

## Weekly Current Affairs PDF January 03 to January 09, 2021

### Current Affairs PDF- January 09, 2021

#### INTERNATIONAL

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

- Indian-American Dr Raj Iyer has taken over as the first Chief Information Officer of the US Army, after the Pentagon created the position in July 2020. Dr Raj Iyer is one of the highest-ranking Indian-American civilians in the US Department of Defence.
- Dr Iyer holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering 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.

#### NATIONAL

##### India to chair 3 key subsidiary bodies of UN Security Council

- The Permanent Representative of India to the UN, T S Tirumurti has announced that India has been asked to chair three important committees of the UN Security Council (UNSC), during its tenure as a non-permanent member of the powerful 15-nation UN body.

##### The three highly significant committees include:

1. Taliban Sanctions Committee
  2. Counter-Terrorism Committee
  3. Libyan Sanctions Committee
- Among these, India will chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee of UNSC in 2022, which coincides with the 75th anniversary of India's independence. India began its two-year term at UNSC from January 01, 2021. It is the eighth time that the country has joined UNSC as the non-permanent member. In 2021, along with India, Norway, Kenya, Ireland and Mexico joined as non-permanent members in the Council.

##### PM Modi dedicates new Section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated the 306-km New Rewari-New Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) to the nation. Through video-conferencing, Modi also flagged off the world's first double-stack long-haul 1.5-km-long container train hauled by electric traction from New Ateli-New Kishangarh.
- The New Rewari-New Madar section of the WDFC is situated in Haryana, approximately 79 km in Mahendragarh and Rewari districts and Rajasthan approximately 227 km in Jaipur, Ajmer, Sikar, Nagaur, and Alwar districts.

##### Karnataka Government launches Krishi Sanjeevani Vans to test soil, water

- The Chief Minister of Karnataka, B.S. Yediyurappa flagged off 40 Krishi Sanjeevani vans in Bengaluru. These vans have been launched by the state Agriculture Department with Central

assistance under National Krishi Vikas Yojana to take up this novel programme.

- To take labs to the agriculture fields, study the conditions and address the needs of the farmers about pest control, the fertility of the soil, weeds and suitable crops in the existing conditions so that farmers get support for their farming techniques.
- Depending on the soil, water and pests inflicting the crops, the Agriculture Department personnel can suggest remedies.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Pakistan successfully test fires "Fatah-1" Rocket System

- The Pakistan Army successfully conducted the test flight of an indigenously developed Guided Multi Launch Rocket System, Fatah-1. The Fatah-1 weapon system is capable of precisely delivering conventional warheads deep into "enemy territory."
- According to Director General of Army, Media Wing, Major General Babar Iftikhar, Fatah-1 weapon system can hit targets up to a range of 140 km.

## OBITUARY

### Veteran Professor Chitra Ghosh passes away

- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's niece and eminent academician Chitra Ghosh has passed away. She made pioneering contributions to academics and community services and dedicated her life in serving the people, teaching & inspiring the youth.
- Professor Bose was the former head of the political science department at Lady Brabourne College in Kolkata.

## APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

### JK Maheshwari sworn in as Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court

- Justice Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari was sworn in as the new Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court. Governor Ganga Prasad administered the oath of office to Justice Maheshwari during a function held in Raj Bhavan.
- Chief Justice Arup Kumar Goswami of the Sikkim High Court has now been transferred for appointment as the Andhra Pradesh High Court's Chief Justice.

### Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia appointed as Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court

- Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia appointed as Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court informed the Ministry of Law and Justice. The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind in the exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution of India, appointed Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Judge of the Uttarakhand High Court, as Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court.
- Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, was enrolled as an Advocate on July 7, 1986, and practised in the Allahabad and Uttarakhand High Courts in Civil, Constitutional, Service, and Labour matters and has specialized in Service and Constitutional matters. He was appointed as a permanent judge of the Uttarakhand High Court on November 1, 2008.

### BOOKS AND AUTHORS

#### RBI officer Giridharan pens novel 'Right Under our Nose'

- A general manager at RBI, R Giridharan has authored his debut book "Right Under our Nose". In "Right Under Your Nose", a murderer eliminates scientists right under the nose of the police and leaves forensics baffled.
- In response, the chief minister calls upon Vijay, who is given an impossible deadline to solve the case before Parliament resumes in a week.

### BANKING AND ECONOMY

#### IHS Markit: Indian economy to rebound with 8.9% growth in FY22

- London-based financial services company IHS Markit has projected the Indian economy to rebound by 8.9 per cent in the fiscal year 2021-22, beginning April 2021. This upward estimate is based on the backdrop of the significant improvement in domestic economic activity in the fourth quarter of 2020 by India.

## Current Affairs PDF- January 08, 2021

### SPORTS

#### Claire Polosak set to become first female match official in men's Test match

- Australia's Claire Polosak is set to become the first female match official in a men's Test match when she takes up the fourth umpire's role in the third Test between India and Australia. The 32-year-old from New South Wales has already earned the distinction of being the first woman on-field umpire in a men's ODI match in ICC's Division 2 league between Namibia and Oman played at the Windhoek in 2019.
- The duties of a fourth umpire include bringing on the new ball, carrying drinks on to the field for the umpires, checking the batteries in the light meter, observing the pitch during the lunch and tea intervals to make sure there is no interference, and bringing on new bails.
- The fourth umpire can also take over the third umpire's position if something happens to one of the on-field umpires, in which case the third umpire takes over on-field duties.
- As per ICC rules for Test matches, the fourth umpire is appointed by the home cricket board from their nominees to the International Panel of ICC Umpires and from the host country.

#### Khelo India Ice Hockey Tournament begins in Chiktan, Kargil

- Khelo India Ice Hockey Tournament organised at Chiktan in Kargil, Ladakh. For the first time, the women team of Chiktan also participated in the Khelo India Games in Kargil district. There are 13 teams from different villages of Chiktan participating in the tournament, which include 11 men's teams and 2 women's teams.
- The tournament was inaugurated by SDM Shakar Chiktan and the Chief Guest of the event Kacho Asgar Ali Khan in the presence of ZPEO Chiktan Ghulam Rasool along with in-charge police post-Chiktan.

## OBITUARY

### Oldest living first-class cricketer Alan Burgess passes away

- The world's oldest living first-class cricketer Alan Burgess has passed away at the age of 100. A right-hand batsman and slow left-arm bowler, Alan appeared in 11 first-class matches for Canterbury from 1940/41 to 1951/52 and also for New Zealand Services in England in 1945. He took 6-52 on debut against Otago at Lancaster Park in a match that began on Christmas Day 1940.
- Alan Burgess was a tank driver for New Zealand's forces in England during the Second World War. Following his death, India's Raghunath Chandorkar is now the oldest first-class cricketer alive.

## APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

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

- The senior-most judge of Delhi High Court, Justice Hima Kohli has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of Telangana High Court. She is the first woman to be sworn in as CJ of Telangana HC.
- Justice Kohli was administered the oath of office by Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan. She replaces CJ Raghvendra Singh Chauhan, who has been appointed as the CJ of Uttarakhand HC.

### Biden selects Judge Merrick Garland for attorney general

- President-elect Joe Biden will nominate federal appeals judge Merrick Garland to be the next U.S. attorney general. He serves as a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, one of 13 federal appeals courts.
- Vanita Gupta, the head of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, will be nominated by Biden as the Associate Attorney General, the No. 3 people in the department.

### Arup Kumar Goswami sworn in as CJ of Andhra Pradesh High Court

- Justice Goswami was transferred from the Sikkim High Court a few days ago. He replaced J.K. Maheswari who has been posted as the Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court.
- Chief Justice Goswami began his career as an advocate with the Bar Council of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura in 1985.

### Alex Ellis appointed new British high commissioner to India

- Alexander Ellis has been appointed British high commissioner to India and will take up the key role later this month. He has held several posts, including deputy national security adviser in the cabinet office, director-general in the department for exiting the European Union, and the British ambassador to Portugal.
- Ellis succeeds Philip Barton. In August 2020, Barton was promoted as permanent undersecretary in the UK's newly formed foreign, commonwealth and development office.

### Karan Bajwa to head Google Cloud in Asia Pacific

- Google Cloud has announced the elevation of Karan Bajwa as its new leader for the Asia Pacific. Presently, Bajwa leads Google Cloud in India. He will lead all regional revenue and go-to-market operations for Google Cloud, including on Google Cloud Platform (GCP) and Google Workspace. He succeeds Rick Harshman who leaves the organisation for a new opportunity.

- At present, Bajwa is based in Gurgaon but will relocate to Singapore in 2021. He will continue to lead Google Cloud in India until a new senior leader for the business is appointed.

### BOOKS AND AUTHORS

#### A book on India's tours Down Under by R. Kaushik

- A book titled 'India's 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia' and one which reflects on India's previous 12 tours Down Under, was launched.
- The book, a Bradman Museum initiative, is authored by senior cricket scribe R. Kaushik, and it chronicles a rivalry that has given a fillip to Test cricket.

### BANKING AND ECONOMY

#### IDFC Mutual Fund unveils new investor awareness campaign #PaisonKoRokoMat

- IDFC Mutual Funds has launched its latest pan-India investor awareness campaign titled #PaisonKoRokoMat. With this new campaign, IDFC Mutual Fund aims to shift the conversation regarding wealth creation from the traditional to the contemporary.
- This new campaign of IDFC Mutual Fund urges savers to become investors and explore the smart and modern mutual fund vehicle for their investments.
- The 360-degree campaign focuses on looking beyond the traditional ways of growing your money and using your goals to allocate your money across asset classes and investment solutions.
- The campaign has been conceptualised and created by TBWAIndia.

#### PNB Collaborates with IIT Kanpur to set up Fintech Innovation Centre

- Punjab National Bank has partnered with IIT Kanpur and the Foundation for Innovation & Research in Science & Technology (FIRST) to set up a 'Fintech Innovation Centre (FIC)' at the institute's campus. PNB and IIT Kanpur will jointly work to set up this innovation centre as a vehicle for research and development of technological solutions, with the help of FIRST, to address challenges and explore opportunities in the Banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) space.
- PNB intends to create new products or solutions with technological innovations by creating an FIC involving IITK's experienced faculty members with the help of FIRST.
- The collaboration of technical prowess from IIT Kanpur and financial expertise of PNB makes it an apt "Fin-Tech" partnership that will help build innovations and entrepreneurial excellence.
- The FIC will be supported by a holistic ecosystem of financial institutions, academia, VC funds, technology companies and key government organizations.

## Current Affairs PDF- January 07, 2021

### INTERNATIONAL

#### Japan to launch the first wood-based satellite by 2023

- Japan's Sumitomo Forestry company and Kyoto University aims to launch the world's first wood-based space satellite by 2023 to combat the problem of space junk. Currently, the initiative is in the nascent stage as several wooden materials are being tested by the research team to find a suitable one for space missions. It is also reported that the team is also working towards

developing wooden materials extremely resistant to temperature changes and sunlight.

- According to the European Space Agency (ESA) statistical model, there are more than 130 million pieces of anthropogenic space debris—waste residue due to human activities—smaller than a millimetre around our planet. The debris can travel at a speed of more than 22,300 mph and can impact other satellites.

## NATIONAL

### PM Modi inaugurates Kochi-Mangaluru natural gas pipeline

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 450-km Kochi-Mangaluru natural gas pipeline built at a cost of Rs 3,000 crore via video conferencing. The event marks an important milestone towards the creation of One Nation One Gas Grid. Natural gas pipeline network will be doubled in 5-6 years and CNG stations will be raised to 10,000 from current 1,500.
- The pipeline will carry natural gas from Kochi in Kerala through Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargod districts to Mangaluru in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka.
- It has been built by GAIL (India) Limited. It will carry natural gas from the LNG Regasification Terminal at Kochi. The pipeline will supply environment-friendly PNG.
- The pipeline grid will help improve clean energy access as well as also aid in the development of city gas projects.

### MP Govt launches 'Launch Pad Scheme' to make youth self-reliant

- The government of Madhya Pradesh has launched a 'Launch Pad Scheme' for the boys and girls coming out of child care institutions and having completed 18 years of age. This scheme has been launched by the Women and Child Development Department of the state with the objective to provide a platform to these youth, through which they will be able to become self-reliant by continuing their education and training.
- The District Administration will provide space to these youths for the opening of coffee shops, stationery, photocopying, computer typing and DTP work.
- All the 52 districts of the state have been divided into 5 clusters with headquarters at Indore, Sagar, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Bhopal.
- An amount of Rs 6 lakh will be provided by the Women and Child Development Department for the installation of each launch pad.
- These launch pads will be operated through non-governmental organizations.

### 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica flagged off

- The 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica was flagged off on January 05, 2021, from Mormugao Port, Goa. The chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasiliy Golovnin has been chosen for the prestigious 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica (ISEA) mission journey and will reach Antarctica in 30 days.
- The expedition journey has 43 members onboard.
- India's major fuel supplier, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) has supplied Jet A1 fuel, lubes and Marine Gas Oil (MGO) for the mission.

- Apart from its scientific mission, this expedition shall carry out the humanitarian responsibility of bringing back the 48-strong winter crew from their 15-month tenure, and resupply the bases with food, fuel, provisions and spares for operations and maintenance of life support systems.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### India & Israel successfully test MRSAM air defence system

- India and Israel successfully tested a Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) defence system. The MRSAM missile defence system has been developed jointly by DRDO and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) to deal with airstrikes by enemy countries. Currently being used by all three wings of the Indian Army as well as Israel Defence Forces (IDF), the air and missile defence system was a joint venture of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the IAI.
- MRSAM is an air and missile defence system that can destroy enemy aircraft from a distance of 50 to 70 km.
- It provides ultimate protection against a variety of aerial platforms.
- The MRSAM includes command and control, an advanced phased-array radar, mobile launchers and interceptors with advanced RF seeker.

## OBITUARY

### World Cup winning hockey player Michael Kindo passes away

- Olympic bronze and World Cup-winning hockey player Michael Kindo passed away. He played 3 Men's Hockey World Cup in 1971, 1973 & 1975 where India bagged bronze, silver & gold medals.
- He also represented in 1972 Olympic Games where India secured a bronze medal. Kindo received the Arjuna Award in 1972.

## APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

### Lt Gen Shantanu Dayal to take charge as Deputy Chief of Army Staff

- Lt Gen Shantanu Dayal has been named the new Deputy Chief of Army Staff (DCOAS). Lt Gen Dayal is the Corps Commander of the Tejpur based 4 Corps. He will take the place of Lt Gen SS Hasabnis who superannuated on December 31 as soon as his replacement arrives.
- Indian Army has undergone a major reshuffle at the top within the Army Headquarters and at the various other formations including the Corps Commanders, administrative and training institutions witnessing the change of guard.
- The other significant change is in the newly-created Department of Military Affairs (DMA) with Chief of Defence Staff as its first Secretary. Lt Gen Taranjit Singh, the first Army officer to join as the Additional Secretary in the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) under the Ministry of Defence.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### Journalist Day Observed in Maharashtra on 6 January

- The Journalist Day is observed by Maharashtra state government on 6th January every year in

the memory of late journalist Balshastri Jambhekar. The first newspaper in the Marathi language named 'Darpan', was published on January 6, 1832, the date which also marks the birth anniversary of Balshastri Jambhekar.

- Balshastri Jambhekar is also known as 'The Father of Marathi Journalism', for his efforts in starting journalism in Marathi language, in the form of first Marathi newspaper and first Marathi monthly.

## SUMMITS AND MOU'S

### Tata Power partners with SIDBI to offer easy & affordable financing scheme for MSME

- Tata Power, India's largest integrated power company, announced its partnership with SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) to offer easy and affordable financing scheme for MSME customers in the rooftop solar segment. This scheme will empower MSMEs to adopt sustainable energy for their businesses and promote greener.
- Easy and affordable financing has been one of the barriers for penetration of Solar in the MSME sector in the country.
- In order to address this challenge, Tata Power and SIDBI have joined hands to design a unique Solar financing solution for the MSME customers helping them switch to rooftop solar without any collateral at an interest rate less than 10%.
- This will also be complemented with a quick sanction and disbursement process (within 7 days with disbursement in 4 days).
- This financing scheme is exclusively for MSME customers of Tata Power for both off-grid and on-grid connections.

## BANKING AND ECONOMY

### RBI introduces Legal Entity Identifier for NEFT, RTGS transactions above Rs 50 crore

- The Reserve Bank of India has introduced Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) for all payment transactions of value Rs 50 crore and above undertaken by entities (non-individuals) via Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT). Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) are the Centralised Payment Systems operated by RBI. This instruction shall come into effect from April 01, 2021.
- The Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions worldwide.
- Reserve Bank has introduced LEI in a phased manner for participants in the over the counter (OTC) derivative and non-derivative markets as also for large corporate borrowers.
- LEI can be obtained from Legal Entity Identifier India Ltd. (LEIL) which is wholly owned subsidiary of Clearing Corporation of India Ltd (CCIL).

### World Bank Projects Indian Economy to Contract By 9.6% in 2020-21

- World Bank has projected the Indian economy to contract by 9.6 per cent in the fiscal year 2020-21, in its Global Economic Prospects report. World Bank estimates Growth to recover to 5.4 per cent in 2021.
- Apart from this, the global economy is estimated to expand by 4 per cent in 2021 by the World

Bank. According to the report, global growth is projected to moderate to 3.8 per cent in 2022.

#### **SMCB becomes India's 1st urban co-operative bank to transition to SFB**

- Uttar Pradesh-based, Shivalik Mercantile Co-operative Bank (SMCB) has become the first urban co-operative bank (UCB) in India to receive a licence from RBI to operate as a Small Finance Bank (SFB). The RBI had given an 18-month timeline to commence business.
- SMCB received the commercial banking license from banking regulator Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on January 06, 2021, to transition to an SFB, under the voluntary transition scheme. The Shivalik Small Finance Bank (SSFB) will start its banking operations from April 2021.
- SSFB operates through 31 branches and over 250 banking agents in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, and Uttarakhand with 400,000 customers. As on March 31, 2020, the total deposit base of the bank stood at Rs 1,140 crore and total advances stood at Rs 719 crore.

## **Current Affairs PDF- January 06, 2021**

### **INTERNATIONAL**

#### **Argentine filmmaker Pablo Cesar to head 51st IFFI's International Jury**

- The International Jury for 51st edition of International Film Festival of India has been announced with eminent filmmakers from across the world. According to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, the Jury will comprise Pablo Cesar of Argentina as Chairman, Prasanna Vithanage of Sri Lanka, Abu Bakr Shawky of Austria, Priyadarshan of India and Rubaiyat Hossain of Bangladesh.
- Pablo Cesar is an Argentine filmmaker. He has contributed to the African cinema by making the critically acclaimed films, Equinox, the Garden of the Roses, Los dioses de agua and Aphrodite, the Garden of the Perfumes.

### **NATIONAL**

#### **Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurates Ramalingeswara Park in Berhampur**

- The Ramalingeswar Park was inaugurated in Berhampur of Ganjam district in Odisha on Monday by Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik through Video Conferencing. The park has added glitter to the Silk City.
- Beautification of the park is a 5T initiative by the Government of Odisha. This is said to be the New Year gift to the residents of the Silk City from the Chief Minister.
- Situated in the middle of Berhampur city the Ramalingeswara Park has been beautified with a cost of Rs. 12 crore. Spread in 1500 sq. ft area the park has a huge statute of Lord Shiva in the centre of the pond. Besides, the water fountains have added beauty to the park.

#### **Ramesh Pokhriyal launched Toycathon-2021 to promote manufacturing of toys**

- The Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and Union Minister WCD and Textiles Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani jointly launched Toycathon-2021 and the Toycathon Portal. Toycathon is being organized to develop India as the global Toy manufacturing hub. Toycathon will provide a

platform to conceptualize innovative toys based on the Indian value system which will inculcate the positive behaviour and good value among the children.

**The Toycathon will be based on nine themes:**

1. Indian Culture, History, Knowledge of India and Ethos;
2. Learning, Education and Schooling;
3. Social and human values;
4. Occupations & specific fields;
5. Environment;
6. Divyang ;
7. Fitness and sport;
8. Out of the box, creative and logical thinking and
9. Rediscovering/redesigning traditional Indian toys.

## APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

### GJC elects Ashish Pethe as New Chairman

- The All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC), the national apex body of the gems and jewellery industry, has announced the appointment of Ashish Pethe as chairman and Saiyam Mehra as vice chairman for a period of two years. Pethe has been closely associated with GJC and was the Zonal Chairman West, which he will continue even after this new position.
- The entire e-Voting election process was conducted by an authorised independent person (Chief Election Authority), and the voting platform was created by a digital agency, both appointed by GJC.
- All India Gem And Jewellery Domestic Council is a national trade federation for the promotion and growth of trade in gems and jewellery across India. GJC represents over 6,00,000 players comprising manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, distributors, laboratories, gemologists, designers, and allied services to the domestic gems and jewellery industry.

### Sanjay Kapoor elected All India Chess Federation president

- Sanjay Kapoor was elected president of the All India Chess Federation (AICF) while Bharat Singh Chauhan retained the secretary's post. Kapoor, representing Uttar Pradesh Chess Association, defeated incumbent PR Venketrama Raja in a close contest. Kapoor received 33 votes as against 31 of Raja.
- Chauhan beat Ravindra Dongre 35-29. Apart from the president, secretary and treasurer, six vice-presidents and six joint secretaries were also elected.

## OBITUARY

### Former Maharashtra Minister Vilas Patil Undalkar passes away

- Former Maharashtra cabinet minister and seven-time Congress MLA Vilas Patil Undalkar has passed away. The veteran Congressman, Undalkar, who was popularly known as 'kaka', was elected seven times from Karad-South Assembly constituency for a record 35 consecutive years, from 1980 to 2014.
- Undalkar held the Cooperation and Law and Justice portfolios in the State Cabinets during the

previous Congress-led state governments.

### SUMMITS AND MOU'S

#### Trifed Signs MoU with Akhil Bhartiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram for Setting up of TRIFOOD Parks in Madhya Pradesh

- Continuing its mission to improve the livelihoods of the tribals(both forest dwellers and artisans) and work towards tribal empowerment, TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs has decided to explore a convergence and build a partnership with Akhil Bhartiya Vanvasi Kalyan Kendra, a pioneering organization that has been working for the welfare of tribals in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand since 1952.
- In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was exchanged between the two organisations on January 3, 2021 to work together for setting up of TRIFOOD Parks in 5 districts in Madhya Pradesh.

#### Indian Army inks pact with Goa Shipyard to get 12 fast patrol boats

- Indian Army has inked a contract with Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) to procure 12 Fast Patrol Boats for surveillance and patrolling of large water bodies, including those in high altitude areas like Pangong Tso lake in Ladakh. Pangong Tso's 134-km length is divided into eight 'fingers', military parlance for mountain spurs jutting into the water body that is contested by both sides. The lake is frozen with the onset of winters, and the Army plans to deploy around two dozen such boats by next summer.
- The indigenously-built boats will be delivered by May 2021 by Defence sector Public Sector Undertaking (PSU), GSL.
- The GSL will also carry out maintenance of these boats for four years.
- The need for these new high-speed boats to patrol the Pangong Tso lake was felt in the wake of the military tussle between the Indian and the Chinese troops, leading to the tense situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

### BANKING AND ECONOMY

#### World Bank approves \$105 million loan to improve Waterways in West Bengal

- The World Bank has signed a \$105 million project with the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal to improve the inland water transport infrastructure in Kolkata, West Bengal. The \$105 million loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a maturity of 17 years, including a grace period of 7 years.
- The West Bengal Inland Water Transport, Logistics and Spatial Development Project will improve passenger and freight movement across the Hooghly river as well as improve accessibility in the Kolkata Metropolitan Area, enhance the quality of life of its residents and contribute to the growth of the state's logistics sector. The project will cover the five most populous districts of southern West Bengal, including its urban agglomeration — the Kolkata Metropolitan Area (KMA) where around 30 million people or one-third of West Bengal's population live.
- In the first phase, the project will enhance the capacity and improve the safety of the Inland

Water Transport system; including rehabilitating existing jetties, buying new ferries with enhanced design; and installing electronic gates in 40 locations.

- In the second phase, it will support long-term investments for passenger movements, including in terminals and jetties; improve the design of the inland water transport vessels; ensure night navigation on the most hazardous and trafficked routes and crossing points, and encourage the private sector to invest in Ro-Ro vessels that will allow easier movement of trucks across the Hooghly river.
- In addition, the project will facilitate disabled-friendly amenities, ensure women's safety and encourage women's employment in the IWT Department as well as with the ferry operators.

### **IDBI Bank launches video KYC facility for opening savings bank accounts**

- IDBI Bank announced the launch of video KYC account opening (VAO) facility for savings bank accounts. Through the facility, a customer can open a savings account with the lender from the convenience of his/her home or office as there are no physical forms to be filled or visits to be made to the branch.
- Video KYC is a quick and easy way to open a savings account from the comforts of your home. It ensures that the online journey for opening savings account remains safe, simple, and fast eliminating the need to visit the branch for KYC.

## **Current Affairs PDF- January 05, 2021**

### **INTERNATIONAL**

#### **U.S. Congress passes 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act'**

- The U.S. Congress has passed the 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' to increase the number of scholarships for Pakistani women in higher education under merit and needs-based programme. The bill was passed by the United States Senate by a voice vote on January 1. The bill now heads to the White House for U.S. President Donald Trump to sign into law.
- The bill requires the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to award at least 50% of scholarships under a Pakistan-based higher education scholarship programme to Pakistani women, from 2020 to 2022, across a range of academic disciplines and in accordance with existing eligibility criteria.
- The bill also requires USAID to consult with and leverage investments by the Pakistani private sector and Pakistani diaspora in the United States to improve and expand access to education programmes in Pakistan.

### **NATIONAL**

#### **Bajaj Auto becomes world's most valuable two-wheeler company**

- Indian multinational two-wheeler and three-wheeler manufacturing company, Bajaj Auto has become the most valuable two-wheeler company in the world, after it crossed a market capitalization of more than Rs. 1 lakh crore, on January 01, 2021.
- Bajaj's share price on NSE closed at Rs. 3,479 per share on the first day of 2021, leading to a market capitalization of more than Rs 1,00,670.76 crore. Thus, Bajaj Auto is not only the most

valued company in the two-wheeler segment but also the first-ever two-wheeler company in the world to have reached this market cap milestone.

### PM Modi inaugurates National Metrology Conclave 2021

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has addressed the National Metrology Conclave, via video conferencing on January 04, 2021. National Metrology Conclave 2021 was organised by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi, to mark its 75th year of inception.
- This year theme: 'Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation'.
- As a part of this conclave, PM Modi also dedicated 'National Atomic Timescale', and 'Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya' to the nation, and laid the foundation stone of the 'National Environmental Standards Laboratory'.

### Delhi government sets up Tamil Academy

- Delhi government Department of Art, Culture, and Language has set-up a Tamil academy to promote the language and culture of the southern state of Tamil Nadu. Delhi has a large population of people from Tamil Nadu and we want to present a platform to the people of Delhi to get a taste of the art and culture of Tamil Nadu.
- The Delhi government has appointed a former councillor and member of Delhi Tamil Sangam N Raja as the Vice-Chairman of the academy.
- The Department of Art, Culture, and Language of the Delhi govt has decided that the new academy will introduce various awards to promote and reward the good works of people in Tamil language and culture.
- The government will also provide language courses through this academy.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### GRSE delivers 8th landing craft utility ship to Indian Navy

- Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) has delivered the Landing Craft Utility (LCU) MK IV class vessel 'IN LCU L-58' (Yard 2099) to the Indian Navy. The amphibious ships, to be based in the strategic location of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which is close to various routes leading to the South China Sea. LCU L-58 is the final ship in the series of 8 LCUs being manufactured by GRSE for the Indian Navy.
- The LCU ships, equipped with state-of-the-art technology, were developed in-house with 90 per cent of its parts indigenously manufactured.
- These ships are very unique in their design and class in the world. A very specific kind of requirement was given by the Indian Navy — the speed of 15 knots, a displacement of 900- odd tonnes and a low draught for beaching in the shallowest of waters.
- The ships are designed to accommodate 216 personnel and have two indigenous CRN 91 guns to provide artillery fire support during landing operations.

## OBITUARY

### Ace mountaineer Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar passes away

- Ace mountaineer Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar, who helped India secure the Siachen Glacier, passed away. He was responsible for the success of Operation Meghdoot in 1984. He was the first Indian to climb Mount Nanda Devi. He climbed Mount Everest in 1965, Mount Blanc (highest peak in the Alps), and later Mount Kangchenchanga. He earned the nickname 'Bull' for relentlessly charging into everything he did.
- Col Kumar, who was awarded the Kirti Chakra, Padma Shri, Arjun Award and the McGregor medal, carried out multiple expeditions in the Siachen glacier area in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

### Former Union Minister Buta Singh passes away

- Former Union Minister and senior Rajasthan Congress leader Buta Singh passed away. The veteran politician Buta Singh served as Home Minister of India in the Rajiv Gandhi government from 1986 to 1989.
- Buta Singh had also served as the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. He was a four-time MP from Jalore-Sirohi Lok Sabha constituency. He served as the Chairperson of the National Commission For Scheduled Cast from 2007 to 2010.

## APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

### Pankaj Mithal sworn in as CJ of J&K, Ladakh Court

- Justice Pankaj Mithal has been appointed as the new Chief Justice (CJ) of the Common High Court for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh in Jammu on January 04, 2021.
- Chief justice Mithal has been appointed in view of the retirement of chief justice Gita Mittal recently. Chief Justice Mithal was administered the oath of office by Lieutenant Governor of J&k, Manoj Sinha.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

### Oscar nominee 'Another Round' to be opening movie at 51st IFFI

- The 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will open on 16th January, with the Indian premiere of the movie 'Another Round' by Thomas Vinterberg. The movie starring Cannes Best Actor Award winner Mads Mikkelsen is among a star-studded line up of movies being showcased at IFFI. The movie is also Denmark's official entry to the Oscars. The festival will also witness the World Premiere of 'Mehrunisa'. The film by Sandeep Kumar will premier mid-fest.
- The festival will close on 24th January with the India Premiere of the historical drama 'Wife of a Spy' by Kiyoshi Kurosawa.

### 51st IFFI is being organised from 16th to 24th January in Goa.

- This edition is being organised in a hybrid mode for the first time and will comprise of both online and in-person experience. The festival will be loaded with a line-up of famous movies with a total of 224 films from across the globe.

- This includes 21 non-feature films and 26 feature films under the Indian Panorama section. Media registration for the festival has opened recently and is available till 10th January.

## BANKING AND ECONOMY

### ADB approves \$100 million loan to upgrade power distribution system in Bengaluru

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide a USD 100 million (around Rs 730 crore) loan to modernise and upgrade the power distribution system in Bengaluru city. Besides the USD 100 million sovereign loans, ADB will provide a USD 90 million loan without sovereign guarantee for the project to Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd (BESCOM), one of the five state-owned distribution utilities in Karnataka.
- In parallel to underground distribution cables, over 2,800 km of fibre optical cables will be installed to strengthen communication network. Moving about 7,200 km of distribution lines underground will help reduce technical and commercial losses by about 30 per cent.
- The fibre optical cables will be used for smart metering systems, distribution automation system (DAS) in the distribution grid, and other communication networks.
- The project will install 1,700 automated ring main units adapted with a DAS to monitor and control the distribution line switch gears from the control centre.
- The loan will strengthen the capacity of BESCOM in operation and maintenance of underground cabling, environment and social safeguards, financial management and commercial financing. Improved financial management ca.

## Current Affairs PDF- January 04, 2021

### NATIONAL

#### India becomes co-chair of Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP)

- India has been chosen as the co-chair of the IUCN-supported Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP) for a period of three years till November 2023. India will replace South Korea, which held the post for 3 years until November 2020. As a co-chair, India would be responsible to assist other Asian countries in managing their protected areas. The APAP is chaired by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Asia and co-chaired by an APAP nation member on a rotational basis.
- The APAP was formally launched in 2014, at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Australia.
- It is a regional platform to assist governments and different stakeholders to collaborate for more practical administration of protected areas (PA) within the area.
- Currently, there are 21 members from 17 international locations.

#### DCGI gives final approval for Covid-19 vaccines of SII, Bharat Biotech

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has formally announced the final approval for Oxford-AstraZeneca "Covishield" and Bharat Biotech "Covaxin" vaccines against the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) for emergency use. CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation) accepts the subject expert committee reform rations on Serum and Bharat Biotech Covid vaccines.

- The subject expert committee (SEC) under CDSCO had recommended Oxford-AstraZeneca's vaccine, which is being manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII) as Covishield, for emergency use and Covaxin for restricted use.
- Covaxin is the indigenous vaccine being developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

## SPORTS

### Leon Mendonca becomes India's 67th Grandmaster

- Goa's 14-year-old Leon Mendonca has become India's 67th chess Grandmaster by winning the third and final norm at a tournament in Italy. Mendonca, who achieved the feat at 14 years, 9 months and 17 days, is the second GM from the coastal State. Chennai player G. Akash, had in July, become the country's 66th Grandmaster. He became the 29th Youngest GM in the world. The 1st GM from Goa is Ivana Maria Furtado, she achieved it in 2011.
- The player achieved his first GM norm at the Rigo Chess GM Round Robin, while the second came at the event in Budapest in November and the final one at the Vergani Cup in Italy.
- Sergey Karjakin of Russia holds the record for the World's Youngest ever GM having qualified for the title at the age of 12 years and 7 months (achieved the title in 2003).
- GM is a title awarded by FIDE (International Chess Federation). It is the highest title a chess player can obtain apart from World Champion.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### BEL and Indian Navy inks pact for initial supply of Laser Dazzlers

- The Indian Navy has signed a contract with the Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), to procure Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation Dazzlers (Laser Dazzlers). Initially, agreement has been signed for 20 Laser Dazzlers. The Laser dazzler technology has been developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and would be manufactured by BEL, Pune plant. It is the first time that this unique product is indigenously designed and developed for the Armed Forces.
- They are used as a non-lethal method for warning and stopping suspicious vehicles/boats/aircraft/UAVs/pirates etc. from approaching secured areas during both day and night.
- It is capable of dazzle and thereby suppress the person's/optical sensor's action with disability glare in case of non-compliance to orders.
- While this technology can disorient/ confuse/blind a person temporarily, it can also dazzle and distract aircraft/UAVs.

## OBITUARY

### Hollywood director Joan Micklin Silver dies at 85

- Joan Micklin Silver, who forged a path for female directors and independent filmmakers with movies including Hester Street and Crossing Delancey, has died. She was 85.
- Silver died from vascular dementia Thursday at her home in New York,. She used a combination of talent, fortitude and luck to create 1975's Hester Street, her first feature, released when she

was 40 years old.

### Uliyin Osai director Ilavenil passes away in Chennai

- Tamil director and writer Ilavenil passed away yesterday in Chennai. He was in his 70s. He suffered a heart attack.
- The director is known for his film Uliyin Osai, which was written by Karunanidhi, and produced by S. P. Murugesan. The film released on 4th July, 2008 and it featured Vineeth and Keerthi Chawla in the lead roles.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World Braille Day: 4 January

- World Braille Day is observed globally on 4th January since 2019. The day is celebrated to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people. The day is marked remembering the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of Braille – for people with visual disabilities. Louis Braille was born on 4th January 1809 in the town of Coupvray in northern France.
- Braille is a tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using six dots to represent each letter and number, and even musical, mathematical and scientific symbols. Braille (named after its inventor in 19th century France, Louis Braille) is used by blind and partially sighted people to read the same books and periodicals as those printed in a visual font.
- Braille is essential in the context of education, freedom of expression and opinion, as well as social inclusion, as reflected in article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## RANKING

### Mukesh Ambani ranked 12th in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index 2021

- India's richest man Mukesh Ambani, the chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) dropped down to 12th spot in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index 2021 (as on 2nd January 2021). The net worth of Ambani dropped from 90 billion USD (around Rs. 6.62 lakh crore) (in early 2020) to 76.7 billion USD (around Rs. 5.6 lakh crore). The drop in the net worth of Mukesh Ambani was due to the correction in the shares of RIL which has fallen to Rs.1995.50 on 30th December 2020, which is 16% from its all-time high of Rs 2369.35.

#### Top 3 in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index:

Rank	Personality	Net worth
1	Jeff Bezos	190 Billion USD
2	Elon R Musk	170 Billion USD
3	Bill Gates	132 Billion USD

### Asia's Richest person:

- Zhong Shanshan, referred to as "Lone Wolf", has replaced Ambani as Asia's richest person, he is one of the fastest in the history to achieve the feat.
- Zhong Shanshan is Chinese billionaire whose net worth is 78.2 billion USD, which is attributed to the listing of Beijing Wantai Biological Pharmacy Enterprises Co and Nongu Spring Co, a bottled water firm.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

### Amit Shah releases 'National Police K-9 Journal'

- Union home minister Amit Shah on Saturday released the inaugural issue of "National Police K-9 Journal."
- The publication of the Police K9 Journal is another step in creating an ecosystem in the country to train and learn on augmenting this vital resource. The journal comprises different sections in Hindi and English, the Home Ministry said in a release.
- "This is a unique initiative which will further enrich the subjects related to Police Service Canine (K-9) (PSK) teams in the country," Amit Shah said while inaugurating the book.

## BANKING AND ECONOMY

### RBI introduces the RBI-Digital Payments Index

- Reserve Bank of India has launched a Digital Payments Index (DPI) to capture the extent of digitization of digital/electronic payments across the country. This RBI-Digital Payments Index (DPI) has 5 broad parameters that will be used for the measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments.

#### These parameters and their weightage are as under:

1. Payment Enablers (weight 25%),
  2. Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors (10%),
  3. Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors (15%),
  4. Payment Performance (45%) and
  5. Consumer Centricity (5%).
6. The base period for RBI-DPI is March 2018. This means that the DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100. RBI has calculated the DPI for March 2019 and March 2020 at 153.47 and 207.84 respectively, indicating appreciable growth. RBI-DPI shall be published on a semi-annual basis from March 2021 onwards with a lag of 4 months.

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### NATIONAL

### PM Modi lays foundation stone of Light House projects (LHPs)

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Light House projects (LHPs) at six sites across six States through video conference on 1st January 2021. The LHPs will be implemented at Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Rajkot (Gujarat), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Ranchi

(Jharkhand), Agartala (Tripura) and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh).

- The project is being constructed under the Global Housing Technology Challenge (GHTC)-India. It has been conceptualised by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- GHTC-India envisages providing an ecosystem for the adoption of innovative technologies in the housing construction sector in a holistic manner.
- Under the programme, over 1,000 houses would be built in each of the six cities in 12 months along with allied infrastructure facilities.
- The houses are called lighthouse projects in technical language. Houses being built under the Light House Projects (LHPs) will take less time to build and will be resilient, affordable and comfortable as they use the best of new-age alternative global technologies, materials and processes in the construction sector.

## OBITUARY

### Legendary Music Director Shantanu Mohapatra passes away

- Legendary Odia musician, Shantanu Mohapatra passed away. He was the first Odia music composer to work with legends like Lata Mangeshkar, Manna Dey and Md Rafi and also the first to work in Hindi, Bengali, Assamese and Telugu film industries.
- Mohapatra has composed music for hundreds of Odia film songs and Jatra (opera) shows in a career that spanned over three decades. Mohapatra, who retired as the Director of Odisha Mining Corporation, received several awards including the Odisha Film Critic Award for his contribution to Odia music.

## APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

### Umesh Sinha named deputy election commissioner

- Umesh Sinha has been named as the deputy election commissioner in the Election Commission of India. Sinha, a 1986-batch IAS officer (retired) is at present serving as secretary-general in the commission.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet cleared the extension in the term of reemployment of Sinha as deputy election commissioner on contract basis for a period of six months beyond December 31, 2020. His term will end on June 30, 2021. At present Sinha is also part of a committee set up by the Election Commission to look into the issue of revising the election expenditure of candidates during campaigning.

### Suneet Sharma takes over as new Chairman & CEO of Railway Board

- The appointments committee of the Cabinet has approved Suneet Sharma appointment as Chairman & CEO of Railway Board, Ministry of Railways and ex-officio Principal Secretary to Government of India. He took over in his new role with effect from January 01, 2021. The extended one-year tenure of Sharma's predecessor, Vinod Kumar Yadav, who also became the restructured Board's first CEO, ended on December 31, 2020.
- Prior to this, Suneet Sharma worked as General Manager, Eastern Railway.
- Suneet Sharma joined the Indian Railways in 1979 as a Special Class Apprentice while he was studying engineering at IIT Kanpur. A graduate in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering he has

more than 40 years of experience serving in the Indian Railways in various capacities. He has done stints in Operational working, maintenance in Sheds, Depots and Workshops.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### DRDO Celebrates 63rd Foundation Day on 1st January 2021

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) observed the 63rd Foundation Day of its establishment on January 01, 2021. DRDO was established in 1958 with just 10 laboratories to enhance the research work in the Defence sector. At that time, it was tasked with designing and developing cutting edge defence technologies for Indian Armed Forces.
- As of now, DRDO is working in multiple cutting edge military technology areas, which include aeronautics, armaments, combat vehicles, electronics, instrumentation, engineering systems, missiles, materials, naval systems, advanced computing, simulation, cyber, life sciences and other technologies for defence.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

### A book titled “Vahana Masterclass” launched by Italian Writer Alfredo Covelli

- Alfredo Covelli, an Italy based author has launched his new book Vahana Masterclass for children and Young Audience. The books will be illustrated and published by Scholastic India. Alfredo had a keen interest in our Indian culture and mythology which inspired him to write a story on Lord Ganesh for children.
- The book narrates the story of the Ganesha looking for a new vahana to accompany him to all the great adventures around the cosmos.
- After millenniums of service, the great VahanaMushika, holy mount of Lord Ganesha is about to retire to live the rest of his life in meditation.
- For this reason, 4 young mice (3 months each) are selected from different parts of India: intelligent Anand from Kolkata (selected by Goddess Kali), devoted Kanu from Gujarat (selected by Lord Krishna), brave Karthik from Chennai (selected by the other Vahanas), and compassionate Gitanjali from Uttarakhand (selected by Prakriti, nature).

## BANKING AND ECONOMY

### ADB to provide \$231 mn loan to enhance power generation capacity in Assam

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a \$231 million loan with the Government of India to augment electricity generation capacity in the state of Assam. This is the third tranche loan for the ‘Assam Power Sector Investment Programme’ that was approved by the ADB Board in July 2014.
- Under the project, 120 megawatts (MW) hydroelectric power plant would be constructed. The programme focuses on enhancing the capacity and efficiency of the energy generation and distribution systems in Assam to improve the availability of electricity service to end-users. The programme, including its two previous tranches, focuses on enhancing capacity and efficiency of the energy generation and distribution systems in Assam to improve electricity service to end-users.

**ADB and India sign \$10 million loan to support horticulture in HP**

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India have signed a \$10 million project readiness financing (PRF). This agreement aims to help finance piloting activities, and design and capacity building for an ensuing project that aims to expand horticulture production and farm household income in the hill state of Himachal Pradesh.
- The PRF project will support advance actions to achieve a high level of project readiness through detailed design activities, capacity building of state-level agencies, and creating an enabling environment for subtropical horticulture development in the state.
- The PRF project aims to ensure implementation readiness with prior testing of new production technologies and marketing systems so that the ensuing project is cost-effective and gets completed in a timely manner to enhance farm profitability.
- The ensuing project, to be designed by the PRF, will support the development of subtropical horticulture, including cultivation of fruits and vegetables, in the state's southern region which is currently lagging due to limited access to perennial water sources, crops losses due to wild animal encroachment and limited access to high-value markets.