed to eradicate delays, summary rejections or favoritism by the sanctioning authority and is aimed at Ensuring transparency in the leave process.
- The sanctioning authority must respond within three hours. If there is delay of more than three hours, it will be escalated to the officer above the sanctioning authority.
- For those who do not have the internet, they can use advanced **CLAPP V2** and apply by sending an SMS.

### Madurai's Alanganallur to get new Jallikattu Arena:

- Chief Minister MK Stalin has announced that a new jallikattu arena with world-class Facilities would be built at Alanganallur.
- An exhibition centre on bulls will also be set up near the arena.
- This was among the works for various schemes in the district, costing Rs 342.33 crore, the Chief Minister inaugurated through video conferencing.
- Referring to Chennai's rapid developmental Growth following the inception of the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA), Stalin said,
  - ✓ "The recently-unveiled Urban Development Authority for Madurai will ensure the development of the city. All infrastructure here will be augmented considering the city's rising Population".

- The Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal, in its final order of February 2017, allocated 2.2 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) to Tamil Nadu for consumptive use.
- Consequently, the State had been permitted to draw about 11 tmc ft. This had been made, after the Tribunal had apportioned water among States [and Union Territory of Puducherry] of the Cauvery basin on the basis of irrigated areas served.
- After providing water to all parties to the dispute, the Tribunal had fixed 25.71 tmc ft as Tamil Nadu's share out of the balance quantum of water.
- This was worked out on the basis of the 2011 Census, after considering the requirements of the permitted Irrigated Schemes.
- The panel had sought extension to examine witnesses in the wake of the Supreme Court order.

### **BHOG Certification for Prasadam**

- Chief Minister M. K. Stalin appreciated the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Department for obtaining BHOG certification for Prasadam (offering to deities) and food distributed as part of Annadhanam scheme at 314 temples in the State.
- As a token of appreciation, he met the executive officers of 15 temples at an event at the Secretariat and handed over the **Blissful Hygienic Offering to God (BHOG)** certificates issued by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

### **Stalin opposes Changes to IAS Rules:**

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, opposing the proposed Amendments to the IAS (Cadre) Rules, 1954.
- He argued that it struck at the very root of the country's federal polity and State autonomy.
- He urged the Prime Minister to engage with the States to further strengthen the nation's federal spirit.
- Contending that civil servants must be allowed to work with a free mind and stay apolitical, Mr. Stalin said the ramifications of the proposed amendments were ominous and would cause an irreparable damage to the spirit of cooperative federalism that exists between the Union and the States and result in concentration of power with the Union Government.

### **Chola-era Inscriptions found at Temple near Villupuram**

- Inscriptions of the Chola period were discovered at the Vishnu temple at Angur in Villupuram district.
- They belong to the period of Kulottunga I (1070-1120), Vikrama Chola (1118-1135) and Kulottunga II (1133-1150).

### **CM Inaugurates T.N. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Corp. Expo**

- Inaugurating the Tamil Nadu Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Corporation exhibition in Anna University, Chennai, which has been set up at ₹10 crore, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said the need for drones were on the rise.
- He also virtually inaugurated the 1 MW capacity solar power plant established at ₹7.25 crore in the Madurai Kamaraj University campus.

### **Arumughaswamy Panel gets Extension**

- The State Government extended till June 24 the tenure of Justice A. Arumughaswamy Commission of Inquiry constituted to probe the death of former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa.
- The panel's tenure was to expire on January 24.

### **Public Libraries Act, Rules to be revisited**

- Conscious of the problem of lack of funds being faced by public libraries and the consequent adverse impact on development works of the Libraries Department, the Tamil Nadu government has decided to revisit the Public Libraries Act, 1948, and the Public Libraries Rules, 1950.

- An eight-member high-level committee, headed by former Tamil University Vice-chancellor M. Rajendran, has been constituted, according to an order issued by the Education Department last week.

### Urban Local Bodies polls to be held in Single Phase on Feb. 19

- Tamil Nadu State Election Commissioner V. Palanikumar announced that the urban local bodies polls for 21 municipal corporations, including Chennai, **138 municipalities and 490 town Panchayats**, will be held in a single phase on February 19.

### CM to launch All India Federation for Social Justice

- On the occasion of Republic Day, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said he will soon launch an All-India Federation for Social Justice, which will have “leaders from oppressed classes from all States”.
- Addressing a national webinar on ‘Taking Forward the Struggle for Social Justice and Joint National Programme (JNP) for Social Justice Movement’, Mr. Stalin said,
  - ✓ “The proposed federation will provide suggestions to all States on laws related to social justice.
  - ✓ ‘Everything for everyone’ will be the base of this federation. This will be a federation that works to achieve the principles of federalism and Social Justice.”
- The webinar was jointly organized by the **All-India Backward Classes Federation (AIBCF), the Social Revolution Alliance (SRA), Phule Ambedkari Gauravshali Aur Adarshawadi Muhim (PAGAAM), the All India Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation (BAMCEF), We the People (WTP) and Lead India.**

### CM Announces Awards for Scholars:

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced the **2021 awards for scholars, organisations and media houses** that contributed to the development of Tamil language.

- From this year the award money has been increased to ₹2 lakhs from ₹1 lakh each.
- The award winners will be honoured with a one sovereign gold medal, a shawl and a citation.
- The winners are:
  - ✓ **Perarignar Anna Award** - Nanjil Sampath.
  - ✓ **Mahakavi Bharathiyar Award** - Bharathi Krishnakumar.
  - ✓ **Pavendhar Bharathidasan Award** - Senthalai Gowthaman.
  - ✓ **Sollin Selvar Award** - Surya Xavier.
  - ✓ **Singaravelar Award** - Madukkur Ramalingam.
  - ✓ **Thamizhthai Award** - Malaysian Tamil Writers Association.
  - ✓ **Arutperunjyothi Vallalar Award** - Sanjeevirayar.
  - ✓ **Si Pa Aditanar Award** - Uyirmmmai magazine.
  - ✓ **Kambar Award** - Bharathi Baskar.
  - ✓ **G.U. Pope Award** - veteran journalist and former Readers’ Editor of The Hindu A.S. Panneerselvan.
  - ✓ **Maraimalai Adigalar Award** - Suki Sivam
  - ✓ **Ilango Adigal Award** - Nellai Kanan.
  - ✓ **Ayothidas Pandithar Award** - Gnana Aloysius.

### Stalin Presents Anna medals for Gallantry to Brave Hearts:

- An Air Force helicopter showered flower petals over the venue after the tricolour was unfurled. Wing Commander **Anuj Gupta** was the **overall Parade Commander of the Republic Day parade in Chennai.**
- Stalin presented Anna medals for gallantry to policemen and members of the public.
- **Inspector Rajeswari** who saved Ganesh, a painter, from a dilapidated house in Otteri during Nivar cyclone and rescued a differently-abled boy Palani and reunited him with his family in three hours was given the award.

- Next to receive the award was **M.Rajiv Gandhi**, a fireman from Villupuram district, who rescued two boys from drowning in a flood.
- **Dr. K. Asokan**, forest veterinary assistant surgeon, was awarded the gallantry medal for successfully tranquilising two forest elephants and saving many lives.
- Four members of the public were awarded the Anna medal for gallantry.
- **Muthukrishnan** from Sivaganga was awarded for saving the lives of five people who fell into a canal. Nine-year-old Chandrasekaran of Tiruchy got the award for saving the life of a Class four student who fell into a well.
- **Sokknathan and Sudha**, from Tiruppur, were awarded the medal for rescuing five school children from drowning.
- **M.Thaniyarasu** from Tiruvottiyur was awarded for alerting the residents of TNUHDB building before it collapsed.
- **C.Ramasamy** from Salem district was awarded **C. Narayanasamy Naidu Award** for the highest yield of rice (13,800 kg per hectare).
- **Gandhi Adigal Police Medal** was given to policemen for their outstanding work in curtailing illicit liquor.
- The **Tirupur south, Tiruvannamalai Taluk and Anna Nagar police stations** were named the **best police stations in the State**.
- He is the seventh from Puducherry to win the Padma award.
- He is a recipient of several awards including the **Kalaimamani Award** from the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2006.
- He was conferred the title of '**Aasthana Vidwan**' by Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peeda and Sreepuram Golden Temple.
- He was an A Plus Grade Artist on All India Radio, who has also performed at concerts in several international countries and represented India in the "Festival of India" in Paris.
- He is a Thavil teacher at Villupuram Government Music school, where he has taught more than 300 students in his 23 years of service at the school.

### Funds Alloted for Magizh Kanidham Scheme:

- '**Magizh Kanitham**' (Learning Mathematics with Joy) will, according to Samagra Shiksha officials, kindle interest among children to learn mathematics.
- To implement the scheme, Tamil Nadu government has allotted Rs. 93.79 lakhs for 6948 schools (Rs. 1350 per school).
- R. sudhan, State Project Director, Samagra Siksha in his circular to primary education officials said for the students from 6th to 8th class in government schools in Tamil Nadu to learn maths easily 'Magizh Kanidham' scheme is yet to be implemented.
- The School Education Department has conducted an online training programme for mathematics teachers on January 20 and 21 to give them a basic knowledge on the new concept.

### State unveils its Telecom Infrastructure Policy 2022:

- The State government has formulated the Tamil Nadu Telecom Infrastructure Policy, 2022, aiming at developing a robust and secure state-of-the-art telecommunication network that would provide seamless coverage by easing the process of application, approval and Installation of Telecom Infrastructure.

### Padma Sri to me will bring joy and encouragement to Thavil Musicians:

- Thavil musician Kongampattu AV Murugaiyan, one of the Padma Shri recipients is joyous over the announcement by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the occasion of 73<sup>rd</sup> Republic Day.
- "It is not only an honour for me but the award to me will bring joy and encouragement to young musicians to learn Thavil," said AV Murugaiyan.
- The 58-year-old Thavil exponent who is the only recipient of the Padma award from Puducherry was born in Kongampattu village, near Kandamangalam in Villupuram district.

- A G.O. issued by the Information Technology Department recently said the policy was in consonance with Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules 2016 and is applicable to all existing and future telecom infrastructure, which would streamline the process of applications and granting of permission for installation of mobile towers, laying of optical fibre cable and other telecom infrastructure.
- The policy aims at increasing mobile telecom penetration in rural areas, providing reliable, affordable, high-quality telecommunication and internet services and providing high speed and high-quality broadband access to the rural areas and adopting green and citizen friendly telecom sites.
- For laying Underground Telegraph Infrastructure, every application would have to be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of ₹1000 a kilometre or part thereof exclusive of taxes.
- In case of establishing Mobile Tower (Overground Telegraph Infrastructure), every application has to be accompanied by a onetime non-refundable fee of ₹10,000 a tower.
- For establishing Overground Telegraph/Optical Fibre Cable line, every application under subsection of (1) of Section 11 of this Policy, shall be accompanied by a onetime nonrefundable fee of ₹1000 per kilometre or part thereof exclusive of taxes, it said.

### States must decide on SC/ST Quota in Promotions:

- The Supreme Court refused to lay down the “yardstick” for determining the inadequacy of representation for granting reservation in promotions for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates in government jobs.
- The court stuck firm by the decisions of its Constitution Benches in the Jarnail Singh and M. Nagaraj cases that the question of adequate representation of SC/ST communities ought to be left to the respective States to determine.

### Acknowledging Demographic transition, T.N. prepares Draft policy for Elders:

- The Government of Tamil Nadu has framed a Draft policy for senior citizens in an Acknowledgement of the State’s ongoing demographic transition. In this endeavor, it plans to partner with field experts, academic institutions and civil society organisations working for the welfare of senior citizens in rural and urban Tamil Nadu.
- The draft document is based on **Article 41 of the Constitution**, which requires the State to secure the right to work, education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement.
- According to the report **Elderly in India, 2021** released by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation**, Tamil Nadu had 13.6% of senior citizens last year.
- It is projected to have the second highest proportion of people aged 60 and above (after Kerala), with 18.2% in 2031.
- As per the draft policy, the State government will focus on health and nutrition, social security schemes, livelihood and income security, housing and environment, safety, institutional care, awareness and education, research and documentation, disaster management and set up the Directorate for the Welfare of the Senior Citizens.

### 541 MBBS, BDS seats Allotted in First day of Medical Counselling under 7.5 per cent Quota:

- Medical counselling for government school students under the 7.5 per cent reservation began on January 28.
- The selection committee had called 762 candidates for the counselling, of which 739 attended it.
- A total of 541 seats were allotted, of which 437 were MBBS seats.

## **CM Administers Pledge against Untouchability:**

- Chief Minister M.K. Stalin administered the pledge against untouchability to Ministers, senior officials and staff at the Secretariat in Fort St. George on January 29, to mark the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

### **About:**

- The Gandhi murder trial took place in Delhi's Red Fort.
- Godse and Narayan Apte were sentenced to death. Vinayak Savarkar was acquitted. Others, including Nathuram's brother Gopal Godse, were given prison sentences on conspiracy charges.

### **Books on Gandhiji's Assassination:**

- Veteran journalist Dharendra K Jha - '**Gandhi's Assassin: The Making of Nathuram Godse and His Idea of India**'.
- Koenraad Elst - '**Why I Killed the Mahatma: Uncovering Godse's Defence**'.
- Justice GD Khosla was one of the judges who presided over Godse's trial. He authored the book '**Murder of the Mahatma**'.
- Prof Makarand R Paranjape - 'The Death and Afterlife of Mahatma Gandhi' in 2014.
- Louis Fischer - biography '**The Life of Mahatma Gandhi**'.
- British historian Robert Payne - '**The Life and Death of Mahatma Gandhi**'.
- Tushar Gandhi, the Mahatma's grandson - '**Let's Kill Gandhi**' in 2007.