

Weekly Current Affairs PDF January 16 to January 22, 2022

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INTERNATIONAL

'Anxiety' is Oxford University Press' Children's Word of the Year 2021

- The Oxford University Press (OUP) has picked up 'Anxiety' as the Children's Word of the Year 2021, based on their recent research.
- The Oxford University Press (OUP) has picked up 'Anxiety' as the Children's Word of the Year 2021, based on their recent research. Apart from "anxiety" (21%), "Challenging" (19%), "isolate" (14%), "Wellbeing" (13%) and "resilience" (12%) were the children's top five words. In 2020, Coronavirus was the Children's Word of the Year by OUP.
- Over 8,000 children from across 85 schools in the UK, spanning Year 3 to Year 9, were surveyed and asked to choose the top words they would use when talking about health and wellbeing. The research highlights the widespread impact lockdown and school closures had on children, with almost a quarter of all surveyed choosing anxiety (21 per cent) as their number one word, closely followed by challenging (19 per cent) and isolate (14 per cent). However, wellbeing (13 per cent) and resilience (12 per cent) closely followed as their top words, signalling children's positive attitude in the face of recent challenges.

First BRICS Sherpas meeting of 2022 held under Chinese chairship

- The first BRICS Sherpas meeting of 2022 was held virtually on January 18-19 2022, with the members thanking India for its BRICS chairship in 2021.
- The first BRICS Sherpas meeting of 2022 was held virtually on January 18-19 2022, with the members thanking India for its BRICS chairship in 2021. China has taken on the rotating chairmanship of BRICS in 2022. BRICS is a grouping of five major emerging economies — Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
- Meanwhile, Sanjay Bhattacharyya India's BRICS Sherpa said that Last year we saw a significant achievement that our foreign ministers brought about in terms of the document on the strengthening and reform of the multilateral systems. These issues of global governance, particularly the UN systems and other institutions, are extremely important. And I'm happy that we shall continue to attach high importance to its continued relevance.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Jahnvi Dangeti: 'India's First' who completed the prestigious NASA programme

- Jahnvi Dangeti, a young girl from Andhra Pradesh, has just completed NASA's International Air and Space Program (iasp nasa) at the Kennedy Space Centre in Alabama, US, making her the first Indian to accomplish this feat. She is part of a carefully shortlisted group of 20 students from around the world. She has been a campus ambassador for numerous organisations, including Star (Space Technology and Aeronautical Rocketry), an Indian private aerospace company. She is a member of the International Organization of Aspiring Astronauts (IOAA). She participated in many events and workshops of Nasa, Isro and other space agencies.

APPOINTMEN & RESIGNATION

Internet Panel On Languages Ropes In Vijay Shekhar Sharma As Ambassador

- Vijay Shekhar Sharma named as ambassador of Internet panel on languages UASG Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma has been roped in as the Ambassador of Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG), a community-based team of industry leaders supported by global internet body ICANN. UASG works on developing and recommending standards for languages script that are not currently used to access the internet. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) aims to help ensure a stable, secure, and unified global Internet. Its headquarter is based at California, United States.

Dileep Sanghani elected as IFFCO Chairman

- The board of directors of the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) has unanimously elected Dileep Sanghani as the 17th Chairman of the Cooperative.
- The board of directors of the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) has unanimously elected Dileep Sanghani as the 17th Chairman of the Cooperative. He succeeds Balvinder Singh Nakai, who passed away earlier on October 11, 2021. Prior to this, Sanghani was serving as vice-chairman of IFFCO since 2019.
- Sanghani is a senior co-operator from Gujarat and the chairman of the Gujarat State Cooperative Marketing Federation Ltd. (GUJCOMASOL), a position he has held since 2017. He held various portfolios in the Gujarat government, including agriculture, cooperation, animal husbandry, fisheries, cow-breeding, prison, excise, law and justice, legislative and parliamentary affairs.

Chanchal Kumar appointed as MD of NHIDCL

- Chanchal Kumar has been appointed as the Managing Director, National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL), under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH). He is appointed in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary. He is a 1992 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, presently Principal Secretary of Bihar's Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has also approved the extension in the central deputation tenure of Ashutosh Jindal, Additional Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat for 1 year beyond 16th February 2022 to 16th February 2023.

OBITURY

World's oldest man dies at 112 in Spain

- Guinness World Records holder for the oldest person living (male), Saturnino de la Fuente García (Spain) has passed away at the age of 112 years and 341 days.
- Guinness World Records holder for the oldest person living (male), Saturnino de la Fuente García (Spain) has passed away at the age of 112 years and 341 days. Saturnino claimed the record as the oldest person living (male) in September 2021 when he was exactly 112 years and 211 days. He was born on February 11, 1909, in the Puente Castro neighbourhood of León in Spain.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Pfizer chief Albert Bourla wins \$1 million Genesis Prize for development of COVID-19 vaccine

- The global pharmaceutical giant Pfizer Inc.'s Chairman and Chief Executive, Albert Bourla, has been awarded with the prestigious Genesis Prize 2022.
- The global pharmaceutical giant Pfizer Inc.'s Chairman and Chief Executive, Albert Bourla, has been awarded with the prestigious Genesis Prize 2022 on January 19, 2022. He has been awarded for his efforts in leading the development of a COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer–BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine). The award comes with a cash prize of \$1 million.
- The annual prize is awarded to Jewish people who have achieved significant professional success, in recognition of their accomplishments, contributions to humanity, and commitment to Jewish values and/or to the State of Israel. It is widely referred to as the “Jewish Nobel Prize”.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

India Ratings projects economy to grow at 7.6% in FY23

- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has projected the real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of the Indian economy to grow at 7.6 per cent year-on-year in 2022-23 (FY23).
- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has projected the real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of the Indian economy to grow at 7.6 per cent year-on-year in 2022-23 (FY23). Ind-Ra is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Fitch Group. The economic recovery was encouraging, he said, and restrictions put in place by many states to contain the current wave of Covid-19 were not as severe as the second wave. Nonetheless, there are risks to the ongoing recovery, the rating agency warned.
- It pointed to the latest FY22 GDP advance estimates, which show that private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) — the largest component of GDP (58.6 per cent) from the demand side and a proxy for consumption demand — is projected to grow only 6.9 per cent YoY in the current year, despite a low base and sales data of many consumer durables showing robust growth.

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INTERNATIONAL

ILO Report 2022: Global unemployment level projected at 207 million

- The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has released its World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2022 (WESO Trends) report. The report analyses comprehensive labour market projections for 2022 and 2023 and assesses how labour market recovery has unfolded worldwide. In the WESO 2022, ILO has downgraded its forecast for labour market recovery in 2022.
- The global unemployment level in 2022 is estimated at 207 million, compared to 186 million in 2019.
- Total working hours globally in 2022 is projected to be 2% below the pre-pandemic level, and that is equivalent to the loss of 52 million full-time jobs.
- The global labour force participation rate in 2022 is projected to remain 1.2 percentage points below that of 2019 before the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic began.

NATIONAL

India Successfully Test-Fires New BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile Off Odisha Coast

- BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, with increased indigenous content and improved performance, was successfully test-fired from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- The launch was conducted by Brahmos Aerospace in close coordination with Defence Research and Development Organisation. This flight test was monitored by all the sensors of the range instrumentation including telemetry, radar and electro-optical tracking systems deployed across the eastern coast and the down range ships.
- Brahmos was successfully test-fired from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha on January 20, 2022.
- The flight test is a major milestone in the way forward for BrahMos programme.
- The highly maneuverable missile cruised at supersonic speed for its maximum range and all mission objectives were met.

Odisha teams up with WFP to improve food security, farmers' resilience

- The United Nations World Food Programme and the Odisha Government joined hands to improve the food security of small and marginal farmers in India by strengthening their resilience to climate change.
- In a participatory pilot initiative, climate advisories will be tailored to enable smallholder farmers to adapt to the impact of climate change. Smallholder farmers, who constitute 90 percent of farming communities in Odisha, will be able to select the right farming and livelihood options to improve their food security and incomes.

SPORTS

Babar Azam named captain of ICC Men's T20 Team of Year 2021

- Pakistani skipper Babar Azam has been named as the captain of the ICC Men's T20I team of the year for 2021. The ICC Team of the Year recognises the 11 best players in men's cricket who have impressed one and all with their performances in a calendar year, either with the bat, ball or their all-round performance. No Indian male player has found a place in the team of 11.
- However, in ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year for 2021, Smriti Mandhana is the only Indian women player named in the 11 member team. Smriti has made in the list for third time in the T20I team of the year after 2018 (opener) and 2019 (number three). England's Nat Sciver has been made the captain of ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year for 2021.

Sania Mirza: India tennis star to retire after 2022 season

- Sania Mirza, the most successful woman in Indian tennis history, has decided that she is bidding adieu to the sports at the end of 2022.
- The 35-year-old had already bowed out of singles competitions in 2013. Sania has six Grand Slam titles in women's doubles and mixed doubles to her name. Her last headline-grabbing win came with Chinese partner Shuai Zhang in women's doubles at the Ostrava Open on September 26, 2021.

APPOINTMEN & RESIGNATION

Vikram Dev Dutt appointed new CMD of Air India

- Senior bureaucrat Vikram Dev Dutt has been appointed as the chairman and managing director (CMD) of Air India Ltd. Dutt is a 1993-batch IAS officer of AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre. He has been appointed as the Air India chief in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary, an order issued by the Personnel Ministry. Prior to this, he was the Principal Secretary (Tourism) in Delhi government.
- The Centre had in October last year accepted Tata Son's bid of Rs 18,000 crore to acquire 100 per cent of the debt-laden state-run carrier. The takeover has not been completed yet. Talace Pvt Ltd, a unit of the holding company of the salt-to-software conglomerate, had made the winning bid of Rs 2,700 crore cash and Rs 15,300 crore debt takeover.

SUMMIT'S & MOU'S

IIMK LIVE, Indian Bank ink Landmark MoU

- Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode's (IIMK) Business incubator Laboratory for Innovation Venturing and Entrepreneurship (LIVE) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Bank to financially support early-stage startups. Under the MoU, a startup funding scheme, 'IndSpring Board' has been launched. Under this scheme loans up to Rs, 50 Crore will be disbursed to the startups.
- The startups can use the loan amount to meet their operational expenditure and capital expenditure which includes working capital, purchase of fixed assets and other expenses.
- The loan amount disbursed to startups under the IndSpring Board scheme from IIMK LIVE and Indian Bank can be used to meet a startup operational expenditure and capital expenditure which includes working capital, purchase of fixed assets and other expenses.
- Startups selected under this scheme would have to be committed towards working on innovation, development or improvement of products or processes or services, or present a scalable business model with a high potential of employment generation or wealth creation.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

RBI: Digital payments up 39.6% in Sept 2021

- The RBI's Digital Payment Index, which shows the deepening of payments through digital modes in India, rose by 39.64 per cent to 304.06 in September 2021 against 217.74 in the year-ago month. The RBI-DPI Index continues to demonstrate significant growth in adoption and deepening of digital payments across the country. RBI has introduced Digital Payments Index in January 2021 with March 2018 as the base year to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country. This means that the DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100.
- RBI has started publishing the Digital Payments Index (DPI) on a semi-annual basis from March 2021 onwards with a lag of 4 months. This means that the DPI will be released by RBI for March and September every year in the months of July and January respectively.
- The RBI-DPI comprises five broad parameters that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods, viz. payment enablers (with 25 per cent weight), payment infrastructure—demand-side factors (10 per cent), payment infrastructure—supply-side factors (15 per cent), payment performance (45 per cent) and

consumer centricity (5 per cent). These parameters have sub-parameters which, in turn, consist of various measurable indicators.

Microsoft to acquire Activision Blizzard to bring the joy and community of gaming to everyone

- Microsoft Corp. is set to acquire game making company, Activision Blizzard Inc., in an all-cash transaction for \$68.7 billion. (\$95.00 per share). This acquisition will boost the competitiveness of Microsoft in the mobile gaming business and virtual-reality technology, across mobile, PC, console and cloud and will provide building blocks for the metaverse.
- Activision Blizzard is famous as the maker of Candy Crush and Call of Duty, Xbox, among other leading video games. Upon the completion of the deal, Microsoft will become the world's third-largest gaming company by revenue, behind Tencent and Sony. This is the biggest deal ever by Microsoft and also the largest-ever deal in the history of the gaming industry.

SEBI Launched Saa᳚Thi Mobile App for Investor Education

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

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INTERNATIONAL

Shaped Like An Infinity Symbol, Dubai Opens Incredible 'Infinity Bridge' To Traffic For The First Time

- Iconic 'Infinity Bridge' in Dubai, United Arab Emirates has been formally opened to traffic for the first time on 16th January 2022. Its design resembles a mathematical sign for infinity (∞). It represents the limitless, infinite goals of Dubai. It consists of six lanes in each direction and a combined 3-metre track for pedestrians and cyclists. It is 300 meters long and 22 meters wide.
- The bridge consists of six lanes and improves the link between Deira and Bur Dubai. It features a combined 3-metre track for pedestrians and cyclists. First announced in 2018, the Infinity Bridge is part of an Al Shindagha Corridor Project. Consisting of six lanes in each direction, the bridge has an arch-shaped like the infinity symbol – which symbolises Dubai's unlimited ambitions.

Malta's MEP Roberta Metsola takes over EU parliament presidency

- Roberta Metsola, a Christian Democrat from Malta, was elected president of the European Union's parliament. Her election comes a week after the shock death of outgoing parliament president David Sassoli, who was due to step down as part of a power-sharing pact. She is only the third woman elected to the post. she is the European Parliament's youngest president. Metsola was the candidate of the parliament's biggest group, and she received 458 of the 616 votes cast.

NATIONAL

India-Japan maritime exercise in Bay of Bengal

- A Maritime Partnership Exercise was held between the Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) in the Bay of Bengal in a non-contact mode amid C-19. The Indian side was represented by Indian Naval Ships (INS) Shivalik and INS Kadmatt while JMSDF Ships Uraga and Hirado participated from the Japanese side. Strengthening bilateral relations, promoting defence cooperation, enhancing mutual understanding and interoperability, and sharing best practices between IN and JMSDF.

SPORTS

AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 will be host by India

- India is all set to host AFC Women's football Asian Cup India 2022 from 20th January 2022 in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, and Pune. The tournament will witness 12 teams competing for the trophy. AFC Women's Asian Cup India will also be the final stage of Asian qualification for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand. Five teams will qualify for the main event directly while two of them will progress to the inter-confederation play-offs.
- Japan are the defending champions of the Women's Asian Cup, having won it in 2018. Hosts India has been placed in Group A alongside China, Chinese Taipei, and Iran. Meanwhile, Australia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia have been placed in Group B. Defending champions Japan find themselves in Group C along with South Korea, Vietnam, and Myanmar.

OBITURY

Legendary cartoonist and illustrator Narayan Debnath passes away

- Legendary Bengali comics artist, writer and illustrator, Narayan Debnath, has passed away after a prolonged illness. He was 97. The celebrated cartoonist was the creator of popular Bengali comic strips like Handa Bhonda (1962), Bantul the Great (1965) and Nonte Phonte (1969). He holds the record of longest-running comics by an individual artiste for the Handa Bhonda comics series which completed its continuous 60 years of running. In 2021, Debnath was awarded Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award in India.

M.K. Prasad, noted ecologist and 'Save Silent Valley' campaigner, passes away

- Noted environmentalist & 'Save Silent Valley' campaigner Prof M K Prasad passed away recently. He was a prominent figure in the historic grassroots level movement to save the evergreen tropical rain forests in Kerala's Silent Valley from destruction. He had also led the popular science movement, 'Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishath'. Prof. Prasad, who had served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Calicut University, was in the forefront of environment protection activities in the State.

Shaoli Mitra, eminent theatre personality, actress dies at 73

- Renowned Bengali theatre personality Saoli Mitra has passed away. She had acted in Ritwik Ghatak's avant garde film Jukti Takko aar Gappo in 1974. She also wrote, directed and acted in the hugely popular Katha Amritsamman (Words that are like Nectar) another adaptation of the Mahabharata.

- Mitra, who was the recipient of Sangeet Natak Akademi in 2003, Padma Shri in 2009, and Banga Bibhusan in 2012 would be remembered by her fans and critics alike for her solo performance as Draupadi in Naathvati Anaathbat (Five husbands, yet an orphan), which she also wrote and directed, and as Sita on Sitakatha.

BOOKS & AUTHOR

Book “Bose: The Untold Story of An Inconvenient Nationalist” by Chandrachur Ghose

- A new biography titled “Bose: The Untold Story of An Inconvenient Nationalist” authored by Chandrachur Ghose will be released in February 2022. The book contains the thoughts and opinions of Subhas Chandra Bose about the development of independent India, communalism, geopolitics and political ideology. It also marked the untold and unknown stories of Netaji (Subhas Chandra Bose).
- The biography attempts to bring new perspectives on Netaji’s thoughts on independent India’s development, the problem of communalism, geopolitics, his political ideology, and how he negotiated with the political parties, revolutionary societies, and the government.
- The book throws light on Bose’s intense political activities around the revolutionary groups in Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra, and the United Provinces; his efforts to bridge the increasing communal divide and his influence among the splintered political landscape; his outlook on and relations with women; his plunge into the depths of spirituality; his penchant for covert operations; and his efforts to engineer a rebellion among the Indian armed forces.

Awards & Recognition

Axis Bank and CRMNEXT win IBSi's Innovation Awards 2021 for the Best CRM System Implementation

- Axis Bank & CRMNEXT Solution won the IBS Intelligence (IBSi) Global FinTech Innovation Awards 2021 for the “Best CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System Implementation”. It is one of the most prominent awards for global bankers and IT (Information Technology) consultants across the world.
- The Axis Bank implemented CRMNEXT for sales and service modernisation and it also enables smarter lead processing, automated routing, complete tracking, and visibility. It identified and honoured technology players and banks for their excellence in banking technology implementations and innovations using emerging technologies.

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INTERNATIONAL

Maya Angelou Is the First Black Woman to Appear on the U.S. Quarter

- The US Treasury has minted coins featuring poet Maya Angelou – the first black woman ever featured on the US 25-cent coin known as a quarter. Angelou, a poet and activist, was the first black woman to write and perform a poem at a presidential inauguration. In 2010, she was given a Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest US civilian award by President Barack Obama.

- The new coin still features George Washington's visage on the "heads" side, while the "tails" side honours Angelou by evoking one of her most famous works, the autobiography "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings."

South Africa Launches Satellites to Monitor Shipping off its Coastline

- South Africa has launched its first satellite constellation developed entirely in the continent of Africa. Three locally produced nanosatellites, which made up the country's first Maritime Domain Awareness Satellite (MDASat) constellation, were launched from Cape Canaveral in the United States, as part of American aerospace company SpaceX's Transporter-3 mission.
- Transporter-3, SpaceX's third dedicated rideshare mission, carried a total of 105 spacecraft for various organisations and governments, including CubeSats, microsats, PocketQubes and orbital transfer vehicles.

NATIONAL

MoS for education Subhas Sarkar launches Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22

- Minister of State for Education, Subhas Sarkar has launched the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) 2021 – 2022 virtually. The Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar recognises, inspires and awards schools that have undertaken exemplary work in the field of water, sanitation and hygiene while also providing a benchmark and a roadmap for schools to make further improvements in future. The Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar was first distributed by the Department of School Education and Literacy, in 2016-17 to create self-motivation and awareness about sanitation.
- All categories of schools, that is, government, government-aided and private schools in both rural and urban areas can participate in the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22.

UPI AUTOPAY has introduced for the telecom industry with JIO

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

Centre launches stamp to mark 1 year of Covid vaccination

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

SPORTS

Himachal Pradesh: Women's ninth ice hockey nationals start at Kaza rink

- In Himachal Pradesh, the 9th women National Ice Hockey Championship-2022 was inaugurated at Ice Skating Rink, Kaza in Lahaul Spiti district. For the first time in the state, Ice Hockey

competition & development camp is being organized at the national level. Teams from Himachal Pradesh, Telengana, Ladakh, ITBP Ladakh, Chandigarh & Delhi are participating in this mega event.

- The state Chief Minister, Jai Ram Thakur inaugurated the Championship. This is the first time that National Level Ice Hockey Competition and Development Camp was being held in the State. In 2019, the first Basic Ice Hockey ten days Coaching Camp was organized at Kaza by State Youth Services and Sports Department, in collaboration with the Ladakh Women Ice Hockey Foundation. The State Government has already announced the High-Altitude Sports Center at Kaza with an estimated cost of Rs. 16 crore.

APPOINTMENT & RESIGNATION

AEPC's new Chairman Narendra Goenka takes over

- Narendra Kumar Goenka has been appointed as the new chairman of the Apparel Export Promotion Council, AEPC. Former chairman Padma Dr A Sakthivel handed over the charge to him. Mr. Goenka has been associated with the Council for more than two decades. He was the Vice Chairman of the apex body of Indian apparel exporters before taking charge as Chairman of AEPC.
- AEPC is the official body of apparel exporters in India, under the aegis of the Ministry of Textiles, that provides invaluable assistance to Indian exporters as well as importers/international buyers.

OBITURY

Former Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu dies at 91

- The former Prime Minister of Japan, Toshiki Kaifu has passed away at the age of 91 years in Japan. He served as the PM from 1989 to 1991. He is known for sending the Maritime Self-Defense Force to the Persian Gulf in 1991. After the Gulf War, the Japanese Self-Defense Force were deployed to the Gulf region to conduct minesweeping operations during Kaifu's term of office.

IMPORTANT DAYS

19 January 2022: NDRF's 17th Raising Day

- National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) celebrates its Raising Day every year on January 19, since it came into existence on January 19, 2006. In 2022, the NDRF is observing its 17th Raising Day. There are 12 NDRF battalions located in different parts of the country and comprises as many as 13,000 NDRF personnel who work to build a safer country.
- The NDRF has earned a good name and fame nationally and internationally with its selfless service and unmatched professionalism in disaster management. NDRF has saved more than One lakh lives in its 3100 operations and rescued/evacuated over 6.7 lakh people during disasters. NDRF is an Indian specialized force under the National Disaster Management Authority, constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, to carry out the special responses in situations of threatening disaster.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

MobiKwik launches 'ClickPay' for faster bill payments in collaboration with Bharat BillPay

- MobiKwik, one of India's largest mobile wallets and Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) Fintech companies launched 'ClickPay' for its customers, in collaboration with NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd. (NBBL). This feature enables MobiKwik customers to pay recurring online bills (such as mobile, gas, water, electricity, DTH, insurance, and loan EMIs) with ease by eliminating the need to remember individual bill details and due dates.
- ClickPay is a two-step payment feature wherein the billers generate a unique payment link within the bill-pay message, allowing customers to make payments directly on the payment page. MobiKwik is focused on providing the Indian middle-class population a simple and secure payment platform to make daily life payments.

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NATIONAL

Kerala's Kumbalangi to Become India's First Sanitary Napkin-free Village

- Kerala's Kumbalangi is set to become the country's first sanitary napkin-free panchayat. This move is a part of the 'Avalkayi' initiative, which is being implemented in the Ernakulam parliamentary constituency, in association with the "Thingal Scheme" of HLL Management Academy's and Indian Oil Corporation. Under this initiative, menstrual cups will be distributed to women aged 18 and above in Kumbalangi village. 5000 menstrual cups will be distributed under it.
- In the same event, Governor will also declare Kumbalangi village as a model village. The model village project is implemented as a part of 'Pradhan Mantri Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (PM-SAGY)'. A new tourist information centre will also be set up in the village.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh launches AI driven start-up by IIT alumni for water purification

- Union Minister of State (I/C) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh has launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Start-Up by Indian Institute Technology (IIT) alumni for water purification through innovative technology with financial support from Technology Development Board (TDB). The facility aims to provide clean drinking water at a price much lesser than the market price.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between TDB, a statutory body of the Department of S&T and Swajal Water Private Limited. The Gurugram based company's patented system, 'Clairvoyant' uses artificial intelligence to optimise purification systems and predict future breakdowns. The company is focused on innovative technologies to make reliable clean drinking water accessible to communities at affordable price, for their project on IoT enabled point of use Solar Water Purification Unit for slums, villages and High Utility Areas.

Defence Ministry sets up online portal to resolve pension-related grievances: Rajnath Singh

- The Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh has set up an online Raksha Pension Shikayat Nivaran Portal to resolve pension-related grievances of ex-servicemen (ESM) and their dependents. The portal will allow them to lodge grievances directly with the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW), he stated on the occasion of Armed Forces Veterans Day.
- The minister also announced that the DESW has allotted Rs 320 crore to Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF) to clear all backlog of pending applications for welfare schemes, especially education and marriage grants for widows or dependent children of ESM. The Minister also stated that the Directorate General of Resettlement has issued 22,278 job letters—including 7,898 job letters to freshly retired/first-time entrants—to civil life ESMs in the government sector/PSUs/banks and private sector during the year April 2021-December 2021.

SPORTS

Savita Punia named captain of Indian women hockey team for Asia Cup in Muscat

- Goalkeeper Savita Punia will lead India at the upcoming women's Asia Cup in Muscat as Hockey India named a strong 18-member squad for the event, including 16 players that featured at the Tokyo Olympics. Since regular skipper Rani Rampal is recovering from an injury in Bengaluru, Savita will lead the side in the tournament, which is scheduled to be held between January 21-28.
- Indian women are the defending champions. Seven other teams competing at the Women's Hockey Asia Cup 2022 are China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand.

Russian Aslan Karatsev won third ATP Title in Sydney Tennis Classic

- In tennis, Aslan Karatsev defeated Andy Murray by 6-3, 6-3, to win men's single title at the Sydney Tennis Classic final, to claim his third ATP Tour title. The women's single title was claimed by Spanish world number nine Paula Badosa, who defeated Barbora Krejčíková 6-3 4-6 7-6(4), to capture her third career title.

APPOINTMENT & RESIGNATION

Adani Power appoints Shersingh Khyalia as CEO with immediate effect

- The Board of Directors of Adani Power Limited (APL), a subsidiary of Adani Group, approved the appointment of Shersingh B Khyalia as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Adani Powers with effect from 11th January 2022. He is a Chartered Accountant, who has served as the Managing Director in Gujarat Power Corporation. Earlier, Khyalia has worked as Managing Director in Gujarat Power Corporation, where he got experience of the Renewable Power Sector especially the development of Ultra Mega Renewable Parks.

OBITURY

Former Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita dies aged 76

- The former President of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, who was ousted in a military coup, has passed away. Mr Keita had ruled Mali for seven years, since September 2013, till he was overthrown in a military coup in August 2020. He had also served as prime minister of the country from 1994 to 2000. He had promised to restore Mali's honour as a model for

democracy in West Africa as he campaigned as a unifying figure in his fractured country, pledging “zero tolerance” for corruption.

Padma Shri awardee, eminent social activist Shanti Devi dies in Odisha

- Odisha’s social worker and Padma Shri awardee Shanti Devi, who was remembered as the voice of the poor, has passed away. She was 88. She was also called Lugdi Devi. She was known for her dedication towards the underprivileged community and restoring peace in the Maoist-affected areas in Odisha. She has received the prestigious Padma Shri award from President Ram Nath Kovind on November 9, 2021.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Mrs World 2022: Mrs America Shaylyn Ford Takes The Crown; UAE & Jordan Runner Ups

- 37 Years old Shaylyn Ford was crowned as the winner of Mrs World 2022. She was crowned by the outgoing queen Kate Schneider from Ireland. Mrs Jordan Jaclyn Stapp & Mrs UAE Debanjali Kamstra were the runner up. Shaylyn Ford represented America in the pageant and battled out 57 other contestants from across the globe to claim the title. This is the 8th time an American representative won the title of Mrs. World.
- Shaylyn Ford hails from Granville, Ohio, USA. She won the annual Mrs American pageant on November 19, 2021. She is a professional makeup artist, who has worked in every setting, from movie sets to make-a-wish projects. She has been married to her pastor husband for the past seven years and has three children. She also serves as a charitable director and does a lot of volunteer work to bring services to special needs families.

India's Navdeep Kaur wins Best National Costume award for her Kundalini Chakra dress at Mrs World 2022

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

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INTERNATIONAL

Indian, Russian Navies carry out joint exercise in Arabian Sea

- Indian Navy and Russian Navy undertook PASSEX exercises at the port of Cochin, in the Arabian Sea. The Indian Navy’s indigenously designed and built guided-missile destroyer, INS Kochi, took part in the exercise. Russian Federation Navy was represented by RFS Admiral Tributs.
- Two other Russian naval ships Russian Naval Missile Cruiser Varyag, and Russian Tanker Boris Butoma were also accompanied. The exercise showcased cohesiveness and interoperability

between the two navies and included tactical manoeuvres, cross-deck helicopter operations and seamanship activities.

NATIONAL

World's Largest Khadi National Flag To Be Displayed At 1971 War Site

- The world's largest national flag, made of Khadi fabric was put to display to celebrate the "Army Day" on January 15, 2022. It was displayed at Longewala, along the India – Pakistan Border in Jaisalmer. Longewala was the centre stage of the historic battle of 1971 between India and Pakistan. It will be the fifth public display of the Khadi flag. 70 khadi artisans prepared this flag in 49 days. Its making has created about 3500 man-hours of additional work for Khadi artisans and allied workers.
- The Monumental National Flag is 225 feet long and 150 feet wide. It is approximately 1400 kgs in weight.
- 4500 meters of hand-woven, hand-spun, Khadi cotton bunting has been used to make the flag. It covers an area of 33, 750 square feet. The Ashok Chakra in the flag has a diameter of 30 feet.

January 16 to be celebrated as National Startup Day: PM Modi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared to mark 16th January as 'National Start-up Day'. The announcement was made by PM Modi on January 15, 2022, via video conferencing during a week-long event "Celebrating Innovation Ecosystem" as a part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Prime Minister interacted with more than 150 startups across different sectors, during the event.
- The startups, categorised under six groups, gave presentations to the Prime Minister on six themes — 'growing from roots, 'nudging the DNA', 'from local to global, 'technology of future', 'building champions in manufacturing' and 'sustainable development.
- The Prime Minister was of the view Indian startups can easily make it to the global stage and reach other countries and told the young entrepreneurs: "Don't just keep your dreams local, make them global. Remember this mantra — let's Innovate for India, innovate from India".

SPORTS

Tasnim Mir becomes first Indian to claim world no. 1 status in u-19 girls singles

- Tasnim Mir became the first Indian to grab World no 1 in Under-19 (U-19) Girls Singles category with 10,810 points in the latest Badminton World Federation (BWF) Junior rankings. She is followed by Mariia Golubeva from Russia and Lucia Rodriguez from Spain. In 2021, she won 3 Junior International Tournaments held in Bulgaria, France and Belgium, which helped her climb up for No.1 position. The World No.1 position in Boy's Singles is shared by Lakshya Sen, Siril Verma and Aditya Joshi.

Former West Indies Cricket Captain Clive Lloyd Receives Knighthood

- Former West Indies Captain Clive Lloyd received Knighthood from Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge at Windsor Castle, for his services towards the game of cricket. On the same day, England's world cup-winning captain Eoin Morgan was awarded with CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) by Prince William for his services towards the game of cricket. The CBE is the highest-ranking Order of the British Empire award, followed by OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) and then MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire).

- A knighthood is a title that is given to a man by a British king or queen for his achievements or his service to his country. A man who has been given a knighthood can put 'Sir' in front of his name instead of 'Mr'.

India Open: Lakshya Sen stuns world champion Loh Kean Yew to win maiden Super 500 title

- Indian badminton player Lakshya Sen has defeated World Champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore, in the men's singles final of India Open 2022 to secure his maiden Super 500 title. The 20-year-old Sen gained victory over Yew in straight games 24-22, 21-17. The 2022 India Open (badminton), officially Yonex-Sunrise India Open 2022, was held at the K. D. Jadhav Indoor Hall in New Delhi, India, from 11 to 16 January 2022.

16th 'India Digital Summit' organised by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Piyush Goyal virtually addressed the 16th India Digital Summit, 2022. The two-day virtual event was organised on January 11 and 12, 2022 by the Internet And Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). The theme of the summit was "Supercharging Startups".
- India Digital Summit is the oldest event of the digital industry in India. During the event, the Minister unveiled 'LEAP' as the way forward to further strengthen our Startups ecosystem. LEAP stands for "Leverage, Encourage, Access & Promote".

OBITURY

Kathak maestro Pandit Birju Maharaj passes away at 83

- Legendary Kathak dancer, Pandit Birju Maharaj has passed away at the age of 83. A recipient of the country's second-highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan, he was fondly called Pandit-ji or Maharaj-ji by his disciples and legions of followers and was one of India's best-known artistes.
- Birju Maharaj was a descendant of the Maharaj family of Kathak dancers, which includes his two uncles, Shambhu Maharaj and Lachhu Maharaj, and his father and guru, Acchan Maharaj. Birju Maharaj was also a singer par excellence, having command over Thumri, Dadra, Bhajan and Ghazal.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

RBI releases Annual Report of Ombudsman Schemes, 2020-21

- Reserve Bank of India has released the Annual Report of the Ombudsman Schemes for 2020-21, which has been prepared for the 9-month period (July 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021) in alignment with the change in the Financial Year of RBI from 'July – June' to 'April – March' with effect from July 1, 2020. The Annual Report covers the activities under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 (BOS), the Ombudsman Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies, 2018 (OSNBFC) and the Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions, 2019 (OSDT).
- The volume of complaints received under all the 3 Ombudsman Schemes increased by 22.27 percent on an annualized basis and stood at 3,03,107.
- The complaints received at BOS from July 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021, stood at 2,73,204
- The complaints received at OSNBFCs stood at 26,957 during July 1, 2020-March 31, 2021
- The number of complaints received at the OSDT rose to 2,946 during July 1, 2020-March 31, 2021.

Yes Mutual Fund rechristened as White Oak Capital Mutual Fund

- The name of YES Asset Management has been rechristened as WhiteOak Capital Asset Management and therefore the name of YES Mutual Fund has been changed to WhiteOak Capital Mutual Fund. The change in the names are effective from January 12, 2022. White Oak got the license to run a mutual fund. White Oak Capital group provides investment management and advisory services for equity assets of over Rs 42,000 crore.
- In November 2021, White Oak Capital Group, through its subsidiary, GPL Finance and Investments, acquired the mutual fund business, Yes Asset Management, of Yes Bank. The White Oak Capital group provides investment management and advisory services for Indian equity investors.

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INTERNATIONAL

Philippines confirms move to acquire BrahMos cruise missiles in \$375 mn deal

- Philippines has become the first foreign country to place an order for the purchase of the BrahMos Shore-Based cruise Missile System for its navy. This agreement will give a big boost to India's defence manufacturing system. The estimated deal cost is worth \$374.9 million. The BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd will supply the missile, under the Shore-Based Anti-Ship Missile System Acquisition Project, for Philippine Navy.

Nicaragua's Ortega sworn in for fourth term as U.S., EU impose sanctions

- Nicaraguan President José Daniel Ortega Saavedra, leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), was sworn in for a new presidential term. This marks his 5th term and 4th consecutive term as the President of Nicaragua. He will remain in the office until January 2027. He received the presidential sash from Gustavo Porras, head of the National Assembly. Ortega's first stint in power ended in 1990 and upon returning as president in 2007, he quickly set about gaining control of key state institutions.

NATIONAL

India grants financial assistance of over USD 900 million to Sri Lanka to overcome forex crisis

- India has announced financial assistance of USD 900 million loans to Sri Lanka to help the island nation in building up its depleted foreign reserves and for food imports. It must be noted that Sri Lanka is currently facing a shortage of almost all essential commodities due to a shortage of dollars to pay for the imports. India is extending its support through the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Gopal Baglay met Cabraal and expressed India's strong support to Sri Lanka in the wake of RBI extending over USD 900 million facilities.
- These comprise deferment of Asian Clearing Union settlement of over USD 509 million and currency swap of USD 400 million. Sri Lanka is currently experiencing a shortage of almost all essentials due to a shortage of dollars to pay for the imports. Additionally, power cuts are imposed at peak hours as the state power entity is unable to obtain fuel to run turbines. The state fuel entity has stopped oil supplies as the electricity board has large unpaid bills. The only refinery was shut as it was unable to pay dollars for crude imports.

Meenakashi Lekhi launches 'North East on Wheels Expedition' to promote Culture of Northeastern States

- Minister of State for Culture, Meenakashi Lekhi has launched the 'North East on Wheels Expedition' in New Delhi to promote the Culture of Northeastern States. The Bike Expedition is scheduled between 8th to 16th April this year to mark the celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- 75 Bikers participating in this expedition will be selected from all over the country and will cover about 9000 km in the North East Region in 6 groups. The expedition will also promote the Dekho Apna Desh initiative of the Ministry of Tourism. The Riders will also carry the message of the importance of Road Safety.

20th Dhaka International Film Festival Inaugurated

- The 20th Dhaka International Film Festival begins at Dhaka, Bangladesh. The festival will showcase 225 films from 70 countries under 10 categories will be screened across various venues in Dhaka between 15-23 January. The film festival is being organized in a hybrid mode with many films being streamed online during the festival. The DIFF will also organise the 8th edition of the 'Women in Cinema' international conference, as well as the 4th edition of the 'West meets East' screenplay lab during the festival.
- The Indian entries to the 20th DIFF include films like Koozhangal directed by P S Vinothraj, Avijatrik directed by Subhrajit Mitra, Mayar Jonjal directed by Indranil Roychowdhury, and Aandaal directed by Shareef Easa among the 35 entries.
- The Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF) is organised by the Rainbow film Society established in 1977. The DIFF was started in 1992. The festival will have ten sections including the Asian Competition Section, Retrospective, Tribute, Bangladesh panorama, Wide Angle, Cinema of the World, Children's Film, Spiritual film, Women Filmmakers section and short and independent films.

SPORTS

Virat Kohli quits as India's Test captaincy after seven years

- Virat Kohli has stepped down as the Test captain of the Indian national cricket team after seven years. He first led the national side in Test cricket in 2014 against Australia. He guided the team to an unprecedented back-to-back Test series wins Down Under. Kohli also thanked former head coach Ravi Shastri and former captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni in his statement.
- In 2021, India also finished as the runners-up in the inaugural ICC World Test Championship. Kohli had recently stepped down as India's T20I captain and was subsequently removed as the ODI captain ahead of the South Africa tour. India also became a top-ranked Test side in the world.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Indifi, GPay join hands to offer instant digital credit to SMEs

- Small businesses-focused online lending platform Indifi Technologies has collaborated with Google Pay to provide instant loans to eligible medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs) merchants through the Google Pay platform. The borrowing process is entirely digital and eligible merchants on the Google Pay for the Business app can click on loan offerings from Indifi and submit an application online. The loans will be in the range of Rs 2.5 to Rs 3 lakh.

- With a 35 per cent share of monthly UPI volumes, Google Pay has been growing its financial services play over the past year like other payments leaders in India. It already provides loans and short-term credit to individuals and small merchants in tie-ups with IIFL Loans, CASHe, and ZestMoney, among others.

BANKING AND ECONOMIC

Paytm Payments Bank leads UPI beneficiary chart: SBI biggest remitter in December

- Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL) became the largest and fastest-growing UPI beneficiary bank in India. It becomes the first beneficiary bank in the country to achieve the landmark of over 926 million UPI transactions in a single month. Beneficiary banks are the banks of the account holder who is receiving money. Paytm Payments Bank has also gained rapid traction as a remitter bank for UPI payments.
- While State Bank of India (SBI) topped the chart of being the biggest remitter in December 2021, according to data released by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). State Bank of India followed PPBL as the second-largest beneficiary with 664.89 million transactions.

