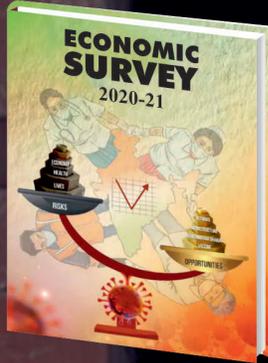


Website-  dristi.in



**Economic
Survey
2020-21**

NAVATRA

Monthly Magazine on Current Events

Vol. - 4 >>> Issue - 8 >>> February, 2021



UNION BUDGET 2021-22

Preface

Dear readers, we have started edristi English edition as well since August, 2015. We are hopeful that it will help us to connect to the broader audience and amplify our personal bonding with each other.

While presenting Day-to-day current affairs, we are very cautious on choosing the right topics to make sure only those get the place which are useful for competitive exams perspective, not to increase unnecessary burden on the readers by putting useless materials. Secondly, we have also provided the reference links to ensure its credibility which is our foremost priority. You can always refer the links to validate its authenticity.

We will try to present the current affairs topics as quickly as possible but its authenticity is given higher priority over its turnaround time. Therefore it could happen that we publish the incident one or two days later in the website.

Our plan will be to publish our monthly PDF on very first day of every month with making appropriate modifications of day-to-day events. In general, the events happened till 30th day will be given place in the PDFs. The necessity of this is to ensure the contents factual authenticity.

Reader's satisfaction is our utmost priority so requesting you to provide your valuable feedback to us. We will warmly welcome your appreciation/criticism given to us. It will surely show us the right direction to improve the content quality. Hopefully the current affairs PDF (from 1st January to 31st January) will benefit our beloved readers.

Current affairs data will be useless if it couldn't originate any competitive exam questions. E-Dristi has been very successful in that direction. Almost all the questions from UPPCS and other examinations have been asked from our materials. You can verify that by matching the question papers and e-Dristi contents from yourselves.

National

Budget 2021-2022

Question : What is the estimated fiscal deficit for 2021-22 budget year?

- a)3.5%
- b)4.5%
- c)6.5%
- d) 6.8%

Answer: d)



Budget 2021-2022 summary

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented union budget for 2021-22 on 1st of February 2021. This budget was presented amid extraordinary situation of Covid-19 pandemic.

The Indian economy have reduced from 2.24 lakh crore nominal GDP to Rs 1.94 lakh crore since budget 2020 because of various restriction placed to contain covid - 19 pandemic.

The fiscal deficit for 2021-2022 was estimated to be 6.8% of the GDP.

Six Pillars of Budget 2021-2022

This year Budget was presented with following 6 pillars as its base :-

- Health and Wellbeing
- Physical & Financial Capital, and Infrastructure
- Inclusive Development for Aspirational India
- Reinvigorating Human Capital
- Innovation and R&D
- Minimum Government and Maximum Governance

EXPENDITURE, REVENUE & DEFICIT

- Estimates of Rs. 34.83 lakh crore budget estimates (BE) for expenditure in 2021-2022 including Rs. 5.54 lakh crore as capital expenditure, rest is revenue expenditure.

- To boost economy, provision for increase in capital expenditure is by 34.5% (Rs 1,42,151 crore) over BE 2020-21.
- Total Revenue is estimated to be 17.88 lakh crore for 2021-22.
- The fiscal deficit in BE 2021-2022 is estimated to be 6.8% of GDP. For previous financial year it is pegged at 9.55% of GDP. Revenue deficit has been revised for FY21 to 7.5% and for FY22 to 5.1%.

Health and well being

- Health expenditure has been more than doubled by 137% over previous budget .
- The allocation has been increased form ₹ 94452 Cr to ₹ 2.23 lakh Cr (137% increase).
- **PM Aatma Nirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana**
- It is a centrally sponsored scheme and it will be launched with an outlay of about Rs 64,180 crore over 6 years.
- Objective of the Scheme is to develop capacities of primary, secondary, and tertiary care Health Systems.
- **Poshan 2.0**
- It will merge the **Supplementary Nutrition Programme and the Poshan Abhiyan**.
- Objective of the Poshan 2.0 is, improving the nutritional content, delivery, outreach, and outcome across 112 Aspirational Districts.
- **Water supply**
- Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban) will be launched to provide water supply to all the 4378 Urban Local Bodies and 500 AMRUT cities.
- Will be implemented over 5 years with an outlay of ₹ 287000 Cr.
- **Swachh Bharat, Swasth Bharat**
- Urban Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 will be launched for a period of 5 years from 2021-2026.
- **Scrappage policy**
- Voluntary scrappage policy has been announced.
- Vehicles older than 15 years and 20 years in case of commercial and personal vehicles respectively will be covered under this.
- It will promote the usage of fuel-efficient, environment-friendly vehicles.

Budget proposes spending ₹ 35000 Cr for covid vaccines in FY22. Rollout of pneumococcal vaccines for pan India usage (available only in 5 states now) has been announced (it will avoid deaths of 50000 children).

Physical & Financial Capital, and Infrastructure

- **PLI (Production Linked Incentives)**
- Rs 1.97 lakh Cr for five years from FY22.

- It already exist for 13 sectors.
- This scheme provides 4% to 6% incentive on incremental production to the eligible companies who are manufacturing goods for 5 years period.
- **Textiles**
- Mega Investment Textile Parks (MITRA) will be launched.
- Scheme aims to create world class infrastructure with plug and play facilities to enable create global champions in exports.
- MITRA will be launched in addition to the Production Linked Incentive Scheme(PLI).
- **Infrastructure**
- **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP):**
- NIP was announced in the last year budget to provide funding for various infrastructure project in the country.
- The total value of projects proposed under NIP is ₹ 111 lakh Cr (\$1.5 tn).
- Government has expanded projects under NIP to cover 7400 projects from earlier 6835 projects.
- In order to increase the spending, the govt proposed three steps:-
- **1.Creating an institutional structure- National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID).** It will be set up with a capital base of ₹ 20000 Cr and will have a lending target of ₹ 5 lakh Cr in three years
- **2.Asset monetization**
- A National Monetization Pipeline (NMP) of potential brownfield infrastructure assets will be launched.
- asset monetization dashboard
- NHA and PGCIL to set up infrastructure investment trust to attract global funds.
- Railway to monetize DFC assets after their completion.
- **3.A sharp increase in capital expenditure – ₹ 5.54 lakh crore for the FY22 (34.5% more than the budget estimate of FY21).**
- **Railways:**
- Indian Railways has prepared a National Rail Plan 2030.
- Reducing logistics cost is at the core of policy-Dedicated Freight corridor – DFC (Western and Eastern) will be commissioned by 2022.
- Future DFC will also be undertaken.
- 100% electrification of Broad-Gauge routes will be completed by December, 2023.
- For passenger safety and convenience aesthetically designed Vista Dome LHB coach on tourist routes and indigenously developed automatic train protection system on the high density network of railway.
- **Urban Infrastructure:**
- A new scheme will be launched at a cost of `18,000 crores to support augmentation of public bus transport services.

- PPP models to promote private bus operators to operate and maintain 20000 buses in urban areas.
- Two new technologies – MetroLite and MetroNeo will be deployed to provide rail metro services at a much lower cost.
- **Power infrastructure:**
- Framework will be put in place to give consumers alternatives to choose from among more than one Distribution Company.
- Reforms-based result-linked power distribution sector scheme will be launched with an outlay of `3,05,984 crores over 5 years to help discoms.
- Hydro energy Mission 2021-22 for generating hydrogen from green power sources.
- **Ports, Shipping and Waterways:**
- 7 ports worth more than `2,000 crores will be offered to the private sector under PPP.
- Scheme to promote flagging of merchant ships in India with an amount of Rs 1624 crores will be provided over 5 years.
- India has implemented the Recycling of Ships Act 2019 and has acceded to Hong Kong International Convention. Read more on this convention in the article International Maritime Organization.
- **Petroleum and Natural Gas:**
- The number of beneficiaries under the UJJWALA Scheme has been increased from 8 Cr to 9 Cr (increased by 1 Cr).
- Will add 100 more districts under City Gas Distribution Network in the next 3 years.
- **Financial capital:**
- Proposed consolidation of SEBI Act, Depositories Act, Securities Contract Act and Govt securities Act into a single rationalized Securities Markets Code.
- World class Fin-Tech hub at the GIFT-IFSC.
- RBI will have to give up its powers of regulating the G-securities.
- Gold exchanges were announced in the budget of 2018-19. In this regard SEBI was notified as the regulator and Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority will be strengthened.
- FDI in the insurance sector has been increased from 49% to 74%.
- **Banking:**
- To further consolidate the financial capacity of PSBs, further recapitalization of `20,000 crores is proposed in 2021-22.
- **Stressed Asset Resolution by setting up a New Structure**
- An Asset Reconstruction Company Limited and Asset Management Company would be set up to consolidate and take over the existing stressed debt and then manage and dispose of the assets to Alternate Investment Funds and other potential investors for eventual value realization.
- **Deposit Insurance**

- Deposit insurance cover has been increased from ₹ 1 lakh to ₹ 5 lakh per individual
- Govt to allow withdrawal of deposits to the extent of deposit insurance cover in the troubled banks
- **Disinvestment**
- Policy features:
 - Will cover CPSEs, PSBs and insurance companies.
 - Sectors will be classified into strategic and non-strategic
 - In the case of strategic sectors, the govt would be having a minimum presence. Remaining CPSEs will be privatized, merged, subsidized with other CPSEs or closed.
 - In non-strategic sectors, these CPSEs will be privatized or shall be closed.
 - Disinvestment of BPCL, Air India, Shipping Corporation of India, Container Corporation of India, IDBI Bank, BEML, Pawan Hans, Neelachal Ispat Nigam limited among others would be completed in 2021-22. The proceeds from the disinvestments would be to finance social and developmental programmes of the govt.
 - Other than IDBI Bank, we propose to take up the privatization of two Public Sector Banks and one General Insurance company in the year 2021-22.
 - The govt has set a disinvestment target of ₹ 1.75 lakh Cr (against ₹ 2.1 lakh Cr in the last fiscal, against this the govt has raised ₹ 19499 Cr so far).

Inclusive Development for Aspirational India

- **Agriculture**
- SWAMITVA Scheme:
 - So far about 1.8 lakh property owners from 1241 villages have been issued with property cards. Scheme has been extended to cover all states/UTs.
 - Farm loans allocation has been increased to ₹ 16.5 tn from ₹ 15 tn in the last fiscal.
 - Proposed doubling of Micro Irrigation Fund, (corpus of Rs 5,000 crores) which has been created under NABARD.
 - 'Operation Green Scheme' that is presently applicable to tomatoes, onions, and potatoes, will be enlarged to include 22 perishable products.
 - 10% import tax on the import of this cotton to help farmers.
 - Govt has also raised the levy on raw silk and silk yarn from 10% to 15%.
 - 1000 more mandis will be integrated under e-NAM.
 - **The Agriculture Infrastructure Development cess:**
 - Govt has proposed cess on 25 products and basic customs duty has been reduced on these items so that the consumers do not end up paying a higher price. This has been done to improve farm infrastructure.

- Govt has imposed this cess on petrol, diesel, gold. AIDC of ₹ 2.5 per litre has been imposed on petrol and ₹ 4 on diesel.

Migrant workers and labour

- One Nation One Ration Card:-
- So far being implemented by 32 states and UTs, reaching about 69 crores beneficiaries –total of 86% beneficiaries covered. The remaining 4 states and UTs will be integrated in the next few months.

Proposal to launch a new portal that will collect relevant information on gig, building and construction workers among others. This is expected to help in formulating schemes for the migrant workers.

The 4 labour codes will be implemented.

Reinvigorating Human Capital

- More than 15,000 schools will be qualitatively strengthened to include all components of the National Education Policy.
- 100 new Sainik Schools will be opened in partnership with NGOs/private schools/states.
- An umbrella body called the Higher Education Commission of India to be set up.
- Govt has set up a target of setting up 750 Ekalavya model residential schools.

Innovation and R&D

- To boost overall research ecosystem of the country with focus on identified national-priority thrust areas National Research Foundation (NRF) has been allocated Rs 50,000 crores, for next 5 years.
- Rs 1500 Cr allocated for a scheme to promote digital transactions.
- Deep Ocean Mission with an outlay of ₹ 4000 Cr over 5 years has been proposed.

Minimum Government, Maximum Governance

- Proposal to set up a Conciliation Mechanism and mandate its use for quick resolution of contractual disputes.

Taxation in Budget

- Senior citizens over 75 years of age with only pension and interest income are exempted from filing income tax returns.
- Presently, the tax assessments can be reopened up to 6 years and in serious tax frauds up to 10 years. This has been reduced to 3 years and in the case of serious tax frauds, up to 10 years but with approval from the Principal Chief Commissioner

Economic Survey 2020-21

Question : On 29 January 2021, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey 2020-21 in Parliament. Consider the following statements related to this —

(1) As per the advance estimates, India's GDP is estimated to grow by (-) 7.7% in FY21

(2) Economy will grow in 'W' shape due to Comprehensive Immunization Campaign, rapid improvement in service sector and rapid growth in consumption and investment.

(3) In FY 2021-22, India's real GDP growth rate will be 11 percent and nominal GDP growth rate will be 15.4 percent.

(a) Only (1) and (3)

(b) Only(2) and (3)

(c) Only(3)

(d) All above

Ans.(a)

Related facts

- On 29 January 2021, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Economic Survey 2020-21 in Parliament.



Highlights

- Highlights of the ES(Economic Survey) is given below —
As per the advance estimates, India's GDP is estimated to grow by (-) 7.7% in FY21.
- V-shaped recovery, as seen in 7.5% decline in GDP in Q2 and recovery across all key economic indicators vis-à-vis the 23.9% GDP contraction in Q1.
- Global economic output estimated to fall by 3.5% in 2020 (IMF January 2021 estimates)
- India's real GDP to record a 11.0% growth in FY2021-22 and nominal GDP to grow by 15.4% – the highest since independence:
- Rebound to be led by low base and continued normalization in economic activities as the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines gathers traction.
- Exports expected to decline by 5.8% and imports by 11.3% in the second half of FY21
- India expected to have a Current Account Surplus of 2% of GDP in FY21, a historic high after 17 years.

- On supply side, Gross Value Added (GVA) growth pegged at -7.2% in FY21 as against 3.9% in FY20:

Agriculture set to cushion the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Indian economy in FY21 with a growth of 3.4%

Industry and services estimated to contract by 9.6% and 8.8% respectively during FY21.

- The share of Agriculture and Allied Sectors in Gross Value Added (GVA) of the country at current prices is 17.8% for the year 2019-20 (CSO-Provisional Estimates of National Income, 29th May, 2020)
- Total food grain production in the country in the agriculture year 2019-20 (as per Fourth Advance Estimates), is 11.44 million tonnes more than during 2018-19
- FDI equity inflows were US\$49.98 billion in FY20 as compared to US\$44.37 billion during FY19:

It is US\$30.0 billion for FY21 (up to September-2020)

- Despite the disruptions being witnessed globally, FDI inflows into India's services sector grew robustly by 34% Y-o-Y during April-September 2020 to reach US\$ 23.6 billion
- India's services sector contracted by nearly 16 % during H1: FY2020-21, during the COVID-19 pandemic mandated lockdown, owing to its contact-intensive nature
- The services sector accounts for over 54 % of India's GVA and nearly four-fifths of total FDI inflow into India
- The sector's share in GVA exceeds 50% in 15 out of 33 States and UTs, and is particularly more pronounced (greater than 85%) in Delhi and Chandigarh
- Services sector accounts for 48% of total exports, outperforming goods exports in the recent years
- India's GNI per capita (2017 PPP \$) has increased from US\$ 6,427 in 2018 to US\$ 6,681 in 2019
- Life expectancy at birth improved from 69.4 years in 2018 to 69.7 years in 2019
- Gross Capital Formation (GCF) relative to GVA showing a fluctuating trend from 17.7 % in 2013-14 to 16.4 % in 2018-19, with a dip to 14.7 % in 2015-16

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1693231>

Release of National Non-communicable Disease Monitoring Survey (NNMS)

Question: According to recently released National Non-communicable Disease Monitoring Survey (NNMS), conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research what per cent of adolescents (in the sample of 1700 adolescents) were overweight or obese?

a) 5% b) 6.2% c) 12% d) 7%

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:



- On 25 January, 2021; National Non-communicable Disease Monitoring Survey (NNMS) was released by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan.
- Dr Vardhan launched this survey on the occasion of foundation day of Indian Council of medical Research (ICMR).
- Dr Vardhan also released on this occasion the framework on use of telemedicine for cancer, diabetes, heart diseases and stroke.
- According to the National Non-communicable Disease Monitoring Survey (NNMS), more than one in every four adults and 6.2 per cent adolescents were overweight or obese.
- The survey also reported following facts about the adult people in the country:-
 - i. The consumption of fruits and vegetables among adults is inadequate and 98.4 per cent of those surveyed consuming less than five servings per day.
 - ii. More than two in five adults and one in four adolescents do insufficient physical activity.
 - iii. Three out of ten adults had raised blood pressure
 - iv. 9.3 per cent had raised blood glucose; average daily intake of salt was 8 gms.
 - v. Two in five adults had three or more risk factors for non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
 - vi. One in every three adults and more than one-fourth proportion of surveyed men used any form of tobacco and consumed alcohol in past 12 months respectively.
 - vii. Among the surveyed population aged 30-69 years, the proportion who had ever undergone screening for oral cancer (men and women) were 1.7 per cent.
 - viii. Only 1.6 per cent women had been screened for breast cancer by clinical examination and 2.2 per cent for cervical cancer.
 - ix. Screening for cervical cancer in rural areas was three times lesser than urban areas.

- The estimated sample size for the survey, conducted during 2017-18 by ICMR-National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (NCDIR), Bengaluru, was 12,000 adults (18-69 years) and 1,700 adolescents (15-17 years).
- The year 2020 brings back memories of gloom due to COVID-19. Dr. Vardhan shared his deep gratitude on behalf of the whole country to the scientists of ICMR for their immeasurable contribution in controlling the pandemic.

Links:-

<https://in.finance.yahoo.com/news/consumption-fruits-vegetables-among-adults-143920539.html>

Start-up India Seed Fund Scheme

Question: On January 29, 2021 government has announced launch of Start-up India Seed Fund. What is the corpus of this fund?

- a) Rs 700 cr b) Rs 900 cr
- c) Rs 945 cr d) none of the above



Answer: c
Context

- The government has announced for the launch of Start-up India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) on January 29, 2021.

Facts

- It is launched to provide assistance to start ups for proof of concept , prototype development, production trials, market-entry and commercialization.
- It has corpus of 945 crore and will be launched in mission mode for 2021-25.
- The overall execution and monitoring of the SISFS will be done by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). The DPIIT will form an Experts Advisory Committee (EAC) to look after the same.
- The Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) will evaluate and select the incubators.
- These incubators will play the role of fund distributor.

Which start-ups are eligible under the scheme?

- Starts-ups not incorporated before 2 years at the time of application.
- Must be recognised by DPIIT.

- Must have commercially viable business idea and should use technology in its core product or service.
- The notification highlights that, preference will be given to start-ups that create innovative solutions in sectors such as waste management, social impact, healthcare, textiles, agriculture, water management, defence, food processing, education, energy, railways, financial inclusion, mobility, space, oil, gas and biotechnology.

Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1689160>

UP becomes first Indian State to have 2 Expressway airstrips for landing & take-off of fighter planes

Question: Which is the first Indian state to have two Expressway airstrips for landing & take-off of fighter planes?

- (a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Gujarat
(c) Kerala (d) Maharashtra



Answer: (a)
Related facts:

- Uttar Pradesh has become the first Indian state having two airstrips on expressways.
- Uttar Pradesh achieved this feat after completion of construction of a new 3,300-metre-long airstrip near Kurebhar on Purvanchal Expressway.
- Uttar Pradesh also has an airstrip on Lucknow-Agra Expressway.
- Airstrips on expressways facilitate emergency landing and take-off of fighter planes.

Links:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/up-becomes-first-state-to-have-2-airstrips-on-expressways-for-landing-take-off-of-fighter-planes20210124124158/>

TCS is third most valued IT services brand globally: Brand Finance

Question: Which Indian company has been ranked third most-valued IT services brand globally?

- (a) Infosys (b) Tata Consultancy Services
(c) HCL Technologies (d) Wipro Limited

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- According to a report by Brand Finance, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has been ranked third most-valued IT services brand globally.
- First rank has been given to Accenture, an American-Irish multinational professional services company. The company has a record brand value of \$26 billion.
- International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) with brand value of \$16.1 billion has been adjudged second most-valued company.
- Four Indian IT services companies — TCS, Infosys, HCL and Wipro — secured spots in the top-10 global tally.
- Third-ranked TCS is rapidly closing the gap with IBM following a healthy 11% brand value increase to USD 15 billion.



Links:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/tcs-3rd-most-valued-it-services-brand-globally-closes-gap-behind-ibm-brand-finance/articleshow/80481748.cms#:~:text=NEW%20DELHI%3A%20Tata%20Consultancy%20Services,the%20top-10%20global%20tally.>

Tamil Nadu CM inaugurates Jayalalithaa Memorial

Question: In which city Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palanisamy inaugurated Jayalalithaa Memorial?

- (a) Coimbatore (b) Madurai
- (c) Chennai (d) Tiruchirapalli

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 27 January 2021, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palanisamy inaugurated Jayalalithaa Memorial at Chennai.
- The grand memorial is built on nine acre land situated on the shores of the Marina Beach.
- The memorial has been built with an outlay of Rs 79 crore.



- The phoenix shaped memorial has a statue of Jayalalithaa and MGR with an artificial waterfall.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Tamil-Nadu-CM-inaugurates-Jayalalithaa-Memorial-in-Chennai&id=408706>

Maharashtra CM launches Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy

Question: Which Indian state has launched Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy?

- (a) Gujarat (b) Telangana
(c) Maharashtra (d) Andhra Pradesh



Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 27 January 2021, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray formally launched the Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy.
- The policy will facilitate immediate electricity connections for agriculture pumps.
- The government will provide relief in interest on electric bill arrears and relief in delayed charges.
- The Chief Minister also inaugurated Krishi Urja Abhiyan Policy Web Portal, Solar Energy Land Bank Portal, Maha Krishi Abhiyan App and ACF App prepared by the power discom Mahavitaran.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=408780>

Ayushman CAPF scheme

Question: Where did Union Home Minister Amit Shah launch the Ayushman CAPF scheme for personnel and dependents of the Central Armed Police Forces?

- (a) Guwahati (b) Ahmedabad
(c) Bhubaneswar (d) Dehradun



Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 23 January 2021, Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched the 'Ayushman CAPF' scheme for personnel and dependents of the Central Armed Police Forces during a function in Guwahati, Assam.
- The scheme covers about 28 lakh Central Armed Police Forces and their families in all the states where Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana is operational.
- The scheme will be fully implemented by May 1, 2021.
- In this regard, a MoU was signed between the National Health Authority (NHA) and the Union Home Ministry in presence of Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai and state Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at the CRPF Group Centre in Guwahati.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1691783>

Airtel demonstrates live fifth-generation (5G) service

Question: Which is the first telecom company to successfully demonstrate live fifth-generation (5G) service in an Indian city?

- (a) Airtel
- (b) Jio
- (c) Vodafone Idea
- (d) None of these

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 28 January 2021, Bharti Airtel successfully demonstrated live fifth generation service over a commercial network in Hyderabad.
- Airtel operated the 5G network over its existing liberalised spectrum in the 1,800 MHz band through the NSA (non-standalone) network technology.
- Airtel 5G will be capable of delivering 10x speeds, 10x latency and 100x concurrency when compared to existing technologies.
- The users in Hyderabad were able to download a full-length movie in a matter of seconds on a 5G phone.

Links:

<https://www.timesnownews.com/business-economy/companies/article/airtel-announces-5g-ready-network-in-hyderabad/712959>

PANKH Abhiyan

Question: Which Indian state has launched the PANKH Abhiyan for Girl children January 24, 2021?

- (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Chhattisgarh (d) Odisha



Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 24 January 2021, National Girl Child Day, Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched a new scheme 'PANKH Abhiyan'.
- The scheme has been launched under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme to empower the girl child.
- 'PANKH Abhiyan' is a year long programme. The letter in the PANKH scheme stands for: 'P' – protection, 'A' – awareness of their rights, 'N' – nutrition, 'K' – knowledge, 'H' – health.
- The National Girl Child Day is celebrated every year since 2008.

Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/madhya-pradesh-cm-launches-pankh-abhiyan-on-national-girl-child-day-101611490619061.html#:~:text=On%20the%20occasion%20of%20National,growth%20of%20the%20girl%20child.>

Maharashtra CM inaugurates Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park

Question: Where did the Maharashtra CM inaugurate Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park?

- (a) Pune (b) Mumbai
(c) Nagpur (d) Thane



Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 26 January 2021, Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park in Nagpur.

- The park has been developed by the State Forest Department and Forest Development Corporation.
- It is spread across an area of 1,914 hectares and includes a wildlife sanctuary, Indian safari, African safari biodiversity park and night safari.
- Adjacent to the park is the famous Gorewada Lake, which is a good place for bird watching.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Maharashtra-CM-inaugurates-Balasaheb-Thackeray-Gorewada-International-Zoological-Park-in-Nagpur&id=408672>

24th Hunar Haat

Question: In which city is the 24th Hunar Haat being organized from 22nd January to 04th February, 2021?

- (a) Lucknow (b) Jaipur
(c) Ahmedabad (d) Patna

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The 24th Hunar Haat is being organized at Avadh Shilpgram, Lucknow (UP) from 22nd January to 04th February, 2021.
- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath formally inaugurated the “Hunar Haat” on 23rd January, 2021.
- Theme for the 24th Hunar Haat is “Vocal for Local”.
- Hunar Haat provides a huge platform to the artisans/craftsmen of India to showcase their expertise and explore the opportunities of employment under “Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development (USTAAD)”.
- Union Ministry of Minority Affairs organizes the Hunar Haat.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1691203>

Kalka Mail train renamed as Netaji Express

Question: Which Express/Mail train has been renamed as Netaji Express?

- (a) Howrah-Kalka Mail
- (b) Poorva Express
- (c) Howrah – Mumbai Mail
- (d) Kolkata Rajdhani

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In order to celebrate the 125th Birth Anniversary year of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Indian Railways has renamed the Howrah-Kalka Mail as 'Netaji Express'.
- The Howrah-Kalka Mail train has been in service for more than 150 years, after coming into operation in the year 1866.
- The iconic Kalka Mail train runs between Howrah in West Bengal (Eastern Railway) and Kalka in Haryana (Northern Railway) via Delhi.
- The train is said to have been used by Netaji to escape from British captivity in 1941, when it was operated by the East Indian Railway Company.



Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news>

India's longest road arch bridge inaugurated

Question: In which state/Union Territory was the India's longest road arch bridge inaugurated?

- (a) Meghalaya
- (b) Ladakh
- (c) Assam
- (d) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 22 January 2021, Meghalaya chief minister Conrad Sangma inaugurated the longest road arch bridge in India. The bridge named as "Wahrew Bridge" is located at Sohbar in East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya. It connects Bholaganj & Sohbar to Nongjri.



- The 169-metre Wahrew suspension bridge has been constructed at a cost of Rs 49.395 crore under the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) of Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.

Links:

<https://www.thenortheasttoday.com/current-affairs/states/meghalaya/indias-longest-road-arch-bridge-inaugurated-in-meghalaya>

India – EU Maritime Security Dialogue

Question: With which country/Union India has held its first virtual maritime security dialogue on 20 January 2021?

- (a) Vietnam (b) European Union
(c) United Kingdom (d) African Union

Answer:(b)

Related facts:



- India and the EU held their first maritime security dialogue in a virtual format on 20 January 2021.
- The consultations involved exchanges on developments in maritime security environment, regional cooperation activities, developments of mutual interest and opportunities for cooperation between India and the EU.
- The EU-India Maritime Dialogue was chaired by Director Joanneke Balfourt on the EEAS side and Joint Secretary Sandeep Arya on the Indian side.
- The dialogue seeks to develop mutual understanding and cooperation opportunities between India and the EU in the maritime security domain as another factor of the strategic partnership between the two sides consistent with the India-EU Roadmap to 2025.

Links:

[https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl%2F33400%2FInaugural India EU Maritime Security Dialogue](https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl%2F33400%2FInaugural+India+EU+Maritime+Security+Dialogue)

Report on Ageing Dams

Question: which agency has released report on ageing dams across the world titled, “Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk”?

- a) United Nation (UN) b) US government
- c) IPCC d) None of the above



Answer: a
Context

- United Nations have released its report titled ‘Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk’ on the ageing of the dams across the globe.

Facts

- Report is compiled by United Nations University’s Canadian-based Institute for Water, Environment and Health.
- Report was compiled by analyzing the dam decommissioning or ageing from the USA, Canada, France, Japan, India, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Key finding of report

- It says most of the 58,700 large dams worldwide were constructed between 1930 and 1970 with a design life of 50 to 100 years.
- Over a thousand large dams in India will be roughly 50 years old in 2025 and thus possess a major infrastructural risk.
- By 2050, most people on Earth will live downstream of tens of thousands of dams built in the 20th century, many of them already operating at or beyond their design life .
- As per the report, 58700 large dams worldwide were constructed in between 1930 and 1970. Those dams have the design life of 50 to 100 years.
- In the US, the average age of 90,580 dams is 56 years. More than 85% of US dams in 2020 were operating at or beyond their life expectancy and 75% of US dam failures occurred after 50 years of age.
- Report highlights, 32,716 large dams which accounts for 55 percent of the world’s total are found in four Asian countries namely China, India, Japan, and South Korea.
- Approximately 3.5 million people are at risk if India’s Mullaperiyar dam in Kerala will fail. The dam was built over 100 years ago. It is constructed with concrete ‘surkhi’ which is a combination of limestone and burnt brick powder.

Reference: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/ageing-dams-in-india-us-other-nations-pose-growing-threat-un-report-101611480903512.html>

National Mission for Edible Oil (NMEO)

Question: The Ministry of Agriculture has proposed for the National Mission for Edible Oil. What is the time span for which mission is proposed?

- a) 2021-2022 b) 2020-21 to 2023-24
c) 2020-21 to 2024-25 d) None of the above



Answer: c)
Facts

- To increase the domestic availability and reduce the import dependency for edible oils Ministry of Agriculture has proposed the National Mission for Edible Oil.
- The mission has been proposed for next five years in the span of 2020-21 to 2024-25.
- Government aims to increase production of oilseeds from the current 30 million tonnes to over 47 million tonnes by 2024-25.
- The government is seriously concerned about stagnant oilseeds production and the rising import of edible oils to the tune of 15 million tonnes per annum, costing the exchequer over Rs 75,000 crore.

Reference: https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/govt-planning-to-launch-national-mission-on-edible-oil-in-the-near-future-120012101158_1.html

72nd Republic Day Celebration

Question: which country's tri-service contingent took part in the 72nd Republic Day parade of India in 2021?

- a) USA b) Nepal
c) Bangladesh d) Bhutan

Answer: c)

Facts about 72nd Republic Day Celebration of India

- India celebrated its 72nd Republic Day on 26th January 2021.



- Celebrations were observed amid Covid -19 restrictions. This year parade had a shorter route, no chief guest, fewer spectators, no children under 15, and fewer soldiers in the Army and Navy contingents.
- The 2021 Republic Day parade began with a 122-member, tri-service contingent of the Bangladeshi armed forces – led by Lieutenant Colonel Mohatsim Haider Chaudhary parading in front of Indian president.
- A total of 32 tableaux – 17 from states and UTs, six from the Defence Ministry and nine from various central ministries and department took part in the parade.
- For the first time, the tableau of the Union Territory of Ladakh, which came into existence in 2019, was displayed in this year’s parade. The tableau highlighted the “Vision” for Ladakh to be carbon neutral and exemplary for the world.
- Uttar Pradesh’s tableau displayed the state’s cultural city of Ayodhya and the Ram temple, which is under construction. In the first part of the tableau, Maharishi Valmiki has been shown composing the Ramayana. In the middle part of the tableau, Shri Ram Mandir was shown .
- Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth – the first Indian woman to qualify for a combat mission in a fighter jet – became the first to participate in the flypast of the parade.
- India’s new Rafale fighter jet took to the skies of Republic Day parade for the first time.
- The Republic Day parade was led by Parade Commander, Lieutenant General Vijay Kumar Mishra, Ati Vishisth Seva medal, General Officer Commanding Delhi Area. Major General Alok Kacker, Chief of Staff, Delhi Area was the Parade Second-in-Command.

Reference : <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/republic-day-2021-india-showcases-its-military-might-best-pics-and-video-clips-2358158>

India’s position in scientific publication

Question: According to the National Science Foundation (NSF), USA, India is currently at which place in terms of scientific publication globally?

- a) 1st b) 2nd c) 3rd d) None of the above

Answer: c)

Context

- According to data from the US agency, the National Science Foundation (NSF), India is currently in third place, only behind China and the United States, with 1,35,788 scientific articles in the year 2018.

Facts

- India has seen an exponential increase in the number of scientific publications over the last 10 years.
- India's national investment in research and development (R&D) has increased from Rs 1,13,825 crore in 2017-18 to Rs 1,23,847 crore in 2018-19.
- Department of Science and Technology (DST) initiatives such as National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations have played a crucial role to reach this position.



Reference: https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-in-third-position-in-scientific-publications-after-china-us-dst-121012200944_1.html#:~:text=According%20to%20data%20from%20the,year%202018%2C%20the%20DST%20said.

Swarnim Vijaya Varsh

Question : Indian Navy is celebrating Swarnim Vijaya varsh for what reason?

- a) Golden Jubilee celebration of Bangladesh Liberation war of 1971
- b) Indian navy establishment
- c) First Aircraft Carrier deployment
- d) None of the above

Answer: a)

Facts

- Navy tableau at Republic Day parade this year will showcase its role in Bangladesh liberation war of 1971.
- Indian Navy along with other armed forces is celebrating Swarnim Vijaya varsh on the occasion of Golden Jubilee celebration of Bangladesh Liberation war of 1971 this year.
- 50th anniversary of Vijay Diwas being celebrated as 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh' by paying tributes to the valiant personnel of the Armed Forces who made the supreme sacrifice during various operations in the 1971 War on 16 December 2020.
- A tri-Service contingent of Bangladesh armed forces will take part in the parade to mark the occasion.



Reference: <https://indiannavy.nic.in/node/27341>

“Shram Shakti” Portal

Question: On 22nd January, 2021 ‘ Shram Shakti’ portal was launched at a programme held at Panji , Goa. It is initiative of which ministry?

- a) Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- b) Ministry of Labour and employment
- c) Ministry of Commerce
- d) None of the above

Answer: a
Context

- The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda virtually launched “ShramShakti”, a National Migration Support Portal at a programme held at Panjim, Goa on 22nd January .

Facts

- Shram Shakti – It is a National Migration Support Portal.
- It would effectively help in the smooth formulation of state and national level programs for migrant workers.
- Lack of real time data of migrants was the biggest challenge for state and national governments in formulating effective strategies and policy decisions for welfare of migrant workers at both source and destination states. This tribal migration repository will help in providing that critical data.
- The various data that will be recorded via Shram Shakti include demographic profile, livelihood options, skill mapping and migration pattern.
- Minister also launched a tribal migration cell, a tribal museum at Goa and “ShramSaathi”, a training manual for migrant workers.

Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1691237>

Statehood Day of Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura

Question: when did Manipur , Meghalaya and Tripura achieved statehood?

- a) 21st January, 1972
- b) 23rd January , 1972
- c) 1st August, 1973
- d) none of the above



Answer: a**Context**

- Prime Minister and other leaders praised the traditions and culture of the three northeast states on the statehood day of Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura (21st January).

Related Facts

- On 21st January, 1972, all the three states became full-fledged states under the North Eastern Region (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.

Manipur

- A few days before Independence, the Maharaja of Manipur, Bodhachandra Singh, signed the Instrument of Accession with the Indian government on the assurance that the internal autonomy of Manipur would be maintained.
- On 21 September 1949, the Maharaja was coerced to sign a Merger Agreement with the Union of India, to take effect on 15 October the same year. As a result of the agreement, the Manipur State merged into the Indian Union as a Part C State.
- it was given a substantial measure of local self-government under the Territorial Councils Act of 1956, a legislative body and council of ministers in 1963, and full statehood in 1972.

Meghalaya

- In 1947 the rulers of the Garo and Khasi region acceded to the newly independent country of India.
- Meghalaya came into existence as an autonomous state within the state of Assam on 2 April 1970 comprising the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills districts.
- It got its full statehood status in 1972.

Tripura

- Tripura was princely state till the merger with Indian union on 15th November, 1949.

- King Bir Bikram Kishore Debbarman had died in 1947, after which a Council of Regency was formed to run the administration under the presidency of Queen Kanchan Prava Devi, mother of Kirit Bikram Kishore Deb Barman who was the minor son of the dead king.
- In 1972, the two Union Territories of Manipur and Tripura and the Sub-State of Meghalaya got statehood.

Reference: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pm-modi-wishes-people-of-meghalaya-manipur-and-tripura-on-their-statehood-day/articleshow/80379257.cms#:~:text=Under%20the%20North%2DEastern%20Areas,statehood%20on%20January%202021%2C%201972.>

Government announces 23rd January to be celebrated as ‘PARAKRAM DIWAS’ every year

Question: Parakram Diwas will be celebrated as birth anniversary of which Great freedom fighter of the country?

- a) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bosh
- b) Maulana Azad c) G.k. Ghokle
- d) none of the above



Answer: a

Facts

- Government of India has decided to celebrate the 125th Birth Anniversary year of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at national and international level, beginning from 23rd January 2021.
- In his memory and to honour his contribution towards freedom of India, his birth day on 23th January will be celebrated as Parakram Diwas every year.
- It is done to inspire people of the country, especially the youth, to act with fortitude in the face of adversity as Netaji did, and to infuse in them a spirit of patriotic fervour.

Reference: <http://ddnews.gov.in/national/government-announces-23rd-january-be-celebrated-%E2%80%9Cparakram-diwas%E2%80%99-every-year>

India Innovation Index 2.0

Question: India Innovation Index 2.0 is released by which organization?

- a) Ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship

- b) Niti Aayog c) Gates Foundation
- d) none of the above

Answer: b

Context

- NITI Aayog has released the second edition of the India Innovation Index on 20 January 2021, along with the Institute for Competitiveness.

Facts

- The index demonstrates the government’s continued commitment towards transforming the country into an innovation-driven economy.
- It aims to create an environment of constant evaluation of innovation in the country at sub nation level .It aims to do the task of Ranking of states and UTs based on their index scores,Recognizing opportunities and challenges for states and Assisting in tailoring governmental policies to foster innovation.

Innovation report card			
Rank	Major States	Score	
1	Karnataka	42.50	
2	Maharashtra	38.03	
3	Tamil Nadu	37.91	
4	Telangana	33.23	
5	Kerala	30.58	
6	Haryana	25.81	
7	Andhra Pradesh	24.19	
8	Gujarat	23.63	
9	Uttar Pradesh	22.85	
10	Punjab	22.54	
Rank	NE and Hill States	Score	
1	Himachal Pradesh	25.06	
2	Uttarakhand	23.50	
3	Manipur	22.78	
4	Sikkim	20.28	
5	Mizoram	16.93	
Rank	UTs And City States	Score	
1	Delhi	46.60	
2	Chandigarh	38.57	
3	Daman & Diu	26.76	
4	Puducherry	25.23	
5	Goa	24.92	

Source: NITI Aayog, India Innovation Index 2020

About Index

- The India Innovation Index measures innovation inputs through ‘Enablers’ and innovation output as ‘Performance’.
- Five Enablers Pillars: Human Capital, Knowledge Output, Investment Knowledge Diffusion, Business Environment, Safety and Legal Environment Knowledge.
- Two Performance pillars: Knowledge Output, Knowledge Diffusion.

Rankings

- Karnataka retained its leadership position in the major States category, followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Bihar scored the lowest on the index, which put them at the bottom in the “major States” category.
- Delhi topped among Union Territories, and Himachal Pradesh among North-Eastern and Hill States.

Reference: <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/karnataka-maharashtra-tamil-nadu-top-in-niti-innovation-index/article33616425.ece>

SKOCH Challenger Award to Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Question: For what reason, Ministry of Panchayati Raj has won the SKOCH Challenger Award?

- a) Use of ICT in Governance b) Social Inclusion
- c) Transparency in Governance

d) None of the above

Answer: c)

Facts

- Sunil Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, on January 16, 2021, received the SKOCH Challenger Award conferred on the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) under “Transparency in Governance.
- It was given to the ministry for their IT-led initiatives and transformational reforms leading to outcome-based performance improvement, better transparency, and strengthening of the e-Governance in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) across the country.
- The Award was given virtually during the 70th SKOCH Summit (SKOCH Public Policy Forum).



About SKOCH

- SKOCH Group is India’s leading think tank dealing with socio-economic issues with a focus on inclusive growth since 1997.
- The services provided by SKOCH include field interventions, consultancy, research reports, impact assessments, policy briefs, books, journals, workshops and conferences.
- SKOCH Group has instituted India’s highest independent civilian honours in the field of governance, finance, technology, economics and social sector.

Reference : <https://skoch.in/>

<https://www.thespeedpost.com/skoch-challenger-award-to-ministry-of-panchayati-raj-for-transparency-in-governance/>

PM Modi announces ‘Startup India Seed Fund’

Question: PM Modi on 16th January during the ‘Prarambh: Startup India International Summit’ announced a new seed fund for startups in India. What is the total corpus of the fund?

- a) 100 crore b) 1500 crore
c) 1000 crore d) none of the above

Answer: c)

Facts

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 16, 2021 announced a new ‘Startup India



Seed Fund' worth Rs 1,000 crore for startups to provide them with initial capital to start and grow their business.

- India is home to the world's third largest startup ecosystem which has helped several budding entrepreneurs to come up with innovative technologies and become big corporations.
- About 40 per cent of budding entrepreneurs are coming from tier-II and -III cities of India .
- 11 Indian startups entered the unicorn club in 2020.
- There are over 41000 startups in India.

Reference: <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/startup/pm-modi-announces-rs-1000-crore-startup-india-seed-fund-6355761.html>

Pradhan MantriKaushalVikasYojana (PMKVY 3.0)

Question: On 15th January 2021, GOI has launched the third phase of Pradhan MantriKaushalVikasYojana (PMKVY 3.0). which of the following is implementing agency of PMKVY?

- a) Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)
- b) National Skill Development Corporation.
- c) National Skill Development Agency
- d) None of the above

Answer: b)

Context

- The government on 15 January launched the third phase of its flagship skilling scheme Pradhan MantriKaushalVikasYojana (PMKVY 3.0).



Facts

- Skill India Mission PMKVY 3.0 envisages training of eight lakh candidates over a scheme period of 2020-2021 with an outlay of 948.90 crore.
- The 729 Pradhan MantriKaushalKendras (PMKKs), empaneled non-PMKK training centres and more than 200 ITIs under Skill India will be rolling out PMKVY 3.0 training to build a robust pool of skilled professionals.
- On the basis of the learning gained from PMKVY 1.0 and PMKVY 2.0, the Ministry has improved the newer version of the scheme to match the current policy doctrine and energize the skilling ecosystem affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

About PMKVY:

- It is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) implemented by National Skill Development Corporation.
- The government had launched the PMKVY scheme in 2015 and revamped it in 2016 to impart skills to one crore persons by 2020 at an allocation of Rs 12,000 crore. However, the targets were nearly achieved with just Rs 7000 crore with large scale certification under the recognition of the prior learning component of scheme.
- The objective of the scheme is to provide skills that in line with demand of modern industry setup to large number of Youth so that they can get a better opportunity of earning their livelihood.

Reference: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/govt-launches-pmkvy-3-0-to-empower-youth-with-new-age-skills-to-boost-employability/articleshow/80289086.cms>

National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF)-2021

Question: on 12th January 2021, PM Modi gave the valedictory speech of 2nd National Youth Parliament Festival virtually. Which ministry organizes the NYPF ?

- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Defence
- None of the above

Answer: a)

Context



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the valedictory function of the second National Youth Parliament Festival on January 12, 2021 at 10:30 am via video conferencing.

Related Facts

- It is celebrated every year from 12th to 16th January to commemorate the birth anniversary of youth icon Swami Vivekananda.
- It is organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with one of the State Governments.
- The Prime Minister Modi conceptualized the idea of youth becoming the voice of India in his Mann ki Baat address of 31st December, 2017.

Objective of NYPF 2021

- To hear the voice of youth between 18 and less than 25 years of age, who are allowed to vote but cannot stand as a candidate for election, through deliberations in Youth Parliaments at district level and above.

- To encourage the youth to engage with public issues, understand the common man's point of view, form their opinions and express it in an articulate manner
- To develop and enhance decision making abilities.
- To develop in them a respect and tolerance for the views of others.
- To develop in them an understanding that respect for rules is essential for conducting any discussion systematically and effectively.
- To obtain and document their opinions on Vision of New India in 2022.
- To make available their views to policy makers and implementers to take it.

UP's Mudita Mishra won the first prize for her Vocal for Local speech at national level.

Reference: <https://nss.gov.in/sites/default/files/Guidelines%20for%20NYPF%202021%20-%20Approved%20on%2021%20December%2C%202020%20%281%29.pdf>

Kayakalp Awards

Question: On 12th January 2021 which ministry has awarded Kayakalp Award?

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Law Ministry
- none of the above



Answer : (a)

Context

- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has recently announced Annual Kayakalp Awards for the Medical institutions.

Facts

- Kayakalp Awards are given annually to the health facilities with the highest standards of sanitation and hygiene.
- Recently awards were announced by Dr Harsh Vardhan Minister of Health and Family Welfare.
- The Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER) was awarded the second prize under the Kayakalp Awards scheme. JIPMER received the prize under the Group A Central facilities category, hospitals having more than thousand beds.

- The AIIMS Bhubaneswar has won first prize in the Kayakalp awards for cleanliness (2019-20) in B Category (and received a cash reward of Rs 2 crore) for the third consecutive time. Earlier, it had received the award in 2018 and 2019 becoming the second cleanest hospital in the country. Category B holds hospitals with less than thousand beds.
- The Rairangpur Sub Divisional Hospital of Mayurbhanj district is awarded as best medical facility in Sub-divisional hospital community health centre category.
- Kayakalp Scheme was started in 2015 and aims to encourage and incentivize Public Health Facilities (PHFs) in the country to demonstrate their commitment for cleanliness, hygiene and infection control practices.

Reference: <http://qi.nhsrindia.org/kayakalp-swachh-swasth-sarvatra>

All-women crew to operate longest non-stop flight from San Francisco to Bengaluru

Question: On January 11, 2021 which airline has flown its longest flight with an all women crew for the first time?

- a) AirAsia b) Air India
c) Indigo d) SpiceJet

Answer: b)
Context



- Air India's longest direct route flight with the all-women pilot team landed at Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru from San Francisco, USA.

Related Facts

- Air India flight flew over the North Pole and covered a distance of about 16,000 kilometres.
- Aviation experts believe that flying over the North Pole is extremely technical and requires skill and experience.
- The flight, AI 176, departed from San Francisco at 20:30 hrs (local time) on January 9 and arrives at Bengaluru at 03:45 hrs (local time) on 11 January and took about 17 hours to complete.
- Flight was piloted by Zoya Aggarwal and copiloted by Captain Papagari Thanmai, Capt Akansha Sonaware and Capt Shivani along with other crew members.
- It was the first direct non-stop flight to operate between the west coast of United States and South India.

- This is 6th longest flight in terms of total distance covered in the world with 14,004 km (8,702 mi; 7,562 nmi).

Reference: <https://static.india.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Air-india-women.jpg>

Comparison of FDI statistics

Question : Ministry of Commerce & Industry has recently (31 December 2020) released the comparison of FDI statistics. How much FDI inflow increased during the first seven months of 2020-21 ?

- (a) Eleven percent (b) Ten percent
- (c) Nine percent (d) Seven percent

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Ministry of Commerce & Industry has recently (31 December 2020) released the comparison of FDI statistics.
- During the first seven months of F.Y. 2020-21, total FDI inflow increased by 11% from USD 42.06 billion (April, 2019 to October, 2019) to US\$ 46.82 billion (April, 2020 to October, 2020).
- FDI equity inflow increased by 21% to US\$ 35.33 billion (April, 2020 to October, 2020) from US\$ 29.31 billion reported in the same period of previous financial year.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1685013>

India's seventh Trade Policy Review

Question : On which date India's seventh Trade Policy Review (TPR) began ?

- (a) 7 January 2021 (b) 4 January 2021
- (c) 5 January 2021 (d) 2 January 2021

Answer (a)

Related facts



- India's seventh Trade Policy Review (TPR) began on 6th January 2021, at the World Trade Organization in Geneva.
- The TPR is an important mechanism under the WTO's monitoring function, and involves a comprehensive peer-review of the Member's national trade policies. India's last TPR took place in 2015.
- Commerce Secretary, Dr. Anup Wadhawan (India's official delegation for the TPR) emphasized that in the last 5 years, since India's previous TPR, the Government has worked diligently to reform and transform the entire economic eco-system to meet the socio-economic aspirations of a billion plus Indians.
- The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, path-breaking reforms in the labour sector, an enabling and investor friendly FDI Policy, and various national programmes like Make in India, Digital India, Startup India and Skill India to bring about rapid transformation across sectors in our manufacturing environment, were emphasized in this regard.
- A comprehensive Report issued by the WTO Secretariat on the occasion, chronicling all major trade and economic initiatives that India took over the last five years, acknowledged India's strong economic growth at 7.4% during the period under review and made a positive note of India's reform efforts during this period.
- The Report noted that strong economic growth led to an improvement in socio-economic indicators, such as per-capita income and life expectancy in India.
- India's effort is commendable for its timely and comprehensive responses to more than 700 questions received from WTO members ahead of its TPR.
- Many reforms have increased the efficiency and inclusiveness of the Indian economy and India emerged as 5th largest economy in 2019.

Link:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1686692>

Launching of the January 2021 round of Consumer Confidence Survey

Question : The January 2021 round of the Consumer Confidence Survey launched on January 1, 2021. How many cities are included in this survey ?

- (a) Thirteen cities (b) Sixteen cities
(c) Eighteen cities (d) Twenty cities



Answer (a)

Related facts

- The January 2021 round of the Consumer Confidence Survey launched on January 1,2021.

About the survey

- The Reserve Bank of India has been regularly(Quarterly) conducting Consumer Confidence Survey (CCS).
- The survey seeks qualitative responses from households, regarding their sentiments on general economic situation, employment scenario, price level, households' income and spending.
- The results of this survey provide useful inputs for monetary policy. The survey covers approximately 5,400 respondents across 13 cities. The results of this survey provide useful inputs for monetary policy.
- These 13 cities are — Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Chennai, Delhi, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Patna and Thiruvananthapuram.

Link:

https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FS_PressRelease.aspx?prid=50905&fn=2759

Launching of the January 2021 round of the Inflation Expectations Survey of Households

Questions : The January 2021 round of the Inflation Expectations Survey of Households launched on January 1,2021. How many cities are included in this survey ?

- (a) Thirteen cities (b) Sixteen cities
(c) Eighteen cities (d) Twenty cities

Answer (c)

Related facts



- RBI has been regularly(bimonthly) conducting Inflation Expectations Survey of Households (IESH). The January 2021 round of the survey is now being launched.
- The survey aims at capturing subjective assessments on price movements and inflation, of approximately 6,000 households, based on their individual consumption baskets, across 18 cities, viz., Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Delhi, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nagpur, Patna, Raipur, Ranchi and Thiruvananthapuram.
- The survey seeks qualitative responses from households on price changes (general prices as well as prices of specific product groups) in the three months ahead as well as in the one year ahead period and quantitative responses on current, three months ahead and one year ahead inflation rates.
- The results of this survey provide useful inputs for monetary policy.

Link:

https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FS_PressRelease.aspx?prid=50906&fn=2759

Panel to commemorate 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

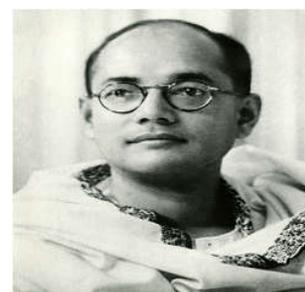
Question: who will be the chairman of committee formed to commemorate 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose?

- a) Amit Shah b) PM Narendra Modi
c) Prahlad Singh Patel d) None of the above

Answer: b)

Related Facts

- A high-level committee has been formed for commemoration of the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- Committee will be headed by PM Narendra Modi.



- The committee will decide on the activities for a year-long commemoration, beginning on January 23, 2021.
- Committee members consist of distinguished citizens, historians, authors, experts, family members of Subhas Chandra Bose, as well as eminent persons associated with the Azad Hind Fauj (INA).
- Committee will provide guidance for the commemoration activities in Delhi, Kolkata and other places associated with Netaji and the Azad Hind Fauj, both in India as well as overseas.

Reference: <https://theprint.in/india/modi-to-head-panel-to-commemorate-125th-birth-anniversary-of-netaji-subhas-chandra-bose/582567/>

NIXI offers free Domain in local Indian languages

Question: which organization has recently announced that they will offer IDN (Internationalized Domain Name) in any of the preferred 22 official Indian language to their clients?

- a) NASSCOM b) NIXI
c) Registry.In d) None of the above



Answer: b)

Context

- The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) announced that it will offer a free IDN (Internationalized Domain Name) in any of their preferred 22 official Indian language.

Facts

- It will be available with every IN domain booked by the registrant.
- Applicant will also get a free email in local language.
- This offer is for promoting use of □□□□ (IDN) domain name and proliferation of local language content.

About NIXI

- National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) is a not for profit organization working since 2003 for spreading the internet technology to the citizens of India.

Reference : <http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=407554>

India's richest person

Question: What is the Mukesh Ambani's rank in Bloomberg Billionaires Index released on December 2020 ?

- (a) 10th (b) 8th
 (c) 9th (d) none of the above

Related facts

Ans. (d)

- Mukesh Ambani ranked 11th in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index released on December 2020.
- This is due to decline in share prices of his company(Reliance industries).
- The drop in Mukesh Ambani's net worth is because of the correction in RIL shares, which have fallen nearly 16% from its all-time high of Rs 2,369.35.



Present condition

- At present(As of 10 January 2021), the RIL top boss is the 13th richest person in the world bellow Francoise B Meyers.
- According to the Bloomberg ranking, Ambani's current net worth is \$74,.3 billion.

Link:

<https://www.timesnownews.com/business-economy/companies/article/mukesh-ambani-no-more-among-the-top-10-richest-billionaires-in-the-world/698917>

Solarisation of KVs and Delhi government schools

Question : Solar firm Oakridge Energy has recently(29 december 2020) said it has signed agreements with the Delhi government and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan(KVs) to solarise schools in Delhi.How much KVs would be solarise under this agreement ?

- (a)1000 KVs (b)500 KVs
 (c)1200 KVs (d)700 KVs



Answer (a)

Related facts

- Solar firm Oakridge Energy has recently(29 december 2020) said it has signed agreements with the Delhi government and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan(KVs) to solarise schools in Delhi.
- The company is aiming to solarise 1,000 institutions by 2022, Oakridge Energy said in a statement.
- The company further said it has recently solarised over 15 schools of the Department of Education in Delhi this year, along with the recently commissioned largest solar power project of 217 KW in Delhi University at Lady Irwin College.
- Installation of solar plants at educational institutions will not only enable them to become energy independent, but will also result in substantial savings in electricity bills and generate an additional income through the sale of surplus power to the utilities.
- The project is developed by the company and subsidised by the Government of India's capital subsidy scheme for government buildings, which the Delhi government has utilised for solarising its schools.

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/oakridge-energy-to-solarise-1-000-kvs-delhi-government-schools-120122900987_1.html

Panel to resolve issues relating to Ladakh land, culture

Question: who is the chairman of committee formed to look into the issue of land and culture of Ladakh?

- a) Amit Shah b) Jamyang Tsering Namgyal.
c) G Kishan Reddy d) Kiren Rijiju



Answer: c)

Context

- Centre has formed a committee under Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy to find a solution to issues related with Ladakh.

Facts

- Panel is formed to look into the issues associated with preservation of Ladakh's land, culture and language apart from demands from the region to be included under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

- A 10-member delegation from Ladakh met Home Minister Amit Shah to discuss the issue.
- The delegation is learnt to have expressed concern over threat to the region's unique culture, language and demography due to recent changes brought about by the Centre to the status of the region.
- Committee will be constituted to look into these matters under the leadership of Sh. G.Kishan Reddy, MoS (Home).
- The committee would comprise of members of the delegation who met the Hon'ble Home Minister today, elected members from Ladakh, members of the LAHDC Council and ex-officio members representing the Government of India and the Ladakh administration.

Reference: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/centre-to-form-panel-to-resolve-issues-relating-to-ladakh-land-culture-7135993/>

Hospital Management Information System of Indian railway

Question : On which date Indian Railways launched the Hospital Management Information System trial project ?

- (a) 11 December,2020 (b) 8 December,2020
(c) 4 December,2020 (d) 1 December,2020



Answer (a)
Related facts

- Indian Railways has recently(11 December, 2020) launched Hospital Management Information System Trial Project.
- The trail project has been launched over South Central Railway.

Significance

- It is actually an IT initiative for the well-being of work force.(best health care facilities to the work force with the help of information technology)
Patients waiting time at the railway hospitals will be minimized and medical records will be available to the team of doctors at all the times.
- The new system will improve the quality of health services and aid in utilization of resources in a transparent manner.

Modules of HMIS and location of trail hospital

- The HMIS in Railways has been developed by Indian Railways in coordination with RailTel Corporation Limited.

- Presently, 3 Modules of HMIS – Registration, OPD Doctor Desk & Pharmacy – are being taken up implemented.
- These three modules are going to be implemented on trial basis at Central Hospital, Lallaguda and will progressively be implemented across all Health Units over SCR(South Central Railway).

Transparent manner

‘Transparent manner’ will be maintained through following steps

- (1) Registration Module covers the integration of UMID with automatic validation of beneficiary in a seamless manner without any difficulty to the patient.
- (2) OPD Desk Module covers all the process of Patient Examination and Diagnosis details which will help in generating the Electronic Medical Records.
- (3) The Pharmacy Module seamlessly connects to easily dispense the medicines prescribed by the doctor and optimise inventory management.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1679986>

Government approves Central Sector Scheme for Industrial Development of Jammu & Kashmir

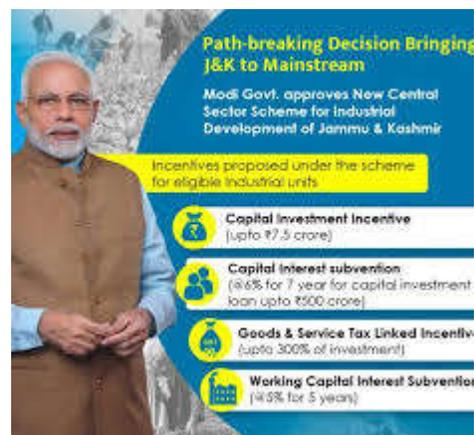
Question: What is the period of the New Industrial Development Scheme for Jammu & Kashmir (J&K IDS, 2021) approved by Government of India for Industrial Development of Jammu & Kashmir?

- (a) 2020-21 to 2030-31 (b) 2020-21 to 2032-33
(c) 2020-21 to 2040-41 (d) 2020-21 to 2036-37

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 6 January 2021, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the proposal of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade for Central Sector Scheme for Industrial Development of Jammu & Kashmir.
- New Industrial Development Scheme for Jammu & Kashmir (J&K IDS, 2021) with a financial outlay of Rs.28,400 crore has been approved for the period 2020-21 to 2036-37.
- The scheme aims to transform the existing industrial ecosystem of J&K by creating more employment opportunities, skill development and sustainable development so that to compete J&K strongly with other states.



- The scheme proposes various types of incentives at investment made on manufacturing and services units.

Incentives proposed in the scheme:

- **Capital Investment Incentive:** At the rate of 30% in Zone A and 50% in Zone B on investment made in Plant & Machinery (in manufacturing) or construction of building and other durable physical assets(in service sector) is available. Units with an investment upto Rs. 50 crore will be eligible to avail this incentive. Maximum limit of incentive is Rs 5 crore and Rs 7.5 crore in Zone A & Zone B respectively
- **Capital Interest subvention:** At the annual rate of 6% for maximum 7 years on loan amount up to Rs. 500 crore for investment in plant and machinery (in manufacturing) or construction of building and all other durable physical assets(in service sector).
- **GST Linked Incentive:** 300% of the eligible value of actual investment made in plant and machinery (in manufacturing) or construction in building and all other durable physical assets(in service sector) for 10 years. The amount of incentive in a financial year will not exceed one-tenth of the total eligible amount of incentive.
- **Working Capital Interest Incentive:** All existing units at the annual rate of 5% for maximum 5 years. Maximum limit of incentive is Rs 1 crore.
- This is the first time that any industrial incentive scheme is taking the industrial development to the block level.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1686744>

Bird flu outbreak in four states

Question: On 6th January 2021 , Government of India has released advisory on the outbreak of which of the following virus in four states?

- a) Swine Flu b) Bird flu
c) Nipah Virus d) none of the above

Answer: b)

Context



- The Centre has issued advisory on 6th January stating that Avian Influenza, or the bird flu outbreak, had so far been reported at 12 epicentres across four states — Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh.

Facts

- Himanchal Pradesh has reported death of migratory birds, Kerala has reported death of ducks, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have also reported bird deaths due to avian flu.
- Avian influenza or bird flu is a highly contagious viral disease caused by Influenza Type A viruses. H5N8 or bird flu is subtype of Influenza Type A viruses.
- The current bird flu outbreak comes few months after India on September 30, 2020, declared the country free from the disease.
- The first outbreak of Avian Influenza was notified in India in 2006.
- H5N8 presents only a low risk to humans, it is highly lethal to wild birds and poultry.
- H5N8 presents only a low risk to humans, it is highly lethal to wild birds and poultry.
- Though risk to humans because of infections with A(H5) viruses are rare and low and generally occur in individuals exposed to sick or dead infected birds (or their environments), they can lead to severe illness or death in humans.

Reference: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/bird-flu-india-rajasthan-kerala-7135498/>

Asian Waterbird Census

Question : On 6th January 2021 , two day Asian Waterbirds Census 2020 has started in which Indian State?

- a) West Bengal b) Andhra Pradesh
c) Tamil Nadu d) None of the above

Answer: b)
Context

- The two-day Asian Waterbird Census-2020 has started in Andhra Pradesh on 6th January.



Facts

- It is part of International Waterbird Census (IWC) that supports the conservation and management of wetlands and waterbirds worldwide.
- It is citizen science event . Anybody can take part using eBird platform and filing an additional site form.
- In India it is coordinated by Bombay Natural History Society and Wetland International. Wetland International is organizing agency of IWC.
- Waterbirds are ecologically dependent on wetlands and hence their presence is strong indicator of health of wetlands.

Reference: <https://south-asia.wetlands.org/news/join-us-for-the-asian-waterbird-census-2021/>

SC clears Centre's plan to build new parliament

Question: when will construction of new parliament building is supposed to be completed ?

- i) July 2021 ii) July 2022
iii) July 2023 iv) None of the above

Answer: ii)
Context

- SC has cleared Centre's plan to build a three times bigger Parliament in its Judgment on 5 January 2021.



Facts

- New parliament building is part of proposed central vista redevelopment project.
- Estimated cost of entire project is around 20000 crores.
- Tata Projects Ltd. has been chosen for construction of new parliament building project which is project of estimated cost of 971 crores.
- Tata Projects Limited won the bid to construct the new parliament building at cost of Rs 861.90 crores.
- New parliament building will be triangular in shape and present cultural diversity of India.
- Structure is expected to be completed by 2022, coinciding with 75 years of India's independence.

India approves two COVID-19 vaccines for emergency use

Question: On 3rd January 2021, Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved which of the following Covid-19 vaccine/vaccines for emergency use?

a) Covishield b) Covaxin c) Sputnik V d) Comirnaty

- i) a and b ii) b and c
iii) a and d iv) none of the above



Answer: i)

Context

- Indian drug regulator CDSCO has granted nod to Covishield by Serum Institute of India, Covaxin by Bharat Biotech for Covid 19 treatment in emergency situation.

Facts

- After this approval Covishield by Serum Institute of India ,Pune and based on the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, and Covaxin by Bharat Biotech will be offered to healthcare workers and frontline workers in India.

Covishield

- Covishield has been developed by the Oxford University scientists in collaboration with the pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca. In India, its trial was undertaken by the Serum Institute of India (SII), which is also manufacturing the Covishield vaccine for the mass vaccination drive.
- It is developed by using the virus — adenovirus — that causes common cold infections among chimpanzees. Its genetic material is same as that of the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.
- The Vaccines efficacy was reported at 70.4% in phase trials conducted in U.K.

Covaxine

- It is developed by Hyderabad based Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – National Institute of Virology (NIV).
- It uses a dead corona virus also called inactivated virus. Under inactivated state, the virus is not capable of infecting people or replicating on its own inside the body of a person after being injected. But a shot of the vaccine prepares the immunity system to recognise the actual virus and fight it if and when infection happens.
- The efficacy of ongoing phase 3 trial on around 22000 people has not been made public yet.

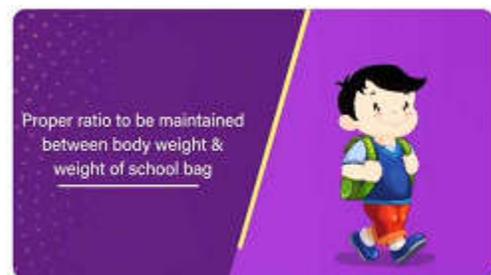
Reference: <https://www.indiatoday.in/coronavirus-outbreak/vaccine-updates/story/covishield-vs-covaxin-a-comparison-of-covid-19-vaccines-in-india-1755615-2021-01-04>

School Bag Policy 2020

Question: School Bag Policy 2020 is prepared by which of the following institutions?

- a) NCERT b) NCTE
c) SCERT d) None of the above

**Answer: a)
Context**



- Directorate of Education, New Delhi has recently asked schools to follow School Bag Policy 2020 .

Facts

- School Bag Policy 2020 is prepared by National Council of Education Research and Training and has been released by Ministry of Education recently.
- It lays down the guideline for homework and weight of school bag for the students of classes of I to XII.
- As per the new School Bag Policy 2020 proposed by the Education Ministry, the maximum weight of the school bags has been capped at 10% of the student's weight.

- Students below Class 2 will not be given any homework as per the proposal of the new policy.
- This policy is in line with New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 which prescribes that weight of the school bag should be in ratio of 1:10 with student bodyweight.
- Schoolteachers should inform the students in advance about the books and notebooks to be brought to school on a particular day and frequently check their bags to ensure that they are not carrying unnecessary material.
- It is also expected of teachers to check the weight of school bags of the students every three months on a day selected for the whole class and any information about heavy bags should be communicated to the parents.
- School management to provide quality potable water in sufficient quantity to all the students in the school so reduce the water bottle weight for the students.
- Heavy bags are having a negative impact on student development and does not necessary adds to development of student.

Reference: https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/School_Bag_Policy_2020.pdf

Indian Army Human Rights Cell

Question: which of the following statements are correct:

- Indian army has recently created a new human right cell.**
- Major General Gautam Chauhan has taken charge of it as its first additional director-general, human rights.**
- It will be the nodal point to examine reports on human rights violations by the army.**

- i) a,b ii) a,b,c
iii) b,c iv) none of the above

Answer: ii

Facts

- The Indian Army has appointed a major general-rank officer to head its newly created human rights cell.
- Major General Gautam Chauhan has taken charge of this human right cell as its first additional director-general, human rights.
- He will work under the army's Vice-Chief Lieutenant General S.K. Saini.



- The cell will look into human rights issues and ensure that the army complies with human rights conventions. It will be the nodal point to examine reports on human rights violations by the army.
- It will also have an IPS officer of SSP/SP rank on deputation who will assist in investigations and legalities and will also facilitate coordination with other organisations and the Union home ministry, if required.

Reference : <https://www.telegraphindia.com/india/indian-army-appoints-a-officer-to-head-human-rights-cell/cid/1802336>

FSSAI new Trans Fat levels

Question: Consider following statements about FSSI recent announcement:

a) FSSAI recently announced that all edible refined oils, vegetable fat spreads, Vanaspati, margarines, Bakery shortening and mixed fat spreads can contain only 3% or less trans fats.

b) This new limit to be followed from January 2021.

c) Further by 2022, January this limit has to come down by 1%.

Which of the above are correct?

- i) a,b,c ii) a,b
iii) a,c iv) none of the above

Answer: ii

Context

- India's top food regulator Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has recently released a notification reducing level of trans fats in food items from current 5% to 3%.



Food Safety and standards
Authority of india

Facts

- FSSAI, on December 29, brought out a gazette notification stating that the level of trans fats in oils and fats will not be more than 3% from January 1, 2021 onwards. The level shall be further reduced to 2% by January 1, 2022 onwards.
- The notification also extends to food and food items having oils or fats.

Trans Fats

- Trans fats, or trans-fatty acids, are a form of unsaturated fat. These are both natural and artificial.
- Natural Trans fats occur in the meat and dairy from ruminant animals, such as cattle, sheep, and goats. They form naturally when bacteria in these animals' stomachs digest grass. These are not known to be harmful.

- Artificial or industrial Trans fats are formed during the hydrogenation process of vegetable oils. They result in partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.
- Consumption of these Trans fats results in heart diseases.

Reference: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/fssai-reduces-trans-fat-levels-in-food-from-5-to-3/story-UjFEutSysq2wMDr6p6HmeN.html>

National Metrology Conclave

Question: Consider the following statements about National Metrology Conclave :

- It is inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on 4th of January.
- It is being organised by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi.
- The theme of the conclave is 'Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation'.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- a,b
- b,c
- a,b,c
- none of the above



Answer: iii
Context

- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to deliver an inaugural address at the National Metrology Conclave on January 4, 2021.

Facts

- The conclave is being organised by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi.
- CSIR-NPL is celebrating its 75th foundation day and hence the conclave is being organised.
- The theme of the conclave is 'Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation'.

Key Events at the Conclave

- The National Atomic Time Scale is to be dedicated to the nation.
- Bhartiya Niradeshak Dravya is to be dedicated to the nation.
- Foundation stone of National Environmental Standards Labs to be laid.

National Atomic Time Scale

- National Atomic Timescale will provide Indian Standard Time with an accuracy of 2.8 nanoseconds. National Physical lab has a primary mandate as the keeper of Measurement Standards for the nation. The time scale is maintained with the help of five cesium atomic clocks. Time scale is the time standard.

Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya

- It is Indian Reference Materials. Reference materials (RM) play pivotal role in maintaining the quality infrastructure of any economy through testing and calibration with precise measurements traceable to SI units. NPLI has recently released two very important certified RMs as Bharatiya Nirdeshak Dravyas (BNDs) i.e BND®-4201 for 4N purity gold and BND®-5101A for Bituminous coal.

National Environmental Standards lab

- It is a state of art national lab being set up by CSIR-NPL for the purpose of standardisation and certification of accuracy for the locally manufactured air quality monitoring equipment.
- The Ministry of Environment, forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has designated the CSIR – National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) as verification and certification agency for emission and ambient air pollution monitoring equipment in India through a gazette notification. To meet this requirement CSIR-NPL has developed a CSIR-NPL India Certificate Scheme (NPLI CS) to provide certification of performance evaluation of air pollution monitoring equipment.

National Metrology Conclave aims to strengthen the role of Precision measurement in various segments that has direct implication in the economic growth of India.

Reference: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/pm-modi-to-deliver-inaugural-address-at-national-metrology-conclave-today/story-bBmTHDwSokaNWm2UqrL4IJ.html>

International

Russia withdraws from the Open Skies Treaty

Question: Which country has announced to pull out from the Open Skies Treaty in January 2021?

- (a) Russia (b) United States of America
(c) France (d) Turkey

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 15 January 2021, Russia announced that it was pulling out of the Open Skies treaty (OST).
- Russia blamed that the pact had been seriously compromised by the withdrawal of the United States.



- Earlier in November 2020, USA exited the Open Skies Treaty claiming that Russian violations of OST protocols, misusing its own missions for gathering key tactical data made it untenable for the United States to remain a party.

Open Skies Treaty:

- The Open Skies Treaty permits participants to conduct short-notice, unarmed, reconnaissance flights over the others' entire territories to collect data on military forces and activities.
- The treaty is also aimed at building confidence and familiarity among states-parties through their participation in the overflights.
- It was first proposed in 1955 by USA President Dwight Eisenhower as a means to deescalate tensions during the Cold War. However Moscow rejected Eisenhower's proposal claiming that the initiative would be used for extensive spying,
- President George H.W. Bush revived the idea in May 1989 and negotiations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact started in February 1990.
- The Open Skies Treaty entered into force on January 1, 2002.

Signatories:

- 35 States-Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia(announced to left), Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States (though the Trump administration withdrew the United States from the treaty in November 2020). Kyrgyzstan has signed, but not ratified the treaty.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/what-russias-exit-means-for-the-open-skies-treaty-7150167/>

KP Sharma Oli expelled from ruling Communist Party

Question: Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli who suffered political expulsion was primarily associated with which political party?

- Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist–Leninist)
- Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre)
- Samajbadi Janata Party
- Nepali Congress

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 24 January 2021, Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has been expelled



from the ruling Communist Party for allegedly dissolving the Parliament.

- The decision to expel was taken by the Standing Committee meeting of the faction led by former prime ministers Prachanda and Madhav Kumar Nepal in Parisdanda in Koteswor.
- Earlier on December 20, 2020, Nepal plunged into a political crisis after Oli, known for his pro-China leanings, in a surprise move dissolved Parliament, amidst a tussle for power with Prachanda.
- Oli-led CPN-UML and Prachanda-led NCP (Maoist Centre) merged in May 2018 to form a unified Nepal Communist Party following victory of their alliance in the 2017 general elections.
- The governing Constitution of Nepal came into effect on Sept 20, 2015.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Nepal-PM-KP-Sharma-Oli-expelled-from-ruling-Communist-Party-over-dissolution-of-Parliament&id=408582>

Joe Biden takes over as President, Kamala Harris as Vice President of US

Question: Joe Biden who sworn in on Januray 20, 2021 is what number President of United States of America?

- (a) 46th (b) 49th
(c) 47th (d) 45th

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 20 January 2021, Joe Biden took oath as the 46th President of the United States of America at a ceremony in the US Capitol building in Washington.
- 78 year old Biden has become the oldest US President in history
- His deputy Kamala Harris was also sworn in as 49th Vice-President of the country.
- The 55 year old Kamala Harris became the first woman, first Black American and first Indian American – to hold the post.



- Harris was born to Jamaican father and an Indian mother. Her mother Shyamala Gopalan Harris was born in Madras (now Chennai), India.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/joe-biden-takes-oath-as-46th-president-of-the-united-states-declares-democracy-has-prevailed/article33620612.ece>

Henley Passport Index 2021

Question: What is the rank of India in Henley Passport Index:Q1 2021 Global Ranking?

- (a) 85 (b) 87 (c) 58 (d) 65



Answer: (a)
Related facts:

- Henley Passport Index 2021 Quarter 1 results were released on January 5 2021.
- The Henley Passport Index is the original ranking of all the world’s passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa.
- It was launched in 2006 and includes 199 different passports

2021 Rankings:

- Japan continues to hold the number one position on the index, with passport holders able to access 191 destinations around the world visa-free.
- Singapore has attained 2nd rank having access to 190 destinations.
- South Korea, Germany and Italy were ranked 3rd 4th and 5th respectively.

India’s rank:

- India has been ranked 85th in the Q1 results of Henley Passport Index 2021.
- Indian passport holders able to access 58 destinations around the world visa-free.
- The Indian passport ranked higher in both 2020 (84th) and 2019 (82nd).

Bottom Rank Holders:

- Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan remains the worst passport to hold with a passport score of 29, 28 and 26 respectively.

Links:

https://www.henleypassportindex.com/assets/2021/Q1/HENLEY_PASSPORT_INDEX_2021_Q1_INFOGRAPHIC_GLOBAL_RANKING_201209_1.pdf

Argentina legalizes abortion

Question: Which Latin American country has recently legalized abortion?

- (a) Argentina (b) Brazil
- (c) Peru (d) Colombia



Answer- (a)

Related facts:

- Argentina has become the largest Latin American country to legalise abortion.
- Under the new law, Argentina has legalized abortions up to the 14th week of pregnancy, since January 2021.
- Argentine senate approved the historic law change by 38 votes in favour to 29 against, with one abstention.
- The move is historic as earlier abortions were only permitted in cases of rape or when the woman’s health was at serious risk.
- In India, under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020 abortion is legal upto to 24 weeks (increased from earlier 20 weeks).

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-why-argentinas-legalisation-of-abortion-is-historic-7127066/>

Global Firepower Index, 2021

Question: which country is ranked at 1st position in Global Firepower Index, 2021?

- a) USA b) Japan c) India d) N.Korea



Answer: a
Facts

- It has been released by Global Firepower (GFP) since 2006.

- It ranks 138 countries which are evaluated on each countries' potential war-making capability across land , sea, and air by conventional means.
- The Global Firepower Index is calculated using fifty individual factors from geography to logistical capability. It also includes manpower, land forces, airpower, natural resources, naval forces, logistics and financials.

Rankings

- USA is ranked at 1st position, followed by Russia, China, India, Japan and S.Korea.
- Pakistan is ranked at 10th.

Reference: <https://www.globalfirepower.com/>

Ice Age Woolly Rhino

Question: where has been an ice age woolly rhinoceros has been found recently?

- a) USA b) Russia c) Canada d) India

Answer: b)

Context

- A perfectly preserved woolly rhinoceros was found by scientists in Yakutia, in Russia's far north recently.



Facts

- Woolly rhino is an extinct ice age mammoth.
- The carcass was found at the bank of Tirekhtyath river in the district of Abyisk district. Near the same place another young woolly rhino was recovered in 2014. Researchers dated that specimen, which they called Sasha, at 34,000 years old.
- The carcass found has most of its intestines intact. It had perfectly preserved soft tissue, hair and a lump of fat. Its horn was found near it.
- The carcass was revealed due to melting permafrost. A number of other Ice Age animals including mammoths, a foal and cave lion cubs have been found across the region as permafrost melts due to global warming.

Permafrost

- Permafrost is the ground that remains completely frozen for at least two years. Permafrost is defined based on temperature and duration.
- The permanently frozen Grounds are those which are generally known to be below 22% of the land surface on the earth. These grounds are mostly located in polar zones and regions with high mountains. The permafrost is found in Russia, Canada and Alaska

Reference: <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/wildlife-biodiversity/global-eco-watch-ice-age-woolly-rhino-uneared-in-siberia-74864>

Italian PM Giuseppe Conte resigns

Question: Which country Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has resigned after losing his Senate majority?

(a) Italy (b) Poland (c) Spain (d) Romania

Answer: (a)

Related facts:



- On 26 January 2021, Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has resigned after losing his Senate majority.
- The uneasy coalition has led Italy since September 2019.
- The resignation is crucial as the country is battling the pandemic and a recession.
- He tendered his resignation to President Sergio Mattarella, the ultimate arbiter of Italian political crises, who invited him to stay on in a caretaker capacity pending discussions on what happens next.
- Italy was the first European country to face the full force of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/italy-prime-minister-giuseppe-conte-resigns-scenarios-for-what-comes-next/articleshow/80466915.cms>

India announces pledge of \$150,000 to UN peace-building

Question: What amount has been pledged by India to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund in 2021?



- (a) \$200,000 (b) \$150,000
(c) \$100,000 (d) \$250,000

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 27 January 2021, India has announced a pledge of \$150,000 to activities of the Peacebuilding Fund this year.
- The announcement was made by TS Tirumurti, permanent representative of India to the United Nations.
- Peacebuilding Commission is an intergovernmental advisory body of the United Nations that supported peace efforts in countries emerging from conflict.
- The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was jointly established by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council in 2005.

Links:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/india-pledges-usd-150000-for-un-peacebuilding20210127044608/>

China surpasses United States as largest recipient of FDI

Question: Which country was the largest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2020 as of a report released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)?

- (a) USA (b) China
(c) India (d) Singapore

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- According to a report released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), China was the largest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2020.
- China overtook the United States to gain the top position in 2020.
- China economy brought in \$163 billion inflows in 2020, compared to \$134 billion attracted by the United States,
- However, in 2019, the United States had received \$251 billion in inflows and China received \$140 billion.



- Overall, the global FDI collapsed by 42% in 2020 to an estimated \$859 billion, compared to \$1.5 trillion in 2019.
- India witnessed a 13% rise in foreign direct investment (FDI) to \$ 57 billion in 2020 compared to previous year.
- India and China were the only countries to register positive rise in FDI inflows in 2020(India-13%, China-4%)

Links:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-economy-fdi-idUSKBN29T0TC>

2021 Portuguese Presidential Election

Question: Who has been elected the President of Portugal in the election held on 24 January 2021?

- (a) Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa (b) Aleksander Vucic
(c) Nicolas Maduro (d) Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The incumbent President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa has won the Portuguese presidential election.
- He has won a second five-year term that is set to start from March 9, 2021.
- The 2021 Portuguese Presidential Election was held on January 24, 2020.
- The 72-year-old former leader of the Social Democratic Party won 61 percent of the total votes.
- He is serving as the President of the country since 9 March 2016.



Links:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/24/exit-poll-incumbent-wins-portugals-presidential-election>

Yoweri Museveni won sixth term as Uganda President

Question: Who has been elected the President of Uganda in the 2021 Ugandan General Election?



- (a) Yoweri Museveni (b) Wavel Ramkalawan
(c) Adama Barrow (d) Andry Rajoelina

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Uganda's incumbent President Yoweri Museveni has won the country's presidential election 2021.
- Museveni secured 58.64 percent of the total votes cast while his main opponent Bobi Wine 34.83 percent of votes cast.
- With this victory he has won the sixth term as President.
- The 76-year-old leader has served as the President of the Republic of Uganda since 1986, and is one of Africa's longest-serving presidents.
- Uganda capital: Kampala
- Currency: Ugandan shilling

Links:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/16/ugandas-museveni-declared-winner-of-presidential-election>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021_Ugandan_general_election

Economics

IMF projects over 11 per cent growth rate for India in 2021

Question: What is the GDP Growth rate projected by the International Monetary Fund for India in the year 2021?

- (a) 11.5 percent (b) 8 percent
(c) 10 percent (d) 12 percent

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected an 11.5 per cent growth rate for India in 2021 in its latest World Economic Update.
- This projection makes India the only major economy of the world to register double-digit growth this year amidst the coronavirus pandemic.
- For 2020, IMF has projected Indian economy to contract by 8 percent.



- China is next fast growing economy with 8.1 per cent growth in 2021 followed by Spain (5.9 per cent) and France (5.5 per cent)

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/world/imf-projects-impressive-11-5-per-cent-growth-rate-for-india-in-2021-7162652/>

India's GDP to contract 8% in 2020-21

Question: What is India's GDP Growth Rate projection for 2020-21 according to FICCI Economic Outlook Survey?

- (a) -8 percent (b) -7 percent
(c) -7.5 percent (d) -6 percent



Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- According to the latest round of FICCI's Economic Outlook Survey published on 27 January 2021, India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to contract by 8 per cent in 2020-21.
- The annual median growth forecast by the industry body is based on responses from leading economists representing industry, banking and financial services sector.
- The median growth forecast for agriculture and allied activities has been pegged at 3.5 per cent for 2020-21.
- FICCI is a non-government trade association and advocacy group. It is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India.

Links:

http://ficci.in/sector/report/21596/news_wrap_jan27.pdf

Introduction of Legal Entity Identifier for Large Value Transactions in Centralised Payment Systems

Question : RBI has recently(5 January, 2021) decided to introduce the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) system for all payment transactions of value _ and above undertaken by entities (non-individuals) using the Reserve Bank-run Centralised Payment Systems with effect from April 1. How much payment transaction value decided by RBI ?

- (a) ₹50 crore (b) ₹25 crore
(c) ₹15 crore (d) ₹10 crore



<http://www.edristi.in/>

Answer (a) Related facts

- RBI has recently(5 January, 2021) decided to introduce the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) system for all payment transactions of value ₹50 crore and above undertaken by entities (non-individuals) using the Reserve Bank-run Centralised Payment Systems(CPS) with effect from April 1.
Here CPS refers to Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT).

LEI

- The Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions worldwide.
- It was conceived as a key measure to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems for better risk management post the Global Financial Crisis.
- LEI has been introduced by the Reserve Bank in a phased manner for participants in the over the counter (OTC) derivative and non-derivative markets as also for large corporate borrowers.

Link:

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=12010&Mode=0>

Launching of RuPay PoS

Question : NPCI has recently(31 December 2020) announced that RuPay has partnered with ___ bank to launch an innovative payment solution for Indian merchants .Which bank has partnered with Rupay in association with PayNearby?

- (a) RBL Bank (b) Axis Bank
(c) CSB Bank (d) None of the above

Answer:(a) Related facts

- NPCI (National Payments Corporation of India) has recently (31 December 2020) announced that RuPay has partnered with RBL bank to launch an innovative payment solution for Indian merchants. This is actually a tri party agreement.
- The third party of this partnership is PayNearby.

About PayNearby

Nearby Technologies Pvt. Ltd. is a DIPP Certified Fintech Company registered



under The Startup India program of Government of India, set up in April 2016 by a team of professionals with experience in Digital Banking & Payments industry.

The main points of the partnership are as follows —

- The introduction of RuPay PoS (Point of Sale) to digitally empower merchants by turning their smartphones into a PoS machine
- RuPay PoS will provide cost effective acceptance infrastructure to retailers at no additional capital cost.
- This unique phenomena will proliferate digital payments acceptance among millions of underserved Indian MSMEs
- RuPay PoS enables customers to perform 'tap & go' payments on merchant's NFC enabled smartphone just by taping their RuPay cards on it
- As a pilot, RuPay PoS can also accept offline transactions of NCM (National Common Mobility) cards, a global first for RuPay acceptance, eliminating dependency on unstable internet connectivity.

About Rupay

RuPay is a international card payment service conceived and launched by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on 26 March 2012.

Link:

<https://www.npci.org.in/PDF/npci/press-releases/2020/NPCI-Press-Release-RuPay-partners-with-RBL-Bank-to-launch-'RuPay-PoS'-in-association-with-PayNearby.pdf>

Selling of 23% stake in IDBI Federal Life Insurance

Question : On which date IDBI announced the selling of 23% stake in 'IDBI Federal Life Insurance' ?

- (a) 31 December 2020 (b) 28 December 2020
(c) 22 December 2020 (d) 5 December 2021



Answer (a)

- IDBI Bank has recently(31 December 2020) announced that it has completed sale transaction of its 23% stake in IDBI Federal Life Insurance Company Limited (IFLI) to Ageas Insurance International JV for a consideration of ₹507.10 crore.
- Following the transaction, IDBI Bank's shareholding in IFLI stood at 25% from the earlier 48%.
- Now, the joint venture has been rebranded as Ageas Federal Life Insurance Company Limited.

- Besides, the bank intended to sell 4% stake to another partner Federal Bank.

Background

- The board at its meeting held on June 26, 2020, had approved selling IDBI Bank's stake in IFLI to the extent of 23% to Ageas and 4% to Federal Bank at a combined value of about ₹595 crore, subject to all regulatory approvals.
- The ₹595 crore raised through this transaction values the life insurer at around ₹2,200 crore which is just a slight premium to the company's book value.
- Post Life Insurance Corporation India (LIC) acquiring 51 per cent stake in IDBI Bank, the stake sale had become imperative.

Link:

<https://www.livemint.com/insurance/news/idbi-bank-sells-23-stake-in-idbi-federal-life-insurance-to-ageas-insurance-for-rs-507-crore-11609424761064.html>

REPORT ON TREND AND PROGRESS OF BANKING IN INDIA 2019-20

Question : On which date the 'Trend and Progress of Banking in India' report published ?

- (a) 29 December 2020 (b) 27 December 2020
(c) 29 November 2020 (d) 9 December 2020

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Recently(29 December 2020), the Reserve Bank of India released the Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2019-20, a statutory publication in compliance with Section 36 (2) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- This Report presents the performance of the banking sector, including co-operative banks, and non-banking financial institutions during 2019-20 and 2020-21 so far.
- The broad theme of this year's report is the impact of COVID-19 on banking and non-banking sectors, and the way forward.

The highlights of the Report are set out below:

- During 2019-20 and first half of 2020-21, scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) consolidated the gains achieved after the turnaround in 2018-19. SCBs' gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio declined from 9.1 per cent at

end-March 2019 to 8.2 per cent at end-March 2020 and further to 7.5 per cent at end-September 2020.

- Capital to risk weighted assets (CRAR) ratio of SCBs strengthened from 14.3 per cent at end-March 2019 to 14.7 per cent at end-March 2020 and further to 15.8 per cent at end-September 2020, partly aided by recapitalisation of public sector banks and capital raising from the market by both public and private sector banks.
- Net profits of SCBs turned around in 2019-20 after losses in the previous two years; in H1:2020-21, their financial performance was shored up by the moratorium, standstill in asset classification and ploughing back of dividends.
- The Reserve Bank undertook an array of policy measures to mitigate the effects of COVID-19; its regulatory ambit was reinforced by legislative amendments, giving it greater powers over co-operative banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), and housing finance companies (HFCs); and it also undertook a series of initiatives to bolster its supervisory framework.
- The recovery process gained traction with the resolution of large accounts through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC); the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI) channel also aided the process of recovery.
- The balance sheet growth of Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) moderated in 2019-20 on lower deposit accretion and muted expansion in credit; while their asset quality deteriorated, increased provisioning resulted in net losses.
- The performance of state co-operative banks improved, both in terms of profitability and asset quality.
- The consolidated balance sheet of NBFCs decelerated in 2019-20 due to near stagnant growth in loans and advances although some improvement became visible in H1:2020-21; notwithstanding a marginal deterioration in asset quality, the NBFC sector remains resilient with strong capital buffers.
- The Report also offers some perspectives on the evolving outlook for India's financial sector.

Link:

https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=50871

RBI study on inflation trend

Question : Maintaining 4% inflation is appropriate for India.RBI working paper(Measuring Trend Inflation in India) has shown this fact.On which date this working paper released ?

- (a) 28 December 2020 (b) 26 December 2020
(c) 22 December 2020 (d) 20 December 2020

Answer (a)

Related facts

- RBI has recently(28 December 2020) released a working paper on Inflation trend in India.
- These papers present research in progress of the staff members of the Reserve Bank and are disseminated to elicit comments and further debate.
- This study shows that maintaining 4% inflation is appropriate for India. The paper notes that estimating trend inflation with regular updates is important for the formulation of monetary policy, irrespective of the country setting.
- In India, this exercise acquires priority in the context of the flexible inflation targeting formally instituted in June 2016, which commits the central bank – the RBI – to a consumer price inflation target of 4 per cent with a symmetrical tolerance band of +/- 2 per cent around it, the authors said.
- It is notable that six-member panel, which had its first meeting in October 2016, was given the mandate to maintain annual inflation at 4 per cent until March 31, 2021, with an upper tolerance of 6 per cent and lower tolerance of 2 per cent.

Link:

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/PublicationsView.aspx?id=20262>

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT TRENDS AND OUTLOOK IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Question : The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) serves as the United Nations' regional hub promoting cooperation among countries to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. On which date it released 'FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT TRENDS AND OUTLOOK IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC' ?

- (a) 22 December 2020
(b) 22 December 2020
(c) 22 December 2020
(d) 22 December 2020

Answer (a)

Related facts



- The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) serves as the United Nations' regional hub promoting cooperation among countries to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.
- It has recently (22 December 2020) released a report named FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT TRENDS AND OUTLOOK IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC.

Highlights of the report

(1) Indian economy

- India's economy could prove the most resilient in the subregion over the long term.
- India attracted comparatively more FDI in 2019 compared to 2018.
- In 2019, Viet Nam received the second largest share of inward greenfield investment (11%), followed by India (10%), and Sri Lanka (8%). Within Asia and the Pacific, ASEAN was the largest destination for Japanese FDI outflows in 2019, receiving \$35 billion, followed by China (\$14 billion), India (\$5 billion) and the Republic of Korea (\$2 billion) (JETRO, 2020).
- Inward FDI flows to South and South-West Asia slightly decreased by 2% in 2019, from \$67 billion in 2018 to \$66 billion in 2019. The growth was mainly driven by India, which accounted for 77% of total inflows to the subregion and received \$51 billion in 2019, up 20% from the previous year.
- FDI outflows from South and South-West Asia increased for the fourth consecutive year, modestly growing from \$14.8 billion in 2018 to \$15.1 billion in 2019. The geographical spread of FDI outflows from the subregion remained uneven.
- Just two countries (India and Turkey) accounted for the vast majority of outflows in 2019. As such, the slight increase in outward FDI was predominantly due to an increase in outflows from India, which accounted for 80% of total outward investment from the subregion.
- In the short term, both inflows and outflows from and to the subregion are expected to decline. In the first three quarters of 2020, the value of greenfield FDI inflows declined by 43% compared to the same period last year, signaling a reversal of the growth trend in the subregion.
- Most of the greenfield flows (87%) were destined for India, although the overall greenfield inflows to the country declined by 29%.
- Equally, FDI from India is projected to decline in 2020, with the largest MNEs revising their earnings down by 25% in early 2020 due to the impacts of the pandemic.

- FDI inflows have been steadily increasing and positive, albeit lower, economic growth after the pandemic and India's large market will continue to attract market-seeking investment. India's fast-growing telecom and digital space, in particular, could see a faster rebound as global venture capital firms and technology companies continue to show interest in India's market through acquisitions.
- Facebook and Google's investment in Jio Platforms, an Indian, in 2020 worth \$5.7 billion and \$4.5 billion respectively, are testament to this trend.
- India was the most active terminator of agreements in the region, with 7 BITs (Bilateral investment treaties) terminated during January 2019 to October 2020 period (figure 9).
- Meanwhile, India has implemented a number of noteworthy investment policies and measures since 2019.
- Some of the most noteworthy include, the relaxation of limits to FDI in the insurance sector which abolished ownership ceilings for FDI insurance intermediaries; liberalization of FDI rules which ended equity caps in several sectors including coal and lignite mining, contract manufacturing and single brand retail trading.

Global Economy

Globally, both FDI inflows and outflows started to recover in 2019, with the former growing 30% to \$1.5 billion and the latter increasing by 33% to \$1.3 billion. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused global FDI flows to drop by 49% in the first two quarters of 2020 compared to the same period in 2019.

- Asia-Pacific's share in global FDI inflows dropped from 45% in 2018 to 35% in 2019, and its share in global FDI outflows decelerated from 52% to 41%. Nonetheless, the region remained the largest source of global outflows for the second year running.
- In 2019, China and Hong Kong, China were the largest FDI recipients attracting 38% of total FDI inflows to the region. Japan was the largest source of investment from the region in 2019, responsible for 42% of regional outward FDI.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the downward trend already recorded in recent years in greenfield FDI with the value of announced inbound greenfield investment projects from January to August 2020 dropping by 40% from the average over the same period in 2019. Likewise, outbound greenfield investment project values declined 48% over the same period in 2019.
- Intraregional greenfield investments as a whole have slowed in 2020 due to the pandemic, with announced intraregional greenfield investment values dropping 45% to \$35 billion in the January-August 2020 period compared to the same period in 2019.

- FDI is expected to remain low and below pre-crisis levels throughout 2021. The outlook beyond 2021 is highly uncertain and dependent on the duration of the crisis, the effectiveness of policy interventions to stimulate investment and navigate the economic effects of the pandemic, as well as geo-economic tensions. FDI recovery rates are challenging to predict at this stage because they are dependent on the rate of overall socio-economic recovery, and consequently investment levels, within the region and socio-economic rate of recovery from countries outside of the region.
- On the bright side, the recent signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is expected to strengthen flows and lift investment prospects, especially for smaller and least developed countries in the group.
- Beyond this, restoring and increasing FDI in the medium and long-term in the region as whole requires swift, coherent and appropriately sequenced action from policymakers to, inter alia, review, revise and revamp FDI strategies to make them more fit-for-purpose, develop green growth recovery plans with a robust role for FDI, operationalize policy measures to support value-chain linked FDI and boost FDI in the digital economy.

Link:

<https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/knowledge-products/APTIT%20FDI.pdf>

PNB launched digital replica of physical credit card

Question : Punjab National Bank has recently(24 December 2020) launched digital replica of physical credit card. What is actually this ?

- (a) an e-credit card
- (b) an e-debit card
- (c) Mix variant of both (a) and (b)
- (d) None of the above



Answer (a)
Related facts

- Punjab National Bank has recently(24 December 2020) launched digital replica of physical credit card.
- It is actually an e-credit card named PNB e-Card.

Utilization

- It will allow PNB customers to use PNB e-credit card at any e-commerce platform or merchant website, without the need of carrying the physical card.
- Customers can view PNB e-Credit Cards details by clicking on e-Credit Card facility in PNB Genie MOBIle app.

Link:

<http://www.uniindia.com/punjab-national-bank-introduce-pnb-e-credit-card/east/news/2273420.html>

Centralised investment clearance cell

Question : On December 31, 2020 'Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade' announced the deadline of the establishment of 'Centralised investment clearance cell'. What is the deadline for it ?

- (a) by 15 April, 2021 (b) by 15 February, 2021
(c) by 15 January, 2022 (d) by 15 September, 2021



Answer (a)
Related facts

- On December 31, 2020 'Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade'(DPIIT) announced the deadline of the establishment of 'Centralised investment clearance cell'.
This announcement made on the occasion of the release of the 'Year End Review 2020' of the DPIIT.

Deadline

- Above mentioned Investment clearance cell(ICC) would be established by 15 April, 2021.
It is notable that ICC was first mentioned in the budget(2020-21) speech of the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

ICC

- It will provide "end to end" facilitation and support, including pre-investment advisory, information related to land banks and facilitate clearances at Centre and State level. It will work through a portal.
- This national portal will integrate the existing clearance systems of the various Ministries/Departments of Govt. of India and State Governments without disruption to the existing IT portals of Ministries.

Year End Review 2020

- The major highlights of the Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade during the year 2020 are as follows :-

1. EASE OF DOING BUSINESS –

- To improve Ease of Doing Business in the country, the emphasis has been on simplification and rationalization of the existing rules and introduction of information technology to make governance more efficient and effective.
- The DBR, 2020 acknowledges India as one of the top 10 improvers, third time in a row, with an improvement of 67 ranks in three years. It is notable that doing business rank in 2019(63) is much better than 2016(130) and 2009(133).

2. Production-Linked Incentive Scheme

- To provide a major boost to manufacturing, the government has launched Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for 13 sectors, 3 sectors in March 2020 and 10 sectors in November 2020 with an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore over the next five years.

3. Industrial Information System(ISS)

- DPIIT has developed an Industrial Information System (IIS) which provides a GIS-enabled database of industrial areas including clusters, parks, nodes, zones, etc. across the country to help investors identify their preferred location for investment. 3390 industrial parks/estates/SEZs in 4.76 lakh hectares have been mapped on Industrial Information System (IIS) along with net land area availability.
- Total number of states onboarded to ISS is thirteen.

4. One District One Product(ODOP)

- DPIIT is working on the initiative of One District One Product to forward the vision of AtmaNirbhar Bharat.
- It can be extended as a national movement to create a pool of 739 products from 739 districts in India.

5. FDI Statistics

- During the first seven months of F.Y. 2020-21, total FDI inflow increased by 11% from USD 42.06 billion (April, 2019 to October, 2019) to US\$ 46.82 billion (April, 2020 to October, 2020).
- FDI equity inflow increased by 21% to US\$ 35.33 billion (April, 2020 to October, 2020) from US\$ 29.31 billion reported in the same period of previous financial year.

6. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

- Figures of IPR filings and registered in 2020-21 are as follow —

IP	CUMULATIVE STATISTICS: FY 2020-21 (Till November 30, 2020)	
	Filing	Grants/Registration
Patents	37660	17148
Trademarks	278023	135289
Copyrights	13861	9221
Designs	7403	5425
Geographical Indications	33	5

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1685013>

Acquisition of 9% stake in Paisalo Digital Ltd

Question : On December 24, 2020, SBI Life Insurance Company had purchased 3.8 million equity shares, representing 8.99 per cent equity of 'Paisalo Digital Ltd'. In which sector this company belongs ?

- (a) Non-banking financial company
- (b) Agri commodities trading company
- (c) Both (a) & (b)
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- SBI Life has recently (24 December 2020) acquired 9% stake in Paisalo Digital for Rs 186.20 cr.
- Under this deal acquirer has purchased 3.8 million equity shares (at Rs 489.99 per share) via open market.

Paisalo Digital

- Paisalo Digital Limited operates as a non-banking financial company. The Company offers personal and business loans, micro funding, and hire purchase financing services.
- Paisalo Digital has a market capitalisation of Rs 2,204.69 crore as on December 24, 2020.



Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/sbi-life-acquires-9-stake-in-paisalo-digital-for-rs-186-20-cr/articleshow/79943767.cms>

Infinite India : ICICI Bank's online platform for foreign companies

Question : When has a new online platform named 'Infinite India' launched by ICICI Bank ?

- (a) 22 December 2020 (b) 20 December 2020
(c) 28 December 2020 (d) 2 January 2021



Answer (a)

Related facts

- ICICI Bank has recently (December 2020) launched an online platform (Infinite India) for foreign companies setting up operations in India.
- 'Infinite India' provides banking solutions, as well as value-added facilities.
- Here are some significant characteristics of this platform —

A. 'value-added' offerings

1. Incorporation services — Under 'value-added' offerings it offers advisory on laws and regulations to incorporate business in India as a joint venture, wholly owned subsidiary, liaison office, branch office, project office or a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP).
2. License and registration — Another 'value-added' offer of this platform is ease of licensing and registration.
3. Taxation and compliance — Foreign companies can access to an array of tax and compliance related services such as filing annual returns of company, GST registration, income tax returns as well as corporate filings with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) for registered office and amendment in memorandum of association (MOA).
4. HR services — Platform provides a value added offer to the foreign companies in HR services.

B. Banking services

- Under the valuable banking services of 'Infinite India' foreign companies can avail the treasury services as well as trade services with global network.
- Besides it the Bank can authorise the setup of Liaison Office (LO), Branch Office (BO) as well as a Project Office (PO) in India within the FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) framework.

- State-of-the-art digital channels enables businesses (foreign companies) to complete almost all their banking requirements digitally such as payments, receivables, foreign exchange, tax payments among many others.

Link:

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/icici-bank-launches-infinite-india-for-foreign-companies-setting-up-operations-in-india-6257361.html>

Cancellation of license of Subhadra Bank

Question : RBI has recently (24 December 2020) canceled the Licence of the Subhadra Local Area Bank Ltd., Kolhapur, Maharashtra. Under which act this cancellation has been done ?

- (a) Section 22 (4) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949
- (b) Section 21 (3) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949
- (c) Section 20 (2) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949
- (d) Section 22 (6) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949

Answer (a)

Related facts

- RBI has recently (24 December 2020) canceled the Licence of the Subhadra Local Area Bank Ltd., Kolhapur, Maharashtra.



भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक
Reserve Bank of India
India's Central Bank

Effective date

- The order is made effective from close of business on December 24, 2020.

Reason

The Reserve Bank cancelled the licence of the Subhadra Local Area Bank Ltd as:

1. the affairs of the Subhadra Local Area Bank Ltd. were conducted in a manner detrimental to the interests of its present and future depositors.
2. public interest would be adversely affected if it is allowed to continue to do the business in the manner in which it is functioning.
3. the general character of the management is considered prejudicial to the interest of the present and future depositors.

The bank had breached the minimum net worth requirement for two quarters in the financial year 2019-20.

Result

Consequent to the cancellation of the licence, Subhadra Local Area Bank Ltd. is prohibited from conducting the business of 'banking' as defined in Section 5(b) or

any additional business envisaged under Section 6 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 with immediate effect.

Link:

https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=50855

Scientific

Defense/Science Short Notes

Exercise Kavach

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Exercise Kavach is a joint military exercise of India.

(2) Exercise Kavach involves Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) only 1 (b) only 2

(c) Both 1 & 2 (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- In order to fine tune the joint war-fighting capabilities Indian armed forces is set to hold a massive joint military exercise Exercise Kavach.
- The exercise involves Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC), the only Joint Forces Command of the country.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) is the first integrated theatre command in India with headquarters at Port Blair.
- The joint force would execute multi domain, high intensity offensive and defensive manoeuvres in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1690793>

Exercise Desert Knight-21

Question: Which countries will conduct a bilateral Air exercise, Ex Desert Knight-21 at Air Force Station Jodhpur from 20 to 24 January 2021?

- (a) India and France (b) India and Spain
(c) India and Russia (d) India and Vietnam

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- **Participating countries / Armed forces:** Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force (Armée de l'Air et de l'Espace).
- **Duration :** 20th to 24th January 2021.
- **Participating Aircrafts from France:** Rafale, Airbus A-330 Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT), A-400M Tactical Transport aircraft (and approximately 175 personnel).
- **Participating Aircrafts from India:** Mirage 2000, Su-30 MKI, Rafale, IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft, AWACS and AEW&C aircraft.
- **Air Exercises (six editions) held between Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force :** Garuda.
- **Last Garuda Exercise held:** In 2019 at Air Force Base Mont-de-Marsan, France.
- **Importance :** The exercise is unique as it includes fielding of Rafale aircraft by both sides and is indicative of the growing interaction between the two premier Air Forces.



Link: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1689893>

Thales ink pact to make STARStreak Air Defence System in India

Question : On 13 January 2021; Thales of UK has signed a Teaming Agreement with which of the following Indian defense equipment company to develop the STARStreak Air Defence system?

- a) Bharat Dynamics Limited(BDL)
b) Tata Advanced Systems.
c) Mahindra Defence Systems (MDS)
d) Kalyani Rafael Advanced Systems (KRAS)

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:-

- 13 January 2021; Bharat Dynamics and Thales have signed a Teaming Agreement to work in partnership on the STARStreak Air Defence system.
- These companies will now develop this system with the support of both the Governments of India and the United Kingdom.



- Under this agreement the BDL will now become a part of the STARStreak global supply chain.
- It will in this way provide, through this agreement, the opportunity for export of the system to existing and future STARStreak Air Defence customers.
- BDL, as a part of its Global Outreach, is endeavoring to forge alliance with foreign companies to take the Make in India mission further.
- It should be known that, Thales and BDL already have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to assess the opportunity for the transfer of technology for STARStreak.
- The signing of this teaming agreement at present, confirms a positive outcome from that exploration process.
- Present agreement will also provide opportunity for BDL to offer STARStreak missile system to the Indian Armed Forces.
- It is to be noted that company will use as maximum as 60% of indigenous content as well as Design and Development of the system and therefore qualifying it under the Make in India programme.
- The agreement also represents opportunity for industrial cooperation between UK and India.
- This will ultimately facilitate for closer collaboration and co-development between industries of the two nations.

Links:-

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-cm/bharat-dynamics-and-thales-partner-to-manufacture-starstreak-air-defence-system-in-india-121011400859_1.html

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)

Question: According to the recent report published about the Birds of Sundarbans, what is the total number of species of birds are existing in these forest nowadays?

a) 328 b) 428 c) 500 d) 528

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-



- In 2021 Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) a publication released from Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) has declared that Sunderbans in India is home to 428 species of birds.

- It should be noted that Sunderbans of India is part of the largest mangrove forest in the world.
- In the publication, released by the ZSI, a report titled as Birds of the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve, comprehensively documented the avifauna of the Sunderbans.
- This report also serves as comprehensive photographic field guide, with detailed distribution and locality data for all the species from the region.
- Authors of the publication said the book with photographs of male and female of species is aimed to kindle interest and spread knowledge about birds among people from all walks of life.
- The Indian Sundarban, which covers 4,200 sq km, comprises of the Sundarban Tiger Reserve of 2,585 sq km — home to about 96 Royal Bengal Tigers (as per last census in 2020).
- This forest is also a world heritage site and a Ramsar Site.
- The scientists said that of the 428 birds listed, some, like the Masked Finfoot and Buffy fish owl, are recorded only from the Sundarban.
- The area is home to nine out of 12 species of kingfishers found in the country as well rare species such as the Goliath heron and Spoon-billed Sandpiper.
- India has over 1,300 species of birds and if 428 species of birds are from Sundarban, it means that one in every three birds in the country is found in the unique ecosystem.
- The publication not only highlights the ecological and conservation aspect of the Sundarban but it also encourages encourage bird-watching.
- It should be noted that year 2021 is being observed by the scientists and nature lovers as the 125th birth anniversary year of Salim Ali, the Birdman of India.
- The ZSI director said bird watching not only brings people closer to nature but also creates awareness and livelihood opportunities for the locals.
- Sundarban are the most diverse of natural landscapes and accounts to 60 % of all mangrove forests in the country.
- The mudflats located in these forests, exposed in the low tides, are rich in microorganism deposited during tidal activity are ideal feeding for migratory birds.
- These mudflats and wetlands of Sundarban act as a stopover site for migratory flight south (south wards) and back.

Link:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/sunderbans-home-to-428->

[species-of-birds-records-zsi/article33651099.ece#:~:text=Credit%3A%20AMITAVA%20MAJUMDER-While%20some%20species%20are%20found%20only%20in%20the%20unique%20ecosystem,of%20India%20\(ZSI\)%20States.](https://www.zsi/article33651099.ece#:~:text=Credit%3A%20AMITAVA%20MAJUMDER-While%20some%20species%20are%20found%20only%20in%20the%20unique%20ecosystem,of%20India%20(ZSI)%20States.)

Two Giant radio Galaxies Discovered by MeerKAT Telescope

Question: Astronomers have recently been discovered two giant radio galaxies with powerful MeerKAT telescope. In which of the following country this telescope is located?

a) Australia b) South Africa c) Canada d) USA

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-



- Recently two giant radio galaxies have been discovered with South Africa's powerful MeerKAT telescope.
- The giant radio galaxies were spotted in new radio maps of the sky created by one of the most advanced surveys (MIGHTEE survey) of distant galaxies.
- Astronomers say that this population of galaxies was previously hidden from us by radio telescopes limitations.
- Now the MeerKAT has allowed new discoveries because it can detect faint, diffuse light which previous telescopes were unable to do.
- MIGHTEE survey is called as International Gigahertz Tiered Extragalactic Exploration.
- It involves data collected by South Africa's impressive MeerKAT radio telescope.
- MeerKAT consists of 64 antennae and dishes, and started collecting science data in early 2018.
- The team working on it has included astronomers from around the world including South Africa, the UK, Italy and Australia.
- MeerKAT is located in the Karoo region, a semi-arid area in the south west of the country.
- This discovery has been, published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.
- Present discovery about these galaxies can give astronomers further clues about how galaxies have changed and evolved throughout the cosmic history.

- Astronomers say that It's also a way to understand how galaxies may continue to change and evolve and even to work out how old radio galaxies can get.
- **Radio Galaxies:-**
- It should be known that Radio galaxies get their name from the fact that they release huge beams, or jets of radio light.
- These happen through the interaction between charged particles and strong magnetic fields related to supermassive black holes at the galaxies' hearts.
- These giant galaxies are much bigger than most of the others in the Universe and are thought to be quite rare.
- Although millions of radio galaxies are known to exist, only around 800 giants have been found.
- **The new pathways for clearer understanding:**
- This discovery means that a clearer understanding of the evolutionary pathways of galaxies is beginning to emerge.
- This is tantalising evidence that a large population of faint, very extended giant radio galaxies may exist.
- This may help us understand how radio galaxies become so huge and what sort of havoc supermassive black holes can wreak on their galaxies.
- Extension of these galaxies is more than 2 mega-parsecs across i.e about 6.5 million light years or about 62 times the size of the Milky Way.
- Yet they are fainter than others of the same size. That's what makes them harder to see.

Links:-

<https://www.news.uct.ac.za/article/-2021-01-19-gigantic-galaxies-discovered-with-the-meerkat-telescope>

Aqua Rejuvenation Plant (ARP) inaugurated in West Bengal

Question: On 23 January 2021; an Aqua Rejuvenation Plant (ARP) was inaugurated in Durgapur (West Bengal). Which of the following institute has developed this WasteWater Treatment Technology Model?

a) CSIR-CMERI b) IIT Kharagpur c) IISc d) IIT Mumbai

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:

- On 23 January 2021; an Aqua Rejuvenation Plant (ARP) was inaugurated at CSIR-CMERI colony in Durgapur (West Bengal).

- This is the first-ever WasteWater Treatment Technology Model initiated in India, which purifies Waste Water for Irrigation/Farming purposes.



- CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute, Durgapur has developed this technology indigenously in the country.

- Prof. Harish Hirani During on this occasion said that our aim is to find the solution for the society through application of basic sciences.

- He said that basic sciences have the knowledge potential to do away with carbon dioxide, frequent chockage of the drainage system and the discharge of sewage water.

- He also referred to different studies where it has been outlined that the COVID virus has the potential to survive up to 34 days in the sewage water.

- The institute has brought up this technology following the norms of the National Green Tribunal which is the statutory body for handling the expeditious disposal of the cases pertaining to environmental issues in our country.

- The used filtration media have been specially developed to handle Indian Sewage Water Parameters and based upon Geographical Variations they may be modified.

- The filter media is also locally source-able; so as to ensure that there would not be any stress in the Supply Chain for scaled-up Manufacturing of ARP.

- Aqua Rejuvenation Plant (ARP) is an Integrated Waste Water Rejuvenation Model which has Six-Stage purification profile.

- It does the comprehensive treatment of Waste Water, based upon diverse purification parameters.

- The approx. 24,000 litres of water that can be rejuvenated using ARP will be sufficient for almost 4 acres of Agricultural Land (barring seasonal variations in water requirements).

- The used filtration media have been specially developed to handle Indian Sewage Water Parameters and based upon Geographical Variations they may be modified.

- The filter media is also locally source-able, so as to ensure that there would not be any stress in the Supply Chain for scaled-up Manufacturing of ARP.

- The treated water which is now being used for irrigation can be used even for drinking purpose also when little more time is given for settling.
- The system has dual benefit as while the treated water is being used for irrigation purpose, the filtered sludge generated is also utilized as manure / fertilizer.
- The institute has also prepared the bio char from dry leaves falling in autumn season is also used for mixing in soil as it reduces the water requirement for irrigation thus saving precious water.
- The Institute was earlier also using alternate technologies like sprinkle system and others for reduced water requirement for such purpose.
- Prof. Hirani urged the different stake holders of the Society, Civic bodies, Governmental authorities, NGOs to come forward and work with the scientific community.

Link:-

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1691622>

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Link:-

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1691622>

SpaceX Successfully Launched Record number of Satellites in a Single Attempt

Question: On Jan. 24 2021; Private space company of USA, SpaceX successfully launched how much record number of satellites in a single attempt?

a) 122 b) 111 c) 143 d) 100



Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- On Jan. 24 2021; SpaceX successfully launched record 143 satellites using its two-stage Falcon 9 rocket.
- It was an ambitious rideshare mission as one of its veteran boosters hoisted 143 small satellites a new record for a single rocket.
- The Falcon 9 rocket lifted off in the morning [10 a.m. EST (1500 GMT)] of January 24, 2021; from the Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station here in Florida.
- All the 143 satellite were Perched atop the veteran Falcon 9 launcher, which placed them one by one in their respective orbits in a quick succession.
- This launching was a part of SpaceX's first dedicated rideshare mission, called Transporter-1.
- This time the SpaceX has sent the bevy of small satellites into space alongside 10 of its own Starlink internet satellites.
- The mission is expected to deposit the flat-paneled Starlink satellites in a unique polar orbit.
- Starlink internet satellites are the first for its broadband fleet that will help provide coverage to customers in Alaska and other polar regions.
- 24th January launch by the falcon 9 marks the third mission this year for SpaceX and the company's second within a week from Florida's Space Coast.
- The rocket powered this mission is a frequent flier, marking its fifth flight on the Transporter-1 mission.
- On 20 Jan 2021; few days before the present Transporter-1 mission, SpaceX launched a full stack of its Starlink satellites atop a different Falcon 9 as part of a record-breaking mission.

- The booster used on that mission became the first in SpaceX's fleet to launch and land eight times.

Link:-

<https://www.space.com/spacex-launches-143-satellites-transporter-1-rocket-landing>

First Indigenous Flow Diverter Stent

Question: Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) is located in which of the following state?

- a) Tamil Nadu b) Kerala
c) Maharashtra d) Gujarat



Answer: (b)

Related Facts:

- India will soon have access to the country's first indigenous flow diverter stent and the Nitinol-based occluder devices.
- The first device, a Flow Diverter stent is to be for diverting blood flow away from localized ballooning of arteries in the brain.
- Second set of devices is Nitinol-based occluder devices, which are presently used to heal Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) or hole in the heart.
- It should be known that Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) or hole in the heart is the condition that affects 8 out of every 1000 living babies born.
- Nitinol-based occluder devices are currently imported to meet the ASD treatment demands in India.
- At present India does not manufacture also flow diverters stents, which are needed for diverting blood flow away from an intracranial aneurysm or localized ballooning of arteries in the brain.
- Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) has took the initiative to manufacture these devices.
- SCTIMST is an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt. of India, under the Technical Research Centre (TRC).
- The institute has entered into Technology Transfer Agreements with Pune based Biorad Medisys for two these biomedical implant devices.
- These devices are Atrial Septal Defect Occluder and an Intracranial Flow Diverter Stents.

- SCTIMST is developing these devices in collaboration with National Aerospace Laboratories, Bangalore (CSIR-NAL) using superelastic NiTiNOL alloys.
- The Technology Transfer Agreements agreements were signed by Dr. K. Jayakumar, Director, SCTIMST, and Mr. Jitendra Hedge, Managing Director, Biorad Medisys.

Link:-

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1689298>

Discovery of Massive Hot UV-Bright Stars in Milky Way Galaxy

Question: Recently astronomers have discovered more UV-bright stars using the UVIT placed at the Astrosat satellite of which of the following country?

a) India b) China c) US d) UK

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:-

- Astronomers from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) have successfully distinguished the UV-bright star cluster in NGC 2808 a globular cluster in the Milky Way galaxy.

- They have detected these stars among relatively cooler red giant stars and other main sequence stars.

- More than thirty-four UV-bright stars were discovered using the Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope (UVIT).



- Astronomers from IIA captured these stars using Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (UVIT) onboard AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength space satellite.
- The team of astronomers also derived properties of the stars such as luminosities, temperature and radii, from the images.
- The derived properties of the stars were placed in Hertzsprung–Russel diagram.
- It is the diagram that shows relationship between stars' absolute magnitudes and luminosities versus their effective temperatures (or stellar classification).
- The diagram was first created in 1910 by Ejnar Hertzsprung and Henry Norris Russell.
- Apart from UVIT, the astronomers also used Gaia telescope and space telescope to identify the stars.

- Gaia is a space observatory of the European Space Agency, launched in 2013.

UV Bright Star

- A UV-Bright Star is brighter than the horizontal branch and bluer than the red giant branch.
- According to the astronomers, the inner core of the stars spotted is almost exposed which is the, that they are extremely hot.
- They were evolved from a solar stage called Horizontal Branch Stars; such stars do not have an outer envelope.
- These stars are in their late stages of evolution just like the sun.

UVIT:

- UVIT is Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope; it is placed in Astrosat satellite.
- It should be known that the Astrosat is the first multi wavelength space satellite of India.
- The Ultra-Violet Imaging Telescope, or the UVIT, is a remarkable 3-in-1 imaging telescope.
- UVIT has the Weight of 230 kg, and it can simultaneously observe in the visible, the near-ultraviolet (NUV) and the far-ultraviolet (FUV).
- UVIT comprises of two separate telescopes.

Link:-

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/science/astrosat-helps-spot-uv-stars-in-milky-ways-cosmic-dinosaur/articleshow/80378474.cms>

Scientists have developed a rapid blood test for patients with Covid-19

Question: Recently Researchers from which of the following institution have developed rapid blood test for patients with Covid-19, based on detection of mitochondrial DNA?

- Washington University School of Medicine at St. Louis(US)
- Serum institute of India
- Indian institute of Science
- Bharat Biotech

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:

- Scientists have developed a rapid blood test that can predict high risk COVID-19 patients.
- Researchers from the Washington University



School of Medicine at St. Louis in the US have developed the procedure of this test.

- Through this test it is possible to know within a day of hospitalization which patients with Covid-19 are at the highest risk of severe complications or death.
- Knowing in advance may help identify those who may best benefit from specific investigational treatments.
- Researchers hoped that it may help identify those who may best benefit from specific investigational treatments.
- The test, described in the journal JCI Insight, measures levels of mitochondrial DNA.
- It should be known that mitochondrial DNA is a unique type of genetic material that normally resides inside mitochondria, the energy factories of cells.
- According to the researchers mitochondrial DNA spilling out of cells and into the bloodstream indicates that a type of violent cell death is taking place in the body.
- Doctors need better tools to evaluate the status of COVID-19 patients as early as possible because many of the treatments are in short supply.
- We need to understand why some patients, irrespective of their ages or underlying health in some cases, go into this hyperinflammatory death spiral.
- The study suggests that tissue damage may be one cause of this spiral since the mitochondrial DNA that is released is itself an inflammatory molecule.
- Viruses are known to cause a type of tissue damage called necrosis that is a violent, inflammatory response to the infection.
- The researchers said, adding that this may lead to cells breaking open and releasing their contents including mitochondrial DNA.
- In COVID-19 patients, there has been anecdotal evidence of this type of cell and tissue damage in the lung, heart and kidney.
- Researchers say it's possible that measures of mitochondrial DNA in the blood may be an early sign of this type of cell death in vital organs.
- The scientists believe the new test could help predict disease severity and also act as a tool to better design clinical trials.
- It may help in identifying patients who might benefit from specific investigational treatments.
- Researchers are of the view that, they will need larger trials to verify what they have found in this study.

- They are hopeful, if could be determined in the first 24 hours of admission whether a patient is likely to need dialysis or intubation or medication to keep their blood pressure from dropping too low.
- It is said In the study that the researchers assessed 97 patients with COVID-19, measuring their mitochondrial DNA levels on the first day of their hospital stays.
- They found that mitochondrial DNA levels were much higher in patients who eventually were admitted to the ICU, intubated or died.
- According to the study, this association held independently of a patient's age, sex and underlying health conditions.
- It noted that mitochondrial DNA levels were about tenfold higher in patients with COVID-19 who developed severe lung dysfunction or eventually died.
- They said the test could also predict outcomes as well as, or better than, existing markers of inflammation currently measured in patients hospitalised with COVID-19.
- According to the scientists, the test is quick to perform, returning results in less than an hour.
- This test uses the same machinery that processes the standard PCR test for COVID-19.
- They said the method allows mitochondrial DNA levels to be quantified directly from patient blood samples without requiring intermediate steps to extract the DNA from the blood.
- The researchers hope to verify that the test is accurate in a larger multi-centre trial before applying for approval from the US Food and Drug Administration.

Links:-

<https://indianexpress.com/article/world/scientists-rapid-blood-test-to-identify-patients-at-highest-risk-of-covid-19-7148905/>

NASA Conducts Test of SLS Rocket Core Stage

Question: NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) rocket is being developed and tested by the agency for which of the following near future mission?

- a) Mars mission b) Moon mission
c) Jupiter mission d) Venus mission

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 17 January 2021; NASA conducted a hot fire test of the core stage for the agency's Space Launch System (SLS) rocket.



- It should be known that SLS will be used to launch the Artemis I mission to the Moon this year.
- The hot fire is the final test of the Green Run series of Space (SLS) rocket of NASA.
- The test plan called for the rocket's four RS-25 engines to fire for a little more than eight minutes, it is the same amount of time it will take to send the rocket to space following launch.
- The team successfully completed the countdown on the B-2 test stand at NASA's John C Stennis Space Center in Mississippi; the rocket's all four RS-25 engines simultaneously ignited.
- All gone well in the initial moments, but the engines shut down by the computer a little more than one minute into the hot fire.
- Teams are assessing the data to determine what caused the early shutdown, and will determine a path forward.
- In this test, the 212-foot core stage generated 1.6 million pounds of thrust,
- The hot fire test included loading 733,000 pounds of liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen – mirroring the launch countdown procedure – and igniting the engines.
- According to NASA's Administrator Jim Bridenstine this test was an important step forward to ensure that the core stage of the SLS rocket is ready for the Artemis I mission, and to carry crew on future missions.
- Although the engines did not fire for the full duration, the team successfully worked through the countdown, ignited the engines, and gained valuable data to inform our path forward.
- Mr. Bridenstine stated that if the issue turns out to be minimal, its possible another hot fire isn't needed.

Links:-

<https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-conducts-test-of-sls-rocket-core-stage-for-artemis-i-moon-mission>

CVRDE developes Reusable landing gear systems for SWIFT UAV's

Question: CVRDE (Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment) is a DRDO laboratory based at which of the following place?

a) Mumbai b) Kolkata c) Chennai d) Ahemdabad

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- On 10th January 2021; the handing over ceremony of Retractable Landing Gear Systems for Tapas and SWiFT UAVs took place at CVRDE Chennai.
- On this occasion 18 types of filters also handed over to concerned authority, for P-75 Submarine.
- CVRDE (Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment) is a DRDO laboratory based at Chennai Tamil Nadu
- CVRDE has indigenously designed and developed Three Ton Retractable Landing Gear (RLG) Systems for Tapas UAV.
- The design, development and testing of this gear system is carried out in co-ordination with CEMILAC (Center for Military Airworthiness & Certification) and DGAQA (Directorate General of aeronautical Quality Assurance) for certification.
- The tricycle nose wheel type multidisciplinary, hydro-electro-mechanical system is now being manufactured by an Industry at Coimbatore.
- First set of Retractable Landing Gear system developed by industry was handed over by Director CVRDE, Chennai to the Director, ADE Bengaluru.



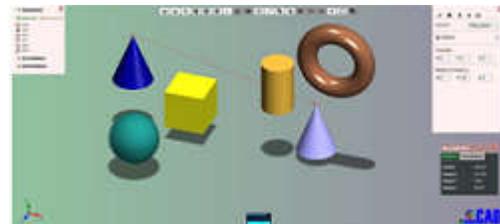
Links:-

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1687456>

Launch of CollabCAD Software

Question: When CollabCAD Software has been launched jointly by National Informatics Centre and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)?

- a) 10 January 2021 b) 14 January 2021
c) 6 January 2021 d) 31 December 2020



Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 14 January 2021; CollabCAD Software has been launched jointly by National Informatics Centre and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)
- This has been launched to provide a total engineering solution for students and Faculty of Engineering Graphics Curriculum.

- This initiative aims to provide a great platform to students across the country.
- It will help them to create and modify 3D digital designs with a free flow of creativity and imagination.
- This software will also enable students to collaborate over designs across the network and concurrently access the same design data for storage and visualization.
- National Informatics Centre, NIC, CBSE, and Atal Innovation Mission have also jointly release a comprehensive e-book on CollabCAD 3D modeling.
- The Electronics and IT Ministry expressed confidence that it will guide CAD students, beginners, and professionals in understanding and using CollabCAD Software.

Links:-

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=407876#:~:text=National%20Informatics%20Centre%20and%20Central,Faculty%20of%20Engineering%20Graphics>

40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica

Question: Recently 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica was flagged off from which of the following place?

- a) Goa b) Mumbai
c) Kolkata d) Kochi



Answer: (a)

Related Facts:-

- On 5 January 2021; 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica was flagged off from Goa.
- It should be noted that the journey also marked the four decades of the nation's scientific endeavour in the White Continent at the South Pole.
- Chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasiliy Golovnin with 43 members on board will be making this journey, as per the Earth Sciences Ministry,.
- It will reach Antarctica in 30 days and will leave behind a team of 40 members and will return to India in April 2021.
- The vessel will also bring back the winter team gone there last winter.

- This time the world is facing the serious challenge posed by the COVID-19 therefore the logistics and the scientific activities of India's 40th Antarctic Expedition will be limited.
- **Aim or Focus of the present Expedition:-**
- Present 40th Scientific Expedition to the Antarctica has been planned to provide support to the ongoing scientific projects on geology, climate change, electric and magnetic flux measurements, ocean observations, environmental monitoring.
- This mission will also facilitate the return journey of winter crew by resupplying the of fuel and food.
- **Precautions taken in the view of COVID-19:**
- To Keep Antarctica free of COVID-19 the Ministry of Earth Sciences under the Central Government, has taken necessary measures.
- In this regard the extra precautions of mandatory 14 days of quarantine (pre-and post-expedition), sanitizing the cargo, and RT-PCR testing before boarding on the vessel were also conducted
- The 40th expedition will also strictly follow all the required protocols for the deployment of materials and men as per COMNAP.
- COMNAP, in full is known as Council of Managers of National Antarctic Program.

Links:-

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1686148>

Advanced Bio-digester Mk-II Technology

Question: Which of the following organisation has recently signed a MoU with Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation (MAHA–METRO) for the implementation of its advanced bio-digester Mk-II technology?

- a) CSIR b) IISc
c) DRDO d) None of the above



Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- On 5 January 2021, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) signed a MoU for the installation of eco-friendly bio-digester units.
- The MoU in this regard has been signed with Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation (MAHA–METRO).

- DRDO will install its eco-friendly bio-digester units across the facilities operated by Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation (MAHA–METRO).
- Experts see this project will prove to be helpful in conserving water and protecting the environment.
- DRDO will provide technical support for the implementation of its advanced bio-digester Mk-II technology.
- This technology has been developed by the DRDO for the treatment of human waste (night soil) and also useful for the metro rail network.
- **Bio-digester:**
- Bio-digester is an indigenous, green, cost-effective and non-sewered sanitation technology.
- It has already been installed in 2.40 lakh passenger coaches of Indian Railways.
- It has been revamped now, and further improved for MAHA-METRO, to save the water and space.

Links:-

<https://government.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/drdo-to-deploy-advanced-bio-digester-mk-ii-technology-across-maha-metro-rail-network-facilities/>

Two new species *Hedychium mechukanum*, *Amomum arunachalense* discovered

Question: Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute for Plant Sciences is an institution of Government of-

- a) Nagaland b) Kerala
c) Arunachal Pradesh d) Maharashtra

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-



- Scientists have recently found two new species *Hedychium mechukanum*, *Amomum arunachalense* from Arunachal Pradesh.
- The species *Hedychium mechukanum* belonging to *Hedychium* genus and *Amomum arunachalense* of *Amomum* genus has large white flowers with a pleasant fragrance.
- The team comprising of M. Sabu and V.S. Hareesh have come across the new species *Hedychium mechukanum*, during a floristic expedition in the eastern Himalayas.

- This team came from the Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute of Plant Sciences, Kozhikode.
- The team found the species *Hedychium mechukanum* from a location at Quing and Tato near the Mechuka valley in Shi-Yomi district, Arunachal Pradesh, at an altitude of 1,400 m.
- It should be known that *Hedychium mechukanum* is a close relative of *Hedychium coronarium*, also known as white ginger lily.
- *Hedychium coronarium* or white ginger lily also belongs to a mythological story of the Mahabharatha epic, when Bhima, the second among the five pandava brothers, going in search of the Kalyanasaugandhika.
- Bhima was searching actually the *Hedychium coronarium* a flower with a heavenly fragrance, to satisfy Panchali's desire.
- **Special fragrance:**
- The species has large white flowers with a pleasant fragrance. It was found to be largely similar to other plants of the *Hedychium* genus found in northeast India and China, but different in several attributes.
- The discovery was published in *Gardens Bulletin*, Singapore. The paper notes that the plant grows in open areas of evergreen forests.
- Flowering is from mid-June to September and fruiting from September to November. The species was named after the small town Mechuka bordering China.
- The area from where the specimens were collected was under threat from road-widening.
- The scientists observed that *Hedychium mechukanum* could be widespread in the region.
- They have assessed the species as Data Deficient under the IUCN guidelines.
- The second new species named *Amomum arunachalense* was collected from Nirjuli in Papum Pare district, Arunachal Pradesh.
- The scientists have reported the discovery in the December 8 issue of *Annals Botanici Fennici*, a research journal published from Helsinki.
- As many as 11 species of the *Amomum* genus are distributed in the northeastern and southern regions of India and the Andaman and Nicobar islands.
- **Difference in Features:-**

- The new species is distinguished from others in the genus mainly by a white rhizome with a pale brown centre.
- The authors collected 20 specimens of the plant from moist, sloping locations along streams.
- They have noted that deforestation and extraction of shoots for medicinal purposes are major threats to the species.

Links:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/two-new-species-of-ginger-found-from-northeast/article33443098.ece>

Short Notes

Personalities

Managing Director and CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank

Question: Who has been appointed the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Dhanlaxmi Bank?

- (a) JK Shivan (b) Rajiv Kumar
(c) Rajnish Kumar (d) Chandrajit Banerjee

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- JK Shivan has been appointed the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Dhanlaxmi Bank.
- The appointment came after the Bank Board had moved a resolution on December 26, as asked by RBI, for shareholders approval via electronic voting, for the appointment of next managing director and CEO the bank.
- He replaced Sunil Gurbaxaniwas.
- The bank is currently managed by a committee of directors (COD) and RBI has given the bank four months to appoint a new head.



Links:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/banking-finance/dhanlaxmi-bank-appoints-jk-shivan-as-md-ceo/2179502/>

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Chandi Prasad Mohanty

Question: Who has been newly appointed the Vice Chief of Army Staff?

- (a) Chandi Prasad Mohanty (b) Ved Prakash Malik
(c) Deepak Kapoor (d) Avtar Singh Lamba



Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Lieutenant General Chandi Prasad Mohanty has been appointed the next vice-chief of Army Staff.
- He will take the charge on February 1, 2021.
- He will succeed Lt General Satinder Kumar Saini.
- He is presently giving his services as the Southern Army Commander.

Links:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/2021/jan/22/new-army-vice-chief-t-gen-chandi-prasad-mohanty-takes-a-walk-down-native-village-in-odisha-2253524.html>

Narendra Chanchal

Question: Narendra Chanchal who died on 22 January 2021 was associated with which profession?

- (a) Singer (b) Doctor (c) Author (d) Sitar player



Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 22 January 2021, veteran bhajan singer Narendra Chanchal passed away at age of 80 in Delhi.
- Some of his ever popular bhajans include Chalo Bulawa Aaya Hai, Tune Mujhe Bulaya Sherawaliye, Ambe Tu Hai Jagadambe Kali, Hanuman Chalisa, Sankat Mochan Naam Tiharo among others.

- Apart from bhajans, Chanchal had also given voice in several Hindi films as well.
- He has won Filmfare Best Male Playback Award for a Bollywood song Beshak Mandir Masjid Todo of the 1973 film Bobby.

Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/entertainment/music>

Dr V Shanta

Question: V Shanta who passed away on January 19, 2021 was associated with which profession?

(a) Oncologist (b) Author (c) Musician (d) Film Director

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Dr. V. Shanta, the world renowned oncologist passed away on January 19, 2021 due to brief illness in Chennai.
- Dr. Shanta was the Chairperson of Adyar Cancer Centre.
- She joined the hospital in 1955 as a trainee and went on to become the Head of the Institution which expanded far and wide to deal with the deadly disease in a more precise manner.
- Recognising Dr Shata contribution to the profession she has been conferred the Ramon Magsaysay Award, Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan awards.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/editorials/v-shanta-death-doctors-cancer-institute-adyar-tamil-nadu-7155020/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V._Shanta

Director General of Central Industrial Security Force

Question: Who took over as the new Director General of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) on 8 January 2021?

(a) O.P. Singh (b) Subodh Kumar Jaiswal
(c) Rajesh Ranjan (d) Deepak Chauhan

Answer – (b)

Related facts:



- On January 8, 2021, senior IPS officer Subodh Kumar Jaiswal took over as the new Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).
- Prior to this he was the DGP (Director General of Police) of Maharashtra.
- He succeeded Rajesh Ranjan at this post.

Links:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2021/jan/08/outgoing-maharashtra-dgp-subodh-k-jaiswal-takes-over-as-new-cisf-chief-2247400.html>

Abhishek Yadav appointed as AIFF's first Deputy General Secretary

Question: Recently, who has been appointed as the first deputy general secretary of All India Football Federation?

- (a) Abhishek Yadav (b) Shabbir Ali
(c) Subrata Pal (d) Renedy Singh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Former India striker Abhishek Yadav has been appointed as the first deputy general secretary of All India Football Federation (AIFF) after the sports body decided to create a new post in its hierarchy.
- The 40-year-old former international, who has played with the likes of Bhaichung Bhutia, Sunil Chhetri, Mahesh Gawli and Climax Lawrence, has been serving as national team's director since January 2018.
- Yadav was also the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of India's U-17 World Cup team.



Links: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/sports/football/top-stories/former-india-striker-abhishek-yadav-appointed-as-aiffs-first-deputy-general-secretary/articleshow/80115872.cms>

Central African Republic president Touadera wins reelection

Question: On 4th January 2021, who has been re-elected as the president of the Central African Republic?



- (a) Francois Bozize (b) Anicet-Georges Dologuele
(c) Faustin-Archange Touadera (d) Martin Ziguele

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Faustin-Archange Touadera was re-elected as the president of the Central African Republic with more than 53% votes on 27th December 2020.
- Results were announced by the electoral commission on 4th January 2021.
- The 63-year-old president has been in power since 2016, but has struggled to seize control of vast parts of the nation from armed militias.
- The Central African Republic, a producer of gold and diamonds, has a population of 4.7 million.

Links:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-centralafrica-election/central-african-republic-president-touadera-wins-re-election-idUSKBN29927S>

<https://www.africanews.com/2021/01/04/car-president-touadera-reelected-electoral-commission//>

Hima Kohli appointed as 1st Woman Chief Justice of Telangana High Court

Question: Recently, who has become the first woman Chief Justice of Telangana High Court?

- (a) Justice R. Banumathi (b) Justice Hima Kohli
(c) Justice Indu Malhotra (d) Justice Ranjana Desai

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Justice Hima Kohli has become the first woman Chief Justice of Telangana High Court on 7th January 2021.
- She is the first woman to be sworn in as Chief Justice of Telangana High Court.
- She replaces CJ Raghendra Singh Chauhan.
- She was serving as the Executive Chairman of Delhi State Legal Services Authority and also as a Member of National Law University Governing Council.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.nic.in/News?title=Justice-Hima-Kohli-to-be-sworn-in-as-Chief-Justice-of-Telangana-HC&id=407433>

Indian-American Raj Iyer becomes U.S. Army's first CIO

Question: Which Indian-American has taken over as the first Chief Information Officer of the US Army, after the Pentagon created the position in July 2020?

- (a) Nimi McConigley (b) Ami Bera
(c) Joy Cherian (d) Dr Raj Iyer



Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Indian-American Dr Raj Iyer has taken over as the first Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the US Army, after the Pentagon created the position in July 2020.
- He is one of the highest-ranking Indian-American civilians in the US Department of Defence.
- Iyer holds a Ph. D. in Electrical Engineering.
- He had been serving as the principal advisor to the Secretary of the Army and directs representation of the secretary in matters relating to information management/information technology (IT).
- The position of CIO is equivalent to a three-star General.
- Originally, Iyer is native of Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/indian-american-raj-iyer-becomes-us-army-s-first-chief-information-officer-121010700510_1.html

Awards & Honors

51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI)

Question: On 24th of January 2021, who was the recipient of the 'Indian Personality of the Year' Award at International Film Festival of India?

- (a) Ravi Kishan (b) Prosenjit Chatterjee
(c) Biswajit Chatterjee (d) Zeenat Aman

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

When: 16th -24th January, 2021

Where: Goa (India)



Focus Country: Bangladesh

Founded: 1952

Opening Movie: 'Another Round' by Thomas Vinterberg (Country: Denmark)

Closing Movie: 'Wife of a Spy' by Kiyoshi Kurosawa (Country: Japan)

Golden Peacock Award: Into the Darkness (Director: Anders Refn, Country: Denmark)

Silver Peacock Award for Best Director: Chen-Nien Ko (Film: The Silent Forest, Country: Taiwan)

Silver Peacock Award for Best Actor – Male: Tzu-Chuan Liu (Film: The Silent Forest)

Silver Peacock Award for Best Actor – Female: Zofia Stafiej (Polish Film: I Never Cry)

Special Jury Award – Kamin Kalev (Film: February, Country: Bulgaria)

Special Mention Award – Kripal Kalita of India (Film: Bridge, Assamese Film)

Best Debut Director Award: Cássio Pereira dos Santos (Film: Valentina, Country: Brazil)

ICFT UNESCO Gandhi Award –200 Meters (Director: Ameen Nayfeh)

Indian Personality of the Year Award – Biswajit Chatterjee

Lifetime Achievement Award: Vittorio Storaro (Italy)

Links:

<https://iffigoa.org/>

National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA), 2020

Question: On 11th January 2021, which industry in thermal power plant category bags first prize in 'National Energy Conservation Awards 2020'?

- (a) JSW Energy Limited (b) Vedanta Limited
(c) Oil Industry (d) GMR Warora Energy Ltd

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

Organized by: Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), Ministry of Power.

Given in : January, 2021.

Awards given for: significant improvements in energy conservation by adopting various measures to promote energy efficiency.

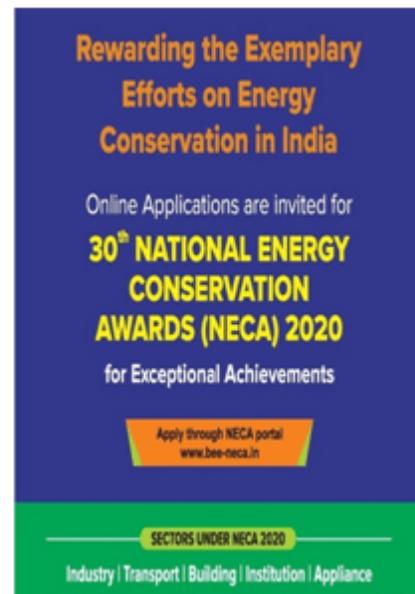
Awardees:

1.1. INDUSTRY (Thermal Power Plant) Category:

First Prize (>100 MW (Coal & Gas)): GMR Warora Energy Ltd – 2 x 300 MW, Chandrapur (Maharashtra)

Second Prize (>100 MW (Coal & Gas)): JSW Energy (Barmer) Limited, Barmer (Rajasthan)

Certificate of Merit : IL & FS Tamil Nadu Power Company Limited, Chennai, (Tamil Nadu), Nabha Power Limited, Rajpura (Punjab), Rihand Super Thermal Power



Station, Sonebhadra (Uttar Pradesh), Budge Budge Thermal Power Station, South 24 Parganas (West Bengal).

First Prize (<100 MW (Coal & Gas)): UltraTech Cement Ltd. – Awarpur Cement Works, Chandrapur (Maharashtra)

1.2. INDUSTRY (Dairy) Category:

First Prize: Heritage Foods Limited, Chittoor (Andhra Pradesh).

Second Prize: Heritage Foods Limited, Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).

Certificate of Merit: Heritage Foods Limited, Bengaluru (Karnataka).

1.3. INDUSTRY (Aluminium) Category:

First Prize(Large) : Vedanta Limited Smelter Plant-1, Jharsuguda (Odisha).

First Prize(Small) : Vedanta Limited (Lanjigarh), Kalahandi (Odisha).

1.4. INDUSTRY (Petroleum Refinery) Category:

First Prize : IOCL-Paradip Refinery, Jagatsinghpur (Odisha).

Certificate of Merit: Bharat Petroleum Corporation – Kochi Refinery, Ernakulam, Koshi (Kerala).

1.5. INDUSTRY (Automobiles) Category:

First Prize: Tata Motors Limited, Dist. Jamshedpur (Jharkhand).

Second Prize: Tata Motors Limited, CVBU, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh).

Certificate of Merit: Tata Motors Ltd, Pantnagar Plant, Udham Singh Nagar (Uttarakhand), Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt Ltd, Kolar (Karnataka).

1.6. INDUSTRY (Fertilizer, Urea based fertilizer) Category:

First Prize: Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited, Phulpur Unit-I, Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh).

Second Prize: Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited, Aonla Unit-I, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh).

Certificate of Merit: Kribhco Fertilizers Limited, Shahjahanpur (Uttar Pradesh), Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited, Aonla Unit-II, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh).

INDUSTRY (Fertilizer, Complex fertilizer) Category:

First Prize: Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Ltd., Paradeep Unit, Jagatsinghpur (Odisha).

1.7. INDUSTRY (Secondary Steel) Category:

First Prize: Tata Steel Long Products Limited, Saraikela-Kharsawan Jamshedpur, (Jharkhand)

Certificate of Merit: Kirloskar Ferrous Industries Ltd, Koppal (Karnataka)

1.8. INDUSTRY (Railway Workshops) Category:

First Prize: Diesel Loco Shed, South Central Railway, Vijayawada Division, Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh).

Second Prize: Kanchrapara Workshop, Eastern Railway Workshop, North 24 Parganas (West Bengal).

Certificate of Merit: Mechanical Workshop, North Eastern Railway, Izzatnagar, Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh), Central Railway Workshop, Mysore (Karnataka), Mechanical Workshop, Dibrugarh North-East Frontier Railway, Dibrugarh (Assam), Central Workshop, Ponmalai, Southern Railways, Tiruchchirappalli (Tamil Nadu).

2. Transport (Zonal Railways) Category:

First Prize: Western Railway, Churchgate, Mumbai (Maharashtra).

Second Prize: Eastern Railway, Kolkata (West Bengal).

Certificate of Merit: North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh), South Central Railway, Secunderabad (Telangana).

Transport (State Road Transport Undertaking) Category:

Certificate of Merit: Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Ltd., Pune (Maharashtra).

3. Institution (Municipality) Category:

First Prize: Chandigarh Municipality, Chandigarh.

Certificate of Merit: North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC), Delhi.

Institution (State Designated Agencies -SDA) Category:

First Prize: Energy Management Centre – Kerala

Second Prize: New and Renewable Energy Department, Haryana (HAREDA), Telangana State Renewable Energy Development Corporation Limited

Certificate of Merit: Maharashtra Energy Development Agency (MEDA), Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDA)

4. Building (Govt Offices) Category:

First Prize: DRM Office, Western Railway, Bhavnagar Para, Bhavnagar (Gujarat)

Second Prize: Divisional Railway Manager Office Building, Rajkot, (Gujarat)

Certificate of Merit: Lekha Bhavan (Financial Advisor and Chief Accounts Officer), Secunderabad (Telangana), Electrical Department DRM Office North Eastern Railways Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

Building (Corporate Offices) Category:

First Prize: UN House, Dwarka, New Delhi.

Second Prize: Candor Gurgaon One Realty Projects Pvt Ltd, Gurgaon (Haryana).

Certificate of Merit: Allianz Technology SE along with Allianz Services Pvt Ltd, Trivandrum (Kerala), WNS Global Services (P) Ltd., Weikfield ITCITI INFOPARK, Pune (Maharashtra)

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1687687>

Commission & Committee

Panel to commemorate 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Question: who will be the chairman of committee formed to commemorate 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose?

- a) Amit Shah b) PM Narendra Modi
c) Prahlad Singh Patel d) None of the above

Answer: b)

Related Facts

- A high-level committee has been formed for commemoration of the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- Committee will be headed by PM Narendra Modi.
- The committee will decide on the activities for a year-long commemoration, beginning on January 23, 2021.
- Committee members consist of distinguished citizens, historians, authors, experts, family members of Subhas Chandra Bose, as well as eminent persons associated with the Azad Hind Fauj (INA).
- Committee will provide guidance for the commemoration activities in Delhi, Kolkata and other places associated with Netaji and the Azad Hind Fauj, both in India as well as overseas.



Reference: <https://theprint.in/india/modi-to-head-panel-to-commemorate-125th-birth-anniversary-of-netaji-subhas-chandra-bose/582567/>

Planning & Project

STARS Project

Question: On January 28, 2021 GOI and World Bank has signed Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program (STARS) project. Which sector scheme is this?

- a) Central sector scheme b) State government funded scheme
c) PPP sector scheme d) None of the above

Answer: a
Context

- The Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) under the Ministry of Education, and the World Bank have signed the Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program (STARS) project on January 28, 2021.

Facts

- STARS project will be implemented as a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme under Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education (MOE).
- STARS project has total project cost of Rs 5718 crore with the financial support of World Bank amounting to US \$ 500 million (approximately Rs. 3700 crore).
- The project covers 6 States namely Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.
- It envisages improving overall monitoring and measurement activities in Indian School Education System.

Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1664361>

L&T Bags contract for Bullet Train Project

Question: which company has won key project worth up to approx Rs 2500 crore for Mumbai- Ahmedabad Bullet train project?

- a) Triveni Construction b) L&T Limited
c) Reliance Infra d) none of the above

Answer: b)
Context

- Infrastructure firm Larsen & Toubro (L&T) announced that it has received an up to Rs 2,500 crore contracts for the upcoming Mumbai- Ahmedabad bullet train project.



Facts

- L&T has been given the contract for the procurement and fabrication of 28 steel bridges for Crossing Over Rivers, roads, railway lines, highways and other structures for the Mumbai Ahmedabad high-speed rail corridor.
- Mumbai- Ahmadabad high speed rail corridor project is being implemented by National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), based on Japanese E5 Shinkansen technology.

About NHRCL

- National High Speed Rail Corporation of Limited (NHRCL) has been formed under the Ministry of Railways, Government of India, for the development and implementation of the high speed rail projects in India.
- It was incorporated in 2016.
- It is a 'Special Purpose Vehicle' in the joint sector with equity participation of the Ministry of Railways, Government of India and two State Governments – the Government of Gujarat and the Government of Maharashtra.

Mumbai – Ahemdabad Bullet train Project

- The Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train Project is a 508 km long corridor. It will operate at speed of 320 km/hour. The train corridor will pass through Gujarat, Maharashtra and Dadra & Nagar Haveli.
- The bullet train project is also funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Reference: <http://www.financialexpress.com/infrastructure/railways/mumbai-ahmedabad-bullet-train-it-bags-up-to-rs-2500-crore-contract-for-indias-1st-high-speed-rail-corridor/2181505/>

Abhyudaya

Question: Which state government has announced free coaching facility 'Abhyudaya' for students of their state for preparation of various competitive examinations?

- a) Madhya Pradesh b) Uttar Pradesh
c) Bihar d) Maharashtra

Answer: b

Related Facts

- On 23rd January UP CM Yogi Adityanath has announced launch of an ambitious, state-wide, free coaching facility programme from next month to help students prepare for various competitive examinations.
- Named 'Abhyudaya', the free coaching facility will start from upcoming Basant Panchmi, the day of worship of goddess Saraswati.



- It will start in 18 divisional headquarters of the state In the first phase, where coaching will be imparted physically and virtually.
- The classes will be held in both online and offline mode and guidance will be given for various examinations be it the NEET, IITJEE, NDA, CDS or UPSC examinations.

Reference: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/education/competitive-exams/up-will-provide-free-coaching-for-many-competitive-exams-from-basant-panchmi-cm-101611498843408.html>

GRSE to build Ocean-going Vessel for Guyana

Question: What is the value of contract, the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) has signed to build an ocean-going vessel for the Guyana a South American country?

- a) USD 10.7 million b) USD 12.7 million
c) USD 2.7 million d) USD 9.7 million

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- The Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) has signed USD 12.7 million contract to build an ocean-going vessel.
- GRSE has signed this contract with the government of Guyana in the Caribbean region in South America.
- This will be a 1,700 tonne vessel which will be constructed by GRSE to be used on the coastal and riverine areas of Guyana.
- It will be equipped with two caterpillar marine diesel engines coupled with twin disc reduction gear boxes to achieve a speed of 15 knots.
- GRSE has the capability to construct 20 ships concurrently, spread across its three production locations in Kolkata, West Bengal.



Links:-

<https://www.projectstoday.com/News/GRSE-inks-USD-127-million-contract-with-government-of-Guyana>

PM Modi announces ‘Startup India Seed Fund’

Question: PM Modi on 16th January during the ‘Prarambh: Startup India International Summit’ announced a new seed fund for startups in India. What is the total corpus of the fund?

- a) 100 crore b) 1500 crore c) 1000 crore d) none of the above

Answer: c)
Facts



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 16, 2021 announced a new ‘Startup India Seed Fund’ worth Rs 1,000 crore for startups to provide them with initial capital to start and grow their business.
- India is home to the world’s third largest startup ecosystem which has helped several budding entrepreneurs to come up with innovative technologies and become big corporations.
- About 40 per cent of budding entrepreneurs are coming from tier-II and -III cities of India .
- 11 Indian startups entered the unicorn club in 2020.
- There are over 41000 startups in India.

Reference: <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/startup/pm-modi-announces-rs-1000-crore-startup-india-seed-fund-6355761.html>

India’s first Labour Movement museum

Question: In which city of India , India’s first Labour Movement museum is coming up?

- a) Prayagraj, UP b) Delhi
c) Alappuzha, Kerala d) None of the above



Answer: C)
Context

- The country’s first Labour Movement Museum, showcasing the history of world labour movement, would be launched in Alappuzha, Kerala.

Facts

- First Labour Movement Museum will be launched in Kerala’s houseboat tourism destination, Alappuzha.

- It will showcase the history of world labour movement and also feature a huge repository of documents and exhibits that shaped the labour movements across the continents and impacted Alappuzha.
- Alappuzha is considered as cradle of Labour movement in the country.
- The museum would be launched as part of the Kerala's LDF government's second 100-day programme.

Reference: https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-s-first-labour-movement-museum-to-open-in-kerala-s-alappuzha-121011700517_1.html

1st indigenously developed Driverless Metro car

Question: on 15th January 2021, which organization has unveiled 1st indigenously developed Driverless Metro car?

- a) ICF, Chennai b) BEML Limited, Bengaluru
c) Alstom Transport d) Bombardier Transportation



Answer: b
Context

- BEML, a defence public sector equipment manufacturer under the Ministry of Defence (MoD), on Friday unveiled 'Driverless Metro Car' for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA).

Facts

- Indigenously designed & developed Driverless Metro trains are being manufactured at BEML's Bangalore Complex.
- The cars will operate on 25 kV AC traction power and equipped with CCTV surveillance and with the provision to carry passenger bi-cycles in the coaches.
- The cars are made up of stainless-steel body with a capacity of carrying 2,280 passengers in six cars Metro train-set.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled 'Driverless Metro Car' at a function held at BEML's Bangalore Complex. Singh also virtually launched the Aerospace Assembly Hangar, situated within BEML's Bangalore Complex, and unveiled the first indigenously manufactured Tatra Cabin by BEML

Reference: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/beml-unveils-driverless-metro-car-for-mmrda/article33581758.ece>

Operationalisation of Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) Scheme

Question : On which date RBI announced the guidelines for Payments Infrastructure Development Fund ?

- (a) January 05, 2021 (b) January 02, 2021
(c) December 26, 2020 (d) December 22, 2021

Answer (a)

Related facts



- On January 05, 2021 RBI announced the guidelines for PIDF(Payments Infrastructure Development Fund).
- These Guidelines are issued under Section 10 (2) read with Section 18 of Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 (Act 51 of 2007).

PIDF

- PIDF is intended to subsidise deployment of payment acceptance infrastructure in Tier-3 to Tier-6 centres with special focus on North-Eastern States of the country. It envisages creating 30 lakh new touch points every year for digital payments.

Some important guidelines are as follows —

- An Advisory Council (AC), under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Governor, RBI, has been constituted for managing the PIDF.
- PIDF will be operational for a period of three years from January 01, 2021 and may be extended for two more years depending upon the progress.
- PIDF presently has a corpus of ₹ 345 crore (₹ 250 crore contributed by RBI and ₹ 95 crore by the major authorised card networks in the country).

Link:

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=12009&Mode=0#ANI>

PM inaugurates Rewari – Madar section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor

Question: On 7th January 2021, PM Modi inaugurated which section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor virtually?

- a) Rewari – Madar section b) Rewari – Iqbalgarh section
c) New Bhaupur- New Khurja section d) None of the above

Answer: a)

Context

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has dedicated to the nation the 306 km long Rewari – Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) on 7th January through video conference.



Facts

- Rewari – Madar section is in between Haryana (rewari) and Rajasthan (Madar village near Udaipur).
- PM Modi also flagged off the world's first Double Stack Long Haul Container Train that is 1.5 kilometre long, between New Ateli and New Kishangarh which has an electric traction track.
- Due to Double Stack Container Trains, the capacity of freight transportation will be increased.
- Freight trains on this track will also run at higher speed from current 75km/hr to 100km/hr now.
- This will reduce delivery times.
- It will provide direct benefit to various industrial areas such as Bhiwadi, Kishangarh, Rewari, Dharuhera, Ajmer, Manesar, and Pushkar in Haryana and Rajasthan.
- With the inauguration of the New Rewari-New Madar section, seamless connectivity between the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor and Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor will be achieved.
- Western dedicated freight corridor will connect Delhi (dadri in Noida)to Mumbai(JNTP).

Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1686746>

PM inaugurates Kochi-Mangaluru LNG pipeline

Question: On 5th January 2021, PM Modi has inaugurated Kochi-Mangaluru LNG pipeline project through video conferencing. This project is part of which of the following government policy?

- a) One Nation, One grid b) National Gas Grid
c) One Nation, One Gas Grid d) Ujjwala Scheme

Answer: c)
Context



- PM Modi has Inaugurated the 450-km Kochi-Koottanad-Mangaluru LNG (liquefied natural gas) pipeline through video conferencing on 5th January .

Facts

- Kochi-Koottanad-Mangaluru LNG pipeline will connect state of Kerala (kochi) to state of Karnataka (Mangaluru) and serve the energy needs of these two states.
- This allow the states to breathe easy by giving households, city transporters and industries easier and uninterrupted access to clean and cheaper fuel.
- This project is part of government's policy of developing One Nation,One Gas Grid.

One Nation, One Gas Grid

- This aims to develop a national gas grid for the distribution of gas (Lpg,png etc) on pan India basis.
- National Gas Grid is part will remove regional imbalance within the country with regard to access to natural gas and provide clean and green fuel throughout the country.
- A national gas grid will not just connect gas sources to major demand centre but also will ensure availability of gas to consumers.
- Government is pushing towards gas economy which will be more efficient as well as less polluting.
- Government aims to increase the share of Natural Gas in energy matrix of country from current 6% to 15% by 2030.

Reference: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/modi-inaugurates-rs-3000-crore-gas-pipeline-to-help-kerala-karnataka-breathe-easy/articleshow/80119310.cms>

First remote monitoring system for oil refineries' turbines

Question: Project of India's First remote monitoring system for oil refineries' turbines is located in which city?

- a) Mumbai b) Hyderabad
- c) Ahmedabad d) Mathura



Answer: (b)

Related Facts:

- On 29 December 2020; Indian Oil Corp (IOC) has launched the country's first remote monitoring system for oil refineries' turbines.
- The project, located in Hyderabad, was inaugurated by oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan.
- The Remote Monitoring & Operation Centre for Tracking of IndianOil's Refinery Gas Turbines was implemented by BHEL-GE Gas Turbine Services (BGGTS).
- It should be known that BHEL-GE Gas Turbine Services (BGGTS) is a joint venture of BHEL and General Electric.
- On this occasion IOC Chairman S M Vaidya said that this is the first time ever, such a multi-unit monitoring system in the country is being implemented by an Oil PSU in India.
- He informed that originally the remote monitoring system was envisaged to be operated out of GE's Atlanta Analytical Centre in the United States.
- He explained that owing to Data Residency Clause and National Cyber Security Guidelines, it would now be operated from Hyderabad.
- This kind of technology is called Proactive Predictive Analytics-based Automated Anomaly Detection.
- Introduction of this technology by IOC will allow Gas Turbine Operational Data flowing in digitally from 27 turbines of the eight IndianOil refineries to be analysed round-the-clock in Hyderabad.

This analysis will help in detection and diagnosis of emerging issues relating to gas turbines before they become critical and triggers corrective actions.

- This will help avoid refinery process unit shutdowns.

Links:-

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/india-launches-first-remote-monitoring-system-for-oil-refineries/80020208>

Thoubal Multipurpose Project

Question: Thoubal Multipurpose Project has been inaugurated in which Indian state?

- a) Meghalaya b) Manipur
- c) Assam d) Tripura



Answer: b)

Context

- Home Minister Amit Shah has inaugurated the e-office and Thoubal Multipurpose Project (Thoubal Dam) in Imphal (Manipur) through virtual mode.

Facts

- The Thoubal Multipurpose Project, located in the Mapithel valley in the Manipur's hill districts of Urkhul and Senapati districts.
- The stated objective of the project was to utilise the water of the Thoubal river for irrigation, drinking water and to generate electricity.
- This project was approved by the Planning Commission in 1980. Construction started in 1989.

Shri Amit Shah said, earlier projects were abandoned after performing ground-breaking ceremonies and work is now being done under the leadership of Modi ji. He also laid the foundation stone of projects, including the Churachandpur Medical College, IT-SEZ at Mantripukhri, Manipur Bhawan in New Delhi and the Integrated Command and Control Center at Imphal.

Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1684003>

Treaty & Agreements

Partnership between IREDA and NHPC

Question : IREDA has recently(January 2020) signed MoU to support NHPC in Green Energy projects for _ years. What is the duration of this partnership ?

- (a) Five years (b) Four years
- (c) Three years (d) Two years

Answer (a)

Related facts



- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited, IREDA under administrative control of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy today signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NHPC Limited, the PSU under Ministry of Power for providing its technical expertise in developing renewable energy projects.

- Under the MoU, IREDA will undertake Techno-Financial due diligence of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and conservation projects for NHPC.
- IREDA will assist NHPC in developing an action plan to create and acquire Renewable Energy projects for the next five years.

Link:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=407556>

Tri party partnership to set up Fintech Innovation Centre

Question : Recently(7 January,2021) a tri party agreement(MoU) has been signed between PNB,IIT Kanpur and FIRST to set up a Fintech Innovation Centre.What is FIRST?

- Foundation for Innovation & Research in Science & Technology
- Forum for Innovation & Research in Science & Technology
- Federation of Innovation & Research in Science & Technology
- None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Recently(7 January,2021) a tri party agreement(MoU) has been signed between PNB,IIT Kanpur and FIRST to set up a Fintech Innovation Centre.

FIRST

- FIRST(Foundation For Innovation & Research In Science & Technology) was incorporated on 27 February, 2018 and is located in Kanpur(I.I.T KANPUR), Uttar Pradesh.
It is classified as a not for profit company.

Fintech Innovation Centre(FIC)

- FIC will act as a vehicle to research and develop technological solutions to address challenges and explore opportunities in the BFSI space.
- PNB intends to create new products or solutions with technological innovations by creating a FIC involving IITK's experienced faculty members with the help of FIRST.
- The FIC will be supported by a holistic ecosystem of financial institutions, academia, VC(Venture Capital) funds, technology companies and key government organisations.
- Planned focus areas include Fintech, Digital Lending, Payments, Cyber Security, etc.

Link:

<https://bfsi.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/fintech/pnb-joins-hands-with-iit-kanpur-to-set-up-fintech-innovation-centre/80164781>

PMJAY SEHAT : Partnership between Bajaj Allianz General and J&K government

Question : Bajaj Allianz General Insurance has recently (December 2020) partnered with J&K government for PMJAY SEHAT. How much families will be covered under the SEHAT scheme?

- (a) 0.8 million (b) 1.5 million
(c) 0.4 million (d) None of the above

Answer- d

Related facts

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had on December 26 launched the PMJAY (Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana) SEHAT scheme for all J&K residents.
- A total of 2.1 million families will be covered under the SEHAT scheme.
- For this purpose Bajaj Allianz General Insurance has recently partnered with J&K government.
- SEHAT stands for social, endeavour for health, and telemedicine.
- The scheme will provide universal health insurance cover with a sum insured of Rs 5 lakh and the health insurance will be provided on family floater basis.
- This scheme will provide free of cost insurance to residents and the premium is borne by the government.
- Under the PMJAY SEHAT scheme, there will be SEHAT health cards given to all the beneficiaries in J&K. To avail free treatment during hospitalisation, the beneficiary will have to show this card in the hospital.



Link:

<https://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/money+control+english-epaper-mcontent/bajaj+allianz+general+partners+with+j+k+government+for+pmjay+sehat-newsid-n240037882>

ADB – NACL loan agreement

Question : Northern Arc Capital Limited (NACL) has recently(December 2020) signed a loan agreement with ADB(Asian Development Bank) to support the livelihoods of microfinance borrowers and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in India. How much the loan amount under this agreement ?

- (a) 40 million dollars (b) 30 million dollars
(c) 20 million dollars (d) 15 million dollars

Answer (a)
Related facts

- NACL(Northern Arc Capital Limited) is a debt platform for financial inclusion focused institutions.
- It has recently(December 2020) signed a loan agreement with ADB(Asian Development Bank) to support the livelihoods of microfinance borrowers and micro,small and medium-sized enterprises(MSMEs) in India.
- The loan amount under this agreement is 40 million dollars.

Disbursement

- The loan is disbursed to NACL as part of ADB's ongoing COVID-19 response.
- NACL will on-lend the loan proceeds and provide guarantees to financial institutions and individual borrowers.
- NACL will also on-lend to affordable housing finance companies.

Link:

<https://www.adb.org/news/adb-northern-arc-sign-loan-support-microfinance-borrowers-and-msmes-india>

Conference

Bharat Parv 2021

Question: which ministry organizes Bharat Parv ?

- a) Ministry of Tourism b) Ministry of Culture
c) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
d) None of the above

Answer: a)

Context

- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated the Bharat Parv-2021 in the presence of Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel on 26th January 2021.

Facts

- Bharat Parv is a festival to celebrate spirit of India.



- It has been organised by Ministry of Tourism since 2016 in front of Red Fort , New Delhi.
- This year in 2021 festival is being organised on a virtual platform www.bharatparv2021.com from 26th January till 31st of January.
- It is being organised with the overall theme focusing on the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat.
- It focuses on generating patriotic fervor and to showcase rich and varied cultural diversity of country.

Reference: <http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=408645>

MASCRADE 2021 organised

Question: On 21 JAN 2021, 7th edition of MASCRADE was inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family welfare. Which of the following is organizing body of the event?

- a) FICCI b) ASSOCHAM
- c) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- d) None of the above



Answer: a

Context

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family welfare on 21st January , inaugurated the 7th Edition of “MASCRADE 2021”- Movement against Smuggled & Counterfeit Trade organised by FICCI Cascade.

Facts

- MASCRADE is an event to deliberate and discuss actionable, innovative policy solutions that can reverse the rising tide of counterfeit, smuggled and spurious products.
- Smuggling and counterfeit trade hold back progress, impact health of the economy and create safety hazards for consumers.
- FICCI MASCRADE is also held for recognizing the work of the law enforcement agencies and felicitating the best performing officers each year for their outstanding achievement in the prevention of counterfeiting and smuggling, and enforcement of anti-smuggling and anti-counterfeiting laws.

Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1690882>

Petroleum Ministry launches ‘SAKSHAM’ campaign

Question: on 16 January 2021, a month long 'SAKSHAM' campaign has been launched by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. Which is the organizing agency of this campaign?

- a) CSIR-NEERI b) TERI
- c) PCRA d) None of the above

Answer: c)

Context

- Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on 16th January launched a month long 'SAKSHAM' campaign.

Facts

- Campaign has been launched with view to create awareness among fossil fuel consumers showcasing them the adverse health and environmental impacts of increasing carbon footprints.
- Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) is organizing agency of the campaign.
- Sanarakshan Kshamata Mahotsva 2021 or SAKSHAM 2021 is a campaign which aims to spread the message of fuel conservation and greener environment across India.



Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav 2021

About PCRA

- PCRA is a registered society set up under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas and is Headquartered at New Delhi.
- As a non-profit organization, PCRA is a national government agency engaged in promoting energy efficiency in various sectors of economy.
- It helps the government in proposing policies and strategies for petroleum conservation, aimed at reducing excessive dependence of the country on oil requirement.

Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1689032#:~:text=With%20a%20view%20to%20create,impacts%20of%20increasing%20carbon%20footprints.>

'Prarambh' Start-up India International Summit being held in New Delhi

Question: On 15th January 2021, Piyush Goyal, union minister for railways, consumer affairs, commerce and industry has inaugurated 'Prarambh' Start-up India International Summit in New Delhi. Which government organization is

organizing the summit?

- a) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade(DPIIT)
- b) Department of Economic Affairs
- c) Ministry of Commerce
- d) None of the above

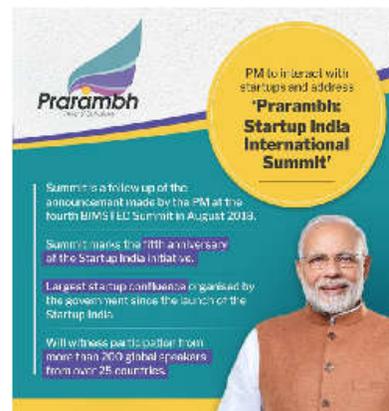
Answer: a)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the Start-Up India International Summit 'Prarambh' on 16th January evening .

Facts

- It is a two day event (15-16 January) being organized by DPIIT to mark the 5th anniversary of Start Up India Initiative .
- Summit is follow up of the announcement made by PM Modi at 4th BIMSTEC in August in 2018.
- Members of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) countries participated in the inaugural event which was inaugurated by Piyush Goyal.
- Summit is a demonstration of neighbourhood first policy which will booster partnership among the BIMSTEC member countries.
- Since all the event will be held virtually , it will be a great opportunity for youngsters to take part and interact with global professionals.



Reference: <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/modi-to-address-startup-summit-prarambh-today-11610762401926.html>

51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI)

Question: 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will be organised between January 16 to January 24 ,2021 in Goa. Which is the country of focus this year?

- a) Nepal
- b) USA
- c) Bangladesh
- d) Thailand

Answer: c)

Context

- 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will start in Goa on January 16 and will conclude on 24 January.



Facts

- Earlier it was scheduled to take place from November 20-28 but got postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic and will now be held from January 16 to January 24 in Goa.
- Bangladesh is country of focus this year and festival will feature 4 films from Bangladesh.
- The movies were selected by an internal committee of Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF) based on the recommendations of Film Federation of India (FFI) and Producer's Guild.
- 20 non-feature and 23 feature films, including "Saand Ki Aankh" and Sushant Singh Rajput's "Chhichhore", will be screened as part of the Indian Panaroma section.
- IFFI will open with the Indian premiere of the movie 'Another Round' by Thomas Vinterberg.
- Pablo Cesar of Argentina has been named as the Chairman of the jury.
- The other jury members are, Prasanna Vithanage of Sri Lanka, Abu Bakr Shawky of Austria, Priyadarshan of India and Rubaiyat Hossain of Bangladesh.
- One of the most significant film festival in Asia is conducted jointly by the Directorate of Film Festivals (under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and the state Government of Goa.

Reference: <https://www.financialexpress.com/photos/entertainment-gallery/2169236/51st-international-film-festival-of-india-all-set-to-start-in-go-a-from-january-16-see-images/>

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2021

Question: 16th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is being organised on 9th January 2021 by GOI in virtual mode. What is the theme of the event ?

- Bringing together Young Achievers from India and Indian Diaspora
- Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat
- Apna Bharat, Apna Gaurav
- None of the above

Answer: b)

Context



- The 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention is being organized on 9th January 2021, despite the ongoing Covid pandemic.

Facts

- PBD is the flagship event of the Ministry of External Affairs which is being organised on 9th January 2021 in virtual mode.
- Event provides an important platform to engage and connect with the overseas Indians.
- PBD conventions were held every year since 2003. Since 2015, its format has been revised to celebrate the PBD once every two years.
- The theme of 16th PBD Convention 2021 is “Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat”.
- It will be inaugurated by PM Modi and Chief Guest of event will be H.E. Mr. Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Hon’ble President of the Republic of Suriname.
- PBD is celebrated every year on 9th January to commemorate the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa on this day in 1915.
- These conventions are also very useful in networking among the overseas Indian community residing in various parts of the world and enable them to share their experiences in various fields.
- Youth PBD was also celebrated virtually on the theme “Bringing together Young Achievers from India and Indian Diaspora” on 8 January 2021.

Reference: <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1686874>

EDUCON 2020

Question: What is the theme of EDUCON 2020 which was inaugurated on 7th January 2021, by Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ ?

- a) Envisioning Education for Transforming Youth to Realize Global Peace
- b) Challenging Youth for innovation
- c) Perform, Reform and Transform

d) None of the above

Answer: a)

Context

- Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has inaugurated the two-day Virtual International Akhand Conference 'EDUCON 2020' through video conferencing on 7th January 2021.

Facts

- EDUCON 2020 is being organized by Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB) in collaboration with the Global Educational Research Association (GERA) .
- It is a two day non-stop, akahand ,31 hours conference which will pass on the message to the researchers and students across the globe that the research is a 24X7 exercise and requires strong perseverance.
- Focal theme of the conference is 'Envisioning Education for Transforming Youth to Realize Global Peace'.
- This International conference is the first of its kind in India where scholars across the world would be continuously having non-stop marathon dialogue sessions for 31 hours exploring the possibilities of the use of ICT in the higher education to promote the equitable quality education in India.
- Various other paradigm like likely scenario of higher education and school education by 2050, developing disruptive technologies for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Education, training youth for strategic future jobs in Universities, skill training programme for future graduates and relevance of ancient education system in 21st century will also be developed.
- National Education Policy (NEP)- 2020 will also be discussed from the point of national and global perspective.



Reference: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1686807>

Asian Waterbird Census

Question : On 6th January 2021 , two day Asian Waterbirds Census 2020 has started in which Indian State?

- a) West Bengal b) Andhra Pradesh
c) Tamil Nadu d) None of the above



Answer: b)

Context

- The two-day Asian Waterbird Census-2020 has started in Andhra Pradesh on 6th January.

Facts

- It is part of International Waterbird Census (IWC) that supports the conservation and management of wetlands and waterbirds worldwide.
- It is citizen science event . Anybody can take part using eBird platform and filing an additional site form.
- In India it is coordinated by Bombay Natural History Society and Wetland International. Wetland International is organizing agency of IWC.
- Waterbirds are ecologically dependent on wetlands and hence their presence is strong indicator of health of wetlands.

Reference: <https://south-asia.wetlands.org/news/join-us-for-the-asian-waterbird-census-2021/>

Udyog Manthan

Question: From January 4, 2021 to March 2, 2021 “ Udyog Manthan” is being organised by which of the following Government departments?

- a) Department of Personnel and Training
- b) Department of Commerce
- c) Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
- d) None of the above

Answer: c)

Context



- “Udyog Manthan” is being organised by Department of Promotion Of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) from January 4, 2021 to March 2 , 2021.

Facts

- “Udyog Manthan” is a marathon of focused sector-specific webinars for promoting Quality and Productivity in Indian Industry.
- This Webinar marathon will have 45 sessions which will cover various major sectors in manufacturing and services. Each webinar will be a two-hour session involving discussions led by sectoral and industry experts in a particular sector.

- Participants of Udyog Manthan will include representative from industry, testing and standardization bodies.
- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is a central government department under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Reference: <http://newsonair.com/News?title=%e2%80%9cUdyog-Manthan%e2%80%9d-being-organized-from-Jan-4-to-March-2&id=407301>

Year, Day & Week

International Holocaust Remembrance Day

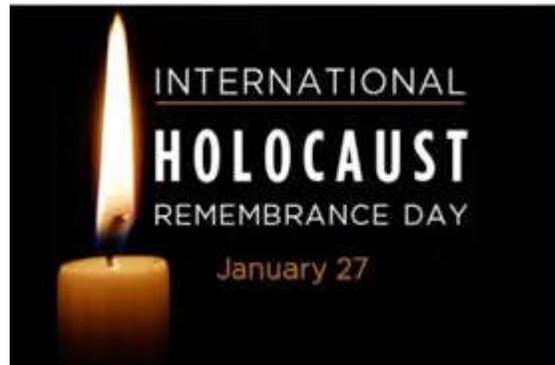
Question: When is the International Holocaust Remembrance Day observed?

- (a) 26 January (b) 24 January
(c) 20 January (d) 27 January

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- International Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed every year on 27 January.
- The day pays tributes to the memory of victims of Holocaust, the genocide that resulted in the deaths of 6 million Jews and 5 million others, by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.
- On 27 January 1945, Soviet troops liberated the Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau.
- The day was officially proclaimed in November 2005, by the United Nations General Assembly.
- The theme of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2021 is “Facing the Aftermath: Recovery and Reconstitution after the Holocaust”.



Links:

<https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/holocaustremembranceday>

International Customs Day

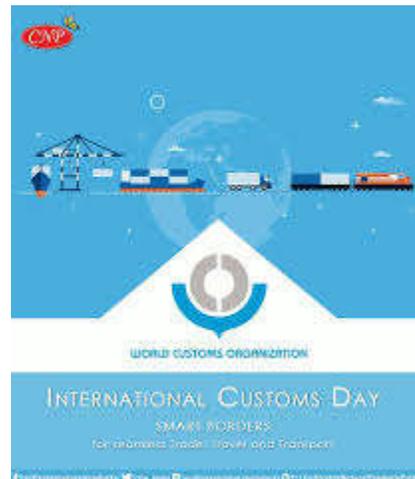
Question: When is the International Customs Day observed?

- (a) 26 January (b) 24 January
(c) 20 January (d) 27 January

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- International Customs day is observed every year on January 26.
- The International Customs Day (ICD) in 2021 is dedicated to the united efforts of Customs to emerge from the coronavirus crisis and support people and businesses by strengthening the global supply chain, reinforcing collaboration, harnessing technology and putting “people” at the centre of the transformation process.
- Slogan of 2021 International Customs day is “Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience for a sustainable supply chain”.
- The day was instituted by the World Customs Organization (WCO) to commemorate the day in 1953 when the inaugural session of the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC) was held in Brussels, Belgium.
- The CCC was renamed as World Customs Organization (WCO) in 1994.
- World Customs Organization (WCO) headquarter is in Brussels, Belgium.



Links:

<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/about-us/international-customs-day/icd-2021.aspx>

National Voters Day

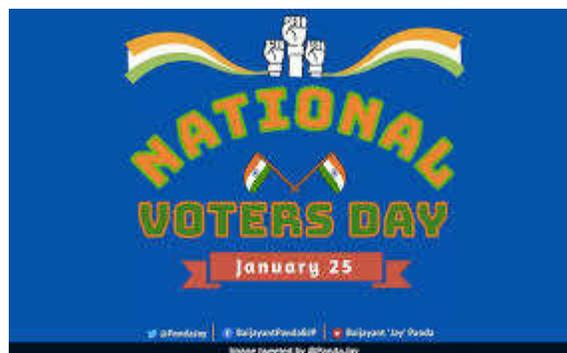
Question: When is the National Voters Day celebrated?

- (a) 25 January (b) 25 May
(c) 24 January (d) 18 January

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- 11th National Voters Day was celebrated across the India on 25 January 2021.
- National Voters Day(NVD)is celebrated to encourage the voter enrolment, spread awareness among voters for promoting informed participation in the electoral process.
- The theme for 2021 NVD is ‘Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed’.



- The National Voters' Day has been celebrated on January 25 every year since 2011, all across the country to mark the foundation day of Election Commission of India, i.e. 25th January 1950.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1691755>

National Tourism Day

Question: When is the National Tourism Day celebrated?

- (a) 25 January (b) 20 January
(c) 24 January (d) 18 January

National Tourism Day



Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Every year, January 25 is celebrated as National Tourism Day in India.
- The day highlights the importance of tourism for the economy of the country.
- 2021 Theme of the National Tourism Day is 'Dekho Apna Desh'.
- The Ministry of Tourism has been organizing seminars around the theme beginning from January 21 to February 22, 2021.

Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/information/story/national-tourism-day-2021-date-significance-theme-and-quotes-1762430-2021-01-25>

International Day of Education

Question: When is the International Day of Education observed?

- (a) 25 January (b) 20 January
(c) 24 January (d) 18 January



Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- International day of Education is observed on January 24 every year.
- The day promotes universal education for peace and development.
- The day was declared by United Nations General Assembly on December 3, 2018.

- Theme of the third International Day of Education is ‘Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation’.
- Sustainable Development Goal 4, in particular, aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/education-day>

First International Day of Epidemic Preparedness

Question : When did the first International Day of Epidemic Preparedness observed ?

- (a) 27 December, 2020 (b) 24 December, 2020
 (c) 28 December, 2020 (d) 26 December, 2020



Answer (a)

Related facts

- The first ‘International Day of Epidemic Preparedness’ observed on 27th December 2020.
- The day advocates the significance of global partnership against epidemics.

Background

- As exemplified by the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic major infectious diseases and epidemics have devastating impacts on human lives, wreaking havoc on long-term social and economic development.
- Global health crises threaten to overwhelm already overstretched health systems, disrupt global supply chains and cause disproportionate devastation of the livelihoods of people, including women and children, and the economies of the poorest and most vulnerable countries.
- There is an urgent need to have resilient and robust health systems, reaching those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations.

Link:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/epidemic-preparedness-day>

Books

Book-India’s 71-year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia

Question: Who is the author of the book India’s 71-year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia?

- (a)Alok Sinha (b) Neeru Bhatia
(c) R Kaushik (d) Sudhanshu Upadhyay

Answer – (c)

Related facts:

- On 6 January 2021, Indian Men’s Cricket team coach Ravi Shastri has launched the book India’s 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia’, a new book by the Bradman Museum, at the Sydney Cricket Ground.
- The book has been authored by R. Kaushik, one of India’s most respected cricket writers.
- The book reflects on India’s first 12 tours to Australia – from 1947/48, to face Don Bradman’s side.
- India became the first Asian team to beat Australia in a Test series Down Under by winning the 2018-19 Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Links:

<https://www.scgt.nsw.gov.au/whats-on/latest-news/indias-71-year-test-the-journey-to-triumph/>

Book-Manohar Parrikar – Off The Record

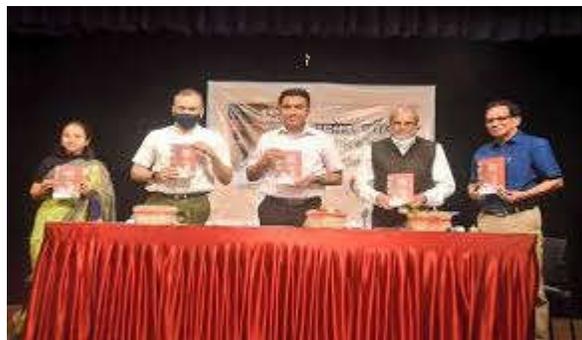
Question: Who is the author of the book Manohar Parrikar – Off The Record?

- (a) Waman Subha Prabhu (b) Vikram Seth
(c) Aravind Adiga (d) Durjoy Dutta

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 15 January 2021,Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant released a book titled ‘Manohar Parrikar – Off the Record.
- The book has been written by senior journalist Shri Waman Subha Prabhu.
- The book is a collection of memories of Waman Prabhu who happened to be with late Parrikar during the journey of his life.
- In the book the author has narrated the multi-faceted personality of late Manohar Parrikar.



Links:

<https://www.uniindia.com/goa-cm-releases-book-manohar-parrikar-off-the-record/west/news/2293694.html>

Miscellaneous

India to get UN tag of International disaster force for NDRF

Question: Under which of the following ministry, NDRF a distinguished, unique Force, function in India?

- a) Ministry of defense b) Ministry of Home affairs
c) Ministry of External affairs d) None of these

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:



- India 's federal contingency force, NDRF could from 2021 be a part of the United Nations (UN) mandated international disaster rescue operations.
- Government sources has informed that it is expected that NDRF to obtain a globally recognised standardization later this year.
- The authorisation will be done by the Switzerland-headquartered INSARAG (or the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group).
- It should be noted that INSARAG is a network of more than 90 countries and organisations under the UN umbrella to deal with urban search and rescue related issues.
- As that of the Bureau of Indian Standards in the country, the UN agency INSARAG standardises disaster response teams across the world.
- NDRF director general S N Pradhan told that It is an international gold standard in an interview with PTI.
- The DG said, it will be a matter of great prestige for India that its force is known as an international response force.
- He said an INSARAG committee, comprising Australian and Singaporean experts, has conducted preliminary review of NDRF teams in September, 2019.
- **NDRF:-**
- The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was raised in 2006 to undertake specific tasks of relief and rescue during natural and manmade disasters or life threatening situations.

- It has 12 operational battalions comprising more than 15,000 personnel based across the country at present while four more battalions are taking shape.
- The DG said the force will be upgrading its capacity and equipment in the next two financial years, which will be followed by training.

Links:-

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-to-get-un-tag-of-international-disaster-response-force-for-ndrf-121011000394_1.html

Japan's new initiative for space debris

Question : which country has proposed satellites made of wood to be launched in space?

- a) USA b) India
c) China d) Japan

Answer: d)

Context



- Japanese researches are to launch wooden satellites by 2023.

Facts

- To solve the problem of space debris ,Japanese researcher are planning to launch wooden satellites by 2023.
- The wooden satellites are being designed by the Sumitomo Forestry and Kyoto University. The Sumitomo Forestry is a 400-year-old wood working company of Japan.
- Wooden satellites will burn up in the space without releasing any harmful chemicals when they fall on earth.
- According to NASA, 95% of man-made objects in orbit were space junk. These are formed from the aluminum and other materials which peels off from satellites orbiting around earth when they fall back into earth's atmosphere.

Reference: <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-55463366#:~:text=Japan%20plans%20a%202023%20launch,out%20of%20wood%20by%202023.>

Kazakhstan abolishes death penalty

Question: which country has recently abolished death penalty ?

- a) Kazakhstan b) Pakistan
c) India d) none of the above

Answer: a)
Context

- President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has signed a decree abolishing the death penalty in Kazakhstan.



Facts

- President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has signed the UN's 2nd optional protocol of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

2nd optional protocol of ICCPR

- This protocol aims at abolishing death penalty in signatory countries.
- It is a side agreement to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It was created on 15 December 1989 and entered into force on 11 July 1991.
- As of now it has 88 parties and 40 signatories.

Reference : <https://www.dw.com/en/kazakhstan-abolishes-death-penalty/a-56117176#:~:text=President%20Kassym%20Jomart%20Tokayev%20has%20signed%20a%20decree%20abolishing%20the,by%20then%20President%20Nursultan%20Nazarbayev.>

Kolar Leaf-Nosed Bat

Question: In which part of world Kolar leaf nosed bat are found?

- a) Karnataka , India b) California, USA
c) Sindh, Pakistan d) none of the above

Answer: a)
Context

- Bat Conservation India Trust, which has been entrusted with drawing up a conservation plan, has been awarded a grant to conduct further research on Kolar leaf nosed bat recently.

About Kolar leaf- nosed bat

- The Kolar leaf-nosed bat (*Hipposideros hypophyllus*), or leafletted leaf-nosed bat is a species of bat.



- It is found in only two caves in the village of Hanumanahalli in Kolar district of Karnataka, India.
- For reasons that are still unknown, the bat became locally extinct in one of the two caves.
- Since 2016 Leaf Nosed-bats are placed in critically endangered list of IUCN. The habitats of Leaf-Nosed Bats are under threat due to explosion done for the purpose of granite mining. The Granite miners in the Kolar district have driven out the Leaf-Nosed bats by setting fires.
- Government of India imposed a ban on granite mining in the region to save the bats in 2014. However, the ban was temporary. Currently no such ban exist.

Need for conservation

- The Kolar Leaf-Nosed Bat is exclusive to Karnataka and very little is known about this bat – what ecology it thrives in, what its diet is, its behavior and what would happen to it if the cropping pattern changes in the area in which it resides.
- Although they generally have a bad image in public eye, bats are very important for the ecology as they are pollinators, their main diet being nectar. The plants that bloom at night are entirely dependent on bats and moths for pollination. They are also helpful in insect control.

Reference: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/conservation-plan-on-table-to-save-bat-species-in-kolar-caves-7125529/>

Agricultural credit : Integration of Karnataka government's 'FRUITS' portal with Canara Bank

Question : Canara Bank has recently granted access to Karnataka government's 'FRUITS' portal. FRUITS stands for —

- (a) Farmers' Registration and Unified Beneficiary Information System
- (b) Farmers' Registration and Universal Beneficiary Information System
- (c) Farmers' Registration and Unified Beneficiary Integration System
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Integration of Karnataka government's 'FRUITS' portal with Canara bank occurred on December 2020.
This integration means Canara Bank has granted access to the portal.

Accessibility

Key facts related to the above mentioned 'accessibility' are as follows —

Base	Canara Bank, convenor of the state-level bankers' committee in Karnataka, is granted access to the FRUITS platform on a pilot basis
Result	Once it is found successful, all other FIs(Financial Institutions) will be brought on to the portal so that at one place, all the data pertaining to the loans of the farmers will be available
Data	The Farmer Registration and Unified beneficiary Information System (FRUITS) portal has not only captured the details of the land owned by the farmers but also has information on the crops grown, loans taken from the banks and financial institutions, insurance coverage and also the benefits availed from various government schemes.
Unified beneficiary Information System	Unified beneficiary information system will maintain through an identification number. Using this number, the Financial Institutions (FIs) and lending institutions can check the land details of the farmers as well as their borrowings and take a quick decision on lending money to the farmers depending on their requirements

About 'FRUITS' portal/platform

- It is an e-Governance initiative commenced on January 2019. Karnataka has captured all the details of 70 lakh farmers in the State under this single platform.
- The 'FRUITS' portal is integrated into the BHOOMI package of the State for fetching and validating the land details.
- This is the first of its kind in the country wherein the land and other details of all the farmers in the State are being captured.

Agricultural credit in India

- NABARD is India's specialised bank for Agriculture and Rural Development in India. Non-Banking Finance Companies(NBFCs) and cooperatives are active in the agriculture credit space.

- The target of agricultural credit flow for 2019-20 was set at Rs 13,50,000 crore, and an amount of Rs 9,07,843.37 crore has been disbursed till November 30, 2019.
- The regional distribution of agricultural credit in India is highly skewed.
- It is observed that credit is low in North Eastern, Hilly and Eastern States.
- Agricultural credit disbursement has been seven to fifteen percent in some southern states(Kerala,Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh).
- The share of North Eastern States has been less than one percent in total agricultural credit disbursement.
- Agriculture credit target for the year 2020-21 has been set at rupees 15 lakh crore.

Link:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/karnataka-captures-all-farmer-details-under-single-platform/article33396581.ece>