

Weekly Current Affairs PDF January 10 to January 16, 2021

Current Affairs PDF- January 16, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

Donald Trump becomes first U.S. President to be impeached twice

- President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House for a historic second time on January 13, charged with “incitement of insurrection” over the deadly mob siege of the Capitol in a swift and stunning collapse of his final days in office. He was first impeached in 2019 over his Ukraine dealings.
- The House voted 232-197 to impeach Mr Trump. The proceedings moved at lightning speed, with lawmakers voting just one week after violent pro-Mr. Trump loyalists stormed the U.S. Capitol, urged on by the President’s calls for them to “fight like hell” against the election results.

NATIONAL

No foreign leader as chief guest on Republic Day this year

- According to External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava, due to the global C-19 situation, it has been decided that this year there will not be a foreign Head of State or Head of Government as the Chief Guest for the Republic Day event. President Ramnath Kovind will take the salute at the parade this time. This will be the first time in over five decades that India will not have a chief guest at the Republic Day parade.
- This comes days after United Kingdom (UK) Prime Minister Boris Johnson cancelled his visit to India. Boris Jonhson was scheduled to be the chief guest at India’s Republic Day parade on January 26.

Rajnath Singh unveils India’s 1st indigenously developed driverless metro car

- Union Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh has unveiled India’s first ‘Driverless Metro Car’ on 15 January 2021 during a function held at BEML’s Bangalore Complex. The indigenously designed & developed state-of-the-art Driverless Metro trains are being manufactured at BEML Bangaluru manufacturing facility, for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA).
- BEML recently opened its Depot office at Charkop Metro Depot, MMRDA, Mumbai for commissioning, testing and round-the-clock services for Driverless Metro cars. BEML bagged a total order of 576 cars for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA)’s MRS1 project and the supply is scheduled progressively up to January 2024.

Piyush Goyal inaugurates the ‘Prarambh: Startup India International Summit’

- The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food and Public Distribution, Piyush Goyal has inaugurated the two-day ‘Prarambh’, Startup India International Summit in New Delhi on 15 January 2021. The Summit has been organized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), under M/o Commerce & Industry.
- The inaugural event was participated by the members of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for

Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) countries.

- The 'Prarambh' Summit will provide a platform to the startups and young minds from around the world to come together and collaborate to work collectively to come with new ideas, innovation and invention.
- The focus of the Summit will be on enhancing multilateral cooperation and engagement with countries from around the globe to collectively develop and strengthen the startup ecosystems.
- The Summit marks the fifth anniversary of the Startup India initiative, launched by the Prime Minister on 16 January 2016.

Centre launches Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3.0

- The Government of India launched the third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana on 15 January 2021. The scheme has been rolled out for the current financial year, ending March 2021, and will be implemented by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana-3.0, skills training would be provided in 600 districts across all states, (except four states including Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal) to 8 lakh candidates over next three months with an outlay of Rs 948.90 crore with a focus on Covid-related skills.
- The training will be imparted through 729 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKKs), empanelled non-PMKK training centres and more than 200 industrial training institutes (ITIs).
- Further, a five-year PMKVY will be launched in 2021-22 with an enhanced target of skilling 1.5 crore youth.

Kerala becomes 8th State to complete ease of doing business reforms

- Kerala has become the 8th State in the country to successfully undertake "Ease of Doing Business" reform stipulated by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance. Kerala has become eligible to mobilise additional financial resources of Rs.2,373 crore through Open Market Borrowings. Permission for the same was issued by the Department of Expenditure on 12th January 2021.
- Kerala has now joined the seven other States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, who have completed this reform. On completion of reforms facilitating ease of doing business, these eight States have been granted additional borrowing permission of Rs.23,149 crore.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DRDO develops India's first Indigenously-Developed 9mm Machine Pistol

- India's first indigenous 9mm Machine Pistol has been jointly developed by DRDO and Indian Army. Infantry School, Mhow and DRDO's Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune have designed and developed this weapon using their respective expertise in the complementary areas. The weapon has been developed in a record time of four months. The weapon is aptly named "Asmi" meaning "Pride", "Self-Respect" & "Hard Work".
- The Machine Pistol fires the in-service 9mm ammunition and sports an upper receiver made from aircraft-grade Aluminium and lower receiver from carbon fibre.

- The 3D Printing process has been used in designing and prototyping of various parts including trigger components made by metal 3D printing.
- The weapon has huge potential in Armed forces as a personal weapon for heavy weapon detachments, commanders, tank and aircraft crews, drivers/dispatch riders, radio/radar operators, Closed Quarter Battle, counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations etc.
- This is also likely to find huge employability with the central and state police organizations as well as VIP protection duties and Policing.
- The Machine Pistol is likely to have a production cost under rupees 50000 each and has potential for exports.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Intel appoints Pat Gelsinger as new CEO

- Intel has appointed Pat Gelsinger as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective Feb. 15, 2021. Gelsinger will also join the Intel board of directors upon assuming the role. He will succeed Bob Swan, who will remain CEO until Feb. 15.
- Gelsinger is an industry veteran with more than four decades of technology and leadership experience, including 30 years at Intel where he began his career.
- Pat is a proven technology leader with a distinguished track record of innovation, talent development, and deep knowledge of Intel.
- He will continue a values-based cultural leadership approach with a hyper-focus on operational execution.

IMPORTANT DAYS

IFFI 2021 to celebrate the work of legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray

- The 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will be celebrating the work of legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray by screening five of his classics. As part of the tribute, the festival will showcase Ray's acclaimed "Pather Panchali", the first film of his The Apu Trilogy, 1964 romantic drama "Charulata", "Sonar Kella", his 1977 Hindi directorial debut "Shatranj Ke Khilari" and "Ghare Baire" (1984).
- 12 films for Festival Kaleidoscope & 50 films for World Panorama section were unveiled too.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

India and Japan inks MoU to enhance cooperation in ICT

- India and Japan have signed an MoU to enhance cooperation in the field of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) via videoconferencing. The MoU was signed between Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad and the Japanese Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Takeda Ryota.
- Both countries will enhance mutual cooperation in the field of 5G technologies, telecom security, submarine optical fibre cable system to islands of India, spectrum management, smart cities, high altitude platform for broadband in unconnected areas, disaster management and public safety etc.

Current Affairs PDF- January 15, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

Sadyr Japarov wins the presidential election in Kyrgyzstan

- The frontrunner in Kyrgyzstan's presidential election, Sadyr Japarov, has won by a landslide. According to the Central Election Commission, Mr Japarov had won 79% of votes cast. Mr Japarov, who served time in jail for taking a rival hostage, will also have sweeping new presidential powers after voters by a similar margin opted to amend the constitution in a referendum.
- Kyrgyzstan has been in crisis since parliamentary elections last October. The results of those elections were disputed, leading to protests and the resignation of then-President Sooronbay Jeenbekov.

NATIONAL

Haryana CM inaugurates country's first air taxi service

- Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar on Thursday inaugurated air taxi services from Chandigarh to Hisar from Chandigarh Airport under Centre's UDAN scheme
- "For the first time in the country, a small aircraft in the form of air taxi is being used for services,"
- "In 2nd phase, services for Hisar to Dehradun will be started on 18 January. In the 3rd phase, two more routes from Chandigarh to Dehradun and Hisar to Dharamshala will be added on 23 January. The company also plans to include Shimla, Kullu and more Haryana routes.

NITI Aayog and Flipkart collaborate to enhance WEP

- NITI Aayog and Flipkart, have come together to launch the revamped Women Entrepreneurship Platform. The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) is a unified access portal which brings together women from different parts of India to realise their entrepreneurial aspirations.
- The idea of the platform was first mooted by Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog who announced the setting-up of a Women Entrepreneurship Platform in NITI Aayog at the conclusion of the 8th Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES) held in Hyderabad in 2017, with an overarching theme of 'Women first, prosperity for all'.
- The revamped version shall also include an additional feature to offer mentorship to the women mentees with specific knowledge concerning a problem area through a dedicated online mechanism facilitated under FICCI-FLO's Empowering the Greater 50% mission.
- Women entrepreneurs today face unique obstacles, from a lack of networking opportunities and mentors to the challenge of balancing work and family.
- When women come together or form communities, they are better equipped to tackle challenges that come their way. Shared experiences from mentors and professionals further help.
- 'Community' on the WEP platform aims to connect knowledge-seeking women entrepreneurs who have questions or seek clarifications on multiple aspects of setting up new businesses (like

registering businesses, GST, funding, effects of the pandemic, etc.), or progressing already established businesses; to knowledge providing women entrepreneurs who have experience in setting up businesses and hence can contribute by solving queries.

Naveen Patnaik inaugurates India's first 'Fire Park' in Bhubaneswar

- The Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik virtually inaugurated a first of its kind 'Fire Park', to educate and bring awareness on basic fire safety measures among the people, particularly the students. The 'Fire Park' is located inside the premises of the Odisha Fire and Disaster Academy in Bhubaneswar.
- The minister also launched an online portal, 'AgnishamaSeva' of Odisha Fire Service. The fire park will facilitate demonstrations on use of first aid fire-fighting equipment, rescue and disaster operations, visit the exhibition hall, screening of films and distribution of leaflets on fire safety.

What's on the show:

- Demonstrations on use of first aid fire-fighting equipment
- Demo on rescue and disaster operations
- Visit the exhibition hall
- Screening of films and distribution of leaflets on fire safety
- The Fire Park will be opened to the public on every Saturday from 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm

IRDAI sets up panel to examine availability of health insurance products

- Insurance regulator Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) has set up a panel of experts called 'Health Insurance Advisory Committee' to examine the availability of health insurance products in the country, considering the need of the Indian society and recommend suitable products and processes. The expert committee will be headed by IRDAI Chairperson, Subhash Chandra Khuntia and will have a Member (Non-Life) as the vice-chairperson. The committee, which has a term of one year.
- Nachiket Mor (Visiting Scientist, Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health),
- A K Chand (Professor and Neurosurgeon, Bangalore),
- B K Mohanti (Former Professor and Oncologist, AIIMS),
- K Hari Prasad (Anaesthetist, Hyderabad), and Pankaj Sharma (IRDAI).

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Dushyant Dave resigns as SC Bar Association (SCBA) President

- Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) president, Dushyant Dave has resigned from his post with immediate effect, he has forfeited his right to continue. Acting SCBA Secretary Rohit Panday confirmed the development that the senior advocate has resigned with immediate effect.
- The SCBA is an Indian bar association, comprising the practising lawyers of the Supreme Court of India.
- The SCBA has been in the vanguard of the movement for upholding, maintaining and consolidation of the constitutional values of democracy, rule of law and independence of Judiciary. In its meeting dated 4th May 1951.
- The Committee in its resolution observed that no attempt should be made to abridge or limit the

Fundamental Rights.

- The Committee further pointed out that the Constitution was in operation only for a short period of sixteen months and the Supreme Court had no occasion to pronounce on the validity of various State laws.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Indian Army Day: 15 January

- The Army Day in India is celebrated on 15 January every year, to salute the valiant soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country and its citizens. This year marks the 73rd Indian Army Day. The Army Day is celebrated at all Army Command headquarters to honour our country's soldiers who set the greatest example of selfless service and brotherhood, and above all, love for the country.
- The day is marked to commemorate the day when General (later Field Marshal) KM Cariappa took over the command of Army from General Sir FRR Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief in 1949 and became the first Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army post Independence.
- The Indian Army is one of the most powerful militaries of the world, competing with superpowers like the US, Russia and China. The motto of the Indian Army is 'service before self' and its mission is to ensure national security and national unity, defend the nation from external aggression and internal threats, and maintain peace and security within its borders. Salute to the brave soldiers, who risk and sacrifice their lives to protect us. Even the Prime Minister of India Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965 had given the slogan like "Jai Jawan Jai Kisan".

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

AIIMS Bhubaneswar receives Kayakalp Award for 3rd time

- The All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Bhubaneswar has proved its mettle once again for promoting cleanliness, hygiene and creating sustainable practices in public health facilities by winning the Kayakalp Award Scheme. AIIMS Bhubaneswar will get an award of Rs 2 crore for the performance.
- The institute has been adjudged as the best central government hospital under B category for cleanliness for a third consecutive year. It had earlier received the award in 2018 as well as in 2019 for becoming second cleanest hospital in the country among category B hospitals (less than 1000 beds) and received Rs one crore as prize money.

RANKING

India ranks 4th in 'Break Out Economies'

- Rapidly digitalising India was ranked 4th in "Break Out Economies" in the third edition of the Digital Evolution Scorecard developed by Tufts University's Fletcher School in partnership with Mastercard. China which leads the countries in the "Break Out Economies" group is more evolved digitally due mainly to its combination of rapidly growing demand and innovation.
- Third rank Indonesia, and India, which ranks number four in momentum, have displayed increasing digital momentum suggesting the potential to rapidly digitalise for both post-COVID economic recovery and longer-term transformation.

- “Break Out Economies” are those that are digitalising very quickly and yet have a lot of room to grow before matching those in the developed economies, such as those in Europe and in more developed Asian countries like Singapore, South Korea, and Hong Kong.
- The objective of the study was to help governments, businesses and investors understand what they need to emerge ahead of the competition.
- To do this, the researchers analysed 90 economies based on a combination of 160 indicators across four supply key drivers: Supply Conditions, Demand Conditions, Institutional Environment, and Innovation and Change.
- A combination of proprietary and public data from more than 45 different databases, as well as analyses conducted by the Fletcher School’s Digital Planet team, was used to explore key questions across the core subject areas.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Tesla sets up India subsidiary in Bengaluru

- Elon Musk-owned electric vehicle (EV) company Tesla has registered a fully-owned subsidiary in Bengaluru, Karnataka. Tesla, the world’s most valued carmaker has incorporated a fully owned subsidiary ahead as a first step to set up an R&D unit and a manufacturing plant for its electric vehicles in the country.
- Tesla’s global senior director David Jon Feinstein, chief accounting officer Vaibhav Taneja and Bengaluru-based entrepreneur Venkatrangam Sreeram are on the board of the India unit, Tesla India Motors and Energy Pvt Ltd. The office, situated on Lavelle Road in Bengaluru, is registered with a total paid-up capital of Rs 1,00,000 and authorised share capital of Rs 15 lakh.

Current Affairs PDF- January 14, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

Bharat Biotech inks pact with Precisa Med to supply Covaxin to Brazil

- Bharat Biotech has announced that it has signed an agreement with Precisa Medicamentos for the supply of its indigenously manufactured C-19 vaccine ‘Covaxin’ to Brazil. The supplies of Covaxin will be prioritized for the public market, through direct procurement by Brazil government.
- A team from Precisa Medicamentos had visited the Bharat Biotech facility in Genome Valley near here last week to discuss export of COVAXIN, India’s first indigenous vaccine for C-19.

NATIONAL

Suriname’s Indian-origin President to be Republic Day chief guest

- President of the Republic of Suriname, Chandrikapersad Santokhi, will be the chief guest at India’s Republic Day parade on January 26. India had initially invited Boris Johnson to be the chief guest but the British PM had to cancel his visit in view of the grim coronavirus situation back home.
- Earlier this week, Santokhi was the chief guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention, held

by the Ministry of External Affairs and he delivered the keynote address. He was sworn in as the president of Suriname in July 2020, when his party, the Progressive Reform Party, won 20 of the 51 seats in the elections.

Manipur: CM Biren Singh virtually inaugurated Cherry Blossom Festival

- The 4th edition of the Cherry Blossom Festival, Mao in Manipur was virtually inaugurated by Chief Minister N Biren Singh. However this year, the authority decided to scale down the festival due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Festival featured the picturesque landscape of Mao adorned with beautiful cherry trees laden with blooming flowers which have traditionally attracted visitors from across the world.
- Manipur has been celebrating the festival every year since 2017.
- The festival which featured the picturesque landscape of Mao town adorned with beautiful Cherry Blossom flowers was streamed live from 2 pm on various social media platforms.
- The Mao area of Senapati district in Manipur is known for Cherry Blossom, a plant which is popularly known as Sakura in Japan.

First ever Ice climbing festival celebrated in Nubra valley

- In Leh, the first-ever Ice climbing festival was celebrated in Nubra valley. The Seven Day event was organized by Nubra Adventure Club. Ice climbing is a popular winter sport abroad. To promote winter tourism in Nubra valley, Nubra Adventure Club, with the help of Social activist Dr Nordan Otzer, has organized the Seven Day Ice Climbing Festival. Trainer Rigzin Tsewang said that Nubra has the potential to be the ice climbing capital in the Himalayas.
- 18 participants across Nubra valley including 4 women have taken part in Ice climbing. All were trained in basic ice climbing skills during the festival at three locations, Pudong Cake at Panamik, Artificial Glacier at Aye Village and first ascent at " Nubra Adventure Club Crag" located near Warshi Village. Three trainers Rigzin tsewang, Tsewang Namgyal and Kran Kowshik imparted ice climbing skills. Participants were awarded certificates as well.

OBITUARY

Social Activist and Padma Shri Awardee D Prakash Rao passes away

- Noted social activist and Padma Shri winner, D Prakash Rao has passed away. He was basically a tea seller based in Cuttack, who spent his entire earning to educate slum children, through the school 'Asha O Ashwasana', which he started in 2000.
- He was conferred with the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2019 for his contribution towards boosting the value of education among slum kids in Cuttack. Apart from this, Rao was also a well-known blood donor.

Indian American writer Ved Mehta passes away

- Indian American writer Ved Mehta passed away. The Indian-American novelist overcame blindness & was widely known as the 20th-century writer most responsible for introducing American readers to India.
- Ved Mehta, a longtime writer for The New Yorker whose best-known work, spanning a dozen

volumes, explored the vast, turbulent history of modern India through the intimate lens of his own autobiography.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Armed Forces Veterans Day: 14 January

- In India, the Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14 January since 2017 to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation. The day was initially called Armistice Day. 2021 marks the 5th Armed Forces Veterans Day.
- The day is observed as a mark of respect and recognition of the services rendered by Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE, the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces who retired on 14 January 1953.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

Dr Ajay Kumar co-chairs 13th India-Vietnam Defence Security Dialogue

- The 13th India-Vietnam Defence Security Dialogue was held in a virtual format. The virtual event was co-chaired by Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar along with Vietnamese Sr Lt Gen Nguyen Chi Vinh, Deputy Defence Minister, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.
- Defence Secretary and the Deputy Defence Minister expressed satisfaction at the ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries in spite of the limitations imposed by COVID 19.
- Both countries exchanged views on the plan of action from the recently concluded Virtual Summit between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc in December 2020.
- Both the sides reviewed the progress on various bilateral defence cooperation initiatives and expressed commitment to further elevate engagements between the Armed Forces under the framework of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
- Both sides agreed that in the recent past our respective countries have made notable strides in Defence Industry and Technology cooperation and look forward to even greater cooperation in this field.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Manipur Guv released book "Making of a General A Himalayan Echo"

- Manipur Governor, Dr Najma Heptulla has virtually released a book titled "Making of a General- A Himalayan Echo" authored by (Retd) Lt General Konsam Himalaya Singh at Durbar Hall, Raj Bhavan, Imphal. The book elegantly summons the essence and imperatives of superior command of one of the most formidable forces in the world.
- The book is the memoir of Lt Gen (Dr) Konsam Himalay Singh who has traced his journey from a small village in Manipur to becoming the first person from North East India to hold the rank of a Three-Star General of the Indian Army.
- The book has also highlighted about Manipur, the "Land of Emeralds".

BANKING AND ECONOMY

RBI forms six-member working group to regulate digital lending frauds

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a working group to study digital lending activities of the regulated and unregulated players, due to the growing instances of frauds in digital lending space. The group will suggest steps to regulate digital lending including online lending platform and mobile lending. The group will evaluate digital lending activities and assess the penetration and standards of outsourced digital lending activities in RBI regulated entities.

The six-member panel comprises of following four RBI internal and two external members:

1. Jayant Kumar Dash, Executive Director, RBI (Chairman)
2. Ajay Kumar Choudhary, Chief General Manager-in-Charge, Department of Supervision (Member)
3. P Vasudevan, Chief General Manager, Department of Payment and Settlement Systems, RBI (Member)
4. Manoranjan Mishra, Chief General Manager, Department of Regulation (Member Secretary)
5. Vikram Mehta, Co-founder, Monexo Fintech (External Member)
6. Rahul Sasi, Cyber Security Expert & Founder of CloudSEK (External Member)

First time in history, Union Budget 2021 to be paperless

- Union Budget 2021, slated to be presented on February 1, is going to be completely paperless in the wake of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. This will be the first time since independence that the budget papers will not be printed. The Centre has received permission for the same from both houses of parliament. The decision has been taken as several people (approximately 100) would be required to stay at the printing press for around a fortnight amid the COVID-19 fear.
- The budget papers are usually printed at the ministry's in-house printing press in the North Block. This year's budget may reportedly witness several conventions being broken as the traditional 'Halwa' ceremony, which is a given every year is also not likely to take place, or a low-key function may be held with limited gathering in attendance.

India's retail inflation drops to 4.59 % in December

- India's retail inflation fell sharply to 4.59 per cent in December, mainly due to declining food prices, government data showed. Retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 6.93 per cent in November.
- Food inflation declined to 3.41 per cent in December in 2020, compared to 9.5 per cent in the previous month, according to the data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) factors in retail inflation while arriving at its monetary policy.

Current Affairs PDF- January 13, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

France hosts 4th One Planet Summit

- The Government of France organised the fourth 'One Planet Summit', through videoconferencing, which aimed at protecting the world's biodiversity. The Summit was organised in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank. The theme of the Summit was "Let's act together for nature!"
- It was inaugurated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres, French President Emmanuel Macron, and President of the World Bank Group David Malpass.

The Summit focused on biodiversity preservation through:

- The protection of terrestrial and marine ecosystems,
- The promotion of agroecology,
- The mobilization of funding for biodiversity, and
- The link between deforestation, species and human health.

NATIONAL

Nitin Gadkari to launch "Khadi Prakritik Paint" developed by KVIC

- Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari will be launching an innovative new paint developed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission. The eco-friendly, non-toxic paint, called "Khadi Prakritik Paint" is a first-of-its-kind product, with anti-fungal, anti-bacterial properties.
- Based on cow dung as its main ingredient, the paint is cost-effective and odourless and has been certified by the Bureau of Indian Standards.
- Khadi Prakritik Paint is available in two forms - distemper paint and plastic emulsion paint.
- Production of Khadi Prakritik Paint is aligned with Prime Minister's vision of increasing farmers' income.

RS Sharma to head empowered panel for Covid-19 vaccine

- The Union government has appointed RS Sharma, former Trai chief, as the chairperson of an empowered committee for the administration of Covid-19 vaccine. A ten-member team has been constituted to be headed by Sharma. This has come days ahead of the mega vaccination drive is to start in India. He has also been included as a member of the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration of Covid-19 that was formed in August 2020.
- RS Sharma was the first person to officially initiate a discussion on vaccination delivery in the government in the summer of 2020 when Covid-19 cases peaked.
- The top health ministry and UIDAI officials are part of the empowered committee.
- The panel can invite eminent persons as and when required to ensure delivery of the vaccine through the Co-Win technology platform.

Coastal defence exercise “Sea Vigil 21” kicks off

- A major exercise to test military readiness at sea along the coastline of the country starts. This is the second edition of the biennial pan-India coastal defence exercise “Sea Vigil-21” will be conducted on January 12 and 13. The two-day exercise involving all stakeholders, states and Central government agencies will set the tempo of operations, including “transition from peace to conflict”.
- The exercise is a build-up towards the next step and level exercise called “Tropex” (Theatre-level Readiness Operational Exercise), which is expected to be conducted at month-end or early February. Ministries of Defence, Home Affairs, Shipping, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Fisheries and Customs, state governments and other agencies of Centre and state are coordinating.
- The exercise, inaugural edition of which was conducted in January 2019, will be undertaken along the entire 7,516-km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India.
- It will involve all 13 coastal states and Union Territories along with other maritime stakeholders, including the fishing and coastal communities.
- Exercise ‘Sea Vigil-21’ is expected to provide a realistic assessment of our strengths and weaknesses and thus will help in further strengthening maritime and national security. The exercise is being coordinated by the Indian Navy.
- The entire coastal security set up was re-organised after the 26/11 terror attack at Mumbai which was launched using the sea route.
- Assets of the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, Customs and other maritime agencies will participate in the exercise.

SPORTS

Oldest living Olympic champion Agnes Keleti turns 100

- The oldest surviving Olympic champion, Ágnes Keleti, celebrates her 100th birthday. She is one of her country’s most successful Olympians, having won 10 medals for Hungary in gymnastics, at the Olympic Games Helsinki 1952 and Melbourne 1956. Her haul included five golds.
- Keleti won the floor event in Finland before producing an astonishing display in Australia, winning four golds – in the uneven bars, balance beam, floor, and team event. At 35, she became the oldest female gymnast to win an Olympic title.

Dhaka Marathon 2021: Jigmet Dolma from Ladakh wins 4th position

- Jigmet Dolma from India secured the fourth position in the Dhaka Marathon 2021. Jigmet Dolma is an SPO of Ladakh police. In the marathon, Hicham Lakohi of Morocco came first in the elite competition of the marathon in men’s category while Angela Jim Asunde from Kenya won the women’s category in the same event. In the full marathon, among the SAARC and local runners, Bahadur Singh of India became the champion in the men’s category and Pushpa Bhandari of Nepal became the champion in the women’s category.
- The marathon was organized to commemorate the return of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from Pakistan jail to Bangladesh in 1972. The full marathon covered 42.19 kilometres while the half marathon covered 21.09 kilometres. Athletes from all over the world including India, Morocco, Kenya, France, Nepal, Ethiopia among others participated in various categories

of the event. Home Minister of Bangladesh Asaduzzaman Khan inaugurated the event at Dhaka Army Stadium.

OBITUARY

Pulitzer Prize-winning author & journalist Neil Sheehan passes away

- Pulitzer Prize-winning author & journalist Neil Sheehan passed away. He covered the Vietnam War for United Press International and the Times from 1962 to 1966.
- He won a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award in 1989 for "A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam."

RANKING

India Ranks 85 in Henley Passport Index 2021

- The Henley Passport Index 2021 has been released by Henley & Partners, based on the exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). As per the latest report, India has been ranked 85th among 110 countries, in the Henley Passport Index for 2021, with a visa-free score of 58. The index presents the original ranking of the world's most powerful passports, according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa.
- Japan has once again topped the list of being the most powerful passport in the world, for the third consecutive year. Japanese citizens can travel to as many as 191 countries visa-free. Singapore is in second place (190) and South Korea ties with Germany in third place (189). Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan are the countries with the worst passport, with a passport score of 29, 28 and 26 respectively.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

A book titled "The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India" by Ex-CEC

- Former chief election commissioner (CEC) S Y Quraishi has come out with his book titled "The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India". The book will hit the stands on February 15, 2021. It has been published by HarperCollins India.
- The book evaluates India's demographics from a religious perspective and seeks to demolish two basic myths that 'Islam is against family planning' and "Muslim rate of growth" is linked to capture political power.
- The book is a detailed analysis of the 'Muslim rate of growth' in the light of population data and national and international reports.
- The book examines the crucial and urgent question of the politicisation of demography in India.
- Quraishi, who was CEC from July 30, 2010, to June 10, 2012, introduced a number of electoral reforms, such as the creation of a voter education division, expenditure monitoring division, the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management, and launched the National Voters Day.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

RBI cancels the licence of Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the licence of Maharashtra-based Vasantdada

Nagari Sahakari Bank, with immediate effect. Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank Ltd will now not be allowed to conduct the business of 'banking', including acceptance of deposits and repayment of deposits, with effect from the close of business on January 11, 2021.

- RBI has requested the Commissioner for Cooperation and Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RCS), Maharashtra to issue an order for winding up the bank and appoint a liquidator for the bank.
- The Bank has failed to comply with the requirements of Section 11(1) read with Section 56 of BR Act and thus would be unable to pay its present depositors in full in its current financial position.
- With the cancellation of licence and commencement of liquidation proceedings, the process of paying the depositors of Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank Ltd., Osmanabad, Maharashtra as per the DICGC Act, 1961 will be set in motion. Every depositor is entitled to repayment of his/her deposits up to Rs 5,00,000 from the DICGC. More than 99% of the depositors of the bank will get full repayment of their deposits from DICGC.

Current Affairs PDF- January 12, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

Bangladesh declared as 'Country in Focus' for 51st IFFI

- Bangladesh has been chosen as the 'Country in Focus' for the 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI). The festival will be held at Goa from January 16 to January 24, 2021. The Country in Focus is a special segment that recognizes the cinematic excellence and contributions of the country. This section at the 51st IFFI will showcase four films from Bangladesh.
- The International Film Festival of India (IFFI), is being held annually since 1952, in Goa. The event is organised jointly by the Directorate of Film Festivals (under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and the state Government of Goa.

Indonesian Jetliner crashes into the sea after takeoff

- A passenger plane of Indonesia's Sriwijaya Air carrying 62 people on board crashed into waters off Jakarta. The Boeing 737-500 was on an estimated 90-minute flight from Jakarta to Pontianak, capital of West Kalimantan province on Indonesia's Borneo island.
- The Sriwijaya Air disappeared from radars four minutes into its journey to Pontianak in West Kalimantan province. It is thought to have dropped more than 3,000m (10,000ft) in less than a minute.

Twitter deletes new Trump tweets on @POTUS, suspends campaign account

- Twitter Inc has deleted new tweets posted by U.S. President Donald Trump on official government account @POTUS and suspended the account of his presidential campaign, after booting his personal account of the platform permanently. @POTUS Twitter account is an official Twitter account of US President Donald Trump. The Account is named President Trump.

- The POTUS Twitter account is in the news because President Trump used the account to tweet against “Twitter” after the company permanently banned and suspended the @realDonaldTrump of Trump.
- Trump tweeted that Twitter has conspired with his rivals and suspended his account to silence him.
- Earlier, Twitter released an official statement about the permanent suspension of the @realDonaldTrump Twitter account.
- After the tweets by Trump through the @POTUS account, Twitter deleted his tweets.
- @POTUS account has 33.4 million followers at present.

NATIONAL

Harsh Vardhan launches Coastal Research Vessel Sagar Anveshika

- Union Minister for Earth Sciences, Harsh Vardhan has launched Coastal Research Vehicle (CRV) ‘Sagar Anveshika’ at the Chennai Port. The vehicle will be used to carry out environment indexing and bathymetric (mapping underwater features) in both coastal and offshore waters.
- It will be used for research purposes by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) and has been built by Titagarh Wagons, Kolkata, West Bengal. NIOT already has 6 Research Vessels – Sagar Kanya, Sagar Sampada, Sagar Nidhi, Sagar Manusha, & Sagar Tara.
- Anveshika has been built under the Indian Register of Shipping (IRClass) and is a DP (Dynamic Positioning)-Capable vessel.
- Anveshika will add to the capacity and capability for exploring the ocean which is a huge source of water, energy, food, minerals.
- Utilizing the Research Vehicle, Marine Scientists can travel six kilometres below the sea. The scientists can also stay underwater for more than 16 hours to conduct research activities.
- Anveshika will enable scientists to conduct various oceanographic research missions aboard, it houses modern laboratories equipped with the latest instruments.

India’s 7th Trade Policy Review (TPR) at WTO

- The second session of the 7th Trade Policy Review (TPR) of India concluded at the World Trade Organization (WTO). This was the final session of the 7th trade policy review. Trade Policy Review is a key mechanism under the monitoring function of WTO. During this trade policy review, WTO examines the trade and related policies of the member countries with an aim to improve their adherence to WTO rules and to provide constructive feedback.

Important Points Trade Policy Review (TPR) of India:

- The official delegation of India for the 7th TPR was headed by Anup Wadhawan, the Commerce Secretary.
- The Commerce Secretary responded to all the issues rose by the Members during the 1st TPR session of India.
- The Commerce Secretary also urged the members to provide a permanent solution to Public

Stock Holding (PSH) for food security.

- India is committed to simplify and streamline the overall domestic business environment and has an aim to make a place in the top 50 in the World Bank's Doing Business Report.
- Before this, the last Trade Policy Review of India was held in the year 2015.

Preeti Pant Panel to study adverse findings of NFHS-5

- The Health and Family Welfare Ministry has recently formed a technical expert group to study the adverse findings from the National Family Health Survey-5. The Ministry has set up the technical committee of medicine and nutrition experts under the leadership of Joint Secretary Preeti Pant.

About National Family Health Survey-5:

- The expert group also includes State programme officers from Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Karnataka.
- The committee will examine the findings of the National Family Health Survey-5 as well as suggest policies and courses of action to improve on indicators related to anaemia, malnutrition, C-section, and stunting.
- The newly formed technical expert group will conduct meetings regularly and will provide its recommendations soon.
- As of now, no meeting has been held and no date has been finalized for the first meeting.

National Family Health Survey-5:

- The factsheet of the 1st phase of National Family Health Survey-5 was released in December 2020.
- The sheet covered 22 States/UTs and provided information on 131 indicators like family welfare, population, nutrition, reproductive and child health, etc.
- Before the National Family Health Survey-5, four surveys have been conducted in the years 1992-93, 1998-99, 2005-06, and 2015-16.
- All the NFHS rounds were conducted by the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai.

SPORTS

Jay Shah named BCCI's Official Representative on ICC Board

- Jay Shah has been named as the official representative of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board meetings. Shah is the Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
- He will replace BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, who was currently representing India at the ICC Board, but he suffered a heart condition recently and had to be admitted to hospital where he underwent primary angioplasty.

OBITUARY

Padma Shri Awardee Telugu Journalist Turlapati Kutumba Rao passes away

- Veteran journalist and orator (public speaker) Sri Turlapati Kutumba Rao has passed away. He is known for his service to journalism in the Telugu language. He has written over 4000 biographies and delivered over 16000 public speeches which have been recorded by the Telugu Book of Records as a world record.
- Rao has received a number of honour for his field of work, including the fourth highest Indian civilian award of Padma Shri, in 2002, making him the first journalist from the state of Andhra Pradesh to receive the award.

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Road Safety Month 2021: 18 January – 17 February

- The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways observes the National Road Safety Week every year in the second week of January. However, in 2021, the Government has decided to observe National Road Safety Month instead of National Road Safety Week.
- Accordingly, the National Road Safety Month will be observed from 18th January, 2021' to 17th February' 2021. During this period nation-wide various activities will be conducted throughout the country in association with the Central/ State Governments/ UT administrations, and other stakeholders.

National Youth Day: 12 January

- National Youth Day is celebrated in India every year on 12 January to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The day was declared by the Government of India in 1984 while the event was first celebrated in 1985. The main aim behind this is to make sure that the students across the country can be encouraged to learn about the life, the ideas and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda and apply them in their lives.
- In 2021, we are observing 158th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand (12 January 1863). The theme for National Youth Day 2021 is 'Channelizing Youth Power for Nation Building'.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

IREDA-NHPC Partnership in Green Energy Projects

- NHPC Limited has signed an MOU with the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) for providing assistance in setting up renewable energy (RE) projects for the next 5 years. The agreement was signed in the presence of Abhay Kumar Singh, NHPC CMD, and IREDA, CMD, Pradip Kumar Das.
- NHPC will help in the knowledge and technology transfer and provide consultancy and research services.

- NHPC has undertaken an ambitious plan to make a significant impact on the renewable energy landscape of the country.
- Under the plan, NHPC will develop 7.5 GW of renewable energy projects in the next 3 years.
- NHPC has already successfully commissioned a renewable capacity of 102.5 MW on an ownership basis and has contracted 2000 MW as an intermediary procurer basis.

Current Affairs PDF- January 11, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

Japan commits Rs 2,113 cr support for COVID relief efforts

- The Government of Japan has committed Official Development Assistance loan of 30 billion Japanese Yen which is approximately Rs 2113 crore rupees. This programme loan aims to support India's efforts to provide coordinated and adequate social protection to the poor and vulnerable across the country against the severe impacts of COVID-19 pandemic.
- India and Japan have had a long and fruitful history of bilateral development cooperation since 1958. In the last few years, the economic cooperation between India and Japan has strengthened and grown into a strategic partnership.

Joe Biden names two Indian-Americans in US National Security Council

- US President-elect Joe Biden named Indian-American Sumona Guha as senior director for South Asia and Tarun Chhabra as senior director for Technology and National Security. Guha was co-chair of the South Asia foreign policy working group on the Biden-Harris campaign and serves on the transition's State Department Agency Review Team.
- During the Obama-Biden Administration, Chhabra served on the National Security Council staff as director for Strategic Planning and director for Human Rights and National Security Issues, and at the Pentagon as a speechwriter to the Secretary of Defence.
- Guha is a graduate of Johns Hopkins and Georgetown University. Named as senior director for Technology and National Security, Chhabra is a senior fellow at the Centre for Security and Emerging Technology at Georgetown University.

NATIONAL

BMC to set up 5 new stations to monitor air quality

- These stations are being set up under the Centre's National Clean Air Program, which was launched by the Union Environment Ministry in 2019. The programme aims to reduce the pollution levels across the country to less than 20% in the next five years.
- To get more area-specific air quality data, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) plans to set up continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations (CAAQMS) at five places in the city. BMC officials said these five CAAQMS will come up at Mahul village in Chembur, Shivaji Nagar in Deonar, Pant Nagar in Ghatkopar; Charkop in Kandivali and Byculla Zoo. The stations will also have display boards showing air quality index (AQI) with its impact and weather

information for 24 hours. The BMC has invited tenders for appointing agencies to set up stations. It would cost the civic body about Rs 10 crore.

5-year-old Pune prodigy sets world record with unique memory

- She is only five, but her age didn't deter her from creating a world record. Meet Presha Khemani, daughter of a city-based chartered accountant and a homemaker, who has aced it to the World Records India Book by naming 150 countries and their capitals after identifying their flags in just 4.17 minutes.
- The little genius won the 'Youngest Kid to Identify Flags and Country Names' title for her incredible feat.

Kerala: To set up Kalaripayattu Academy to boost traditional martial art form

- To give a boost to the traditional martial art form of Kerala, the state government is setting up a Kalaripayattu Academy at Vellar Craft Village here, under the Department of Tourism.
- Kalaripayattu, also known as 'Kalari', is known for its long-standing history within Indian martial arts culture and is believed to be the oldest surviving martial art in the world.
- According to the Department of Tourism, the 3,500 square feet gallery is expected to be completed in two months, where Kalari Asans (gurus) led by Padma Shri Meenakshamma will conduct classes.

DRDO develops products to help Indian army battle extreme cold in Eastern Ladakh

- With over 50,000 Indian troops are deployed in Eastern Ladakh to fight against China, the Defence Research and Development Organisation has developed multiple products such the Him-Taapak heating devices and snow melters to help the soldiers fight the enemy in form of the extremely low temperatures.
- The Him Tapak space heating device (Bukhari) has been developed for the Indian Army deployed in Eastern Ladakh, Siachen and high altitude areas and it has placed an order of more than ₹420 crores for these appliances, DRDO's Defence Institute for Physiology and Allied Sciences (DIPAS) Director Dr Rajeev Varshney.

West Bengal CM Inaugurates 26th Kolkata International Film Festival

- West Bengal CM, Mamata Banerjee has inaugurated the 26th Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF). The inaugural ceremony was also virtually attended by Bollywood superstar and West Bengal's brand ambassador Shah Rukh Khan from Mumbai. Legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray's classic 'Apar Sansar' will be the inaugural film of the festival in which 131 movies from 45 countries will be screened till January 13.
- Films will be screened at Rabindra Sadan, Nandan, Sisir Mancha and Rabindra Okakura Bhavan in Salt Lake. Six films by Italian filmmaker Federico Fellini and movies on sitarist Ravi Shankar, singer Hemanta Mukherjee and flicks of comedian Bhanu Bandyopadhyay will be screened.

OBITUARY

Former Gujarat Chief Minister Madhavsinh Solanki passes away

- Veteran Congress leader Madhavsinh Solanki, who served as former External Affairs Minister of India and the Chief Minister of Gujarat, has passed away. He had served as External Affairs Minister of India from June 1991 to March 1992.
- He had been the Chief Minister of Gujarat for three times between 1976 to 1990.
- He was the longest-serving chief minister of the state before Narendra Modi.

IMPORTANT DAYS

“World Hindi Day” celebrated globally on 10th January

- The World Hindi Day is celebrated annually on January 10 since 2006 to promote the language at the global stage. The day marks the anniversary of first World Hindi Conference which was inaugurated on January 10, 1975, by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.
- However, the celebration of first World Hindi Day was commenced on 10 January 2006 by former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. It must be noted that the National Hindi Day is celebrated in India on September 14 every year. On that day in 1949, the constituent assembly adopted Hindi, written in Devanagari script, as the official language of the Union.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

“Modi India Calling – 2021” Book Released

- A coffee table book named “Modi India Calling – 2021” has been released on the occasion of 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. The book contains various photographs of Prime Minister Narendra Modi captured during his “107 overseas and bilateral visits”.
- The book is the idea of BJP leader Vijay Jolly and it was released by Adesh Gupta, the Delhi BJP president. The book has been published by Maneesh Media and has 450 pages containing thousands of photographs of the PM Modi. Jolly has also said that he wishes to form a similar book on Rahul Gandhi and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal.

Current Affairs PDF- January 10, 2021

INTERNATIONAL

British Indian minister Alok Sharma given sole charge of UN climate summit

- Alok Sharma, one of the Indian-origin ministers in UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Cabinet, has relinquished his role as Business Secretary in a mini-reshuffle to take sole charge as President of COP26 – the United Nations climate summit scheduled for Glasgow, Scotland, in November.
- The Agra-born minister, who was until now in charge of dual roles, will focus entirely on what has been dubbed as the largest summit the UK has ever hosted, bringing together representatives from nearly 200 countries, including India.

Central African Republic president Touadera wins reelection

- Faustin-Archange Touadera was re-elected as the president of the Central African Republic with more than 53% votes. The 63-year-old president has been in power since 2016 but has struggled to seize control of vast parts of the nation from armed militias.
- The Central African Republic, a producer of gold and diamonds, has a population of 4.7 million.

Elon Musk overtakes Amazon's Jeff Bezos to become world's richest person

- According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Tesla CEO Elon Musk overtakes Amazon's Jeff Bezos to become the world's richest person. Elon Musk had a net worth of more than \$188.5 billion.
- A 6% rise in Tesla (TSLA) shares early Thursday lifted the value of its CEO's stock holdings and options by \$10 billion, taking his net worth to about \$188.5 billion. A more modest rise of less than 2% lifted Bezos' Amazon (AMZN) shares by about \$3 billion, putting his net worth at \$187 billion. Bill Gates is now a distant third at \$132 billion, according to Bloomberg.

NATIONAL

PM Modi To Address National Youth Parliament Festival On Jan 12

- "Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the National Youth Parliament Festival 2021 on 12th January at 10 AM.
- "The event will be covered live on Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal's Twitter/Facebook pages," the ministry said in another tweet.
- Earlier today, Prime Minister Modi spoke at the 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention. During the event, Modi said that the country is ready to save humanity with two "Made in India" C-19 vaccines.

Mamata govt allows 100% occupancy in cinema halls in West Bengal

- West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has allowed 100 per cent occupancy in cinema halls in the state but asserted following precautionary measures in the view of C-19.
- She was speaking at the inauguration of the 26th edition of the Kolkata International Film Festival 2021 via video conference on Friday.
- "Due to the pandemic, only 50 per cent occupancy in cinema halls is allowed.
- Actor Shahrukh Khan also participated in the event virtually. The Kolkata Film Festival, which was started in the year 1995, is being organised virtually in the view of C-19 pandemic.

J&K LG, Manoj Sinha launches Mobile Application 'Satark Nagrik'

- Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has launched Mobile Application 'Satark Nagrik' and Departmental Vigilance Officers Portal of J&K Anti Corruption Bureau. The Lt Governor observed that the UT Government is taking comprehensive measures for ensuring transparent, accountable, and responsive governance.

About Mobile Application 'Satark Nagrik'

- The mobile application launched today has been developed with a purpose to facilitate seamless flow of information about corruption and enable citizens to submit their grievances

with ease and mobility.

- Any citizen having an android based device can download the application from play store.
- A unique ID number will be allotted at the time of registration of grievance which later can be used to track the status of grievance.

About Departmental Vigilance Officers Portal:

- The Departmental Vigilance Officers (DVO) Portal has been designed to enable an online communication channel with the DVOs of various departments.
- In certain cases, the complaints are related to ongoing works, current recruitments, and payments yet to be made against contracts etc.
- By referring these matters to DVOs, violations/ shortcomings can immediately be rectified and loss to the state exchequer can be prevented.

Ramesh Pokhriyal inaugurates International Akhand Conference 'EDUCON-2020'

- Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has inaugurated the two-day Virtual International Akhand Conference 'EDUCON 2020' through video conferencing. This two-day International Conference is being organized by the Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB) in collaboration with the Global Educational Research Association (GERA). The focal theme of EDUCON-2020 is Envisioning Education for Transforming Youth to Restore Global Peace.
- This conference is the first of its kind in India where scholars across the world would be continuously having a non-stop marathon dialogue sessions for 31 hours exploring the possibilities of the use of ICT in the higher education to promote the equitable quality education in India.
- Further, the conference will also provide a platform for discussions on emerging trends in education viz., likely scenario of higher education and school education by 2050, developing disruptive technologies for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Education, training youth for strategic future jobs in Universities, the skill training programme for future graduates and relevance of ancient education system in 21st century.

OBITUARY

Veteran Indian Fashion Designer Satya Paul passes away

- Veteran Fashion designer Satya Paul, best known for reinventing the Indian saree for contemporary women, has passed away.
- Satya Paul launched the first saree boutique in India, L'Affaire, in 1980. In 1986, he launched India's first designer label, under the brand 'Satya Paul', which has now become one of the premier brands in the country.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Abhishek Yadav appointed as AIFF's first Deputy General Secretary

- Former India striker Abhishek Yadav has been appointed as the first deputy general secretary of All India Football Federation (AIFF) after the sports body decided to create a new post in its hierarchy. The 40-year-old former international, who has played with the likes of Bhaichung

Bhutia, Sunil Chhetri, Mahesh Gawli and Climax Lawrence, has been serving as national team's director since January 2018.

- Yadav has also served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the 2017 U17 Indian World Cup team, collaborating closely with Luis Norton de Maros, the head coach.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrated on 9 January

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas or NRI Day is celebrated every year on January 9 to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. The day is celebrated every year to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. The aim of celebrating the day is to provide a platform for NRI to express their perceptions about India and thereby involve them in Indian developmental activities. The theme of 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2021 is "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat".
- The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated on January 9, as Mahatma Gandhi returned from South Africa on the day in 1915. In 2015, the day was declared biennial. In 2018, the day was widely celebrated in Singapore. In 2019, the event was celebrated in Varanasi.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Bandhan Bank unveils account for army personnel

- Private lender Bandhan Bank has signed an agreement with the Indian Army to provide banking services to the personnel of the force. The bank got the mandate to maintain a Bank Shaurya Salary Account of the Army personnel. Bandhan Bank Shaurya Salary Account will have a zero balance facility. The Shaurya Salary Account also offers protection for self and assets.
- They will be offered other preferential services such as six per cent interest on balance over Rs one lakh, unlimited free ATM transactions across ATMs, waiver of issuance and annual charge on Shaurya Visa Platinum Debit Card and unlimited free NEFT/RTGS/IMPS/DD transactions.
- This includes free personal accident insurance of Rs 30 lakh, air accident cover of Rs 1 crore and free educational benefit of up to Rs 1 lakh per year for four years to a dependent child in case of accidental death of the account holder.