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MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS EBOOK
DECEMBER 2021

YOUR GUIDE TO MOST IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS AND EVENTS OF THE MONTH.

IAS | BANKING | SSC | NDA/CDS | AND OTHER COMPETITIVE EXAMS

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Nirmala Sitharaman chairs 46th GST Council Meeting: GST Council to retain status quo on GST rate on textile to 5%

46th GST Council Meeting: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chaired the 46th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council in the national capital on December 31, 2021. The GST Council has decided to retain the status quo on GST rate on textile to 5% and not raise it to 12%, informed the finance minister while addressing the press conference after the conclusion of the meeting.

The GST Council meeting has decided to retain the status quo on GST rate on textile to 5% and not raise it to 12%. The issue of GST rate on textile will be sent to the tax rate rationalization committee which will submit its report by February: FM Nirmala Sitharaman pic.twitter.com/DCjIvNTp2Z

— ANI (@ANI) December 31, 2021

The 46th GST Council meeting was called under emergency provisions. Finance Minister informed that it was a brief agenda and had only one agenda. The meeting was triggered by a letter that written to the Finance Minister by the finance minister of Gujarat, requesting for reconsideration of the September 2021 decision taken in the Council.

Speaking on rate rationalisation, Finance Minister said that there is already a committee that looks at rate rationalisation and it has been decided that textile will again be put to the committee for review along with other items. The tax rate rationalization committee will submit its report by February. After that the GST council wil have a meeting where the committee's report on every item, including textile, will be discussed.

Finance Minister of #Gujarat had requested for reconsideration of Sep 2021 GST Council decision

The decision (45th GST Council) was taken in the process of correcting the inversion in the tax structure

- FM @nsitharaman @FinMinIndia @nsitharamanoffc

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— PIB in Maharashtra (@PIBMumbai) December 31, 2021

This meeting is significant as it comes ahead of the Union Budget presentation, which will be presented in the Parliament on February 1, 2022.

The GST Council meeting was attended by finance ministers of States and Union Territories and Union ministers of state in the Ministry of Finance, Pankaj Chaudhary and Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad along with other senior officials of the Finance Ministry. The meeting was held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.

45th GST council meeting

During the 45th GST Council meeting, the council decided that the concessional GST rates, which were announced for COVID-19 related medicines till September 30 earlier, will be extended till December 31, 2021. The extension was only given for medicines that were given exemption earlier and not medical equipment. The council also exempted life-saving drugs that are not connected with COVID-19 but are very expensive from GST taxation.

Other key decisions -

The GST rate on cancer-related drugs was reduced from earlier 12 percent to 5 percent.

•The GST rate on retro-fitment kits for vehicles used by Divyang/ Persons with Disabilities was reduced to 5 percent.

•The GST rate on fortified rice kernels was reduced from 18 percent to 5 percent.

•The GST rate on biodiesel was also been reduced from 12 percent to 5 percent.

Read more: 45th GST Council meeting

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Year Ender 2021 India: List of Central Government Schemes 2021

Govt Schemes 2021: The Government of India released some of the major developmental schemes in 2021. The govt schemes in 2021 covered various sectors ranging from health to providing 4G services to the farthest of villages. As the country was crippled with the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, the schemes introduced by the Modi govt were targeted particularly to strengthen the health infrastructure of the country, some of them were, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, Ayushman Bharat CAPF Healthcare Scheme, among others.

To know more, go through the compilation of Central Government schemes 2021. Find the list of top 10 schemes of the Indian Government in 2021 which were introduced for the greater good of citizens of India.

1. Ayushman Bharat CAPF Healthcare Scheme

'Ayushman Bharat CAPF' healthcare scheme was launched for the personnel of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) in all states in a phased manner. The healthcare scheme was a joint initiative by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Health Authority. The CAPF Healthcare scheme aims to provide cashless and paperless medical treatment at the empanelled hospitals and will also ensure access to health services across the country to CAPF personnel.

2. Gram Ujala Scheme

The Gram Ujala scheme was launched by the Power Ministry in the Lok Sabha constituency of PM Modi, Varanasi. Under the Gram Ujala scheme, the government offers the world's cheapest LED bulbs in rural areas at Rs.10. It aimed at promoting a better standard of life, more economic activity, financial savings, and better safety for the rural citizens of UP while also further extending to other states.

3. PM GatiShakti

PM GatiShakti- National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity was launched by Prime Minister Modi in October 2021 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. The scheme is worth Rs. 100 lakh crores. PM GatiShakti aims at addressing the past issues through institutionalizing the holistic planning for stakeholders for the major infrastructure projects. The plan of PM GatiShakti was announced

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by PM Modi during his address on Independence Day 2021.

4. Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana

Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana was launched by the Railways Minister. It is a programme under the aegis of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. Under the scheme, entry-level training will be provided to the youth in industry-relevant skills through Railway Training Institutes. The training under Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana will be provided to 50,000 candidates over a period of three years. It will initially be provided to 1000 candidates in four trades -Welder, Electrician, Fitter, and Machinist.

5. PM-Daksh Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgarhi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana was implemented by the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry from the year 2021-22. Under PM-Daksh Yojana, eligible target groups are provided with the skill development training programmes on Short Term Training Program; Up-Skilling/Re-Skilling; Entrepreneurship Development Programme, and Long Term Training Programme.

6. RBI's Retail Direct Scheme, Integrated Ombudsmen Schemes

Two innovative, customer-centric initiatives of the Reserve Bank of India namely the RBI Retail Direct Scheme and the Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme were launched by PM Modi in November 2021. The Retail Direct Scheme of RBI aims to enhance access to the government securities market for retail investors while the Integrated Ombudsman Scheme is based on 'One Nation-One Ombudsman' with one portal, one email, and one address for the customers to lodge their complaints.

7. Govt Scheme to provide 4G network in over 7,000 villages

Under a scheme by the Central Government, 4G mobile services will be provided in over 7,000 villages across five states- Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, and Odisha**.** Under the recent Union Cabinet approved scheme, 4G-based mobile services will be provided in 7,287 uncovered villages of 44 Aspirational Districts. The 4G mobile services in the remote and difficult uncovered areas across 5 states will help in enhancing digital connectivity.

8. Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission

Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission was virtually launched by Prime Minister Modi in September

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2021. Prime Minister had announced the pilot project of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission in his speech on August 15, 2020. The Mission will ensure the security, confidentiality, and privacy of health-related personal information, and enable access and exchange of longitudinal health records of citizens with their consent. Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission will help in empowering citizens with modern healthcare systems.

9. Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana

PM Modi in October 2021 had launched the 'PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission'. Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana by the Central Government is one of the largest pan-India schemes that will focus on strengthening healthcare infrastructure across the country. The scheme was launched by Prime Minister Modi in addition to the National Health Mission.

10. Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0, AMRUT 2.0

Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 and AMRUT 2.0 were launched by Prime Minister Modi in August 2021**.** Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban was initiated by the center back in 2014 to eliminate open defecation and improve solid waste management. **The Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0** aims to continue the work done under the first phase of the mission.

AMRUT 2.0 will aim to make cities self-reliant and ensure water security. Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation was launched in 2015 by PM Modi to ensure adequate robust sewage networks and water supply to bring about a transformation in urban areas.

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Major Dhyan Chand Sports University: PM Modi to lay foundation stone in Meerut on January 2nd

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the **foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University in Meerut** on January 2, 2022. The University will be set up at Salawa and Kaili villages of Sardhana town in Meerut at an estimated cost of around Rs 700 crore.

The key focus of the Major Dhyan Chand Sports University would be to inculcate a sporting culture and establish world-class sporting infrastructure across the country. The establishment of the university will be a major step towards fulfilling this vision.

PM Modi will visit Meerut on 2nd Jan & lay the foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University at around 1 pm. The University will be established at Salawa & Kaili villages of Sardhana town in Meerut at an estimated cost of about Rs 700 Cr: PMO

(File pic) pic.twitter.com/KPUAAcdDCk

— ANI (@ANI) December 31, 2021

Read more: **PM Modi launches multiple projects in Haldwani in Uttarakhand**

Major Dhyan Chand Sports University- Facilities and Infrastructure

•Major Dhyan Chand Sports University will be the first-of-its kind Sports University that will offer training to sports persons in all possible ways, in all sporting disciplines.

•It will be equipped with modern and state-of-the-art infrastructure including synthetic Hockey ground and Football ground.

•It will also have a basketball, handball, kabaddi and volleyball ground, lawn tennis court and a shooting arena, archery and weightlifting areas.

•It will also be equipped with a gymnasium hall, synthetic running stadium, swimming pool, cycling velodrome and a multipurpose hall.

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•The university will also have state-of-the-art facilities for other sporting disciplines such as squash, shooting, gymnastics, weightlifting, archery, kayaking and canoeing.

•The University will have the capacity to train at least 1,080 sportspersons at a time including 540 female and 540 male sportspersons.

•The University will have dorms or housing facilities for the candidates who enroll.

Read more: **Top 5 things to know about Kanpur Metro inaugurated by PM Modi**

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RedInk Awards 2021 winners: Danish Siddiqui named ‘Journalist of the Year’; Check full list of winners

Redink Awards 2021 winners: The Redink Awards for Excellence in Journalism 2021 were presented on December 29, 2021, by Mumbai Press Club with the Chief Justice of India NV Ramana as a Chief Guest at the virtual event. **Photojournalist Danish Siddiqui**, who died during an assignment in Afghanistan in July 2021, was posthumously awarded as the **‘Journalist of the Year’** by the Mumbai Press Club.

Chief Justice NV Ramana presented the prestigious Redink Award to Danish Siddiqui for his spectrum of investigative and impactful news photography. The award of ‘Journalist of the Year’ was received by Siddiqui’s wife Frederike Siddiqui.

Mumbai Press Club also awarded the Red ink awards 2021 to various other journalists. They were honoured in 12 categories for their ethics and hard work in the field of Journalism.

Red ink Award 2021 Lifetime Achievement

RedInk 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed on Senior Journalist Prem Shankar Jha for his long and distinguished career of analytical and incisive writing. Chief Justice Ramana, while bestowing Red ink award 2021 lifetime achievement, said that Jha’s reputation for hard work, intellectual rigour, and highest ethical standards are unparalleled in the field.

Redink Awards-2021 : Winners#redinkawards2021 pic.twitter.com/3lw5r9Deag

— Mumbai Press Club (@mumbaipressclub) December 30, 2021

Red ink Journalist of the year award 2021

Photojournalist Danish Siddiqui was awarded the Journalist of the Year award by the Mumbai Press Club.

Frederike Siddiqui, wife of Danish Siddiqui, accepted the RedInk Award for the 'Journalist of the Year' on his behalf.#RedInkAwards2021 #DanishSiddiqui #JournalistOfTheYear pic.twitter.com/y0506vfm1b

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— Mumbai Press Club (@mumbaipressclub) December 31, 2021

Danish Siddiqui was the Chief Photographer for Reuters India. He was killed on July 15, 2021, while on duty in Afghanistan. His spectrum of news photography which was investigative and impactful ranged from anti-CAA protests, Rohingyas to COVID-19 and Afghanistan Civil War.

Mumbai Press Club Red ink awards 2021:

The RedInk Award was instituted by the Mumbai Press Club a decade ago to recognize the good investigative and featured writing as well as to raise the bar of journalism in India.

Red ink award 2021 was the 10th edition of recognition for excellent writing and good journalism.

Red ink awards 2021 winners list

Winners	Categories
1. Varsha Tolgalkar **2. Mrityunjay Singh**	**Business & Economy**
Sagar	**Crime**
1. Ishan Kukreti **2. Kundan Pandey** **3. Soundaram Ramanathan** **4. Sugandha Arora** **5. Sofia Bind**	**Environment**
1. Priyanka Pulla **2. Faye D' Souza** **3. Arun Rengaswamy**	**Health & Wellness**
1. Kumar Sambhav Shrivastava **2. Prabhakar Tamilarasu** **3. Tridip Kanti Mandal**	**Human Rights**

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4. Syed Shahriyar	
1. Kathakali Chanda	Lifestyle & Entertainment
2. Makepeace Sitlhou	
1. Abhishek Angad	Politics
2. Saurabh Shukla	
1. Bhavya Dore	
2. Ganesh Raghunath Kale	Science & Innovation
3. Pallava Bagla	
1. Mihir Vasavada	Sports
1. Mahtab Alam	The Arts
2. Majid Maqbool	
1. Apoorva Diwakar Salkade	The Big Picture
2. Manisha Mondal	
1. Asmita Bakshi	Women Empowerment & Gender Equalit
2. Shrikant Fakirba Bangale	

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China claims Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet, India says invented names do not alter facts

China has renamed 15 places in Arunachal Pradesh in its own language, claiming Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet, an area that falls under its administrative control. China had said last year as well that it did not recognise Arunachal Pradesh as a part of India.

India responded to the reports saying, ***"Arunachal Pradesh has always been, and will always be an integral part of India. Assigning invented names to places in Arunachal Pradesh does not alter this fact."***

India's Official Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi added that this is not the first time China has attempted such a renaming of places in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. China had sought to assign such names in April 2017 as well.

China renames 15 places in Arunachal Pradesh

China's Ministry of Civil Affairs announced on December 29, 2021 that it had standardised names of 15 places in Zangnan, the Chinese name for Arunachal Pradesh, in Chinese characters, Tibetan and Roman alphabet. The standardisation of the names was in accordance with regulations on geographical names issued by China's State Council.
Among the 15 places, eight are residential areas, four are mountains, two are rivers, while one is a mountain pass.

This is the second batch of standardised names that China has issued for places in Arunachal Pradesh. As per experts, the second batch covers more places this time, including residential areas, rivers and mountain passes.

China has released the following new names-

Residential places- Sêngkêzong and Daglungzong in Cona County of Shannan Prefecture, Goling, Damba in Zayu County of Nyingchi, Mani'gang, Duding and Migpain in Medog County of Nyingchi and Mêjag in Lhunze County of Shannan Prefecture.

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Mountains- Wamo Ri, Dêu Ri, Lhünzhub Ri and Kunmingxingzê Feng.

Rivers- Xênyogmo He and Dulain He

Mountain Pass- Sê La in Cona County.

Background

China had released the first batch of the standardised names for places in Arunachal Pradesh in 2017. The Chinese Foreign Ministry had said then that China's territorial claims in the Zangnan region have a historical and administrative basis.

According to Lian Xiangmin, an expert with the China Tibetology Research Center in Beijing, the renaming of the places was a part of a national effort to standardise the management of place names. He added that the places have existed for hundreds of years.

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South Africa's Quinton de Kock retires from Test cricket: Know his Test Career, Stats and Records

Quinton de Kock Test Retirement: Former South African captain Quinton de Kock announced sudden retirement from Test cricket on December 30, 2021. The wicket-keeper batsman announced his retirement from Test cricket with immediate effect, citing his intentions to spend more time with his growing family.

The announcement comes right after the first test between India and South Africa in Centurion, which India won by 113 runs and took a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. De Kock scored 34 runs in South Africa's first innings after standing ground for about 100 minutes and in the second innings, he hit 21 runs off 28 balls.

De Kock cited intentions to spend more time with his growing family as the reason for his relatively early retirement from the format. The 29-year-old and his wife, are anticipating the birth of their first-born child in the coming days.

BREAKING: #Proteas wicket-keeper batsman, Quinton de Kock has announced his retirement from Test cricket with immediate effect, citing his intentions to spend more time with his growing family.

Full statement: https://t.co/Tssys5FJMI pic.twitter.com/kVO8d1e0Ex

— Cricket South Africa (@OfficialCSA) December 30, 2021

Quinton de Kock test retirement statement

Quinton de Kock said in a statement, *"This is not a decision that I have come to very easily. I have taken a lot of time to think about what my future looks like and what needs to take priority in my life now that Sasha and I are about to welcome our first child into this world and look to grow our family beyond that. My family is everything to me and I want to have the time and space to be able to be with them during this new and exciting chapter of our lives."*

He further stated, *"I love Test cricket and I love representing my country and all that it comes with. I've enjoyed the ups and the downs, the celebrations and even the disappointments, but now I've found something that I love even more. In life, you can buy almost everything except for time, and right now, it's time to do right by the people that mean the most to me."*

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He further thanked all his teammates, coaches, management teams, family and friends and everyone else who has been a part of his Test cricket journey from the very beginning. He added that this is not the end of his career as a Protea. "I'm fully committed to white ball cricket and representing my country to the best of my ability for the foreseeable future," he said.

He further wished luck to all his teammates for the remainder of South Africa's Test series against India.

Quinton de Kock Test Debut

Test Debut- February 20,2014

Last Test- December 26,2021

Quinton de Kock had made his test debut for South Africa against Australia on February 20, 2014. His last test was the India vs South Africa test at Centurion on December 26, 2021.

Quinton de Kock Test Career & Records

•Quinton de Kock began playing Test cricket as a batsman and not as a wicketkeeper-batsman. He later however began to keep wickets in Test cricket as well. He bats in the middle order in Test cricket.

•He captained South Africa for the first time in Test cricket in December 2020, in South Africa's series against Sri Lanka.

•In his whole Test Career, Quinton De Kock played 54 matches and scored 3300 runs with a top score of 141 not-out. He has hit six centuries and 22 half-centuries in Test cricket.

•As a wicketkeeper, he has 232 dismissals to his name in Test cricket including 221 catches and 11 stumpings.

•Quinton De Kock had the third-most catches in the inaugural ICC World Test Championship with 48 dismissals including 47 catches and 1 stumping in 11 matches.

•He also has a personal best of six dismissals in an innings, against England in Centurion in 2019.

•He became the fastest wicketkeeper to take 150 test dismissals during the second test between

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South Africa and Sri Lanka on July 22, 2018.

•He broke the record for the fastest wicketkeeper to effect 200 dismissals on January 27, 2019 during South Africa' s fourth test against England.

•Quinton De Kock joined Mark Boucher by amassing 3000 runs in Test cricket as a wicketkeeper for South Africa on June 12, 2021.

Quinton de Kock Test Stats

Competition	Test
Matches	54
Runs scored	3,300
Batting average	38.82
100s/50s	6/22
Top score	141 not out
Catches/stumpings	221/11

What next for South Africa?

Quinton de Kock's retirement means South Africa will need to rope in a new wicket-keeper in their playing XI in the remaining two games against India. The second test between India and South Africa will be played at the Wanderers stadium in Johannesburg and the third test will be played in Cape Town.

South Africa has two other wicket-keeping options in the squad-Kyle Verreynne and Ryan Rickelton.

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Morning Current Affairs: 31 December 2021

FM Nirmala Sitharaman to chair 46th GST Council meeting today

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will chair the 46th meeting of the GST Council in New Delhi on December 31, 2021. The meeting is important as it comes ahead of Union Budget, which will be presented on February 1,2022.
Union Ministers of State in Finance Ministry Pankaj Chaudhary and Dr Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad will also attend the meeting.

Read more here

South Africa's Quinton de Kock announces sudden retirement from Tests

Former South Afican captain and wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock announced sudden retirement from Test cricket with immediate effect on December 30, 2021. The announcement comes one day after the first test between India and South Africa in Centurion, where India won by 113 runs. Quinton de Kock said that he wanted to spend more time with his family.

Read more about his test career, stats here

Covaxin safe, immunogenic in 2-18 age group: Bharat Biotech

Bharat Biotech said on December 30, 2021 that its COVID-19 vaccine, Covaxin was found to be "safe, well-tolerated, and immunogenic" in the age group of 2-18 years in phase II/III study. Bharat Biotech had conducted phase II/III clinical trials to evaluate the safety, reactogenicity and immunogenicity of COVAXIN in healthy children and adolescents. This comes as the vaccine has been approved for 15-18 year olds.

SBI authorised to issue electoral bonds

The State Bank of India (SBI) has been authorised to issue Electoral Bonds through its select 29 branches during January 1-10, 2022. This was informed by the Finance Ministry on December 30, 2021.The Electoral Bonds shall be valid for 15 days from the date of issuance and no payment shall be made to any payee Political Party if the Electoral Bond is deposited after expiry of the validity period. The Electoral Bond deposited by an eligible Political Party in its account shall be credited on the same day.

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Post-COVID-19 infection immunity persists for 9 months: ICMR DG Dr. Balram Bhargava

The immunity after COVID-19 infection persists for at least 9 months, as per evidence-based studies from different countries informed Dr. Balram Bhargava, Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on December 30, 2021. He stated that if you get the infection then for 9 months you are generally protected.

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Sahitya Akademi Award 2021: Namita Gokhale named among 20 winners; Full list of Sahitya Akademi winners here

Sahitya Akademi Award 2021 list: Eminent author Namita Gokhale, Punjabi writer Khalid Hussain and TMC MLA Bratya Basu are among the **20 winners of the Sahitya Akademi Award 2021** announced on December 30, 2021, by Sahitya Akademi. English writer Namita Gokhale won the award for her novel **'Things to Leave Behind'.** She is among the authors who have been honored with Sahitya Akademi Award 2021 in 20 different languages.

The annual Sahitya Akademi Award included **seven books of poetry, five short stories, two novels, two plays, and one book each of autobiography, biography, epic poetry, and criticism.** While Namita Gokhale won the literary honour for her epic historical novel, Bratya Basu and Khalid Hussain won Sahitya Akademi Award 2021 for a play and collection of stories 'Sullan Da Salan', respectively.

Deeply honoured by the Sahitya Akademi Award for English, 2021 for my novel Things To Leave Behind. Feel a deep sense of pride and gratitude to belong to the vibrant Indian literatures. #ManyLanguagesOneLiterature @sahityaakademi @PenguinIndia @JaipurLitFest pic.twitter.com/RbNuJdtAXv

— Namita Gokhale (@NamitaGokhale_) December 30, 2021

According to Sahitya Akademi's statement, the awards for Gujarati, Manipuri, Maithili, and Urdu languages will be announced at a later date.

Sahitya Akademi Award 2021: How winners are selected?

Sahitya Akademi explained that the books were selected for Sahitya Akademi Award on the basis of the recommendation made by a jury of three members in the concerned languages as per the procedure laid down for the purpose.

The Executive Board of Sahitya Akademi declared the awards on the basis of unanimous selections made by the jurors or the selection made on the basis of the majority vote.

Sahitya Akademi Awards relate to books that are first published during the five years immediately

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preceding the year of the award (between January 1, 2015, and December 31, 2019).

Sahitya Akademi Award 2021: What is the prize money?

Sahitya Akademi Award 2021 will include a casket containing a shawl, an engraved copper plaque, and an amount of Rs. 1,00,000.

Sahitya Akademi Award will be presented to the winners at the award presentation function which will take place at a later date.

Press Release: #SahityaAkademi announced its Annual Sahitya Akademi Award-2021 in 20 languages today.#AmritMahotsav @AmritMahotsav @kishanreddybjp @arjunrammeghwal @M_Lekhi @MinOfCultureGoI @secycultureGOI @Sen2Partha @ksraosahitya @BOC_MIB @PIB_India @PIBCulture @MIB_India pic.twitter.com/qC5w6D1HDf

— Sahitya Akademi (@sahityaakademi) December 30, 2021

Sahitya Akademi Award

Sahitya Akademi Award by Sahitya Akademi is a literary honour in India that is conferred on the writers of the most outstanding books of literary merit that are published in any of the 24 major Indian languages. The prestigious literary award is conferred by Sahitya Akademi which is India's National Academy of Letters.

Sahitya Akademi Award was established in 1954 and it comprises a plaque and a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000. The aim of the Sahitya Akademi Award is to recognize and promote excellence in Indian writing as well as also acknowledge the new trends in literature.

Sahitya Akademi Award plaque which is awarded to the winners was designed by Indian filmmaker Satyajit Ray.

Full list of Sahitya Akademi Award 2021 winners

Winners	Language	Genre
Anuradha Sarma Pujari	Assamese	Novel
Bratya Basu	Bengali	Play
Mwdai Gahai	Bodo	Poetry
Raj Rahi	Dogri	Short Stories
Namita Gokhale	English	Novel

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Daya Prakash Sinha	Hindi	Play
D.S. Nagabhushana	Kannada	Biography
Wali Mohd. Aseer Kashtawari	Kashmiri	Criticism
Sanjiv Verenkar	Konkani	Poetry
George Onakkoor	Malayalam	Autobiography
Kiran Gaurav	Marathi	Short Stories
Chhabilal Upadhyaya	Nepali	Epic Poetry
Hrushikesh Mallick	Odia	Poetry
Khalid Hussain	Punjabi	Short Stories
Meethesh Nirmohi	Rajasthani	Poetry
Vindeshwariprasad Mishr 'Vinay'	Sanskrit	Poetry
Niranjan Hansda	Santali	Short Stories
Arjun Chawla	Sindhi	Poetry
Ambai	Tamil	Short Stories
Gorati Venkanna	Telugu	Poetry

Read More: **Sahitya Akademi Awards 2020: M Veerappa Moily, Arundhathi Subramaniam named among 20 winners, Check Full List!**

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Year Ender India 2021: From Sidharth Shukla, Puneeth Rajkumar to CDS General Bipin Rawat- Tragic deaths that left us reeling in 2021

Year Ender India 2021: The year 2021 that began as a year of hope soon turned tragic with the devastating second wave of COVID-19 that hit India in April-May, claiming many lives both young and old and leaving many families reeling with the shock. There were major losses in the field of politics, arts and entertainment as well that left a void too large to fill such as the sudden death of popular actors Sidharth Shukla and Puneeth Rajkumar and others who passed away after suffering from a prolonged illness or COVID-19 such as Dilip Kumar, Surekha Sikri, Vinod Dua, Milkha Singh and his wife Nirmal Saini and those who left us in tragic incidents such as CDS General Bipin Rawat, his wife Dr. Madhulika Rawat and 12 senior Defence officials including Group Captain Varun Singh and Pulitzer-winning Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui.

Remembering some of the greatest personalities who left us in 2021

CDS Bipin Rawat and wife Dr Madhulika Rawat

In the most tragic incident, India's first Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat and his wife Madhulika Rawat were confirmed to be among the 13 people who died in the IAF Mi-17V5 helicopter crash near Coonoor in Nilgiris district in Tamil Nadu on December 8, 2021. CDS General Bipin Rawat was on his way to address the faculty and the students of the Defence Services Staff College in Wellington, Tamil Nadu.

Group Captain Varun Singh

Group Captain Varun Singh, who was the sole survivor of the tragic helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu passed away on December 15, 2021 after being on life support. Group Captain Varun Singh had been rescued alive from the helicopter crash site and was taken to a hospital in Wellington. He was later moved to a Bengaluru Military Hospital where he breathed his last.

Dilip Kumar

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Legendary Bollywood Actor Dilip Kumar breathed his last on July 7, 2021 after suffering from prolonged illness. He had been admitted to the hospital multiple times earlier after he complained of breathlessness. Popularly known as the tragedy king of Bollywood, Dilip Kumar delivered some of the most legendary films of Hindi cinema such as Devdas and Mughal-e-Azam.

Milkha Singh

Track legend Milkha Singh passed away on June 18, 2021 after suffering from post-COVID complications. He was 91. His family said in the statement that the "legendary sprinter had fought hard, but God has his ways." His wife, Nirmal Milkha Singh succumbed to COVID-19 before him on June 13 at the age of 85 years.

Sidharth Shukla

In one of the most tragic deaths, Sidharth Shukla passed away suddenly on September 2, 2021 due to heart attack. He was 40. The popular actor's untimely death sent shock waves across the industry and among his fans. He was best known for his role in one of the longest-running TV shows, Balika Vadhu and another TV show Dil se Dil Tak. He was also the winner of Big Boss season 13, one of the most popular seasons of the show.

Puneeth Rajkumar

Kannada actor Puneeth Rajkumar passed away suddenly on October 29, 2021 due to cardiac arrest. He was 46. His death also shocked his fans and industry colleagues. Puneeth Rajkumar was reportedly working out in the gym when he collapsed suddenly and was immediately rushed to the hospital. He was non-responsive when he was brought in and the hospital had initiated advanced cardiac resuscitation but unfortunately, the actor could not be saved.

Danish Siddiqui

In another tragic death, Pulitzer Prize-winning Indian journalist Danish Siddiqui was killed while covering the clashes between Afghan security forces and Taliban fighters in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar city in Afghanistan on July 16, 2021. He had been covering the situation in Kandahar and was regularly posting videos over the situation there on his social media platforms.

Surekha Sikri

Surekha Sikri, who had gained popularity with her role as Amma ji in the popular daily soap

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'Balika Vadhu', passed away on July 16, 2021, due to cardiac arrest at the age of 75. The three-time National award-winning actor was suffering from complications arising from the second brain stroke. She passed away after suffering from a cardiac arrest. Some of her most memorable performances had come in films like Badhaai Ho, Tamas, Mammo.

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Egypt becomes new member of BRICS NDB; Full list of New Development Bank member countries

BRICS new development bank upsc: India on December 29, 2021, welcomed **Egypt as the new member of BRICS New Development Bank. With this, Egypt has now become a fourth new member** to be admitted to BRICS NDB. The BRICS group includes five major emerging countries around the world- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa and the multilateral bank BRICS NDB was established by these rising economies to finance the sustainable development projects.

The news of Egypt being a new member of BRICS NDB was announced by the Spokesperson of External Affairs Minister, Arindam Bagchi who also said that the membership expansion will enable the bank to position itself as a significant development institution.

welcomes Egypt as the fourth new member of #BRICS #NewDevelopmentBank family. Bangladesh, UAE & Uruguay joined in Sep 2021.

Membership expansion enables @NDB_int to position itself as a premier development institution for emerging economies. @indembcairo @MfaEgypt

— Arindam Bagchi (@MEAIndia) December 29, 2021

5 things to know about BRICS New Development Bank

1. BRICS New Development Bank is a multilateral bank that was established by Brazil, Russia, China, India, and South Africa to finance sustainable development and infrastructure projects.

2. The Board of Governors of NDB had authorized the bank to conduct the formal negotiations with the prospective members in late 2020.

3. New Development Bank was established to mobilize the resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS as well as other emerging economies.

4. BRICS NDB complements the existing efforts of the regional and multilateral financial institutions for global growth and development.

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5. Projects in the areas such as water, transportation, sanitation, digital infrastructure, clean energy, urban development, and social infrastructure are funded by BRICS New Development Bank.

Who are the new members of New Development Bank?

Before Egypt joined the multilateral bank, earlier, in September 2021, India had welcomed Bangladesh, Uruguay and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the new members of the BRICS New Development Bank.

List of New Development Bank member countries

Find the **total members of BRICS New Development Bank** from the list below:

S. No.	Member countries
1.	Brazil
2.	Russia
3.	India
4.	China
5.	South Africa
6.	Bangladesh
7.	United Arab Emirates
8.	Egypt
9.	Uruguay

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Omicron gradually spreading in community: Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain

Omicron community transmission: Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain informed on December 30, 2021 that **people with no travel history have been found to be infected with Omicron, which means that it is gradually spreading in the community.**

Satyendar Jain also said that the new COVID variant Omicron was found in 46 per cent of 115 samples sequenced in Delhi so far. He further confirmed that there are a total of 200 Covid cases in Delhi hospitals currently, out of which 102 belongs to the city, while 98 are from outside.

People with no travel history found infected with Omicron, it means it's gradually spreading in community: Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain

— Press Trust of India (@PTI_News) December 30, 2021

He further said that of the 200 Covid cases in Delhi hospitals, which include international passengers. 115 are asymptomatic and have been kept in hospitals as a precautionary step.

Read more: **Check Full List of States that have reported Omicron Variant**

"A total of 70 #Omicron patients have been admitted to LNJP till Dec 30, out of which 50 patients have been discharged. Most of the patients are asymptomatic; only 4 out of the 70 patients had a mild fever, throat infection, weakness, loose motion, " said Dr Suresh Kumar, LNJP-MD, Delhi.

A total of 70 #Omicron patients have been admitted to LNJP till Dec 30, out of which 50 patients have been discharged. Most of the patients are asymptomatic; only 4 out of the 70 patients had a mild fever, throat infection, weakness, loose motion: Dr Suresh Kumar, LNJP-MD, Delhi pic.twitter.com/BqJNZRRli1

— ANI (@ANI) December 30, 2021

WHO warns of Covid 'tsunami'

The World Health Organization warned of a possible Covid tsunami on December 30, 2021. WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus expressed high concern over highly transmissible Omicron spreading at the same time as Delta, saying that it is leading to a tsunami of cases. He said that

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Delta and Omicron are twin threats that are driving up cases to record numbers right now, which is again spiking hospitalisations and deaths.

The WHO Chief said that this is and will continue to put immense pressure on exhausted Health workers and health systems on the brink of collapse and again disrupting lives and livelihoods. He stated that the pressure on health systems is not only because of new COVID-19 patients requiring hospitalisation but also a large number of health workers are getting sick themselves.

The WHO Chief warned that the unvaccinated are many times more at risk of dying from either variant. He further warned that Omicron is moving so quickly, in addition to vaccination, public health social measures are also needed to curb the infection to protect health workers and systems and open up societies and keep children in school.

The WHO Chief reiterated that this is the moment for leaders to banish the politics of populism & self-interest, which are derailing the COVID-19 response & threaten to undermine the response to the inevitable next disease X. He stated that the virus will continue to evolve and threaten our health systems if we don't improve the collective response.

This comes as Omicron has already started to exhaust hospitals in the United States, which is the hardest-hit nation currently.

Background

Omicron is spreading very quickly across the world, becoming the dominant global variant in several countries including the United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa and Russia. Omicron is likely to replace Delta as the dominant global variant in the coming weeks. Delta is still the most common variant in all continents.

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Indian Army sets up New Quantum Computing Lab, artificial intelligence centre in MP's Mhow

The Indian Army has set up a quantum computing laboratory and a centre for artificial intelligence at a military engineering institute in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh. MM Naravane, the Chief of Army Staff General had also visited the facility during his recent visit to MP's Mhow.

The Defence Ministry of India announced that the Indian Army with support from the **National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) established the Quantum Lab at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, Mhow in MP.**

Objective

The two centres by the Indian Army will carry out extensive research in developing the transformative technologies for use by the armed forces. The Centre will also facilitate the research and training in the developing field of Quantum and artificial intelligence.

A #QuantumLab operationalised in collaboration with National Security Council at #MCTE, #Mhow, in pursuit of embracing the emerging technologies. #IndianArmy #StrongAndCapable #MakeInIndia#AmritMahotsav pic.twitter.com/vnODtvIVE9

— ADG PI - INDIAN ARMY (@adgpi) December 27, 2021

Indian Army in field of emerging technologies

The Indian Army has been making steady and significant development in the field of emerging technologies.

The Army has already established an Artificial Intelligence Centre at the same institution with over 140 deployments in the forward areas and the active support of academia and industry.

The training on cyber warfare is also being imparted through a state-of-the-art cyber range and cyber security labs.

Research by Army in field of Quantum Technology

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According to the Defence Ministry, the research undertaken by the Indian Army in the field of Quantum Technology will help it facilitate the next generation of communication and transform the current system of cryptography to post-quantum cryptography.

The key thrust areas of Quantum Technology are quantum key distribution, quantum computing and quantum communication.

What is Quantum Technology?

It is an emerging of engineering and physics that completely relied on the principle of **quantum physics**. The examples of Quantum technologies are- quantum sensors, quantum computing, quantum cryptography, quantum metrology, quantum simulation, and quantum imaging- where the properties of quantum mechanics, particularly quantum superposition, quantum entanglement and quantum tunnelling are important.

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Jhansi station new name: Jhansi Railway Station in UP renamed as Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station

Jhansi station name change: The Government of Uttar Pradesh has **renamed the Jhansi Railway Station as 'Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station'.** Jhansi station new name has been decided after Rani Laxmibai. The Chief Minister of UP Yogi Adityanath made the announcement regarding the new name of Jhansi station on December 29, 2021, via a tweet.

The Uttar Pradesh Government also issued a notification and the Railways has also started preparations to implement the change in the name of Jhansi Railway Station. The notification informing about Jhansi station new name also stated that the name has been changed after a 'no-objection certificate' issued by the Home Affairs Ministry in a letter dated November 24, 2021.

— Yogi Adityanath (@myogiadityanath) December 29, 2021

Why UP govt has changed the name of Jhansi Railway Station?

The decision by Uttar Pradesh behind announcing a new name for Jhansi Railway Station has been taken to boost the tourism in the area and as per the state government, it is also likely to benefit the Bundelkhand area in the state.

Rani Laxmibai being the new name of Jhansi Railway Station will also encourage the public to know more about the warrior figure who played a significant role in India's Independence.

Read More: **Know how names of Railway Stations are changed and who has the authority?**

Who was Rani Laxmibai?

Rani Laxmibai or Jhansi ki Rani was an Indian queen. She was the Maharani consort of the Maratha Princely State of Jhansi from 1843 to 1853 as the wife of Maharaja Gangadhar Rao.

Rani Laxmibai was one of the leading figures of the 1857 Indian Rebellion and she also became a symbol of resistance to the British Raj for the Indian Nationalists.

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UP Railway Station name change list

Old Name	New Name
Faizabad Junction Railway Station	**Ayodhya Cantt**
Allahabad Station	**Prayagraj Junction Railway Station**
Mughalsarai Railway Station	**Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction**
Jhansi Railway Station	**Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station**

Proposal to change names of other establishments in UP

While Allahabad was renamed as Prayagraj by the Uttar Pradesh Government, Mirzapur, Sultanpur, Firozabad, Aligarh and Manipuri are also on the list for a name change. Along with them, the proposals to change the names of Bastipur and Ghazipur have also been put forth.

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Ross Taylor announces retirement from international cricket- Know Batting Stats, Centuries & Key Records

Ross Taylor Retirement: New Zealand cricketer Ross Taylor announced his retirement from international cricket on December 30, 2021. The cricketer announced that **his last series would be New Zealand's two-match home Test series against Bangladesh and six ODIs against Australia and Netherlands.** New Zealand is scheduled to tour Australia for three ODIs in late January then will play Netherlands at home.

Taylor tweeted saying, ***"Today I'm announcing my retirement from international cricket at the conclusion of the home summer, two more tests against Bangladesh, and six odi's against Australia & the Netherlands. Thank you for 17 years of incredible support. It's been an honour to represent my country #234."***

Today I'm announcing my retirement from international cricket at the conclusion of the home summer, two more tests against Bangladesh, and six odi's against Australia & the Netherlands. Thank you for 17 years of incredible support. It's been an honour to represent my country #234 pic.twitter.com/OTy1rsxkYp

— Ross Taylor (@RossLTaylor) December 29, 2021

Ross Taylor is the leading run-scorer for New Zealand in Test and ODI cricket. He is also the first cricketer to play 100 matches in all three formats- Test, ODI and T20.

Ross Taylor Debut

Test Debut- November 8, 2007, New Zealand vs South Africa

ODI Debut- March 1, 2006, New Zealand vs Bangladesh

T20 Debut- December 22, 2006, New Zealand vs Sri Lanka

Last T20- November 29, 2020, New Zealand vs West Indies

Ross Taylor IPL Team

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While Ross Taylor has announced retirement from international cricket, it is not clear whether he will continue to play franchise cricket. He, however, has not played in the IPL since last couple of seasons. He was a part of the Royal Challengers Bangalore at the start of the IPL Season from 2008 to 2010 and then became a part of Rajasthan Royals squad. Check his IPL journey below:

2008-2010- Royal Challengers Bangalore

2011- Rajasthan Royals

2012-2014- Delhi Daredevils

2013- Pune Warriors

Ross Taylor Batting Stats

Competition	Test	ODI	T20I
Matches	109	233	102
Runs scored	7,577	8,581	1,909
Batting average	45.37	48.20	26.15
100s/50s	19/35	21/51	0/7
Top score	290	181*	63

Ross Taylor Bowling Stats

Competition	Test	ODI	T20I
Balls bowled	96	42	–

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Wickets	2	0	–
Best bowling	2/4	–	–
Catches/Stumpings	159/–	139/–	46/–

Ross Taylor Records

1. Ross Taylor holds several records including scoring most ODI runs (8,581) for New Zealand.

2. He also holds the record of scoring most runs in Test cricket (7, 584) for New Zealand.

3. He also holds the record of scoring most ODI centuries (21) and most centuries by a New Zealand batsman across all formats (40).

4. He also holds the record of most catches by a New Zealand cricketer in international cricket with 346 catches.

5. He is one of the only four New Zealand cricketers to play 100 tests after Daniel Vettori (112), Stephen Fleming (111), and Brendon McCullum (101).

6. Ross Taylor is the first cricketer ever to play 100 matches across all three formats of cricket.

7. Taylor also holds the record of scoring the highest Test score in Australia by a visiting player after his 290 at Perth in 2015.

8. Taylor had hit the winning runs in the ICC World Test Championship final against India.

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Morning Current Affairs: 30 December 2021

Sourav Ganguly remains haemodynamically stable

BCCI President Sourav Ganguly is haemodynamically stable after testing positive for COVID-19, informed Woodlands Hospital MD & CEO Dr. Rupali Basu. The MD further informed that the former cricketer's oxygen saturation was maintained at 99 percent on room air. Ganguly had been admitted to the hospital late evening on December 26,2021 when he tested positive for COVID.

PM Modi to release 10th installment under PM-KISAN scheme on January

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release the 10th installment of financial benefit under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme on January 1, 2022. The Prime Minister will transfer an amount worth Rs 20,000 crore through video conferencing to more than 10 crore beneficiary farmer families. The fund will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Assam Rifles veteran who escorted 14th Dalai Lama on his arrival in India passes away

Chandra Das, the Assam Rifles veteran, who had received and escorted the 14th Dalai Lama on his arrival in India in 1959 passed away on December 28, 2021. He was 83. Dalai Lama had fled Tibet in 1959 at the age of 22 and crossed the border on March 30, 1959 with the help of the CIA's Special Activities Division. He had arrived at Tezpur in Assam. He was escorted into India by a seven-member Assam Rifles team, which comprised 23-year-old Naren Chandra Das.

PM Modi to lay foundation stone of 23 projects in Uttarakhand today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Haldwani in Uttarakhand today to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of 23 projects that will worth almost Rs 17,500 crore. The Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone of around 17 projects, which will be worth around Rs 14, 100 crore.

Read More here

Congress to get new President in September 2022?

According to Congress Central Election Authority President Madhusudan Mistry, the Congress party will gets its new national president by the end of September 2022. The Congress is currently being led by interim President Sonia Gandhi, who took over after Rahul Gandhi resigned from the

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post in July 2019 after the party's massive defeat in 2019 Lok Sabha Elections.

Vaccines still effective against Omicron: WHO Chief Scientist

According to WHO Chief Scientist Dr.Soumya Swaminathan, vaccines are still proving to be effective against Omicron as even though the number of Covid cases are rising sharply across the globe, the severity of the disease has not risen. The WHO scientist said that the T cell immunity is holding up better against the Omicron Coviod variant. She urged all those who have not yet received their vaccine to get vaccinated at the earliest.

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PM Narendra Modi's UAE visit postponed amid Omicron scare

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has been postponed amid the surge in the number of Omicron cases across the globe. The Prime Minister was supposed to visit UAE on January 6, 2022.

The scheduled trip has reportedly been rescheduled due to the rise in Omicron cases across the world. The visit is likely to be pushed to February 2022.

The visit would have been Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first foreign visit in the new year. It was scheduled at a time when the two nations are looking to be celebrating 50 years of their diplomatic ties.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to UAE postponed. PM Modi was scheduled to visit the UAE on Jan 6: Sources

(File pic) pic.twitter.com/G1AUCp6Dbn

— ANI (@ANI) December 29, 2021

PM Modi was expected to visit the India Pavilion at the Dubai Expo, which showcases India's culture, Yoga, Ayurveda to Space programme. The foreign ministers of the new quad bloc- India, US, UAE and Israel- are expected to hold a meeting on the margins of Dubai Expo 2020.

Comprehensive and Strategic Partnership

PM Modi's visit to UAE in August 2015 had marked the beginning of a new Comprehensive and Strategic Partnership between India and UAE. It was followed by a visit to India from Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE Armed Forces in February 2016.

Omicron Cases

There has been a sudden rise in COVID-19 cases across the world, especially in the United States and Europe. India is also witnessing a surge in cases amid the threat of the new Covid variant- Omicron due to which several states have begun imposing new restrictions like bringing

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back night curfews.

The UAE has reported over 2,234 cases of the Covid-19 coronavirus, while India has reported 9,195 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours.

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Year Ender 2021: List of top women achievers in India 2021

Female achievers in India 2021: As the year comes to an end, the world witnessed some whirlwind changes and one of them was largely dedicated to Indian women achievers in 2021. Effortlessly breaking the glass ceiling from sports to Ramanujan Prize for being a brilliant Mathematician, Indian women came a long way this year. Each with their own unique inspiring journey, these women from India are the examples to achievements which sometimes is believed to be impossible. The achievements, the dedication of Indian women in 2021 must be admired and their challenges must never be undermined.

In the Current Affairs section of Jagran Josh, we are bringing you such women who marked themselves in their diverse fields in 2021. Check the list below of Indian women and their accomplishments ranging from sports to beauty pageants to being on Google Doodle giving them global recognition.

Women in Sports in India 2021: Awards and Recognition

1. Sprinter Anju Bobby George

A retired Indian sprinter Anju Bobby George was awarded ‘Woman of the Year’ at the World Athletics Awards 2021 by the World Athletics. She was recognised for her efforts in advancing the sport in India as well as for inspiring more women to follow in her footsteps and achieve their dreams of being successful athletes.

2. Hockey player Gurjit Kaur

Hockey Star Gurjit Kaur was awarded the FIH Women’s Hockey Player of the Year at the International Hockey Federation's (FIH) Hockey Stars Awards 2020-21. She is an Indian female field Hockey player. Gurjit Kaur plays as a defender who also represented India at the Hockey World Cup 2018.

3. Cricketer Mithali Raj

Mithali Raj in 2021 became the first Indian women cricketer to be conferred with the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind. Raj is the ODI as well as

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Test Captain of the Women's national cricket team.

Indian women in News in 2021: Awards and Recognition in various fields

1. Miss Universe 2021 Harnaaz Sandhu

Harnaaz Sandhu from India created history by winning the Miss Universe crown after a gap of 21 years. Lara Dutta had brought home the crown back in 2000. Harnaaz Sandhu is from Punjab who represented India at the 70th Miss Universe 2021.

2. Brigadier SV Sarasvati awarded National Florence Nightingale Award

The Deputy Director-General of Military Nursing Service, Brigadier SV Sarasvati, was bestowed with the National Florence Nightingale Award 2020 in September 2021. Sarasvati was honoured with a prestigious Nightingale Award for her immense contribution to the Military Nursing Service as a Nurse Administrator.

3. KK Shailaja awarded CEU Open Society Prize

KK Shailaja, the former Health Minister of Kerala was awarded the Central European University (CEU) Open Society Prize for 2021. She was honoured for her community-based public health work and determined leadership at saving lives during the pandemic.

4. Journalist Megha Rajagopalan won Pulitzer Prize 2021

Indian-origin journalist **Megha Rajagopalan** won the Pulitzer Prize in the International Reporting category for their innovative investigative reports. She along with two other journalists was behind exposing China's secretly built Uyghur Muslims detention camps in its Xinjiang region.

5. Dr. Tahera Qutbuddin wins Sheikh Zayed Book Award

Dr. Tahera Qutbuddin, a Mumbai-born Professor**,** became the first person from India to win the prestigious Sheikh Zayed Book Award. She was honoured for her book 'Arabic Oration: Art and Function'.

6. Dhutee Chand honoured with Chhattisgarh Veerni Award

Sprinter Dutee Chand was honoured with the Chhattisgarh Veerni Award at the inaugural edition of the awards. The award was established to recognise the contribution of Indian women in

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different fields including sports, literature, education, law, music, history, social work and business.

7. Poet Arundhati Subramaniam won Sahitya Akademi Awards

Renowned poet **Arundhathi Subramaniam** was named among Sahitya Akademi Award winners 2020 for her poetry collection **'When God is a Traveller'** in English.

8. Activist Anjali Bharadwaj honoured with US anti-corruption award

Indian social activist Anjali Bhardwaj was honoured with the International Anti-corruption Champions Award by the United States. The award recognised individuals who worked tirelessly, often in the face of adversity, to defend transparency, combat corruption and ensure accountability in their own countries.

9. 50 Most Powerful women in India

Fortune India released a list of its top 50 most powerful women in India in the year 2021. The Finance Minister of India Nirmala Sitharaman grabbed a top position. She was followed by Reliance's Nita Ambani who is a Chairperson and founder of Reliance Foundation.

10. Neena Gupta becomes third woman to win Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians 2021

A Mathematician from India Neena Gupta became the **fourth Indian and third woman** to win Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians 2021. She is a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata and won the prize for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.

Many Firsts for Indian women in 2021

1. Vaishali Hiwase becomes first women officer commanding in BRO

Vaishali S Hiwase became the first woman officer to be appointed as Officer Commanding in the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), India. She will be responsible for connectivity through an Indo-China border road, said Border Roads Organisation (BRO), India.

2. Mountaineer Priyanka Mohite becomes first Indian woman to scale Mt Annapurna

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Mountaineer Priyanka Mohite became the first woman from India to scale the tenth highest mountain in the world, Mt Annapurna.

3. Bhawana Kanth became the first woman fighter pilot to participate in Republic Day parade 2021

Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth became the first woman fighter pilot to take part in the parade of Republic Day 2021. She was the part of the tableau of the Indian Air Force that showcased the mock-ups of LAC- Light Combat Aircraft, the Sukhoi-30 fighter plane, and light combat helicopter.

4. Nimaben Acharya becomes first woman Speaker of Gujarat Assembly

Nimaben Acharya, Senior BJP MLA, became the first woman Speaker of the Gujarat Assembly. Her name was proposed by Gujarat's Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.

5. RV Suchiang becomes first native woman of Meghalaya to take charge as Chief Secretary of state

RV Suchiang became the first-ever native woman Chief Secretary of Meghalaya. She is a 1989 batch officer of the Indian Administrative Services and her appointment was made by the State Government.

6. Shefali Juneja becomes first woman chairperson of ICAO

Shefali Juneja from India was elected as the first woman Chairperson of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Aviation Security Committee. She previously served as the Joint Secretary in the Civil Aviation Ministry and used to deal with International Agreements between 2012 and 2019.

Indian Women in 2021: Significant appointments and achievements

1. Mamata Banerjee becomes West Bengal CM for third consecutive time

Mamata Banerjee became the **only woman Chief Minister in the country to win three consecutive terms** in India. She was sworn in as West Bengal's Chief Minister for the third consecutive time on May 5, 2021.

2. Indian-Origin Leena Nair became CEO of Luxury Brand Chanel

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Leena Nair of Indian-origin was appointed as the CEO of Chanel, a French Luxury Brand. Leena Nair was the Chief Human Resources Officer of Unilever and she had started her career at Hindustan Unilever as a management trainee 30 years ago.

3. Gita Gopinath becomes First Deputy Managing Director of IMF

The Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund, Gita Gopinath in 2022 will take up a new role as the First Deputy Managing Director of IMF. She has served as the Chief Economist of IMF for 3 years.

4. Nykaa founder Falguni Nayar becomes wealthiest self-made woman billionaire of India

Falguni Nayar, Nykaa founder and CEO became India's 7th woman billionaire and the wealthiest self-made billionaire. She founded Nykaa in 2012 when she was 50-years-old.

5. Sirisha Bandla became second Indian-born woman to fly into space

Indian-origin Sirisha Bandla became the second Indian-born woman to fly into space. She was one of the six crew members aboard Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic flight, which flew to the edge of space before returning to the Earth. Kalpana Chawal was the first Indian-born woman to go into space.

Indian Women celebrated by Google Doodle in 2021

1. Subhadra Kumari Chauhan

Google had paid a tribute to Subhadra Kumari Chauhan on her 117th birth anniversary with a creative doodle. She was an Indian activist, freedom fighter, and poet. Her work gained national recognition during a male-dominated era of literature.

2. Sarla Thukral

Sarla Thukral was honoured by Google on her 107th birth anniversary. She was an Indian pilot, designer, and entrepreneur and was often best known for being the first woman from India to pilot an aircraft.

3. Kadambini Ganguly

Google honoured Dr. Kadambini Ganguly on her 160th birth anniversary. She was the first

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woman to be trained as a physician in India. The Doodle recognised and honour her pioneering work in medical practice.

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Indian Personalities in News 2021: Neeraj Chopra, Virat Kohli, Harnaaz Sandhu, Mukesh Ambani, Anil Menon & 20 Other Person in News

Indian Personalities in News 2021: The year 2021 was marked by brilliant achievements by Indian personalities all over the world, starting with Neeraj Chopra winning India's first-ever individual Olympic gold in athletics, Mukesh Ambani joining the exclusive $100 Billion Club, Falguni Nayar becoming India’s wealthiest self-made woman billionaire, Sirisha Bandla becoming the second Indian-born woman to fly to space after Kalpana Chawla to India's Harnaaz Sandhu bringing home the Miss Universe 2021 crown, Indian-origin Abhimanyu Mishra becoming the youngest-ever Chess Grandmaster and Samir Banerjee becoming the third Indian-origin player to win Wimbledon boys singles.

Several other Indian personalities also made the headlines in 2021 including Virat Kohli, who stepped down as India's T20 captain, Rahul Dravid who was appointed as Team India's new head coach and Sunil Chhetri who overtook Messi to become 2nd highest active international goalscorer

The Indian Defence Forces also saw new appointments with Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari taking over as new Chief of Indian Air Force and Vice Admiral R. Hari Kumar taking over as the new Chief of Naval Staff. Army Chief Gen Naravane was appointed as the new Chairman of the Chief of Staff Committee after the tragic demise of CDS General Bipin Rawat in a helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu.

Check Top 25 Indian Person in News in 2021

1. Neeraj Chopra becomes first-ever Indian athlete to win gold at Olympic Games

Neeraj Chopra became the first-ever Indian athlete and second-ever Indian to win individual gold at the Olympic Games on August 7, 2021. Only Indian shooter Abhinav Bindra has won an individual gold before in Men's 10m air rifle event at the 2008 Olympic Games. Neeraj Chopra's gold was India's first gold medal at Tokyo Olympics. He claimed the medal with a throw of

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87.58m, finishing at the top of the table in the Javelin throw finals.

2. Harnaaz Sandhu crowned Miss Universe 2021

India's Harnaaz Sandhu created history by being crowned Miss Universe 2021 on December 13, 2021. She brought home the Miss Universe crown 21 years after Lara Dutta had won the Miss Universe title in 2000. The 21-year-old Indian belongs to Punjab and she was presented the crown by Andrea Meza, Miss Universe 2000 from Mexico.

3. Virat Kohli named Wisden Almanack's ODI Cricketer of Decade, what is Wisden Cricketers' Almanack?

Virat Kohli was named Wisden Almanack's ODI Cricketer of the 2010s decade on April 15, 2021 by the annual sports publication the Wisden Cricketers' Almanack. The ICC had also recognized Virat Kohli as the ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Decade and ICC Male Cricketer of the Decade in 2020. Kohli had also surpassed MS Dhoni in 2019 as India's most successful Test skipper.

4. Rahul Dravid appointed as head coach of Team India

Rahul Dravid, a veteran Indian cricketer, also known as 'The Wall' was appointed as the head coach of the men's senior cricket team on November 3, 2021. He was unanimously chosen for the post by the Cricket Advisory Committee. He has previously served as the head coach of India Under 19 and India A side. He was also appointed as the head of the National Cricket Academy in 2019, a position which he left before taking over as India's head coach.

5. Army Chief Gen Naravane assumes charge as Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee

Indian Army Chief Gen MM Naravane was appointed as Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee comprising the three service chiefs on December 16, 2021. The post of the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee had fallen vacant after the passing of India's first Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat in the tragic crash of an IAF helicopter in Tamil Nadu on December 8, 2021.

6. Sushil Chandra becomes 24th Chief Election Commissioner of India

Sushil Chandra was appointed as the new Chief Election Commissioner by President Ram Nath Kovind on April 12, 2021. He became the 24th Chief Election Commissioner of the country, succeeding Sunil Arora who retired from the post. Chandra took charge of the post as he was the senior-most Election Commissioner at the time. He was appointed as the Election Commissioner

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ahead of the Lok Sabha elections on February 14, 2019.

7. Former Judge Arun Kumar Mishra appointed as NHRC Chairman

Former Supreme Court judge Arun Kumar Mishra took charge as the Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on June 2, 2021. He had retired from the apex court in September 2020. He was appointed to the post by President Ram Nath Kovind based on the recommendation of a selection panel comprising of PM Modi, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Home Minister Amit Shah, Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge and Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha Harivansh.

8. Jamsetji Tata tops global list of biggest philanthropists of last century

Tata Group founder Jamsetji Tata emerged as the world's biggest philanthropist in the last century by donating $102 billion, as per a list of top 50 givers prepared by the Hurun Report and EdelGive Foundation. Tata is the only Indian in the top 10 of the list. The only other Indian among the top 50 is former WIPRO Chairman Azim Premji, who is ranked at the 12th position.

9. Mukesh Ambani joins $100 Billion Club

Asia’s richest person, RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani joined the world’s most exclusive $100 Billion Club after the stock of his conglomerate reached a record high on October 8, 2021. The $100 billion club includes 11 billionaires with a fortune of at least $100 billion including Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Warren Buffet and Larry Page. Mukesh Ambani is now worth $100.6 billion after his wealth increased by $23.8 billion in 2021, as per the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

10. Falguni Nayar becomes India’s wealthiest self-made woman billionaire

Falguni Nayar, Nykaa's founder and CEO, became India’s wealthiest self-made billionaire and 7th woman billionaire on November 10, 2021. Her net worth reached $6.5 billion when Nykaa’s parent entity FSN E-Commerce Ventures got listed on the National Stock Exchange for Rs 2,018 and on the Bombay Stock Exchange for Rs 2,001 during Initial Public Offering (IPO). The market cap of Nykaa hit $13.5 billion within just five minutes of its IPO listing. Nykaa has also become the first woman-led unicorn startup that got listed on the stock exchange in India.

11. Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi appointed as Sustainable Development Goals Advocate by UN

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Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi was appointed as the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advocate by UN Secretary-General Chief Antonio Guterres on September 17, 2021. Kailash Satyarthi was appointed as an SDG advocate along with STEM activist Valentina Munoz Rabanal and K-pop superstars BLACKPINK.The Indian social reformer has been a tireless advocate of children's rights, working to end child labour and ensuring that no children are left behind by advocating for the universal right to education.

12. Sourav Ganguly appointed Chairman of ICC Men's Cricket Committee

BCCI President Sourav Ganguly was appointed as the Chairman of ICC Men's Cricket Committee for a three year term. He succeeds Anil Kumble, who stepped down from the post after having served his term. ICC Chairman Greg Barclay welcomed Ganguly's appointment saying, "I am delighted to welcome Sourav to the position of Chair of the ICC Men's Cricket Committee. His experience as one of the world's best players and latterly as an administrator will help us shape our cricketing decisions moving forward."

13. Kaushik Basu receives Humboldt Research Award

Renowned Indian Economist Kaushik Basu won the prestigious Humboldt Research Award for Economics. The award honours economists and scientists from across the world every year for their outstanding work and carries prize money of 60,000 euros to aid their research projects. Kaushik Basu has decided to use the award for the research on Game Theory and Moral Philosophy. The award is sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

14. Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen receives Spain’s top award in social sciences

Indian economist and Nobel Laureate, Amartya Kumar Sen, was awarded Spain’s top Princess of Asturias Award in the Social Sciences category on May 26, 2021. The 87-year-old was chosen among a pool of 41 candidates from 20 nations in the Social Sciences Award. The Princess of Asturias Award is conferred for creative or research work in the field of economics, political science, sociology, law, history, linguistics, teaching, ethics, geography, philosophy, anthropology, demography, or psychology.

15. Bharat Ratna Professor Rao honoured with International ENI Award 2020

Bharat Ratna Professor C.N.R. Rao has been honoured with the International ENI Award 2020 for his research in renewable energy sources and energy storage. Professor Rao is an Indian

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chemist who has worked mainly in structural and solid-state chemistry. He has been working on hydrogen energy as the only source of energy for the benefit of all mankind.

16. Indian architect Balkrishna Doshi wins Royal Gold Medal 2022

Indian architect Balkrishna Doshi was awarded the world's highest honour for Architecture, Royal Gold Medal 2022. The prestigious award is conferred by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The 94-year-old has built over 100 projects in his 70-year-career and influenced the direction of architecture in India and its adjacent regions through both his teaching and practice.

17. Gita Gopinath to be IMF's First Deputy Managing Director

Indian-American economist, Gita Gopinath has been appointed to the role of First Deputy Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF). Gopinath, who is currently serving as the Chief Economist of IMF, will soon be the second-rank official at the world body. She will replace First Deputy Managing Director Geoffrey Okamoto who plans to step down in early 2022.

18. Vanita Gupta becomes first Indian-American Associate Attorney General of US

Vanita Gupta became the first Indian-American to serve as the Associate Attorney General of the United States. She was confirmed for the position in a narrow 51-49 vote after Republican senator
Lisa Murkowski joined the Democrats to support Vanita Gupta's nomination. Gupta had earlier served in the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department under former US President Barack Obama's Administration.

19. Sirisha Bandla second Indian-born woman to fly to space

Sirisha Bandla created history by becoming the second Indian-born woman to fly to space after Kalpana Chawla, who had unfortunately died in the Columbia Space Shuttle disaster in 2003. Bandla was one of the six crew members aboard billionaire Sir Richard Branson's historic Virgin Galactic flight 'VSS Unity' that flew to the edge of space on July 11, 2021 before returning to the Earth.
Bandla also became the fourth Indian to fly into space after Rakesh Sharma, Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams.

20. Anil Menon, Indian-origin doctor, among new NASA astronaut recruits

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Anil Menon, an Indian-origin doctor, was recruited as a part of NASA's 2021 class of astronauts on December 6, 2021 for NASA's future space missions. The 45-year-old is a lieutenant colonel at the US Air Force, who served NASA previously as the crew flight surgeon for various expeditions on the International Space Station (ISS). The new group of NASA astronauts will be a part of NASA's Artemis program, which aims to send the first woman and person of color to the Moon's surface as early as 2025.

21. Samir Banerjee becomes third Indian-origin player to win Wimbledon boys singles

Samir Banerjee became the third Indian-origin tennis player to win Wimbledon boy's singles on July 11, 2021. The 17-year-old was playing his second junior Grand Slam and he beat USA's Victor Lilov in straight sets of 7-5, 6-3 in the Wimbledon boys' singles final that lasted for about one hour and 22 minutes. The other Indians to have won the title before him include Ramanathan Krishnan in 1954, Ramesh Krishnan in 1979 and Leander Paes in 1990.

22. Abhimanyu Mishra becomes youngest-ever Chess Grandmaster in history

Indian-origin Abhimanyu Mishra became the youngest-ever Chess Grandmaster on June 30, 2021. The 12-year-old achieved the feat at the Vezerkepzo Grandmaster mix tournament in Budapest, Hungary. The earlier record was held by GM Sergey Karjakin, who had become the youngest Grandmaster in Chess in 2002 at the age of 12 years and 7 months. Abhimanyu was aged 12 years, 4 months and 25 days when he won the championship.

23. PV Sindhu becomes first Indian woman to win two individual Olympic medals

PV Sindhu became the first Indian woman and second Indian overall to win two individual Olympic medals after she won the bronze medal after defeating China's He Bingjiao 21-13, 21-15 in the women's singles bronze medal match on August 1, 2021. She had won silver after losing in the women's singles final against Spain's Carolina Marin at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. Only other Indian to win two individual Olympic medals is wrestler Sushil Kumar.

24. India's track legend Anju Bobby George named ‘Woman of the Year’

Indian track legend Anju Bobby George was awarded ‘Woman of the Year' by the World Athletics on December 1, 2021 for her efforts in advancing the sport in India and inspiring many women to follow in her footsteps and fulfil their dreams of being successful athletes representing India at international events. Anju Bobby George had created history when she had won the bronze

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medal in long jump at the World Athletics Championship 2003 in Paris.

25. Sunil Chhetri overtakes Messi to become 2nd highest active international goalscorer

Indian Football Captain Sunil Chhetri became the second-highest active international goal scorer on June 7, 2021 after he overtook Argentina's star footballer Lionel Messi. Chhetri with 74 goals stands behind Portugal football star Christiano Ronaldo who has 103 goals in the list of footballers with the most international goals. UAE footballer Ali Mabkhout stands third with 73 goals so far.

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Corbevax Vaccine: Biological E gets approval to conduct phase 3 trials of its Covid vaccine as booster dose

Corbevax vaccine news: The Drug Controller General of India has given its **approval to Hyderabad-based pharma company Biological E to conduct phase 3 trials of 'Corbevax', its COVID-19 vaccine, as a booster dose.** The Subject Expert Committee (SEC), after detailed deliberation, recommended granting permission to conduct phase 3 clinical trials of Corbevax.

Hyderabad-based Biological E has become the second company after Bharat Biotech to conduct clinical trials for a booster dose. The company, on the basis of the approvals, has also been generating the data in a systematic manner to study booster dose.

Biological E gets approval to conduct trials of Corbevax as booster dose

Read @ANI Story | https://t.co/bHsOpZDkD0#BiologicalE #COVIDVaccine #COVID19 #Corbevax pic.twitter.com/IhYwXKztgr

— ANI Digital (@ani_digital) December 28, 2021

Corbevax: Clinical trials for booster dose on two conditions

The Subject Expert Committee of India has recommended granting permission to conduct the proposed **phase 3 clinical trials of the Corbevax vaccine for boosters on two conditions:**

1. The administration of Corbevax booster dose after the primary immunization must be studied in two cohorts of six and nine months with age-wide stratification. It must also include 50 percent of subjects with high risk or comorbidity conditions.

2. The second condition is that the safety follow-up must be extended to a period of nine months.

Corbevax efficacy: How Biological E was permitted to conduct trials for booster dose?

The Subject Expert Committee on December 10, 2021, in its meeting, reviewed the data provided by Hyderabad-based Biological E. The company had presented its revised clinical protocols for the conduct of phase 3 clinical trials to administer booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine that contain

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receptor-binding domain antigen of SARS-CoV-2.

Biological E had also submitted the six months safety follow-up after the second dose from Phase 1 clinical trials, 90 days of safety data from Phase 2 part, and 60 days of safety data from phase 2/3 and phase 3 active comparator study.

All About Corbevax:

Corbevax vaccine is India's first indigenously developed protein subunit vaccine against COVID-19. Corbevax approval came after it received Emergency Use Authorisation from DCGI on December 28, 2021.

The vaccine maker company has been planing on delivering more than 1 billion additional doses globally.

Booster dose in India

PM Modi in an announcement on December 25, 2021, informed that the booster dose in India will be available from January 10, 2022, and it will start with the frontline and healthcare workers. With them, those above the age of 60 years with co-morbidities will also be eligible to receive the precautionary dose against COVID-19.

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Ind vs SA: Rishabh Pant becomes fastest Indian wicket keeper to reach 100 dismissals in Test

Indian wicket keeper: Rishabh Pant on December 28, 2021, became the fastest wicket-keeper of India to reach 100 dismissals in the longest format of the match. Cricketer Rishabh Pant achieved the feat on the 3rd day of the ongoing first Test match against South Africa. Rishabh Pant, the left-handed batter, has also broken the former skipper MS Dhoni's record of reaching 100 dismissals in the longest format of the game.

Rishabh Pant achieved the remarkable feat during his 26th Test match- India vs South Africa- when he took the catch of Temba Bavuma behind the stump. While Dhoni had taken 36 games to reach 100 dismissals, Kiran More in 39 matches, and Nayan Mongia took 49 matches for 100 dismissals in the Longest format.

Rishabh Pant in Test Matches

The Indian wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant has taken three catches in South Africa's first innings of the Opening Test so far- Wiaan Mulder, Dean Elgar, and Temba Bavuma.

A century of dismissals for @RishabhPant17 from behind the stumps in whites

He becomes the fastest Indian wicket-keeper to achieve this feat.#SAvIND pic.twitter.com/6pHpfnLDO1

— BCCI (@BCCI) December 28, 2021

The 24-years old has taken 92 catches and has also executed stumpings in his Test career so far. Rishabh Pant had made in Test debut for the Indian Cricket Team in 2018 and it didn't take much time for him to become a significant part of the Indian Test Team.

Pant played a crucial role in India's massive Test series win in Australia earlier in 2021. In January 2021, Pant was also named the inaugural ICC Player of the Month.

In the most dismissal tally, Dhoni leads with 294 ahead of Syed Kirmani (198) followed by Kiran More (130), Nayan Mongia (107), and Wriddhiman Saha with 104.

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Tests took for 100 wicketkeeper dismissals (India):

Wicketkeepers with 100 dismissals	Test Matches
Rishabh Pant	26
MS Dhoni	36
Kiran More	39
Nayan Mongia	41
Syed Kirmani	42

List of Most dismissals by wicketkeepers in ODI

Position	Player	Team	Dismissals
1	Kumar Sangakkara	Sri Lanka	482
2	Adam Gilchrist	Australia	472
3	MS Dhoni	India	444
4	Mark Boucher	South Africa	424
5	Moin Khan	Pakistan	287
6	Brendon McCullum	New Zealand	242
7	Ian Healy	Australia	233
8	Mushfiqur Rahim	Bangladesh	232
9	Rashid Latif	Pakistan	220
10	Jos Butler	England	213

Indian Cricket team in South Africa

The Indian Cricket Team has been touring South Africa from December 2021 and January 2022. They are scheduled to play three Test matches and three One Day International Matches.

The Test Match between Ind vs SA will form part of the 2021-2023 ICC World Test Championship and the ODI series will form the part of the 2020-2023 ICC Cricket World Cup Super League. Before the tour, Rohit Sharma was named the Captain of the ODI squad, replacing Virat Kohli.

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ICC World Test Championship Points Table 2021-2023: Australia tops WTC Points Table, India ranked 4th- Check full team rankings

ICC World Test Championship Points Table 2021-2023: India won its first test match against South Africa at Centurion by 113 runs on December 30, 2021, claiming a 1-0 lead in the three match series. With this, India's total points have gone up to 54 and percentage of points to 64.28 in the **World Test Championship Points Table 2021-2023.**

India is however still ranked fourth on the World Test Championship Points Table behind Pakistan, as it has lesser percentage of points. Australia is ranked at the top of the ICC WTC Points Table with 36 points after thrashing England by an innings in the third Ashes test, claiming the Ashes series 3-0. Sri Lanka is ranked second on the ICC WTC Points Table with 24 points, while Pakistan is ranked third with 36 points.

The teams are ranked on the ICC World Test Championship Points Table on the basis of the percentage of points won.

Read more: *ICC Test Team Rankings*

ICC Test Player Rankings 2021

ICC World Test Championship Points Table 2021-2023: Check Team Rankings below

Teams	Percentage Points	Points	Won	Lost	Drawn	Series	Penalty Overs
Australia	100	36	3	0	0	1	
Sri Lanka	100	24	2	0	0	1	
Pakistan	75	36	3	1	0	2	
India	64.28	54	4	1	2	3	2

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West Indies	25	12	1	3	0	2	
New Zealand	16	4	0	1	1	1	
England	7.14	6	1	5	1	2	10
South Africa	00.00	0	0	1	0	1	-
Bangladesh	00.00	0	0	2	0	1	

ICC WTC Points Table 2021-23 – Points distribution

Result	Points Available per match	Percentage of Points
Win	12	100
Tie	6	50
Draw	4	33.33
Loss	0	0

ICC World Test Championship Points List

Matches in Series	Total Points Available
2	24
3	36
4	48
5	60

Note: Teams will lose one championship point for slow over-rates for each over short.

ICC World Test Championship

The first-ever ICC World Test Championship began in 2019 with the Ashes series and finished with the New Zealand picking up the first every trophy in June 2021. New Zealand had become the first team to qualify for the World Test Championship final, followed by India.

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The **first-ever World Test Championship final** was played between New Zealand and India from June 18-23 at the Rose Bowl stadium in Southampton, England.

The second ICC World Test Championship began on August 4, 2021 with the Pataudi Trophy series between India and England, which India won 2-1.

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PM Modi in Uttarakhand: Details of developmental projects launched by PM Modi in Haldwani

Haldwani News: Prime Minister Modi visited Haldwani in Uttarakhand on December 30, 2021, to **inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of 23 development projects that are worth over Rs. 17,500 crores.**

The foundation stone in Uttarakhand was laid for 17 projects that are worth over Rs. 14,100 crores and they cover the sectors that range from the road, irrigation, housing, industry, health infrastructure, sanitation to drinking water supply among others.

PM Modi in Uttarakhand also inaugurated 6 projects which will include a hydropower facility in Pithoragarh, multiple road widening exercises, and the projects to improve the sewerage network in Nainital. The total cost of the projects to be inaugurated is over Rs. 3,400 crores.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates & lays the foundation of 23 developmental projects worth Rs 17,500 crores, in Haldwani, Uttarakhand pic.twitter.com/NbMIXqCHyR

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 30, 2021

PM Modi in Uttarakhand: Project details

1. Lakhwar Multipurpose Project

PM will lay the foundation stone of the Lakhwar Multipurpose Project that will be built at the cost of Rs. 5,750 crores. The project in Uttarakhand was first conceived in 1976 and was struck before being revived by PM Modi.

Lakhwar Multipurpose Project will enable the irrigation of about 34,000 hectares of additional land. It will produce 300 MW Hydropower and will also supply drinking water to Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh.

2. Road sector Projects in Uttarakhand

To improve connectivity at far-flung places, the inauguration and foundation stone laying of the

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multiple road sector projects will be worth about Rs. 8,700 crores will also be done. The improved road connectivity will benefit the industrial areas.

The foundation stone of multiple road projects across Uttarakhand under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana will also be laid by Prime Minister. It will include the laying of 133 rural roads with a total length of 1,157 km at a cost of more than Rs. 625 crores and the construction of 151 bridges.

3. Expansion of medical infrastructure in Uttarakhand

To expand the medical infrastructure in Uttarakhand and provide world-class medical facilities, Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone of AIIMS Rishikesh satellite centre in Udham Singh Nagar district and Jagjivan Ram Government Medical College at Pithoragarh.

The two hospitals have been built at a cost of Rs. 500 crores and Rs. 450 crores respectively.

4. Foundation stone for construction of homes for economically weaker sections

The foundation stone for the construction of about 2,400 homes for the economically weaker sections in Uttarakhand will be laid by PM. The homes will be constructed at a cost of more than Rs. 170 crores under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban).

5. Foundation Stone of 73 water supply schemes across 13 districts in Uttarakhand

For improving the water supply in the rural areas of Uttarakhand, PM Modi will lay the foundation stone of 73 water supply schemes across 13 districts in the state. The water supply schemes in Uttarakhand will cost around Rs. 1,250 crores and will also benefit more than 1.3 lakh rural households.

For ensuring the regular water supply in urban areas of Nainital and Haridwar, PM will also lay the foundation stone of water supply schemes for these two cities.

6. Foundation Stones of Aroma Park and Plastic Industrial Park

Foundation stone will be laid for 41 acres Aroma Park at Kashipur and Plastic Industrial Park of 40 acres at Sitarganj.

Kashipur’s Aroma Park will make use of Uttarakhand’s immense potential for floriculture growth. The Plastic Industrial Park will be a step forward for establishing the state’s industrial prowess

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and also creating employment opportunities for people.

7. Inauguration of two Sewage Treatment Plants

Two sewage treatment plants of 7 MLD and 1.5 MLD capacity will also be inaugurated. The plants are constructed at a cost of Rs. 50 crores at Ramnagar, Nainital. The foundation stone will also be laid for the construction of 9 sewage treatment plants in Udham Singh Nagar to be built at a cost of Rs. 200 crores.

8. Inauguration of Hydroelectric Project

Prime Minister Modi in Uttarakhand will inaugurate the 5MW capacity Suringad-II run of the river hydroelectric project. It has been built by Uttarakhand Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited in Pithoragarh district. It has been built at a cost of about Rs. 50 crores.

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Alia Bhatt is PETA India Person of the Year 2021

PETA India Person of the Year 2021: PETA India has named Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt as its 2021 Person of the Year to celebrate her work to support an animal-friendly fashion industry and for her advocacy for dogs and cats in need.

Alia Bhatt has been actively involved in launching animal welfare activities. **She had launched her vegan kidswear line Ed-a-Mamma last year**, which won the 2021 PETA India fashion award for helping nurture children's love for animals and nature.

From urging her fans to adopt from shelters & never shop for dogs and cats to advocating vegan fashion and using the power of social media to call for stronger animal protection laws, @aliaa08 speaks for animals and is PETA India's Person of the Year. https://t.co/K2yXQOyiwR

— PETA India (@PetaIndia) December 28, 2021

She **had also invested in an incense company called Phool earlier this year.** Phool makes incense out of recycled flowers and helps keep rivers clean. **Phool also makes bio-leather from recycled flowers called 'Fleather',** which is a humane alternative to leather, which comes from animal skin.

Alia Bhatt has also featured in the pro-adoption PETA India campaign previously to help cats and dogs and to call for stronger animal protection laws.

She had also launched an animal welfare platform, Coexist, in 2017 to "educate and engage communities to build a future in which man and nature live together in harmony.

PETA India Most Beautiful Vegetarians 2021

PETA India has also named Akshay Kumar and Bhumi Pednekar as the Most Beautiful Vegetarians 2021.

Drum roll! @akshaykumar and @bhumipednekar are PETA India's 2021 Most Beautiful Vegetarian winners.

— PETA India (@PetaIndia) December 21, 2021

PETA India Person of the Year Winners - List of Past Winners

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PETA India Person of the Year 2020- John Abraham for advocating for animals.

PETA India Person of the Year 2019 - Virat Kohli for animal advocacy and calling for the release of an abused elephant Malti, an elephant used for rides at Amer Fort, who was reportedly violently beaten by eight men, and stronger penalties for animal abusers.

PETA India Person of the Year 2018- Sonam Kapoor Ahuja for advocating in favour of adopting vegan lifestyle and keeping animal skin out of her handbag line for her fashion brand Rheson.

PETA India Person of the Year 2017- Anushka Sharma for her wide-reaching work for animals.

PETA India Person of the Year 2016- Sunny Leone for her dedication to promoting rescue of homeless dogs and cats and her compassion towards abused animals and those killed for flesh.

PETA India Person of the Year 2015- Kapil Sharma for his dedication to promote adoption of dogs from animal shelters or the streets.

PETA India Person of the Year 2014- Former SC Justice KS Panicker for heading the bench that passed the landmark judgment that clarified that bulls must not be used in jallikattu and other sporting forms such as bull races and bullfights.

PETA India Person of the Year 2013- Dr. Shashi Tharoor for supporting Compassionate Citizen, PETA India's humane education programme for children, and other education on animal protection.

PETA India Person of the Year 2012- R Madhavan for his outstanding support of PETA in helping us make this world a better place for animals.

PETA India Person of the Year 2011- Hema Malini for repeatedly raising her voice to oppose cruelty to animals and her staunch commitment to a vegan diet.

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Morning Current Affairs: 29 December 2021

PETA India Person of the Year 2021 is Alia Bhatt

Bollywood actress Alia Bhat has been named PETA India Person of the Year 2021 for her active involvement in animal welfare activities and support towards creating an animal-friendly fashion industry. Her vegan kidswear line Ed-a-Mamma had won the 2021 PETA India fashion award for helping nurture children's love for animals and nature.

Read more here

Delhi Metro, Delhi buses to operate at 50 percent capacity

In view of the latest restrictions imposed by the Delhi government to curb the spread of Covid-19, the Delhi Metro will operate at 50 percent seating capacity and no standing passengers will be allowed.

The public buses in Delhi will also run at 50 percent seating capacity to avoid crowding inside the bus and ensure physical distancing and adherence to COVID-19 protocols.

Earthquake of 4.3 magnitude hits Andaman & Nicobar Islands

An earthquake of 4.3 magnitude occurred 165km SSE of Portblair in Andaman & Nicobar Islands at 5.30 am today, December 29, 2021, according to the National Centre of Seismology.

Yesterday, an earthquake of the same magnitude was recorded 76km SSE of Fayzabad in Afghanistan.

PM Modi to inaugurate projects worth over Rs 17,500 crore in Uttarakhand on December 30th

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of 23 projects worth over Rs 17,500 crore in Uttarakhand's Haldwani on December 30, 2021. Among the 23 projects, PM Modi will lay the foundation stone for 17 projects worth at least Rs 14,100 crore covering various sectors including irrigation, health infrastructure, housing, drinking and sanitation and housing. The Prime Minister will then inaugurate 6 projects worth over Rs 3400 crore that include road widening projects, hydropower project in Pithoragarh and projects to improve the sewage situation in Nainital.

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Read more here

Rishabh Pant becomes fastest Indian to reach 100 Test dismissals, breaks Dhoni's record

Rishabh Pant became the fastest Indian wicketkeeper on December 28, 2021 to reach 100 dismissals in Test cricket, breaking former skipper and wicketkeeper Dhoni's record. Pant achieved the feat during India's ongoing first test against South Africa at Centurion.

Read more here

Uttarakhand CM to inaugurate Surai Ecotourism zone in Khatima today

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami is scheduled to inaugurate the Surai Ecotourism zone and Kakra Crocodile Trail in Khatima today, December 29, 2021. The Surai Ecotourism zone will be the first such in the state, where tourists will be able to enjoy jungle safari. Jungle safaris are till now only conducted in national parks and biosphere reserves in the state.

Haryana Cabinet Expansion- BJP's Kamal Gupta, JJP's Devender Singh Babli inducted into state cabinet

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar inducted two Ministers on December 28, 2021 as a part of Haryana Cabinet expansion. The two Ministers include BJP's Kamal Gupta and JJP's Devender Singh Babli. This is the second cabinet expansion of the current Haryana government. The first cabinet expansion had taken place on November 14.

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India to chair UNSC Counter terrorism Committee in January 2022

India will chair the Counter terrorism Committee of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in January 2022. India had last chaired this committee in 2011-12.

The UNSC Counter-terrorism Committee was formed in September 2001 soon after the tragic 9/11 terrorist attack to chart the way forward to fight against terrorism.

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador TS Tirumurti had declared on January 8, 2021 that India will chair three important Committees at UN Security Council in 2021-22 including the Counterterrorism Committee, the Taliban Sanctions Committee and the Libyan Sanctions Committee.

Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)

• The **Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) was established by UN Security Council** through a resolution that was adopted unanimously on September 28, 2001 after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

• The Committee comprises all 15 UN Security Council members. The main task of the committee is to monitor the implementation of the provisions of resolution 1373 (2001), which requested countries to implement several measures intended to enhance their legal and institutional ability to counter terrorist activities at home, in their regions and around the world and other resolutions.

• The 1373 resolution also calls on States to become parties, as soon as possible, to the relevant international counter-terrorism legal instruments.

• The current chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee is H.E. Mr. Tarek Ladeb, who is the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tunisia to the United Nations.

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)

The UN Security Council established the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to assist the counter-terrorism committee and coordinate the process of monitoring the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001).

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Significance

India will chair the Counter-terrorism Committee in the same year when it will celebrate the 75th anniversary of Independence. India has been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism especially cross-border terrorism, as it has been one of its biggest victims.

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Delhi govt new guidelines on COVID-19: Yellow Alert announced, full list of new restrictions in Delhi

Delhi Guidelines: The Delhi Government on December 28, 2021, issued a new set of rules to impose COVID-19 safety guidelines. The step to announce the new guidelines on COVID-19 by Delhi Government has been taken amid the increasing cases of Omicron variant in the National Capital.

The 'Yellow Alert' or the 'Level 1' guidelines have been announced in Delhi by Kejriwal Government. According to the Delhi govt new guidelines on COVID-19, cinema halls and gyms will be closed with immediate effect. To curb the crowd and traffic on the road, the night curfew in Delhi will also remain in force.

> | LIVE https://t.co/BFIs9ERcQi
>
> — Arvind Kejriwal (@ArvindKejriwal) December 28, 2021

Delhi lockdown like restrictions:Yellow level alert in Delhi amid rising Omicron cases

The Chief Minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal after the review meeting on the COVID-19 situation in New Delhi said that the COVID-19 cases in the state have been increasing, however, the symptoms are mild in the patients.

While announcing the COVID-19 guidelines in Delhi, he further added that there is no need for panic, and the detailed order will come on the restrictions that have been implemented in the National Capital. The Yellow Alert was to be announced in Delhi if the infection rate is more than 0.5%.

> COVID19 restrictions under Yellow alert of Graded Response Action Plan in #Delhi: Night curfew 10pm-5am, Delhi Metro, restaurants, bars to operate at 50% capacity; Cinema halls,spas,gyms,multiplexes, banquet halls, auditoriums & sports complexes to be closed,with immediate effect pic.twitter.com/D8s1l3VsXL
>
> — ANI (@ANI) December 28, 2021

Delhi govt new guidelines on COVID-19: Full list of restrictions

Restrictions announced by Delhi Government under 'Yellow Alert' to curb Covid cases:

S. No.	Covid related restrictions in Delhi
1.	Night Curfew in Delhi from 11 pm to 5 am
2.	Private Offices in the city to work at 50% capacity
3.	Only 2 individuals allowed in autos or cabs
4.	Spas and bars in National Capital to work at 50% capacity
5.	Restaurants will operate at 50% capacity from 8 am to 10 pm
6.	Hotels in Delhi will work as the quarantine centers
7.	20 people will be allowed at weddings and funerals
8.	Shops and malls with non-essential services and goods will be open from 10 am to 8 pm under the odd-even rule
9.	Delhi Metro will operate at 50% capacity
10.	Religious places in the city will remain open but devotees will not be allowed.
11.	Delivery of the items will be allowed
12.	Shops dealing with essential goods will remain open
13.	Cinema Halls, gyms, multiplexes will be closed

Delhi Color Coded Covid system

Keeping in mind the possibility of a third wave of COVID pandemic in Delhi, four alerts were determined by the Kejriwal Government- Yellow Alert, Amber Alert, Orange Alert, and Red Alert. In view of the rising Omicron cases in the National Capital where the infection rate is more than 0.5%, the 'Yellow Alert' has been determined by the Delhi Government and DDMA.

Read More: **What is Delhi Government’s color-coded system to tackle COVID-19?**

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Indian National Congress Foundation Day 2021: History and All You Need to Know

Congress Foundation Day 2021: The Indian National Congress (INC) celebrated its **137th foundation day on December 28, 2021.** Indian National Congress was founded by retired British Civil Servant Allan Octavian Hume on December 28, 1885.

The first session of the Indian National Congress was conducted in Bombay from December 28-31, 1885 under the chairmanship of W.C Bonnerjee.

INC is one of the two major political parties in India. The party became the leader of India's independence movement in the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Indian National Congress: Key Facts

Indian National Congress Founder- A. O Hume

Indian National Congress Foundation Day - December 28th

Indian National Congress Symbol - Hand

Indian National Congress First President- Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee

Indian National Congress First Female President - Annie Besant (1917)

Indian National Congress Foundation Day 2021 History

First Organisation of Educated Elites

The Indian National Congress was the first organisation of educated elites. The first session of the party was held at the initiative of a retired British civil servant, Allan Octavian Hume.

AO Hume's main objective was to create an organisation that would serve as a safety valve for the growing social and economic discontent. In other words, the Indian National Congress was formed by Hume to prevent any possibility of any anti-British movement.
The main was to create a platform for a civic and political dialogue between educated Indians and the British Raj.

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The first meeting of the Indian National Union was scheduled to be held in Poona but was shifted to Bombay due to cholera outbreak there.

Moderate Rule

In the first two decades after its formation, the Indian National Congress mainly comprised lawyers and landlords. Their methods were peaceful and demands were modest. They came to be known as Moderates. The British authorities rejected their demands time and again.

Their major demands then included:

-Introduction of democratic institutions in India within the framework of British Rule.

-More share in government services

-Reduction in land revenue and army expenditure

-Use of Indian wealth for Indians themselves

Rise of Extremists

There was a parallel wave that had begun awakening across the country with social reformers raising their voice, calling for a new idealogy of self-reliance. The year 1893 was a major landmark in the evolution of the ideology of our freedom struggle. It was the same year that **Bal Gangadhar Tilak** gave the famous slogan ***"Swaraj is my birthright and I must have it."***

Congress' demands became more radical in the face of constant opposition from the British government at the beginning of the 20th century. The party decided to advocate in favour of the independence movement. **The Partition of Bengal in 1901 by Lord Curzon further drove up radical spirit** with students joining the anti-partition protest and the swadeshi movement.

The Lal-Bal-Pal trio (Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal) represented the extremists, while the moderates were largely led by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Thus two streams of Moderates and Extremists emerged in the Indian National Congress.

Congress under Mahatma Gandhi

Indian National Congress became associated with Gandhi when he returned from South Africa in 1915. Gandhi became the President of Congress in 1924. His popularity and satyagraha drew

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support from leading political leaders of that time- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Jayaprakash Narayan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Chakravarti Rajgopalachari and Jivatram Kripalani.

Under Mahatma Gandhi's chairmanship, Congress became a dominant group that attempted to eliminate all caste differences, poverty, untouchability and religious and ethnic divisions. The party had members from other religions, classes and ethnic and liguist groups.

Purna Swaraj Declaration

The call for Purna Swaraj or complete independence was made by the party during its Lahore session in 1929 under the Presidency of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The party also declared January 26, 1930 as Purna Swaraj Diwas.

Full List of Congress Presidents (1885- 1900)

Year	Name	Congress Annual Session host city
1885	Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee	Bombay
1886	Dadabhai Naoroji	Calcutta
1887	Badruddin Tyabji	Madras
1888	George Yule	Allahabad
1889	William Wedderburn	Bombay
1890	Pherozeshah Mehta	Calcutta
1891	Panapakkam Anandacharlu	Nagpur
1892	Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee	Allahabad
1893	Dadabhai Naoroji	Lahore

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1894	Alfred Webb	Madras
1895	Surendranath Banerjee	Poona
1896	Rahimtulla M. Sayani	Calcutta
1897	C. Sankaran Nair	Amaravati
1898	Anandamohan Bose	Madras
1899	Romesh Chunder Dutt	Lucknow
1900	N. G. Chandavarkar	Lahore

Full List of Congress Presidents (1901- 1947)

Year	Name	Congress Annual Session host city
1901	Dinshaw Edulji Wacha	Calcutta
1902	Surendranath Banerjee	Ahmedabad
1903	Lalmohan Ghosh	Madras
1904	Henry John Stedman Cotton	Bombay
1905	Gopal Krishna Gokhale	Banaras
1906	Dadabhai Naoroji	Calcutta
1907	Rashbihari Ghosh	Surat
1908	Rashbihari Ghosh	Madras
1909	Madan Mohan Malaviya	Lahore
1910	William Wedderburn	Allahabad

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1911	Bishan Narayan Dar	Calcutta
1912	Raghunath Narasinha Mudholkar	Bankipore
1913	Nawab Syed Muhammad Bahadur	Karachi
1914	Bhupendra Nath Bose	Madras
1915	Satyendra Prasanno Sinha	Bombay
1916	Ambica Charan Mazumdar	Lucknow
1917	Annie Besant	Calcutta
1918	Madan Mohan Malaviya	Delhi
1918	Syed Hasan Imam	Bombay (special session)
1919	Motilal Nehru	Amritsar
1920	Lala Lajpat Rai	Calcutta (Special Session)
1920	C. Vijayaraghavachariar	Nagpur
1921	Hakim Ajmal Khan	Ahmedabad
1922	Chittaranjan Das	Gaya
1923	Mohammad Ali Jouhar	Kakinada
1923	Abul Kalam Azad	Delhi (Special Session)
1924	Mahatma Gandhi	Belgaum
1925	Sarojini Naidu	Kanpur
1926	S. Srinivasa Iyengar	Guwahati
1927	Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari	Madras
1928	Motilal Nehru	Calcutta
1929	Jawaharlal Nehru	Lahore
1930	Jawaharlal Nehru	Karachi
1931	Vallabhbhai Patel	Karachi
1932	Madan Mohan Malaviya	Delhi

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1933	Nellie Sengupta	Calcutta
1934	Rajendra Prasad	Bombay
1935	Rajendra Prasad	Lucknow
1936	Jawaharlal Nehru	Lahore
1937	Jawaharlal Nehru	Faizpur
1938	Subhas Chandra Bose	Haripura
1939	Subhas Chandra Bose	Jabalpur
1939 (March)	Rajendra Prasad	Tripuri
1940–46	Abul Kalam Azad	Ramgarh
1946–47	J. B. Kripalani	Meerut

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5G network in India: Full List of cities that are set to get 5G services in 2022

5g network in India latest news: India is all set to roll out the **5G telecom services in the selected cities in 2022.** The leading telecom service providers Reliance Jio, Bharati Airtel, and Vodafone Idea have already established the 5G trial sites in the metro cities in India. The Department of Telecommunication announced on December 27, 2021, that these metros and big cities will be the places for the first 5g network in India in 2022.

5G (fifth-generation) is the latest upgrade in the long-term evolution of mobile broadband networks. While 4G network was a great step forward in the world of technology, **5G has been designed to connect many forms of devices than smartphones, while also offering far higher speed and capacity.**

List of Cities to get first 5G network in India

S. No.	Cities to get 5G network in India
1	Gurugram
2	Bangalore
3	Kolkata
4	Mumbai
5	Chandigarh
6	Delhi
7	Jamnagar
8	Ahmedabad

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9	**Chennai**
10	**Hyderabad**
11	**Lucknow**
12	**Pune**
13	**Gandhinagar**

5G network launch in India: Key details

Besides the leading telecom operators and smartphone manufacturers, the Government of India is also involved actively to facilitate the launch of the 5G network in India. The Telecom Department has also roped in India's leading research institutions for the development and testing of 5G technology in the country.

Indigenous 5G Test-bed Project

Eight agencies namely- IIT (Bombay), IIT (Delhi), IIT (Hyderabad), IIT (Kanpur), IIT (Madras), Indian Institute of Science (Bangalore), Centre of Excellence in Wireless Technology, and Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research- are the institutes that are involved in the research project known as 'Indigenous 5G Test-bed Project'.

It is a visionary technology development project that has been initiated in the telecom space. The 5G Test-bed Project will enable the development, testing, and proliferation of 5G Technology system components, apart from setting up the foundation for the development of the 6G technology Landscape.

5G network in India: Difference between 5G and 4G networks

5G Network	4G Network
1. 5G network works in 3 bands- Low, Mid, and High frequency	**1.** 4G networks are mostly designed for phones.
2. In the low band spectrum of 5G, the speed is limited to 100 Mbps.	**2.** The highest internet speed in 4G has been recorded at 1 Gbps.
	3. Even though 4G was a leap forward that allow

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3. The internet speed in the high band spectrum goes up to 20 Gbps.

4. 5G has been designed for much more flexible use while replacing the need for many special-purpose networks.

5. They are also able to function as many separate networks-all at the same time.

people to stream video and music on the go, 5G be able to connect many forms of devices than smartphones.

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CORBEVAX, COVOVAX Covid-19 vaccines get emergency use approval, antiviral Covid pill also approved

Two new Covid-19 vaccines: India has got two new COVID-19 vaccines-**Covovax & Corbevax** - after they received emergency use authorisation from Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO). The organisation has also given approval to the anti-viral drug Molnupiravir.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya tweeted, "Congratulations India! Further strengthening the fight against COVID-19, cdsco, @MoHFW_INDIA has given 3 approvals in a single day for CORBEVAX vaccine, COVOVAX vaccine and anti-viral drug Molnupiravir for restricted use in emergency situation."

CORBEVAX vaccine is India's 1st indigenously developed RBD protein sub-unit vaccine against #COVID19, Made by Hyderabad-based firm Biological-E.

It's a hat-trick! It's now 3rd vaccine developed in India! (2/5)

— Dr Mansukh Mandaviya (@mansukhmandviya) December 28, 2021

Molnupiravir, an antiviral drug, will now be manufactured in the country by 13 companies for restricted use under emergency situation for treatment of adult patients with COVID-19 and who have high risk of progression of the disease. (4/5)

— Dr Mansukh Mandaviya (@mansukhmandviya) December 28, 2021

About India's two new Covid-19 vaccines

CORBEVAX Covid vaccine

CORBEVAX is India's first indigenously developed RBD protein sub-unit vaccine against COVID-19. It will be manufactured by Hyderabad-based firm Biological-E. The company had submitted the data from its clinical trials to the Indian drug regulator.

CORBEVAX is the third vaccine developed in India after Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and SII's Covishield. The Centre has already made an advance booking to procure 300 million doses of the vaccine at a cost of Rs 1,500 crore.

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COVOVAX Covid vaccine

Covovax is the recombinant nanoparticle protein-based Covid-19 vaccine developed by US drug manufacturer Novavax. It will be manufacured in India by Pune-based Serum Institute of India.

The vaccine has already received emergency use approval from the World Health Organisation (WHO). It also received emergency use approval in the Philippines.

Molnupiravir antiviral Covid-19 drug

The **molnupiravir antiviral Covid-19 drug** has been developed by MSD and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics. The drug works by introducing errors into the SARS-CoV-2 virus' genetic code, which will prevent the virus from replicating further. Ridgeback has developed the Covid pill in collaboration with Merck, a US pharma company.

The clinical trial of the antiviral Covid drug on high risk people during the early onset of the infection showed at least 30 percent reduction in hospitalisations and deaths.

Dr. Reddy's Laboratories along with other pharma majors in India- Cipla, Mylan, Torrent, Emcure and Sun Pharma had tabled the proposal for approval of the anti-viral drug Molnupiravir for emergency use in the country.

The drug recently received a go ahead from US Food and Drug Administration for treatment of mild-to-moderate COVID-19 cases in adults who are at risk for severe disease. The United Kingdom had also granted conditional authorisation to the drug in November 2021.

It is the first pill that has so far shown success in treating COVID-19.

The antiviral Covid-19 drug will be manufactured in the country by 13 companies. Merck & Co. has signed voluntary licensing agreements with several Indian pharma majors including Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Cipla, Emcure Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Hetero Labs Ltd and Sun Pharma for the manufacture and marketing of the drug in India.

How does the antiviral Covid-19 drug work?

The antiviral drug is administered to stop the COVID-19 virus from replicating and causing severe illness in a person. It is advised to be given at the early stage of the infection.

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Dosage- The molnupiravir antiviral Covid-19 drug is administered as four 200 milligram capsules orally every 12 hours for five days. It is not authorised for use longer than five consecutive days.

COVID vaccines in India

With the two new vaccines getting the emergency use approval, a total of eight COVID vaccines have received emergency use authorisation in India.

The six other vaccines include Serum Institute's Covishield, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, Russia's Sputnik V, Moderna, Johnson and Johnson and Zydus Cadila's ZyCoV-D.

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Vikram Misri appointed Deputy National Security Adviser

New Deputy NSA: Vikram Misri was on December 27, 2021 appointed as **India's new deputy National Security Adviser** in the National Security Council Secretariat. Misri is a 1989 batch Indian Foreign Service officer.

He currently serves as India's Ambassador to China. He was appointed to the post in 2019. He will be succeeded by Pradeep Kumar Rawat, who was recently appointed as the next ambassador to China.

Misri had previously served as private secretary to Prime Ministers Inder Kumar Gujral, Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi.

Vikram Misri

• Vikram Misri is an Indian diplomat, who currently serves as the ambassador of India to China. He was also appointed as the Indian ambassador to Spain and Myanmar previously.

• He was born in Srinagar and then got his undergraduate degree in history honours from Hindu College from the Delhi University. He then did MBA at XLRI.

• He later worked for three years in advertising and then joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1989.

• He served Indian missions in Brussels and Tunis between 1991 and 1996.

• He was appointed as the Private Secretary to Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral in 1997.

• He held various other posts in the Prime Ministers Office and External Affairs Ministry as well as several Indian missions abroad.

• He was appointed as the private secretary to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2012.

• He also served as the private secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he succeeded Manmohan Singh.

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• He was later appointed as the ambassador to Spain in 2014.

• He was then appointed as the ambassador to Myanmar in 2016.

• He was appointed as the ambassador to China in 2019. He had held a series of meetings with senior Chinese officials during the 2020–2021 India-China border clash.

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BCCI President Sourav Ganguly tests positive for COVID-19, admitted to city hospital

Sourav Ganguly, the President of the Board of Control of Cricket in India (BCCI) and the former Captain of the Indian Cricket team has **tested positive for COVID-19** on December 28, 2021. He has been admitted to a City Hospital. Sourav Ganguly has received both the doses of COVID-19 vaccine. However, he has been traveling considerably to take part in all the professional activities.

Ganguly, 49-years old, was rushed to the hospital late on the night of December 27 as a precautionary measure after his RT-PCR test returned positive.

BCCI President and former India captain Sourav Ganguly admitted to hospital after testing positive for COVID-19, say BCCI sources

— Press Trust of India (@PTI_News) December 28, 2021

Reportedly, Sourav Ganguly was taken to Woodlands Nursing Home on December 27 and he has been given medication and is currently stable.

Previous health-related issues

Earlier in 2021, Sourav Ganguly was admitted to the hospital twice. He underwent emergency angioplasty after having some cardiac issues. Snehasish Ganguly, his elder brother had also tested positive for COVID-19 earlier this year, but Ganguly had returned a negative RT-PCR test.

Sourav Ganguly travelling extensively

As a BCCI President, the former Captain of the Indian Cricket Team Sourav Ganguly has also been traveling substantially while taking part in the media interactions.

At the time of the T20 World Cup, Ganguly went to UAE and most recently had taken part in several media interactions. He also took part in a BCCI AGM Festival Match at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata, where Sourav Ganguly's Board President XI lost to Jau Shah's Secretary XI.

Sourav Ganguly: From former Skipper to BCCI President

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Sourav Ganguly is an Indian Cricket Administrator, commentator, and the former Captain of the Indian Cricket Team. Affectionately known as 'Dada', Ganguly established himself as one of the leading batsmen in the world and also as one of the most successful Captains of the Indian Cricket Team.

Sourav Ganguly was elected as the President of BCCI in 2019. Before being elected as BCCI's President, Ganguly was the President of the Cricket Association of Bengal which is a governing body for Cricket in West Bengal, India.

Sourav Ganguly: Career Statistics

Competition	Test	ODI	FC (First Class Cricket)	LA (List A Cricket)
Matches	113	311	254	437
Runs scored	7,212	11,363	15,687	15,622
Batting average	42.17	41.02	44.18	43.32
100s/50s	16/35	22/72	33/89	31/97
Top score	239	183	239	183
Balls bowled	3,117	4,561	11,108	8,199
Wickets	32	100	167	171
Bowling average	52.53	38.49	36.52	38.86
5 wickets in innings	0	2	4	2
10 wickets in match	0	0	0	0
Best bowling	3/28	5/16	6/46	5/16
Catches/stumpings	71/–	100/–	168/–	131/–

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Morning Current Affairs: 28 December 2021

Vikram Misri appointed as Deputy NSA

Vikram Misri was appointed as India's deputy National Security Adviser on December 27, 2021. He formerly served as India's envoy to China. He is a 1989 batch Indian Foreign Service officer. He was appointed as India's Ambassador to China in 2019. The External Affairs Minister had recently appointed Pradeep Kumar Rawat as the next ambassador to China.

Read more here

India to chair Counterterrorism Committee of UNSC in January 2022

India will chair the Counterterrorism Committee of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in January 2022. This Committee was formed in September 2001 soon after the tragic 9/11 terrorist attack. India had chaired this Committee in the Security Council in 2011-12. India had been asked to Chair three important Committees of the Security Council earlier this year including the Taliban Sanctions Committee, Counterterrorism Committee and the Libyan Sanctions Committee.

Haryana Cabinet Expansion to take place today

Haryana Cabinet is likely to be expanded today with new Ministers taking oath at Raj Bhawan. One MLA each from BJP and Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) are likely to be inducted as ministers. The expansion may also see shuffling of portfolios. The Haryana Council of ministers has 12 members currently including Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar.

PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail Project

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the completed section of the Kanpur Metro Rail Project today, December 28, 2021. The completed section of Kanpur Metro Rail Project stretches for 9 km long from IIT Kanpur to Moti Jheel. The Prime Minister will also inspect the Metro Rail Project and undertake a metro ride from the IIT metro station to Geeta Nagar.

Read more here

Barbados to hold snap election on January 19

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley has called for snap general election on January 19, 2022.

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This comes just weeks after the country bid adieu to British Monarchy and chose to become a republic. Mia Mottley is the leader of the Barbados Labour Party and had become the first female prime minister of the country in May 2018 for a five-year term.

Resident Doctors' Body calls for complete withdrawal of healthcare services across country from December 29

The Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) has called for complete withdrawal from all healthcare services across the country from 8 am on December 29. The call has been taken "in protest against brute force by Delhi Police against doctors." FAIMA said that the resident doctors were protesting peacefully and alleged that female doctors were brutally thrashed and lathi charged by male police personnel during a demonstration in Delhi on December 27, 2021 over the delay in NEET-PG 2021 counselling.

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PM Modi in Kanpur: 5 things to know about Kanpur Metro inaugurated by Prime Minister

Kanpur metro latest news: Prime Minister Modi visited Kanpur on December 28, 2021, and inaugurated the completed section of the Kanpur Metro Rail Project. **The completed 9 km section of the Kanpur metro project stretches from IIT Kanpur and Moti Jheel.** The improvement in urban mobility Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh has been one of the key focus areas of PM.

PM Modi in Kanpur before the Kanpur metro inauguration also inspected the Metro Rail Project and will undertake a metro ride from IIT Metro Station to Geeta Nagar. Besides the Kanpur Metro Project, he also inaugurated the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project and attended the 54th Convocation Ceremony of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur.

PM Modi inaugurates the completed section of the Kanpur Metro Rail Project and takes a ride in the metro

UP CM Yogi Adityanath and Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri also present along with him pic.twitter.com/Y24I6EQ4kI

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 28, 2021

Kanpur Metro inauguration: 5 things to know about Kanpur Metro Project details

1. The completed 9 km long Kanpur Metro stretches **from IIT Kanpur to Moti Jheel.**

2. The entire length of the Kanpur Metro Project is 32 km.

3. Kanpur Metro Rail Project has been built at a cost of Rs. 11,000 crores.

4. Kanpur Metro will be the fastest-built metro project in India.

5. The construction work of the Kanpur metro project was started on November 10, 2021, by CM Yogi Adityanath and the trial run of Kanpur Metro took place on 9 km IIT to Moti Jheel Priority Corridor on November 10, 2021.

PM Modi visit to Kanpur: Inauguration of Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project

Prime Minister during his visit to Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh also inaugurated the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project.

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The 356 long Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline has a capacity of around 3.45 million metric tonnes per annum.

Prime Minister attended Convocation Ceremony of IIT Kanpur

Before the Kanpur Metro inauguration, PM Modi attended the **54th Convocation Ceremony of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur.**

At the IIT Kanpur convocation, all the students will be issued the digital degree through an in-house blockchain-driven technology. It has been developed at the Institute under the National Blockchain Project.

PM at IIT Kanpur will also launch the blockchain digital degrees which can be verified globally and also are unforgettable.

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NITI Aayog Health Index 2021- Kerala tops among larger states, Mizoram among smaller- Check full ranking of states and UTs

NITI Aayog Health Index 2021: Niti Aayog released the fourth edition of its state health index for 2019-20 on December 27, 2021. The report, titled “Healthy States, Progressive India”, ranks states and Union Territories based on their year-on-year incremental performance in health as well as their overall status.

NITI Aayog releases the fourth edition of the State Health Index | Among the ‘Larger States’, in terms of annual incremental performance, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, and Telangana are the top three ranking states.

— ANI (@ANI) December 27, 2021

Kerala retained its top rank on the health index among the larger states while Uttar Pradesh was the worst. Mizoram topped the health index among smaller states while Nagaland was ranked at the bottom. Among union territories, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu was ranked at the top and Andaman & Nicobar was ranked at the bottom.

The fourth round of the Health Index highlights the overall performance and incremental improvement of states and UTs over the period from 2018-2019 to 2019-20. The health index is a weighted composite score that incorporates 24 indicators covering key aspects of health performance.

On overall ranking based on the composite index score in 2019–20, the top-ranking states were Kerala and Tamil Nadu among the ‘Larger States’, Mizoram and Tripura among the ‘Smaller States’, and DH&DD and Chandigarh among the UTs: NITI Aayog

— ANI (@ANI) December 27, 2021

NITI Aayog Health Index 2021- Larger States Ranking

Rank	State	Composite Score	Incremental Rank/ Change
1	Kerala	82.90	12 (0.60)
2	Tamil Nadu	72.42	8 (1.62)

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3	Telangana	69.96	3 (4.22)
4	Andhra Pradesh	69.95	10 (1.07)
5	Maharashtra	69.14	4 (3.60)
6	Gujarat	63.59	9 (1.14)
7	Himachal Pradesh	63.17	15 (-0.06)
8	Punjab	58.08	7 (1.74)
9	Karnataka	57.93	19 (-1.37)
10	Chhattisgarh	50.70	16 (-0.09)
11	Haryana	49.26	18 (-0.55)
12	Assam	47.74	**2 (4.34)**
13	Jharkhand	47.55	5 (3.38)
14	Odisha	44.31	14 (0.13)
15	Uttarakhand	44.21	13 (0.58)
16	Rajasthan	41.33	17 (-0.25)
17	Madhya Pradesh	36.72	6 (3.35)
18	Bihar	31.00	11 (0.76)
19	Uttar Pradesh	30.57	**1 (5.52)**

NITI Aayog Health Index 2021- Smaller States Ranking

Rank	State	Composite Score	Incremental Rank/ Change
1	Mizoram	75.77	1 (18.45)
2	Tripura	70.16	4 (0.19)
3	Sikkim	55.53	5 (-0.72)
4	Goa	53.68	8 (-12.68)
5	Meghalaya	43.05	2 (17.70)
6	Manipur	34.26	7 (-5.73)
7	Arunachal Pradesh	33.91	6 (-5.73)
8	Nagaland	27.00	3 (3.43)

NITI Aayog Health Index 2021- Performance of Union Territories

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Rank	State	Composite Score	Incremental Rank/ Change
1	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	66.19	6 (-3.53)
2	Chandigarh	62.53	7 (-10.85)
3	Lakshadweep	51.88	3 (7.72)
4	Puducherry	50.83	4 (1.58)
5	Delhi	49. 85	1 (9.68)
6	Jammu and Kashmir	47.00	2 (9.55)
7	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	44.74	5 (0.14)

Background

The NITI Aayog Health Index 2021 was jointly released by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar, CEO Amitabh Kant, Additional Secretary Dr Rakesh Sarwal and World Bank Senior Health Specialist Sheena Chhabra. The report has been developed by NITI Aayog with technical assistance from the World Bank, in close consultation with the Health Ministry.

NITI Aayog Health Index 2021

The NITI Aayog Health Index 2021 is an annual tool to assess the performance of states and UTs in health sector. The index measures 24 indicators grouped under 'Health Outcomes', 'Governance and Information', and 'Key Inputs/Processes' domains. Each domain has an allocated weightage.

The Health Index ranking is categorised into three parts - **larger states, smaller states and union territories -**to ensure comparison among similar entities.

Read more: **How to register children for Covid vaccination?**

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COVID-19: How to book booster dose in India?

India booster dose: Prime Minister Modi on December 25, 2021, announced the booster dose of COVID-19 as the country records the increasing cases of Omicron variant of Coronavirus in multiple states. However, not everyone will be eligible to receive the COVID-19 booster dose in India.

From January 10, 2022, booster dose in India will start with the healthcare and frontline workers making them eligible to receive the precaution COVID-19 dose first. Along with them, all the citizens above the age of 60 years with co-morbidities will also be eligible to receive the booster dose in India.

To book **booster dose in India,** find below the eligibility details, documents required to book the booster dose, and how to book the booster dose.

Eligibility to receive booster dose in India for Covid

The government has opened the facility of a booster dose in India for the healthcare and frontline workers. They will be eligible to be administered with the precautionary dose from January 10, 2022.

The booster dose in India will also be available for the citizens above the age of 60 years with co-morbidities, however, the covid dose will be given to them only on the advice from their doctor. They can also receive the booster Covid dose from January 10 as well.

How to register children for Covid vaccination? - Know steps to register your child on Cowin portal

India booster dose: Documents required to receive booster dose

The citizens above the age of 60 years with co-morbidities will be required to show a medical certificate that will show that they have the specified co-morbidities in order to be eligible for a booster dose of covid.

The senior citizens will have to get a certificate from a registered medical practitioner that can be

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scanned or uploaded on the CoWIN portal or can be produced at a center for vaccination.

Booster dose in India: What must be the gap between second and booster dose?

Reportedly, the gap between the second dose of COVID-19 and the precautionary dose will likely be 9 to 12 months.

How to book booster dose in India?

1. The Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Authority, RS Sharma has informed that the process to register for a booster dose in India on CoWIN Portal will be exactly the same. It will be the same process that was followed when the COVID vaccination in India was opened for people of the 45 plus category, who suffered from Co-morbidities.

2. To book booster dose on CoWIN platform, the process will be the same. The citizen will have to be above 60 years of age, they must have taken both the doses and the gap between the second dose and the day they will register for booster dose must be more than 9 months (39 weeks).

3. While registering for a booster dose for those above 60 years of age, the CoWIN platform will ask whether the person has any comorbidities or not. If yes, the individual will be able to book and will have to show the comorbidities certificate from a registered doctor at the Covid vaccination center.

According to the official data, at least 137.5 million people above the age of 60 years will be eligible to receive the booster dose in India.

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How to register children for Covid vaccination? - Know steps to register your child on Cowin portal

Register children for Covid vaccination: Children **between the age group of 15-18 years will be able to register on the CoWIN platform from January 1, 2022,** informed Dr RS Sharma, CoWIN platform Chief.

The children can be registered for covid vaccination using their 10th student ID card, as some might not have Aadhaar or other identity cards.

Children in the age group of 15-18 years will be able to register on the CoWIN app from Jan 1. We've added an additional (10th) ID card for registration - the student ID card because some might not have Aadhaar or other identity cards: Dr RS Sharma, CoWIN platform Chief pic.twitter.com/gfc2joTPol

— ANI (@ANI) December 27, 2021

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced on December 25, 2021 that the centre will begin vaccination for children between the age group of 15-18 years from January 3, 2022.

Which vaccine will be administered to the children?

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin will be the only COVID-19 vaccine that will be administered to the children between the age group of 15-18 years as of now, as per Dr. NK Arora, Chairman of Covid Task Force working group, NTAGI. He assured that the vaccine has shown a very good immune response in children in its clinical trials. Covaxin received DGCI's approval on December 24th for emergency use in children above 12 years.

Read: Covaxin gets DGCI nod for emergency use on children above 12 years

Steps to register children on CoWIN

1. Open CoWIN app directly or through Aarogya Setu aap.

2. Register using the mobile number of one of the parents or any other mobile number.

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3. Enter the OTP received on the mobile number and proceed to verify.

4. Update the child's identity proof under the new category on the Cowin homepage. The necessary modification is being done of the portal(The option will be available from January 1st)

5.The child can be registered using either their Aadhaar card or their 10th ID card.

6. After updating identity proof, you can book the vaccination slot at a preferred time at a nearby vaccination centre.

Note- Only Covaxin will be used to vaccinate the children between 15-18 years as of now.

Will walk-ins be allowed for children's vaccination?

It is not yet clear where prior registration on Cowin will be mandatory for children or not. So far, the centre has said that vaccine registration for children will open on January 1st.

Read more: PM Modi's 3 major announcements- Vaccines for 15-18 year old from Jan 3rd, precaution dose for senior citizens

Senior citizens to require Comorbidities certificate for precautionary dose of COVID-19

The citizens above 60 years, who are eligible for the precautionary dose of COVID-19, will have to get a medical certificate, signed by any registered medical practitioner to take the precaution dose, informed CoWIN Chief RS Sharma. The certificate can be uploaded on Cowin or carried along as a hard copy to the vaccination centre. The precautionary dose will be available from January 10th and should only be taken upon advise of a doctor.

People above 60 years of age will need a 'comorbidities certificate' to take the COVID-19 precautionary dose: National Health Authority (NHA) CEO, Dr. R S Sharma

(file photo) pic.twitter.com/DF4KvUJvf2

— ANI (@ANI) December 26, 2021

This was also announced by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address to the nation on December 25.** PM Modi had also announced precaution dose of COVID vaccine for Healthcare and Frontline Workers starting from January 10, 2022.

The twenty medical comorbidities criteria include - diabetes, kidney disease or on dialysis,

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cardiovascular diseases, stemcell transplant, cancer, cirrhosis, sickle cell disease, current prolonged use of steroids or immunosuppressant drugs, Muscular Dystrophy/ Acid attack with involvement of respiratory system/ Persons with disabilities having high support needs/ Multiple disabilities including deaf-blindness and Severe respiratory disease with hospitalizations in last two years.

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DAY-NRLM Overdraft facility launched for women SHG members

An overdraft facility of Rs 5000 has been launched for verified women SHG members under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The SHG members can avail of the facility through their saving accounts in banks under the PM Jan Dhan Yojana.

The facility was launched by Nagendra Nath Sinha, Secretary of the Department of Rural Development, as a part of a special event called “Discourse on Rural Financial Inclusion” that was organised by DAY-NRLM on December 18, 2021 as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate 75 years of India's independence.

The overdraft facility has been initiated in pursuance of the announcement made by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech of 2019-20.

Read more: Good Governance Index 2021: Gujarat, Delhi grabs top spot, Full list of top ranking states in GGI

Overdraft facility Benefit

The overdraft facility is estimated to benefit about 5 crore women SHG members under DAY-NRLM.

Six women SHG members from three States, two each from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh were provided with a cheque of Rs 5,000 to mark the beginning of the scheme.

How can women SHGs avail the benefit?

The women SHG members from the rural areas can visit the branches of the banks where they have their Saving Bank account under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana to avail the facility.

Overdraft facility for women SHG members-Key highlights

• Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced during her Budget Speech of 2019-20 that

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the government has decided to allow an overdraft facility of Rs. 5,000 to verified SHG members.

• Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) under the Ministry of Rural Development initiated the process for providing OD facilities to women SHG members in the rural areas to meet their immediate/emergency requirements.

• About 5 crore women Self Help Group (SHG) members under DAY-NRLM will be eligible for this facility.

• The Indian Banks Association advised all Banks on November 26, 2021 to implement this scheme after getting all necessary approvals.

• A virtual meeting was also held with Senior Officials of the banks for the successful implementation of this scheme.

About Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission

• The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) is a flagship programme of the Rural Development Ministry that aims to eliminate rural poverty through mobilizing poor women into community institutions such as Self Help Groups (SHGs).

• The programme aims to strengthen the livelihood base of these women by accessing necessary credit from banks.

• The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission was launched in June 2011.

• Around 8.04 crore rural women have been mobilized into 73.5 Lakh Self Help Groups as of December 15, 2021.

• The programme aims to mobilise around 10 crore women into Self Help Groups by 2024.

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Good Governance Index 2021: Gujarat, Delhi grabs top spot, Full list of top ranking states in GGI

Good Governance Index 2021 UPSC: The Good Governance Index 2021 was released by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah on December 25, 2021. The GGI Index has been prepared by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). **The Good Governance Index 2021 has seen an improved composite score by 20 states, with Uttar Pradesh registering an 8.9% improvement in Good Governance Index indicators from 2019 to 2021.**

In Good Governance Index 2021, Gujarat and Delhi have bagged a top spot in the composite ranking. While addressing an event organized to mark the Good Governance Day on December 25, 2021, Home Minister Amit Shah noted that people have been long waiting for Good Governance which was delivered by PM Modi government in the last 7 years.

While giving an example of Good Governance, the Home Minister also said that there has not been a single case of Corruption charge against the Central Government in the last 7 years.

What is Good Governance Index?

Good Governance Index is an implementable and comprehensive framework that assesses the state of Governance across the Indian States and Union Territories enabling ranking of States and districts.

The aim of the Good Governance Index is to create a tool that can be used uniformly across the states for assessing the impact of various interventions that are taken up by Central and State Governments.

Based on the Good Governance Index Framework, it provides a comparative picture among the states while also developing a competitive spirit for improvement.

Union Minister @AmitShah launches Good Governance Index 2021 prepared by @DARPG_GoI; says, there has not been a single corruption charge against the government in last seven years as it is a clean and transparent administration#GoodGovernanceDay

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Read: https://t.co/v6QwJvjNh3 pic.twitter.com/EvdEtclExc

— PIB India (@PIB_India) December 25, 2021

GGI 2020-21: Governance Sectors and Indicators

The Good Governance Index 2019 had encompassed 10 Governance Sectors and 50 Governance Indicators, however, the indicators have been revised to 58.

10 Governance Sectors are:

1. Agriculture and Allied Sectors

2. Commerce & Industries

3. Human Resource and Development

4. Public Health

5. Public Infrastructure and Utilities

6. Economic Governance

7. Social Welfare & Development

8. Judicial & Public Security

9. Environment

10. Citizen-Centric Governance

Highlights of Good Governance Index 2021

The Good Governance Index 2020-21 has categorized States and UTs into four categories, i.e., **(I)** Other States- Group A; **(II)** Other States- Group B; **(III)** North East and Hill States; and **(iv)** Union Territories.

With a Citizen Centric Administration Approach at the heart of the Governance Model of the Central Government, 20 States have improved their composite Good Governance Index Scores

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over the GGI 2019 index scores.

Which state topped in good governance index-2021?

Good governance index top state 2021: Gujarat among the states has bagged a top spot in GGI Index 2021 composite score.

However, UP has also shown incremental growth over GGI 2019 performance. Among the sectors, UP has secured a top position in the Commerce & Industry sector and has also performed well in citizen-centric governance.

In the Northeast and Hill State category, Mizoram and Jammu & Kashmir have registered an overall increase in their scores over GGI 2019.

Good Governance Index 2021: Top ranking states in sectors as well as composite ranks

Sectors	Group A	Group B	NE & Hill States	UTs
Agriculture & Allied Sector	Andhra Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh	Mizoram	D & N Hav
Commerce & Industry	Telangana	Uttar Pradesh	J&K	Daman & D
Human Resource Development	Punjab	Odisha	Himachal Pradesh	Chandiga
Public Health	Kerala	West Bengal	Mizoram	A & N Isla
Public Infrastructure & Utilities	Goa	Bihar	Himachal Pradesh	A & N Isla
Economic Governance	Gujarat	Odisha	Tripura	Delhi
Social Welfare and Development	Telangana	Chhattisgarh	Sikkim	D & N Hav
Judiciary & Public Safety	Tamil Nadu	Rajasthan	Nagaland	Chandiga
Environment	Kerala	Rajasthan	Manipur	Daman & D
Citizen Centric	Haryana	Rajasthan	Uttarakhand	Delhi

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Governance

Composite **Gujarat** **Madhya Pradesh** **Himachal Pradesh** **Delhi**

National Good Governance Day

National Good Governance Day is observed on the birthday of the late former Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee on December 25 every year. Good Governance Day in India is a key component of economic transformation and with the Central Government's focus on minimum government and maximum governance, the Good Governance Index assumes more significance.

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Rajya Sabha MP Mahendra Prasad passes away

Seven-term Rajya Sabha MP from the Janata Dal (United), Dr. Mahendra Prasad passed away at a private hospital in New Delhi on December 27, 2021.

The 81-year-old passed away after battling prolonged illness. He was a Rajya Sabha MP from Bihar. He had also previously been a member of the Lok Sabha for one term.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep grief over the passing away of Rajya Sabha MP Dr. Mahendra Prasad with a tweet that read, ***"Saddened by the passing away of Rajya Sabha MP Dr. Mahendra Prasad Ji. He served in Parliament for many years and was at the forefront of several community service efforts. He always spoke for the welfare of Bihar and its people. Condolences to his family. Om Shanti."***

Saddened by the passing away of Rajya Sabha MP Dr. Mahendra Prasad Ji. He served in Parliament for many years and was at the forefront of several community service efforts. He always spoke for the welfare of Bihar and its people. Condolences to his family. Om Shanti.

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 27, 2021

President of India Ram Nath Kovind also expressed his condolences through a tweet, ***"Sad to learn about the passing away of Rajya Sabha MP Dr. Mahendra Prasad. He had parliamentary experience of nearly four decades, and was also among pioneers of pharmaceutical industry. My condolences to his family and friends."***

Sad to learn about the passing away of Rajya Sabha MP Dr Mahendra Prasad. He had parliamentary experience of nearly four decades, and was also among pioneers of pharmaceutical industry. My condolences to his family and friends.

— President of India (@rashtrapatibhvn) December 27, 2021

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar also expressed condolences at the passing of the veteran politician, saying that his demise is a big loss to society and politics besides industry.

About Rajya Sabha MP Mahendra Prasad

• Dr. Mahendra Prasad was one of the richest Indian members of Parliament. He was a politician

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and industrialist and was also known as King Mahendra.

• He was the founder of the pharmaceutical company- Aristo. He had also founded Mapra Laboratories Pvt Ltd.

• He has been a member of the council of States since 1985.

• Prasad was first elected to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament, on a Congress ticket in 1980 from Jehanabad Constituency in Bihar. He remained with the party for a long time till its fortunes declined in the state.

• He then joined the Janata Dal and then its split parties- first Rashtriya Janata Dal and then JD(U).

• He was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Bihar for the first time in 1985 and continued to be a member of the esteemed house till his death except for brief gaps.

• He was one of the longest-serving Rajya Sabha MPs.

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Desmond Tutu, South African anti-apartheid hero and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, passes away at 90

Desmond Tutu death: Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a veteran of South Africa's struggle against the white minority rule and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, passed away on December 26, 2021, at the age of 90. Desmond Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 in recognition of his non-violent opposition against the rule by the white minority in the country.

The President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa, in a televised address, described Desmond Tutu as one of South Africa's finest patriots. While the President of the US Joe Biden said that Desmond Tutu followed his spiritual calling to create a freer, better, and more equal world.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer in the late 1990s. In recent years, he was hospitalized on several occasions to treat infections caused due to his cancer treatments.

Anti-apartheid icon Archbishop Desmond Tutu has passed away: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa pic.twitter.com/8Wsm1WRmzf

— ANI (@ANI) December 26, 2021

Who was Archbishop Desmond Tutu?

Desmond Tutu was a South African Anglican bishop who was known for his work as an anti-apartheid and human rights activist.

Tutu was the Bishop of Johannesburg from 1985 to 1986 and then became the archbishop of Cape Town from 1986 to 1996. He both cases, Desmond Tutu was the first black African to hold the position.

The outspoken Desmond Tutu was considered the nations' conscience by both the black and white. It was an enduring testament to his faith and spirit of reconciliation in a divided nation.

Desmond Tutu: Face of anti-apartheid movement

Archbishop Desmond Tutu helped in rousing the grassroots campaigns around the world that

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fought to end apartheid through cultural and economic boycotts.

Traveling and tirelessly throughout the 1980s, Desmond Tutu became the face of the anti-apartheid movement abroad while many of the leaders of the rebel African National Congress (ANC), such as Nelson Mandela were behind bars.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu: Winner of Nobel Peace Prize

In 1984, Desmond Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent approach against the whites during an anti-apartheid campaign in South Africa.

The Nobel Prize committee cites Tutu's role as a unifying leader figure in the campaign to resolve the problem of apartheid in South Africa.

Desmond Tutu, a decade later witnessed the end of white minority rule in the country. He also chaired a Truth Reconciliation Commission which was set up to unearth the atrocities under it.

Anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa

It was an internal resistance to apartheid in South Africa that originated from several sectors of South African society and also took various forms ranging from passive resistance to guerrilla warfare.

Apartheid was adopted as a formal SA government policy by the ruling National Party after their victory in the 1948 general elections. The mass action against the ruling National Party government was instrumental in leading to negotiations to end apartheid which started in the 1990s.

Apartheid was a system of institutionalized racial segregation that existed in South West Africa and South Africa from 1948 until the early 1990s.

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Night curfew in states- Check which states have imposed night curfew in India

Night Curfew in States- India has reported over 578 Omicron cases as of December 27, 2021 with Delhi reporting the highest number of infections, followed by Maharashtra and then Kerala.

The National Capital has overtaken Maharashtra to become the worst-hit state with 142 Omicron cases so far, while Maharashtra has reported 141 cases. The Delhi government decided to impose a night curfew in the capital from 11 pm to 5 am from December 27th after it recorded 290 positive cases in the last 24 hours, the highest since June 10. Overall, Delhi has been witnessing a sudden surge in Covid cases including Omicron cases.

Night curfew to be imposed in Delhi from tomorrow (Dec 27) from 11:00 PM to 5:00 AM, in view of the rapidly increasing #COVID19 cases: Delhi Govt pic.twitter.com/0EV54oiJRI

— ANI (@ANI) December 26, 2021

Several other states have also reported a surge in infections especially Omicron cases including Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, Karnataka, which have prompted the states to go back to imposing night curfew to restrict movement of people and contain the spread of Omicron Covid variant. The night curfew in states will effectively ban New Year celebrations.

Read more: List of states that have reported Omicron cases in India

Night Curfew in States

At least 8 states have imposed night curfew in India including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, Assam, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. **Uttar Pradesh** and Maharashtra were among the first to impose night curfew to curb Christmas and New Year celebrations.

Check which states have imposed night curfew to combat Omicron spread-

Night Curfew in Delhi

The Delhi government announced on December 26, 2021 that it would be imposing a night curfew from December 27 in view of rapidly increasing Covid-19 cases.

Night Curfew in Delhi timings- 11 pm -5 am

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Night Curfew in Karnataka

Karnataka is the latest state along with Delhi to announce a night curfew in the state for 10 days starting from December 28. The state health minister Dr. K Sudhakar said that they would like to watch for 10 days by invoking the night curfew and Section 144.

Night Curfew in Karnataka timings- 10 pm to 5 am

Night Curfew in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh imposed a night curfew in the state from December 23, 2021 as a precautionary action to contain the spread of the Omicron variant.

Night Curfew in Madhya Pradesh timings- 11 pm to 5 am

Night Curfew in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh government announced a night curfew from December 25, 2021 in view of rising Omicron cases in the state. The state has also restricted the number of people attending public gatherings like marriages to 200.

Night curfew in UP timing- 11 pm to 5 am

Read more- UP imposes night curfew from December 25

Night Curfew in Gujarat

Gujarat extended the duration of night curfew in eight cities by two hours on December 24, 2021. The cities include Surat, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Junagadh, Jamnagar, Gandhinagar, Rajkot and Bhavnagar. The night curfew was in force in these cities earlier from 1 am to 5 am.

Night curfew in Gujarat timings- 11 pm to 5 am

Night Curfew in Haryana

Haryana has announced a night curfew in the state from December 25, 2021 till January 5. The state has also prohibited the gathering of more than 200 people in public places and indoor and outdoor events.

Night Curfew in Haryana timings- 11 pm to 5 am

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Night Curfew in Maharashtra

Maharashtra has imposed a night curfew in the state and prohibited gathering of over 5 people between 9 pm and 6 am. The state has also restricted the number of people at theatres, gyms, spas and hotels at 50 percent capacity. The measures have been imposed to curb crowding at Christmas and New Year celebrations.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) of Mumbai has also banned all New Year celebrations in the city both in open and closed spaces.

Night curfew in Maharashtra timings- 9 pm to 6 am

Night Curfew in Assam

The Assam government led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has announced a night curfew in the state from 11.30 pm to 6 am. The decision has been taken as a precautionary measure as there is no confirmed case of the Omicron yet in the state.

Assam night curfew timings-11.30 pm to 6 am

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Morning Current Affairs: 27 December 2021

PM Modi to lay foundation stone of hydropower projects in Mandi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Mandi in Himachal Pradesh on December 27, 2021 to lay the foundation stone of hydropower projects worth over Rs 11000 crore. PM Modi will also inaugurate the Sawra Kuddu Hydro Power Project, a 111MW project that has been built at a cost of about Rs 2080 crore.

Read more here

Delhi imposes night curfew from December 27

The Delhi government has imposed a night curfew from December 27, 2021. The curfew will be enforced from 11 pm to 5 am. The announcement comes as the national capital reported around 290 new Covid cases in the last 24 hours, the highest since June 10. It is for the second consecutive day that Delhi has recorded over 200 new Covid cases.

Read more: **Check which other states have imposed night curfew in India**

Senior citizens require comorbidities certificate for precautionary dose

The Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Authority, Dr RS Sharma said that those above 60 years with comorbidities would require a medical certificate to take the precautionary dose. The medical certificate has to be signed by any registered medical practitioner that can be uploaded on the Cowin portal and also carried to the vaccination centre.

Read more here

Read more: **PM Modi's 3 major announcements- Vaccines for 15-18 year old from Jan 3rd, precaution dose for senior citizens**

Karnataka to establish separate directorate to raise farmers' income

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai informed on December 26, 2021 that the state will establish a separate directorate to raise farmers' income. He stated that agriculture will grow

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automatically if the economic condition of farmers improves.

Covaxin shows good immune response in children- NTAGI Chairman

The Chairman of Covid Taskforce working group (NTAGI), Dr. NK Arora said on December 26, 2021 that Bharat Biotech's **Covaxin** has shown a very good immune response in children during clinical trials. Explaining the decision to roll out vaccination for children between 15-18 years from January 3rd, he said that children in that age group are very much like adults.

Read more: Bharat Biotech's Covaxin gets DGCI approval for emergency use on children above 12 years

Read more: Know how to register children for covid vaccination

Muzaffarpur boiler blast: Ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh announced for kin of deceased

Seven people were killed and seven others were injured in an unfortunate boiler blast in Muzaffarpur in Bihar on December 26, 2021. The blast reportedly took place in a noodle factory. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh each to the families of the deceased. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also approved an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh each for the next of kin of the deceased. Those injured will get Rs 50,000 each.

PM Modi to inaugurate Kanpur Metro Rail project on December 28

Prime Minister Narendra will be inaugurated the completed section of the Kanpur Metro Rail project in Kanpur on December 26, 2021. PM Modi will also inaugurate the Bina-Panki Multiproduct Pipeline Project.

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PM Modi in Himachal today: Prime Minister lays foundation stone of hydropower projects in Mandi

Prime Minister Modi in Himachal Pradesh: The foundation stone of **Hydropower Projects worth over Rs. 11,000 crores** were laid down by Prime Minister Modi in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh on December 27, 2021. PM visited the poll-bound state at around 12 noon. The hydropower projects in Himachal Pradesh inaugurated by PM also included the Renukaji Dam Project that was lying pending for three decades.

Before laying the foundation stone of hydropower projects in Himachal Pradesh today, Prime Minister also presided over the second ground-breaking ceremony of the Himachal Pradesh Global Investors' Meet at around 11.30 am.

Himachal Pradesh | Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates & lays the foundation stone for projects worth Rs 11,000 crores, including Dhaula Sidh hydropower & Renukaji dam projects, at Mandi. pic.twitter.com/OgAmPNs0Vs

— ANI (@ANI) December 27, 2021

Significance

The inauguration of hydropower projects in Himachal Pradesh will help in utilizing the untapped potential of the resources that are available in India and one of the steps in this direction has been to utilize optimally the hydropower potential in the Himalayan region.

The projects that are to be inaugurated in Himachal today by Prime Minister will reflect a key step in this direction.

Hydropower Projects inaugurated by PM Modi in Himachal

1. Sawra-Kuddu Hydropower Project

The 111 MW Project in Himachal has been built at a cost of around Rs. 2,080 crores. The project will lead to the generation of over 380 million units of electricity every year. It will also help Himachal earn a revenue worth over Rs. 120 crores annually.

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2. Foundation Stone of Luhri Stage 1 Hydro Power Project

The 210 MW hydropower project will be built at a cost of over Rs. 1,800 crores and will lead to the generation of over 750 million units of electricity per year.

3. Foundation Stone of Dhaulasidh Hydro Power Project

This will be the first hydropower project of Hamirpur district in Himachal. The 66 MW hydro project will be built at a cost of over Rs. 680 crores and will lead to a generation of over 300 million units of electricity per year.

Renukaji Dam Project

The 40 MW project in the state has been lying pending for over three decades. It will be built at a cost of Rs. 7,000 crores and will prove beneficial for Delhi. The National Capital will be able to receive around 500 million cubic metre water supply per year.

Renukaji Dam project has been made possible through the vision of cooperative federalism of Prime Minister when 6 Indian States- Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, and Uttarakhand were brought together by the Central Government for making the project possible.

List of Hydropower Projects in Himachal Pradesh

S. No	Name	District
1	Allain Duhangan Hydroelectric Project	
2	Andhra Hydroelectric Project	Shimla
3	Baira Siul Hydroelectric Project	Chamba
4	Baner Hydroelectric Project	Kangra
5	Baspa Hydroelectric Project Hydroelectric Project	Kinnaur
6	Bassi Hydroelectric Project	Mandi
7	Bhakra Hydroelectric Project	Unna, bilaspur
8	Binwa Hydroelectric Project	Kangra

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9	Chamera - I Hydroelectric Project	Chamba
10	Chamera - II Hydroelectric Project	
11	Chamera - III Hydroelectric Project	
12	Dehar Hydroelectric Project	Rampur/shimla
13	Gaj Hydroelectric Project	Kangra
14	Ghanvi Hydroelectric Project	SHIMLA
15	Giri Hydroelectric Project	Sirmaur
16	Karcham Wangtoo Hydroelectric Project	Kinnaur
17	Keshang Hydroelectric Project	
18	Koldam Hydroelectric Project	shimla
19	Largi Hydroelectric Project	
20	Malana Hydroelectric Project	Kullu
21	Nathpa Jhakri Hydroelectric Project	Shimla
22	Parbati II Hydroelectric Project	Shimla
23	Parbati III hydroelectric project	
24	Pong Hydroelectric Project	Kangra
25	Rampur Hydroelectric Project	
26	Ranjit Sagar Dam Hydroelectric Project	SHAHPURKANDI (Pathankot)/ GURDASPUR
27	Sanjay Vidyut Pariyojna (Bhabha) Hydroelectric	Kinnaur
28	Shanan Hydroelectric Project	
29	Sorang Hydroelectric Project	Kullu
30	Tangnu Romai Hydroelectric Project	
31	Thirot Hydroelectric Project	Lahaual Spiti

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32	Uhl - III Hydroelectric Project	Kangra
33	Yamuna Hydroelectric Project	Dehradun

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Bharat Biotech's Covaxin gets DGCI approval for emergency use on children above 12 years

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin was granted emergency use authorisation by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) on December 25, 2021 for use on children above 12 years with certain conditions. The proposal was examined in consultation with the Subject Expert Committee.

The **Subject Expert Committee (SEC) had recommended DGCI to grant emergency use authorisation to Covaxin for children.** The approval finally came through based on recommendations of SEC experts and the submission of additional safety data.

The DGCI has approved usage of the whole virion inactivated COVID vaccine for use in children above the age of 12 years with the same dose schedule of 0 & 28 days. PM Modi in his address to the nation on December 25th, had announced that **children between 15-18 years will get COVID-19 vaccines** from January 3, 2022.

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) on Saturday granted emergency use authorisation to indigenously-developed Bharat Biotech's Covaxin for children above 12 years with certain conditions, reads DCGI letter to Bharat Biotech pic.twitter.com/WV4BTj8Rb8

— ANI (@ANI) December 26, 2021

Read More: **PM Modi's 3 major announcements- Vaccines for 15-18 year old from Jan 3rd**

COVAXIN granted much-awaited WHO approval

Significance

Covaxin has become the second Covid-19 vaccine to receive approval for emergency use on children in India. The first vaccine to receive approval for children was Zydus Cadila's three-dose DNA vaccine in August 2021. The vaccine was approved for emergency use on adults and children above the age of 12 years.

Covaxin will be administered to the children in two doses in a gap of 28 days, similar to the adults.

Read More: **COVAXIN showed 77.8 per cent efficacy against symptomatic COVID-19:**

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Lancet Study

Bharat Biotech's statement

While announcing that Covaxin has received approval for emergency use in children aged between 12-18 years, Bharat Biotech said in a statement that Covaxin is formulated uniquely such that the same dosage can be administered to adults and children.

The company also stressed that Covaxin has established a proven record for safety and efficacy in adults for original variants and subsequent variants and added that they look forward for Covaxin to provide similar levels of protection for adults and children alike.

Read the full statement below.

COVAXIN® receives approval for emergency use in Children 12 - 18 years of age.#covaxin #COVID19 #covaxinapproval#childrensafety #BharatBiotech #vaccine #safety #pandemic pic.twitter.com/3LswUG8QU4

— BharatBiotech (@BharatBiotech) December 25, 2021

Background

Bharat Biotech had submitted data of Covaxin's clinical trials on children aged between 2-18 years age group to the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) in October. The data was thoroughly reviewed by both CDSCO and SEC.

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PM Modi's 3 major announcements- Vaccines for 15-18 year old from Jan 3rd, precaution dose for senior citizens

PM Modi major announcements: Prime Minister Narendra Modi in an address to the nation on December 25, 2021 announced that **children between 15-18 years will get COVID-19 vaccines** from January 3, 2022. The decision will aid normalisation of education in schools.

PM Modi also announced that the government has decided to start a precaution dose of COVID vaccine for Healthcare and Frontline Workers starting from January 10, 2022. All citizens above 60 years of age with co-morbidities will also have the option of taking the precautionary dose of the vaccine on the advice of their doctor from January 10, 2022.

Read more: **Bharat Biotech's Covaxin gets DGCI approval for emergency use on children above 12 years**

PM Modi also announced that India will soon get a nasal vaccine and the world's first DNA vaccine. The Prime Minister said that all the decisions taken are based on the suggestions by our scientists.

Citizens above 60 years of age with co-morbidities will also have the option of the Precaution Dose of the vaccine on the advice of their doctor. This will also be available from 10th January 2022.

I also request people to be cautious of rumors & fake news: PM @narendramodi pic.twitter.com/5a3fPlUK34

— PIB India (@PIB_India) December 25, 2021

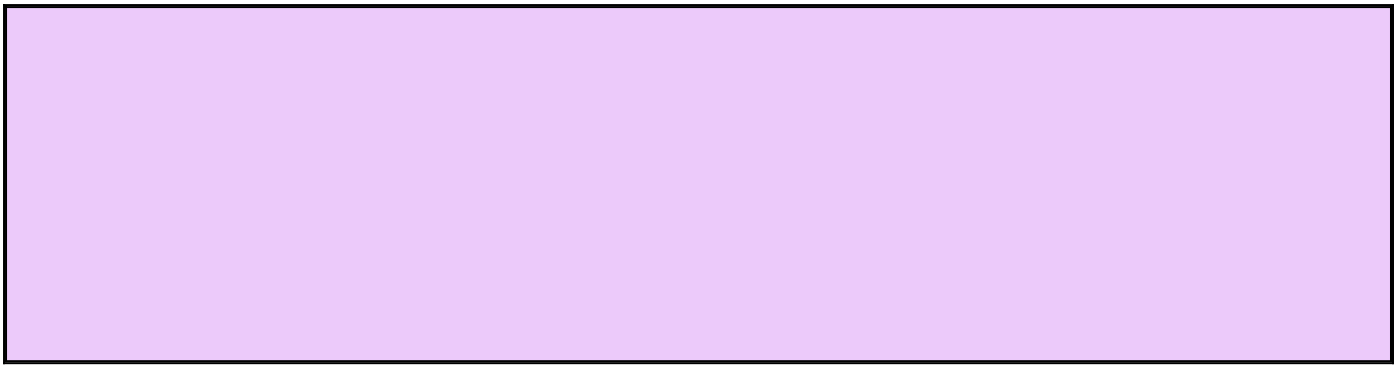
PM Modi address to nation 3 major announcements

-**Covid vaccines for children** between the age of 15-18 years

-Precaution dose of Covid vaccine for Healthcare and Frontline Workers and senior citizens with co-morbidities.

-Launch of nasal vaccine and world's first DNA vaccine.

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On Omicron

PM Modi urged people not to panic regarding the Omicron Covid variant and follow precautions such as wearing masks and washing hands repeatedly. The Prime Minister highlighted that the global experience of fighting COVID relays that following all guidelines is the biggest weapon in the fight against Corona and second is vaccination.

India's vaccination campaign

India's vaccination campaign, which had begun on January 16, 2021, has crossed the 141 crore mark. PM Modi has credited the success to the collective efforts of the citizens, scientists and health workers and doctors.

As of now, 61 percent of the adult population of India has received both the doses of the vaccines and 90 percent of adults have received one dose.

PM Modi further stated that India has 18 lakh isolation beds, 5 lakh oxygen beds, 1 lakh 40 thousand ICU beds and 90000 ICU and Non-ICU beds for children. Besides this, India has over 3000 PSA oxygen plants and 4 lakh oxygen cylinders and centre is providing support to states for buffer doses and testing.

On Rumours

PM Modi has cautioned against the efforts to spread rumours, confusion and fear.

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James Webb Space Telescope launch: Know all about world's most powerful space telescope

James Webb Space Telescope launch: The James Webb Space Telescope, the world's largest and most powerful space telescope, was launched on December 25, 2021 beginning a one-million-mile journey to see 13.5 billion years into the past.

The James Webb Space Telescope was launched aboard Ariane 5 rocket from the Guiana Space Center in Kourou, French Guiana. The 14,000-pound instrument was released into space after a 26-minute ride.

The telescope will take about a month to reach its destination in the solar orbit, which would be roughly 1 million miles from the Earth, four times away from the moon. The project is a result of collaboration between NASA, the European Space Agency & the Canadian Space Agency.

Here it is: humanity’s final look at @NASAWebb as it heads into deep space to answer our biggest questions. Alone in the vastness of space, Webb will soon begin an approximately two-week process to deploy its antennas, mirrors, and sunshield. #UnfoldTheUniverse pic.twitter.com/DErMXJhNQd

— NASA (@NASA) December 25, 2021

US President Joe Biden tweeted, ***"Congratulations @NASA and all who made today’s launch of the James Webb telescope possible. Webb is a shining example of the power of what we can accomplish when we dream big. We've always known that this project would be a risky endeavor, but with big risk comes big rewards."***

Thank you, Mr. President. International endeavors like @NASAWebb benefit humanity as we get closer to understanding our origin story. We look forward to seeing how Webb will #UnfoldTheUniverse. https://t.co/KVmNtlN9Um pic.twitter.com/1eANdNL33C

— NASA (@NASA) December 26, 2021

James Webb Space Telescope Goal

The James Webb Space Telescope will aim to find the first galaxies that formed in the early

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universe and look through dusty clouds to see stars forming planetary systems. The space telescope will be a giant leap forward in the quest to understand the Universe and its origins.

The powerful space telescope will aim to examine every phase of cosmic history, starting from the first luminous glows after the Big Bang to the formation of galaxies, stars and planets and the evolution of our solar system.

Read more: **NASA's Spacecraft Touches Solar Atmosphere for First Time in History**

Mission Objectives

Find first galaxies formed after Big Bang: The James Webb Space Telescope will be like a powerful time machine with infrared vision that will look back over 13.5 billion years to see the formation of the first stars and galaxies in the early universe.

Learn how galaxies evolved: Its unprecedented infrared sensitivity will help astronomers compare the faintest, earliest galaxies to today's grand spirals and ellipticals. It will help deepen the understanding of how galaxies assemble over billions of years.

Observe the formation of stars: The telescope will be able to see right through massive clouds of dust that are opaque to visible-light observatories like Hubble and see how stars and planetary systems are born.

Look for the potential for life in other planetary systems: The telescope will also be able to tell more about the atmospheres of extrasolar planets. It could even find the building blocks of life elsewhere in the universe.

James Webb Space Telescope Instruments

Near-Infrared Camera (NIRCam)

Near-Infrared Spectrograph (NIRSpec)

Mid Infrared Instrument (MIRI)

Fine Guidance Sensors/Near-Infrared Imager and Slitless Spectrograph (FGS/NIRISS)

James Webb Space Telescope major innovations

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The world's most powerful, most expensive and largest telescope comprises following innovations-

Lightweight optics

Deployable sun shield

Folding segmented mirror

Improved Detectors

Cryogenic actuators & mirror control

Micro-shutters

James Webb Space Telescope vs Hubble

The James Webb Space Telescope will aim to replace its 30-year-old predecessor, the Hubble Space Telescope. The Hubble orbits the Earth from 340 miles away, passing in and out of the planet's shadow every 90 minutes.

The **James Webb Telescope is named after James Edwin Webb,** who was an American government official who served as Undersecretary of State from 1949–1952. He was appointed as the second administrator of NASA from February 14, 1961, to October 7, 1968. James Webb oversaw NASA during most of its formative decade of the 1960s.

The James Webb Telescope is expected to be about 100 times more sensitive than the Hubble telescope. It is expected to transform scientists' understanding of the universe.

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Centre deploys multidisciplinary teams in 10 states

The Union Health Ministry has decided to **deploy multi-disciplinary teams in 10 states** in the wake of an increasing number of Omicron and Covid-19 cases or a slow vaccination pace.

The Ministry released an office memorandum which stated, " In the view of the rapid surge in cases and deaths because of Covid-19, as reported by various news channels and state governments, it has been seen that the number of Omicron cases have emerged in some states."

The notification further stated that it has also been observed that the pace of COVID-19 vaccination in these states is less than the national average.

Read more: **List of states reporting Omicron Cases in India**

The central multi-disciplinary teams are being deployed to the 10 identified states in the wake of this situation. The teams will be stationed in the states for 3-5 days and they will work alongside the state authorities.

The 10 states include Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Mizoram, Karnataka, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Punjab.

The multi-disciplinary teams will look at the following areas-

1. Contact tracing, surveillance and containment operations

2. Covid-19 testing and sending adequate samples for genome sequencing.

3. COVID appropriate behaviour and its enforcement

4. Availability of hospital beds, sufficient logistics including ventilators, ambulances and medical oxygen.

5. COVID-19 vaccination progress

The state-level central teams will assess the situation and suggest remedial actions and submit a report every evening on public health activities.

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Read Health Ministry's full statement below:

"These teams shall be stationed in States allotted for 3 to 5 days & will work along with State Health Authorities," reads the Union Health Ministry's letter pic.twitter.com/wd9WXTEhXo

— ANI (@ANI) December 25, 2021

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Morning Current Affairs: 25 December 2021

Multi-disciplinary Central teams to be deployed in 10 states

The Union Health Ministry has sent multi-disciplinary central teams to be deployed in 10 states including Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Mizoram, Karnataka, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Punjab. The decision was taken in the wake of increasing number of Omicron and Covid-19 cases or slow vaccination pace.

7-day mandatory home quarantine for Dubai passengers in Mumbai

In the latest order issued by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, a seven-day home quarantine has been made mandatory for those travelling from Dubai to Mumbai in Maharashtra due to the tally of Omicron cases breaching the 100 mark on December 24th. The passengers will have to undergo an RT-PCR test on the seventh day of their quarantine.

Read more: Top 5 Current Affairs

Delhi's Sarojini Nagar market to operate on an odd-even basis on Dec 25, 26

The Delhi Government has ordered the Sarojini Nagar market to operate on an odd-even basis on December 25 and 26 to avoid it from becoming a COVID-19 super spreader. All shops and street vendors in the market have been asked to follow the odd-even rule over the weekend.

PM Modi to virtually address Gurpurab celebrations at Gujarat gurudwara

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually address the Gurpurab celebrations at Gurudwara Lakhpat Sahib in Kutch of Gujarat on December 25, 2021. PM Modi will address the Gurpurab celebrations at around 12:30 pm through video conferencing. The Sikh Sangat of Gujarat celebrates the Gurpurab of Guru Nanak Dev Ji at the Gurudwara every year from December 23 to December 25.

President Kovind, PM Modi pay tribute to former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee

President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tribute at 'Sadaiv Atal' Samadhi in the national capital to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary on December 25, 2021.

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India vs South Africa first test tomorrow

The first test of the 3-match test series between India and South Africa will get underway on December 26, 2021 at the SuperSport Park, Centurion. South Africa is the only country where India is yet to win a Test series.

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Odisha new restrictions for Omicron: All social gatherings except marriage banned till January 2nd- Check guidelines here

Odisha new restrictions for Omicron: Odisha has released a new list of restrictions for Christmas and New Year amid the recent rise in cases of the Omicron COVID variant. Odisha government has restricted Christmas and New Year celebrations from December 25, 2021 till January 2, 2022.

As per the new Odisha restrictions, all social gatherings including rallies, celebrations, orchestras in hotels, restaurants, clubs and parks have been banned across the states.

Odisha new restrictions for Omicron date/ timings: December 25- January 2nd

In view of the current Covid situation, Odisha Government has restricted the Christmas & New Year celebrations w.e.f 25th Dec to 2nd Jan. Social gatherings, rallies, orchestras, celebrations in hotels, clubs, restaurants, parks, etc will be banned across the State pic.twitter.com/oF43jI2SP2

— ANI (@ANI) December 24, 2021

Odisha new restrictions for Omicron- Check full list of Christmas/ New Year restrictions

1. Christmas celebrations to be limited to Churches with a maximum of 50 people.

2. All night celebrations, new year celebrations in hotels, clubs, restaurants, parks, halls, kalyan mandaps completely banned.

3. No celebration other than marriage allowed across the state. Reception would also not be allowed.

4. Funeral rites will be allowed with due Covid-19 protocols.

5. Strict vigilance on crowding and gathering.

6. No community feast allowed.

7. All social gatherings, rallies, dances, orchestras and other cultural programmes are completely

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banned.

Penalty for violation

Any person found violating the restrictions will face a penalty as per provisions given under Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act 2005 and Covid-19.

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Harbhajan Singh retires from all formats of cricket- Check full Test/ ODI/ T20I Stats

Veteran spinner Harbhajan Singh announced retirement from all forms of cricket on December 24,2021. The cricketer tweeted saying that all good things come to an end and as I bid adieu to the game that has given me everything in life, I would like to thank everyone who made this 23-year-long journey beautiful and memorable.

Harbhajan Singh said in a YouTube video posted alongside his tweet, "Like all cricketers, I too wanted to bid adieu in Indian jersey but fate had something else in store for me."

He said, "I haven't been playing active cricket for quite some time but due to my commitment with Kolkata Knight Riders, I wanted to stay with them in the IPL season but I had made up my mind during the season."

All good things come to an end and today as I bid adieu to the game that has given me everything in life, I would like to thank everyone who made this 23-year-long journey beautiful and memorable.
My heartfelt thank you Grateful .https://t.co/iD6WHU46MU

— Harbhajan Turbanator (@harbhajan_singh) December 24, 2021

Harbhajan Singh was the first Indian bowler to bowl a hat-trick in Test cricket. In his almost two decade career that began in 1998, the spinner has taken 417 wickets in 103 Tests, 269 wickets in 236 ODIs and 25 wickets in 28 T20Is. He was also a part of the 2011 ODI World Cup-winning team. He was conferred with India's fourth highest civilian honour- the Padma Shri in 2009.

Harbhajan Singh Career: From debut in 1998 to IPL

Harbhajan Singh Test Stats

Debut - India vs Australia (March 25, 1998)

Last Test - India vs Sri Lanka (August 12, 2015)

Harbhajan Singh ODI Stats

Debut- India vs New Zealand (April 17, 1998)

Last ODI- India vs South Africa (October 25, 2015)

Harbhajan Singh T20 Stats

Debut- India vs South Africa (December 1, 2006)

Last T20I- India vs UAE (March 4, 2016)

Harbhajan Singh Test/ ODI/ T20I Stats

Harbhajan Singh has the fourth-highest number of Test wickets by an off-spinner after India's Ravichandran Ashwin and Sri Lanka's Muttiah Muralitharan and Rangana Herath. Ravichandran Ashwin surpassed the spinner in number of test wickets recently.

Competition	Matches	Runs Scored/ Top Score	Wickets/ Best Bowling	5 wickets/ 10 wickets
Test	103	2224/ 115	417 (8/84)	25/ 5
ODI	236	1237/ 49	269 (5/31)	3/0
T20I	28	108/21	25 (4/12)	0/0

Harbhajan Singh IPL Career

Harbhajan Singh was a part of the Mumbai Indians IPL Team from the inaugural IPL edition in 2008 till 2017. He was the captain of Mumbai Indians when the team had won the 2011 Champions League Twenty20. He was later picked by Chennai Super Kings for IPL 2018-2019 editions. He was then a part of Kolkata Knight Riders in 2021 IPL Season.

Harbhajan Singh IPL Stats-

Mumbai Indians- 2008-2017

Chennai Super Kings- 2018-2019

Kolkata Knight Riders - 2021

Harbhajan Singh Controversies

1. After his debut in 1998, Harbhajan Singh's career was affected by investigations into his

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bowling action. He made a comeback into the team in 2001 following injury of India's leading leg spinner Anil Kumble.

2. He slowly established himself as India's leading spinner by taking 32 wickets in India's series against Australia and also became the first Indian bowler to take a hat-trick in Test cricket. He was offered a a role of a Deputy Superintendent of Police, in Punjab Police by Punjab government due to his cricket performance. The post was later withdrawn due to non-compliance.

3. A finger injury kept him out mid-2003, allowing Anil Kumble to regain his position as India's leading spinner in Tests and ODI's. Though Singh regained his position in late 2004, he was often left out from the main lineup in Tests with only one spinner - Kumble- being used. Singh was replaced by other spinners after India's early exit from 2007 ODI Cricket World Cup.

4. He was banned by International Cricket Council (ICC) in the beginning of 2008 for racially vilifying Andrew Symonds. The ban was revoked later upon appeal.

5. He was banned from the 2008 IPL season and then suspended from India's ODI squad by the BCCI over a controversy involving him and Sreesanth, when he had slapped the later after a match.

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US waives in-person interviews for H-1B and other types of work visas

The United States has temporarily dropped the **in-person interview requirement for certain visa categories including H-1B, L-1 and O01** amid rising concerns over the spread of the Omicron variant of Covid-19. This was confirmed by US State Department on December 23, 2021.

The State Department said that it is temporarily dropping the in-person interview requirement for some work-visa categories in 2022 to ease visa issuances in the wake of a surge in COVID-19 cases.

In-person interviews are typically the final step before the issuance of visas. Waiver of the requirement will benefit the applicants of H-1B, L-1 and O-1 visas.

These categories of visas are the most common visa types that companies use to attract high-skilled talent from abroad.

US waives in-person interviews for H-1B and certain other types of nonimmigrant visas: State Department

— ANI (@ANI) December 24, 2021

About H-1B, L-1 and O-1 visas in detail

H-1B visa- The visa category allows US employers to temporarily employ foriegn workers in specialty occupations, which requires application of specialised knowledge and a bachelor's degree or equivalent work experience.

Duration of stay- 3 years (extendable to six years). The visa holder can reapply after the expiry of the visa.

L visas- L-1A and L-1B visa categories are for temporary intracompany transferees who work in managerial positions or have specialized knowledge.

O-1 visa - The O-1 nonimmigrant visa is for individuals who possess extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business, or athletics, or who have demonstrated a record of

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extraordinary achievement in the motion picture or television industry and has been recognized nationally or internationally for those achievements.

Period of Stay- 3 years (Extendable up to one year)

US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken has additionally extended consular officers' current ability to waive the in-person interview, through December 31, 2022 for other categories of non-immigrant visas as well including:

Temporary Agricultural and Non-agricultural Workers (H-2 visas)

Students (F and M visas)

Student Exchange Visitors (Academic J visas)

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Why Belgium has decided to close all its nuclear power plants by 2025?

Belgium nuclear phase out: The Government of Belgium **agreed in principle on December 23, 2021, to close all its nuclear power plants by the year 2025.** However, the country has left open the possibility of extending the life of two reactors if it will not be able to otherwise ensure the energy supply.

For months, the seven-party coalition of Belgium has been wrestling with the topic, with the Greens adamant that a law of 2003 setting out a nuclear exit must be respected. On the other hand, the French-speaking liberals favored extending the life of the two newest reactors.

Belgian Government had given itself an end-2021 deadline to settle the matter regarding the nuclear reactors in the country.

Why Belgium has decided to phase out nuclear plants?

Belgian has decided to phase out nuclear power plants while using gas as a bridge towards sustainable energy sources as well as the new technology nuclear options later.

Belgium nuclear phase-out is a political commitment that dates back to 2003 and the country is committed to investing in research for the smaller modular nuclear reactors.

Even though, nuclear power plants release few pollutants in the air, which have made them a sustainable option for nations to meet climate change targets, the construction and demolition of nuclear plants produce large amounts of greenhouse gas. Another argument is that relying on nuclear power will risk slowing the rollout of renewable energy sources.

How Belgium will make up for energy shortfall after nuclear phase out?

The country still needs to establish that how it will make up for the energy shortfall. However, the winner of the contract to build a gas-fired plant just north of Brussels has been denied a permit.

But Belgium is planning to invest 100 million euros over 4 years in research into nuclear power technology. The emphasis will be on smaller module reactors and cooperation with France and Netherlands.

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Belgium nuclear phase out

Belgium's planned nuclear exit with start with the closure of one nuclear reactor on October 1, 2022. Decommissioning which will include the removal of all radioactive materials and the demolition of buildings will be completed by 2045.

Nuclear power plants in Belgium

In Belgium, the two nuclear power plants, with 7 reactors in total, are operated by the French Utility. They account for almost half of the country's electricity production.

Nuclear Power phase out

Countries with the plan of Nuclear phase out by 2030s

1. Belgium

2. Germany

3. Spain

4. Switzerland

List of countries with no nuclear power plants

S. No	Countries
1	Australia
2	Austria
3	Denmark
4	Greece
5	Ireland
6	Italy
7	Estonia
8	Latvia
9	Liechtenstein

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10	Luxembourg
11	Malaysia
12	Malta
13	New Zealand
14	Norway
15	Philippines
16	Portugal
17	Serbia

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UP imposes night curfew from December 25- Know timings

UP night curfew: Uttar Pradesh government led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has imposed **night curfew in the state from 11pm to 5 am from December 25, 2021.** The night curfew has been imposed in UP as a preventive measure against the new Covid variant- Omicron.

The UP Chief Minister also directed the state officials to restrict the number of people attending public gatherings like marriages to 200. All such gatherings will also have to strictly follow Covid-19 guidelines.

The UP CM also asked the officials to ensure that all traders follow the "no mask, no goods" policy at their shops. Masks have also been made mandatory for everyone on the streets or in the markets. The state police has been directed to ensure that all Covid-related guidelines are being followed.

UP Govt: Night curfew to be put in place from December 25 from 11 pm-5am . Not more than 200 people allowed in weddings pic.twitter.com/bHs8Ih7urW

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 24, 2021

UP night curfew and other restrictions- All details here

•UP will have night curfew from December 25 from 11 pm-5am. The night curfew will apply to Noida as well, which borders the national capital.

•Not more than 200 people will be allowed at weddings

•People arriving in Uttar Pradesh from other states or abroad will be traced and tested for coronavirus.

•The UP CM said that extra vigilance will have to be maintained in buses, railway stations and airports.

•The health of those arriving from other states will be closely watched and they will be tested and quarantined if required.

Background

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India has recorded a total of 122 Omicron cases in the past 24 hours, taking its total tally of the new Covid variant to 358. In the wake of rising Omicron cases across the country, the Allahabad High Court had on December 23, 2021 urged the Election Commission of India to immediately ban election rallies and postpone the Assembly polls, if possible, for 1-2 months. The High Court bench comprising Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav also urged PM Modi to consider banning election gatherings.

#Omicron: Allahabad High Court on Thursday requested Election Commission of India to immediately ban election rallies & postpone the Assembly polls, if possible, for 1-2 months

The bench of Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav also urged PM Modi to consider banning election gatherings pic.twitter.com/IPPxmun8Vj

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 23, 2021

PM Modi had chaired a review meeting on December 23, 2021 to review the COVID-19 situation across the nation and during the meeting, he stressed on the need to stay cautious and vigilant amid spread of the new Covid variant. PM Modi said that the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic is not over and that the need for continued adherence to COVID safe behaviour is of paramount importance even today.

The Prime Minister also directed the officials that the centre should send teams to states with low vaccination, rising cases, insufficient health infrastructure to assist them to improve the situation.

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Road projects in UP 2021: National Highway Projects worth over Rs. 9,000 crores launched in Uttar Pradesh

UP Highway news: The Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 240 km long National Highway projects **worth over Rs. 9,000 crores in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh**. While speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister of Road, Transport & Highways also said that the new National Highways in Uttar Pradesh will help the sugarcane farmers to easily transport their agricultural products to the markets and sugar mills. Gadkari also emphasized the farmers' welfare by leveraging technology and research for the economic prosperity of the state.

Find below the list of various road projects in Uttar Pradesh inaugurated by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari.

@nitin_gadkari pic.twitter.com/rk7grVhqQo

— Office Of Nitin Gadkari (@OfficeOfNG) December 23, 2021

6 National Highway Projects in Meerut

While inaugurating and laying the foundation stone of 6 National Highway Projects in Meerut with a total cost of Rs. 8,364 crores, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari noted that the project will facilitate the farmers of the region to take their crops to the market which will further lead to their economic upliftment.

He also added that Meerut being a big center of the industry, the new highways will lead the Meerut on a new path of development.

8,364 139 6 @kpmaurya1 , @Gen_VKSingh ,… pic.twitter.com/bWSzU87F72

— Nitin Gadkari (@nitin_gadkari) December 23, 2021

3 National Highway projects in Muzaffarnagar

Nitin Gadkari, in one of the major road projects in UP in 2021, laid the foundation stone and inaugurated the three National Highway projects in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh.

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!
755 101 3 @Gen_VKSingh , @drsanjeevbalyan , @SureshRanaBJP …
pic.twitter.com/nzW5Zc8CxA

— Nitin Gadkari (@nitin_gadkari) December 23, 2021

While addressing a public gathering, the Union Minister emphasized the welfare of the farmers with the help of research and technology for the economic prosperity of the region. He also stressed the significance of Hydrogen, Ethanol, and other bio-fuels for self-sufficiency, overall progress, and sustainable development.

Delhi-Meerut Expressway dedicated to public

The Union Minister of Road, Transport & Highways dedicated the Delhi-Meerut Expressway to the public. The 82 km long expressway connects Delhi's Sarai Kale Khan to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh.

New-Expressway link to connect Delhi and Lucknow

The Union Minister informed that a new expressway link will be constructed to connect Delhi and Lucknow. It is expected to **reduce the commute time to three and a half hours.**

He further added that the groundbreaking ceremony of the expressway link will take place in the next 10-12 days.

Intelligent Transport system on Delhi Expressway

An intelligent transport system has been launched on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway near Delhi. The mechanism will minimize traffic problems and will also enhance the safety of the consumers.

Features-

1. A revolutionary state-of-the-art technology will be able to achieve traffic efficiency by minimizing traffic problems, providing users with prior information about traffic, prompting efficient infrastructure usage, and enhancing the safety and comfort of the commuters on the expressway.

2. The intelligent transport system on the Delhi expressway will be able to detect any accident and will also receive alerts to ensure that the ambulance reaches the spot within 10-15 minutes.

Background

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As the assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh near, the Modi government has lined up various development projects in the poll-bound state. From Kashi Vishwanath Corridor to Ganga Expressway, the ruling party will leave no stone unturned to ensure the victory of the BJP government in one of the largest states of India.

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Know all about Karnataka's anti-conversion bill

Karnataka legislative assembly passed the **controversial anti-conversion bill** on December 23, 2021 amid long debates. The bill seeks to curb illegal religious conversions.

The **Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Bill, 2021** was introduced in the state legislative assembly on December 21st and was passed by voice vote amid protests from the opposition that demanded longer debate on the bill.

Former Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah said that the anti-conversion bill is anti-Constitution and anti-human being.

It is anti-Constitution and anti-human being: Former Karnataka CM and Leader of Opposition, Siddaramaiah on the state Assembly passing an anti-conversion bill (23.12.2021) pic.twitter.com/yIBQZUXPKt

— ANI (@ANI) December 23, 2021

What does Karnataka’s anti-conversion Bill propose?- Know in 7 points

1. The Karnataka Right to Freedom of Religion Bill, 2021 prohibits conversion from one religion to another by misrepresentation, force, fraud, allurement or marriage.

2. The bill exempts those who reconvert into their immediate previous religion as it will not be deemed to be conversion under the Act.

3. Under the bill's provisions, marriages conducted with the intention of conversion will be deemed null and void.

4. The bill also provides that family members or any other person related to the individual getting converted can file a complaint against it.

5. The bill seeks compensation worth Rs 5 lakh for victims of conversion by the persons attempting the conversion and double punishment for repeat offences.

6. The bill makes the offence of conversion cognizable and non-bailable. The bill proposes jail

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term of up to 3-5 years and a fine of Rs 25,000 for those found guilty of converting people from the general category.

7. Further, it proposes a jail term of 3-10 years and a fine of Rs 50,000-1 lakh for those converting minors, women or persons from SC/ST communities.

What about those people who want to willingly convert into another religion?

The bill provides that any person intending to convert to another religion will have to notify the district magistrate two months in advance. The person who will carry out the conversion will also have to provide one month's notice to give the district magistrate time to conduct an inquiry through the police on the real purpose of the conversion.

If the two parties fail to notify the authorities, it will result in a jail term of up to 6 months to 3 years for those who convert and a term of 1-5 years for those carrying out conversions.

The bill mandates that those who wish to convert shall give a declaration in a prescribed format at least 30 days in advance to the District Magistrate or the Additional District Magistrate.

The person who wishes to convert will lose the religion of his origin and the benefits that come with it including reservation. However, those converting will be entitled to the benefits that are attached to the religion he or she is converting into.

What happens next?

The bill will now be presented in the legislative council, where the state government does not have a majority.

Karnataka Legislative Assembly Total Strength-224

BJP- 121
Independents- 2
Congress- 69
JDS- 32

Karnataka Legislative Council Total Strength- 75
BJP- 26
Congress- 29
JDS- 11
Independents - 5

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What happens if the bill is not passed by the Legislative Council?

If the Legislative Council does not pass the anti-conversion bill then the government will have other options, as the **legislative councils in the states are not as powerful as the Rajya Sabha.**

Legislative Council can only delay the bill but does not have the authority to make any changes to it.

If the council rejects the bill, it will go back to the Legislative assembly, which can pass it again with or without amendments and pass it again to Legislative Council.

If the legislative council rejects it for the second time or more than a month has passed since the bill was tabled in the council, then the bill will be considered to have been passed by both the houses of the state legislature.

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DRDO successfully flight tests high-speed HEAT Abhyas

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested indigenously developed High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas on December 23, 2021. It was flight tested from Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur off the coast, Odisha.

HEAT Abhyas demonstrated a high subsonic speed trajectory at a very low altitude with high endurance during the flight test. The two boosters provided initial acceleration during launch and a small turbojet engine was used to sustain the high subsonic speed with long endurance.

The indigenous unmanned aerial target system has been developed by DRDO's Bengaluru-based laboratory- Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE). Other DRDO laboratories also supported its development to ensure it meets the requirement of the aerial targets of the Indian Armed forces.

Significance

The development will provide a major boost to India's defence prowess. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that the successful test is a great testimony of the synergy between scientists and the Indian industry.

Abhyas Flight Test- Important Highlights

•The aircraft is controlled from the ground using control and an indigenously developed MEMS-based Inertial Navigation System and a Flight Control Computer computer that helps it follow a pre-designated path in a fully autonomous mode.

•The indigenous data link designed by a Bengaluru-based Industry partner was also successfully flown and tested during the flight.

•The performance of the aircraft during its entire flight was confirmed by the data captured by various Range instruments.

Read more: India successfully tests Pralay ballistic missile

What is Abhyas?

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•Abhyas is a high-speed expendable aerial target (HEAT) that is being built by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of DRDO.

•The first experimental launch of the aircraft was done in June 2012 without the main engine.

•The gas turbine engine was later identified and integrated on the Abhyas airframe.

•HEAT Abhyas project was sanctioned with initial funding of Rs 15 crores.

•HAL secured an order for manufacturing, assembly, integration, testing and supply of DRDO Abhyas from ADE on December 17, 2021.

•The Abhyas aircraft is launched from a mobile launcher with the help of two 68 mm booster rockets.

Benefit

Abhyas's radar cross-section (RCS) and its visual and infrared signatures can be boosted to simulate a variety of aircraft for air-defense weapon practices.

Abhyas is also GPS-enabled and has an onboard flight control computer and a miss-distance indicator. The aircraft is designed for autonomous flight with the help of an autopilot.

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Bharatiya Grahak Diwas 2021: All You Need to Know about National Consumer Rights Day

National Consumer Rights Day in India: Bharatiya Grahak Diwas is **observed in India annually on December 24** underlying the significance of the consumer movement in the country and the need to make the consumers aware of their rights and responsibilities. **National Consumer Rights Day 2021** revolves around the principle of 'Customer is King' and no one can be more powerful than the consumer who knows their rights.

National Consumers Day 2021 or Bharatiya Grahak Diwas 2021 will revolve around the theme of tackling plastic pollution. National Consumers Day 2021 signifies not only the rights and responsibilities of the consumers but it also condemns the malpractices taking place leading to the financial loss of the customer. Bharatiya Grahak Diwas highlights the practice of transparency with the customers to inform them about the authenticity and the quality of the products while purchasing. Read more to know about National Consumer Rights Day 2021, its history, and the relevance of consumer rights in India.

National Consumer Day is celebrated on 24th December every year. The day is observed to commemorate the enactment of Consumer Protection Act and to spread awareness about consumer rights.#JagoGrahakJago #AmritMahotsav #NationalConsumerDay #ConsumerDay2021 #ConsumerProtection pic.twitter.com/ezTkvGev3N

— Consumer Affairs (@jagograhakjago) December 24, 2021

National Consumer Rights Day 2021 Date

The National Consumer Rights Day 2021 in India is observed annually on **December 24**.

National Consumer Rights Day 2021 Theme

The theme of the National Consumer Rights Day 2021 or Bharatiya Grahak Diwas 2021 is '**Tackling Plastic Pollution'.**

Bharatiya Grahak Diwas 2021 History

The Government of India in 1986 passed the Consumer Protection Bill to curb the exploitation of

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the consumers which was further aggravated by the poor technology and inflation.

National Consumer Rights Day was marked on 24 December, the day on which the Consumer Protection Act came into existence in 1986. The act came with a purpose to aware customers about their rights, to protect their rights as well as ensure that the consumer is not subjected to market abuse.

Changes were further made in Consumer Protection Act in 1991 and 1993. Another amendment to make the Consumer Protection Act more effective was introduced in December 2002 which came into effect in March 2003.

National Consumer Rights Day 2021 Significance

National Consumer Rights Day 2021 or Bharatiya Grahak Diwas sheds light on the unfair trade practices such as hoarding, false gifts offers, fake advertisements which sometimes lead to tremendous financial loss to the customers.

However, Bharatiya Grahak Diwas also reminds of the fact that the Consumer Protection Act, via an effective complaint redressal forum, assures that there is an efficient settlement of the consumer disputes and the customer has been empowered to a great extent.

World Consumer Rights Day and National Consumer Rights Day

There is a confusion between the National Consumer Rights Day and World Consumer Rights Day. Both the days have similar purpose, however they are celebrated on different dates. **National Consumer Rights Day is observed on December 24 and World Consumer Rights Day is on March 15.**

National Consumer Rights Day 2021: 5 facts about Consumer Rights in India

1. The customer in India has a right to choose product as per their awareness and knowledge and no imposition should be applied.

2. Consumer in India has a right to be protected from all hazardous goods which can cause financial loss to them.

3. Customer has a right to seek redressal whenever their rights have been infringed.

4. The customer must be completed informed about the product, its quality and performance. A transparency should always be maintained.

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5. The consumer in India has a right to be heard in all the decision-making processes that are related to their interests.

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Morning Current Affairs: 24 December 2021

DRDO successfully flight tests High-Speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the indigenously developed High-Speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) Abhyas from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast, Odisha.

United States expands interview waivers for H-1B, L-1 visas

Amid the growing concern of Coronavirus surge, the US has decided to temporarily drop the in-person interview requirement for some work-visa categories- H-1B, L-1, and O-1. The applicants for H-1B, L-1, and O-1 visas applying from abroad will not be required to do an in-person interview at a consulate. It is the final step before a visa is issued.

Prime Minister Modi asks for high-level alertness at all levels amid Omicron concern

PM Modi during a high-level meeting with the officials on the current Omicron scare in the country has asked to take stock of public health measures for the management and containment of COVID-19. He also directed to strengthen the health infrastructure at the state level.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launches National Highway Projects in Uttar Pradesh

The Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of National Highway Projects in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh. The 240 km highway projects are worth Rs. 9,119 crores.

Contemporary messaging app ‘ASIGMA’ launched by Indian Army

A contemporary messaging app ‘ASIGMA’ has been launched by the Indian Army. ASIGMA is a new generation, state-of-the-art, web-based application that has been developed entirely in-house by a team of officers.

Night Curfew imposed by Madhya Pradesh Govt

The state government of Madhya Pradesh has imposed a night curfew till further orders. The decision has been taken in view of the rising cases of COVID-19 in the state. The night curfew in MP will remain in force from 11 PM to 5 AM.

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7 New Internet Exchange Nodes to be launched in Uttar Pradesh

Seven new Internet exchange nodes will be launched in Uttar Pradesh by Union IT Ministry on December 23, 2021. The nodes will boost internet connectivity and digital economy in the state.

The internet exchange nodes will be located at Lucknow, Agra, Meerut, Kanpur, Prayagraj, Gorakhpur and Varanasi.

Minister of State for Electronics, Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar and Minister of State, Law and Justice, SP Singh Baghel will jointly launch the internet exchange nodes physically from Agra.

Significance

Uttar Pradesh only had one internet exchange nodes operating at Gautam Buddha Nagar till date. The seven new internet exchange nodes will further strengthen the internet ecosystem in the state.

Internet Exchange Nodes- 5 Important Points to Note

1. Internet exchange nodes will help improve Internet performance and speed for consumers.

2. It will ensure better resilience, stability, efficiency and quality of Internet at a lower cost.

3. The internet exchange nodes will expand the digital market by paving way for more internet service providers.

4. These exchange points will cover all zones of UP. This means that users across the state will have the same internet capability of user experience as a user in Metro City.

5. The setting up of internet exchange is a part PM Modi's vision of creating a digital India, where all Indians will be connected with open and safe internet.

What are internet exchange nodes?

Internet exchange nodes or points are common grounds of IP networking that allow participant

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Internet service providers (ISPs) to exchange data destined for their respective networks.

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ACC U-19 Youth Asia Cup India Squad 2021: UAE hosts Youth Asia Cup; Check full Indian U-19 Asia Cup 2021 Squad

Under-19 Youth Asia Cup Squad 2021: The first match of ACC U-19 Youth Asia Cup 2021 took place between India-U19 and UAE-U19 and the second match on the same day was between SL U-19 and KUW-U19 on December 23, 2021. The All India Junior Selection Committee of BCCI announced a 20-member Indian squad for the **U-19 Youth Asia Cup Squad 2021** under the leadership of Yash Dhull. The Under-19 Youth Asia Cup will take place between December 23 to December 31, 2021, where the eight teams will contest including five full members and eight qualifiers. U-19 Youth Asia Cup 2021 will see Group A and Group B competing for the trophy.

U-19 Youth Asia Cup 2021: Group A and Group B Teams

Group A

S. No.	Teams
1	Afghanistan
2	India
3	Pakistan
4	United Arab Emirates

Group B

S. No.	Teams
1	Bangladesh
2	Nepal
3	Kuwait
4	Sri Lanka

Also Read: U-19 World Cup India Squad 2022: Check full Indian Under-19 World Cup Squad

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Under-19 Youth Asia Cup India Squad 2021

The list includes 5 standby players.

S. No.	U-19 India Squad for Youth Asia Cup 2021
1	Angkrish Raghuvanshi
2	Ansh Gosai
3	Garv Sangwan
4	Nishant Sindhu
5	Rishith Reddy
6	Siddharth Yadav
7	Kaushal Tambe
8	Manav Parakh
9	Pushpendra Singh Rathore
10	Raj Angad Bawa
11	Shashwat Dangwal
12	SK Rasheed
13	Uday Saharan
14	Yash Dhull (Captain)
15	Aaradhya Yadav (Wk)
16	Dinesh Bana (Wk)
17	Aayush Singh Thakur
18	Amrit Singh Upadhyay
19	Aneeshwar Gautam
20	Dhanush Gowda
21	Harnoor Singh

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22	**Rajvardhan Hangargekar**
23	**Ravi Kumar**
24	**Vasu Vats**
25	**Vicky Ostwal**

U-19 Youth Asia Cup: Full list of past winners

Year	Winners
1989	India
2003	India
2012	Pakistan and India (Match tied and the trophy was shared)
2013/14	India
2016	India
2017	Afghanistan
2018	India
2019	India

U-19 Youth Asia Cup

The ACC Under-19 Youth Asia Cup is organized by the Asian Cricket Council for the U-19 teams from its member nations. The first match was held in 1989 in Bangladesh in which India won the tournament.

The second edition of the U-19 Youth Asia Cup was played after the gap of 14 years in Pakistan where the Indian team retained the winning title from the very first match.

Youth Asia Cup, the second tier event, was held in 1997 in Hong Kong and is held every second year since then.

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IPL 2022 mega auction to be held in Bengaluru on February 12-13

The Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022 mega auction will be held from February 12-13 in Bengaluru, Karnataka, as per reports.

Though the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is yet to officially confirm the news, reports suggest that the IPL officials called each of the franchises on December 23rd to inform them regarding the dates.

Reports also suggest that new IPL team Ahmedabad will be picking up Shreya's Iyer, David Warner and Hardik Pandya ahead of the IPL 2022 mega auction.

The Lucknow IPL franchise is reportedly picking up KL Rahul as its captain and two other players -Rashid Khan and Ishan Kishan.

Royal Challengers are likely to pick up Manish Pandey from the auction pool as their new captain for the IPL 2022 season. While RCB has retained Virat Kohli, he had announced his decision to step down from the skipper position after 2021 IPL season.

Background

A total of 27 players were retained by their respective franchises and remaining were released in the IPL 2022 Retention event on November 30, 2021. All eight IPL franchises retained few of their star players and had to let go of others, including some key players under IPL 2022 Retention Policy.

Read more- Check Retained Player List of All Teams- CSK, RCB, MI, PBKS, KKR, SRH, RR, DC

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CRPF women commandos soon to be added in VIP security teams, to protect Z-plus personalities

In a first, a maiden contingent of **CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) women commandos who have been trained in VIP security will soon be deployed with Z-Plus personalities** such as Home Minister Amit Shah, senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as well as other high-risk facing personalities for multiple duties. CRPF women commandos will also be accompanying them during the upcoming polls in five states.

CRPF raised its first-ever contingent of 32 women commandos in its VIP Security wing. The women commandos will now be tasked to guard its protectees who are based in New Delhi and who receive the top Z+ Cover.

Training CRPF women commandos received for VIP Security wing

The Central Reserve Police Force women commandos just completed their 10-week training in rendering the VIP-security duties, body frisking, unarmed combat, and special weapons firing. The trained CRPF women commandos will now be deployed on the ground sometime in January 2022.

Who will receive CRPF women commandos for security?

The CRPF women commandos, initially, will be deployed with its Z+ category protectees who are based in Delhi such as the first family of Congress, Home Minister Amit Shah. In Congress, the leaders who will receive CRPF women commandos for security will be Sonia Gandhi, her children Rahul Gandhi, and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. The former Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh and his wife Gursharan Kaur are also on the list.

Reportedly, about a dozen other Z+ Category CRPF protectees will have this women commando contingent on a rotational basis.

Women commandos: What they will do to protect Z+ personalities?

1. The Women commandos will be deployed as part of the house protection team of these VIPs.

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2. They will also accompany these personalities, if required, during the upcoming assembly polls in five states of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Uttarakhand, and Goa.

3. The women commandos, when deployed for the house protection, will frisk the female visitors and they will be part of the overall security detail of the VIPs' house during tours.

4. The commandos will provide proximity security to the protectee, particularly in the case of Priyanka Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi.

5. Like their male counterparts, the women commandos will also carry ballistic protection, arms as well as other gadgets as required on the job.

Upcoming assembly polls in five states

The upcoming assembly polls in five prominent states are expected to be held in February-March 2022. A hectic political campaign is also expected in the run-up to the elections with party leaders, politicians, and ministers making tours.

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Bill to raise marriage age for women to 21 years sent to Standing committee

The **Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021** that seeks to raise the marriage age for women from 18 to 21 years was introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 21, 2021. The lower house voted to send the bill to a standing committee for further scrutiny after protests from opposition parties.

The bill seeks to raise the legal marriageable age of women from 18 years to 21 years and bring it at par with men. The opposition parties raised protest on the manner in which the bill was included in the legislative agenda at the last minute and urged that it should be sent to a standing committee.

The bill was introduced by Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani. The Minister while presenting the bill said, ***"The age of marriage should be uniformly applicable to all religions, caste, creed, over-riding any custom or law that seeks to discriminate against women."*** The Minister said that the bill also seeks to override all existing laws, including any custom, usage or practice governing the parties in relation to marriage.

The Union Minister herself urged the chair to refer the bill to a parliamentary panel for detailed scrutiny amid opposition protests. The Lok Sabha then voted to send the bill to the parliamentary panel. The panel will present its recommendations before the Parliament after examining the bill.

Prohibition of Child Marriage Amendment Bill, 2021: Know 5 key points

1. The bill seeks to increase the marriageable age of women to 21 years to secure gender equality in the marriage age of women and men. The bill states that "Women are often put in a disadvantageous position in regard to higher education, vocational instruction, attainment of psychological maturity and skill-sets. The increase in the marriage age of women is also expected to lower maternal and infant mortality rates and improve nutrition and sex ratio.

2. The bill includes a grace period of two years from the date it receives presidential assent.

3. The amendment bill also seeks to alter the definition of "child" to "mean a male or female who has not completed 21 years of age".

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4. It seeks to amend seven personal laws – Hindu Marriage Act, Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act and the Foreign Marriage Act, Indian Christian Marriage Act, Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act and the Special Marriage Act.

5. It bill also prohibits child marriage, irrespective of any law, custom, usage or practice governing the parties. The bill declares that the provisions of the Act shall have an overriding effect over every other law, custom, usage or practice governing the parties.

Why is the bill being criticised?

Asaduddin Owaisi of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen protested against the bill saying that an 18-year-old can vote but can't get married. He also questioned the centre's beti bachao programme.

Union Minister Smriti Irani countered the objections saying that the amendment will give equality to men and women in matrimony. She said that their research shows that 21 lakh child marriages had to be stopped and many underage girls were found pregnant.

Background

The Union Cabinet on December 15, 2021 approval the **bill proposing to raise women's legal marriage age from 18 to 21 years** after reviewing a proposal from a special committee headed by Jaya Jaitly. The committee had been set up in June 2020 to examine various matters pertaining to the age of motherhood, lowering Maternal Mortality rates, improving nutritional and other related issues. The committee submitted its recommendations after holding extensive consultations with experts and young adults, especially young women.

Read more: Cabinet approves proposal to raise legal marriage age of women from 18 to 21 years

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Kisan Diwas 2021 (Farmer's Day): Theme, History- All you Need to Know

National Farmers' Day 2021 India: Kisan Diwas or National Farmers' Day is observed every year in India on December 23 to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Chaudhary Charan Singh, a prominent farmers' leader and the fifth Prime Minister of India.** Chaudhary Charan Singh held the post of the PM between 1979 and 1980. Kisan Diwas 2021 is celebrated to honor the contributions of the Indian farmers as well as to glorify their significance in building the country.

National Farmers' Day 2021 also recognizes and honours the protests by the Indian farmers against the three Farm laws introduced by the Government of India. The consistent opposition ultimately led to the withdrawal of three farm laws. On Kisan Diwas 2021, know more about Chaudhary Charan Singh and the role he played in shaping the presence of Indian farmers on the national level.

, ...

... pic.twitter.com/cSfr6jR1l7

— Narendra Singh Tomar (@nstomar) December 23, 2021

Kisan Diwas 2021 date

Kisan Diwas or National Farmers' day 2021 is observed in India on December 23 to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Chaudhary Charan Singh**.

National Farmers' Day 2021: Why the day is observed on Charan Singh's birth anniversary?

National Farmers' Day 2021 was announced by the Government of India in 2001 in the recognition of Chaudhary Charan Singh's birth anniversary and his contribution towards the upliftment of the farmers and the development of agriculture in the country.

Chaudhary Charan Singh also played a crucial role in bringing some of the most remarkable reforms in the agrarian sector and has been titled by various historians of the country as the 'Champion of India's Peasants'.

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National Farmers' Day 2021: How Chaudhary Charan Singh became the 5th Prime Minister of India?

In 1977, when Janata Party won the Lok Sabha Elections, the MPs of the party authorized the Congress leaders Acharya Kriplani and Jayaprakash Narayan to choose the Prime Minister of India. Morraji Desai was chosen as the Prime Minister and he named Charan Singh as the Home Minister.

However, Chaudhary Charan Singh was asked to resign in June 1978 because of the disagreements with Morarji Desai but later he was brought back to the Cabinet as the Deputy PM in January 1979.

The truce did not last long and the government was reduced to a minority. **On July 28, 1979, Charan Singh was sworn in as the Prime Minister with outside support from Indira Gandhi's Congress (I) party.** Just he was about to confirm his majority in Lok Sabha, Indira Gandhi withdrew support and Charan Singh resigned just after 23 days in office in August 1979.

Charan Singh then advised the then President of India Neelam Sanjiva Reddy to dissolve Lok Sabha, however, the advise was challenged by Jagjivan Ram, Janata Party Leader and he sought to cobble support. But Lok Sabha was already dissolved and Charan Singh continued his role as a caretaker Prime Minister of India until January 1980.

Kisan Diwas 2021: 5 Facts about Chaudhary Charan Singh

1. Chaudhary Charan Singh was born in 1902 in Noorpur, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh in a middle-class peasant family. He earned his bachelors' in 1923 and post-graduation in 1925 and also was an active participant in India's freedom struggle.

2. Chaudhary Charan Singh's role behind the land reforms that changed the landscape of agriculture in the country is extremely significant.

3. Among his works, the notable one is Debt Redemption Bill, 1939, which brought relief to India's farmers who were indebted to the money lenders. Another bill designed by Charan Singh was the Land Holding Act 1960 and he also worked towards the Zamindari Abolition Act of 1950.

4. Chaudhary Charan Sinh had served as the fifth Prime Minister of India for a few months between 1979 and 1980.

5. On January 14, 1980, Charan Singh breathed his last. A memorial dedicated to Charan Singh was built at Raj Ghat. It is called 'Kisan Ghat'.

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Morning Current Affairs: 23 December 2021

PM Modi to inaugurate several projects in Varanasi today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of around 2 development projects in Varanasi on December 23, 2021. The projects will be constructed at a cost of around Rs 870 crores. These include laying the foundation stone of Banas Dairy Sankul at UP State Industrial Development Authority Food Park. The dairy will have the facility to process 5 lakh litres of milk every day.

US to provide additional 1 million Covid-19 vaccine doses to Afghanistan

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken informed on December 22, 2021 that the nation will work along with the international community to scale up assistance provided to Afghanistan. He added that the United States will provide an additional one million COVID vaccine doses to the country through the the COVAX facility.

Haryana lowers the minimum age for drinking to 21 years

Haryana Assembly on December 22, 2021 passed a bill that seeks to lower the minimum age of alcohol drinking from 25 years to 21 years. The Haryana Excise (Amendment) Bill will amend section 27 of the Haryana Excise (Amendment) Act 2021. Under the section, wholesale and retail sale of any country liquor was earlier granted to a man not below 25 years of age.

Haryana bans unvaccinated people in public places from January 1

Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij said on December 22, 2021 that people who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be allowed at public places after January 1, 2021. The Public places include hotels, banks, malls, government offices, buses and marriage halls. The Minister said that this is to protect ourselves from Omicron and the third wave of Covid.

Amazon files writ petition against ED

Amazon has filed a writ petition against the Enforcement Directorate (ED) of India in the Delhi High Court. The petition seeks clarification on an unnecessary summons to its employees and questioning in an alleged FEMA violation in the Future Group deal.

India supports UNSC resolution to allow humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan

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India supported a UNSC resolution earlier today that grants exemptions from sanctions for humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. India's Permanent Representative to the UN, TS Tirumurti said that the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan is dire.

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Surface-to-Surface missile ‘Pralay’: DRDO successfully tests missile with ability to change path midair

The Defence Research and Development Organisation successfully conducted the maiden flight test of indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile ‘Pralay’ on December 22, 2021, from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha. The Ministry of defence while announcing the test of surface-to-surface missile ‘Pralay’ said that the mission met all of its objectives. The advanced missile ‘Pralay’ has been developed in a way that it is able to defeat the interceptor missiles and also has the ability to change its path after covering certain range mid-air.

Today India successfully testfired the Pralay surface to surface ballistic missile which can strike targets from 150 to 500 kms: DRDO officials pic.twitter.com/d1rSsYCzg6

— ANI (@ANI) December 22, 2021

Test of Surface to surface missile ‘Pralay’

The mission of flight testing surface to surface missile Pralay was met with all its objectives as it followed the desired quasi ballistic trajectory and also reached the designated target with high degree accuracy, validating the guidance, control, and mission algorithms.

All the subsystems of the Pralay missile performed satisfactorily. All the sensors that were deployed near the impact point across the eastern coast were able to track the missile trajectory and capture all the events.

The missile has a range of 150-500 km and can be launched from a mobile launcher. The missile guidance system includes state of the art Navigation System and Integrated Avionics: DRDO officials

— ANI (@ANI) December 22, 2021

Pralay Missile: Important details

Pralay missile is powered by a solid-propellent rocket motor and many other technologies. The surface-to-surface missile has a range of 150-500 kilometers and also can be launched from a mobile launcher.

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The guidance system of the Pralay missile includes a state-of-the-art navigation system and integrated avionics. The new generation surface-to-surface missile is equipped with modern technologies. The induction of the missile will also give a necessary impetus to the Armed Forces.

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ICC Test Player Rankings 2021: Virat Kohli slips to 7th rank, Marnus Labuschagne new world no. 1- Check full player rankings

ICC Test Player Rankings 2021: Australia's Marnus Labuschagne has become the new world no.1 batsman in ICC Men's Test Batsmen Rankings 2021, pushing England's Joe Root to the second spot. This is the first time that Labuschagne has taken up the top rank. He was earlier ranked at second place.

Indian Test skipper Virat Kohli has slipped to the seventh spot in the latest ICC Men's Test Batsmen Rankings 2021. He was earlier ranked at the 6th spot. Currently, India's highest-ranked test batsman is Rohit Sharma, who is ranked 5th in the Test Batsmen Rankings.

Ravichandran Ashwin is the only Indian bowler in the top 10 of ICC Test Bowler Rankings 2021. He has consistently maintained his second rank. Jasprit Bumrah, who was previously ranked 10th in the ICC Test men's bowler rankings, has slipped to 12th rank. Australian Test skipper Pat Cummins leads the ICC Test Men's Bowling Rankings.

Among all-rounders, West Indies cricketer Jason Holder tops the ICC Test All-Rounder Rankings 2021, followed by India's Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja.

Check the full ICC Test Player Rankings 2021 List Below:

ICC Test Batsman Rankings			
Rank	**PLAYER**	**TEAM**	**RATING**
1	Marnus Labuschagne	AUS	912
2	Joe Root	ENG	897
3	Steve Smith	AUS	884
4	Kane Williamson	NZ	879

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5	Rohit Sharma	IND	797
6	David Warner	AUS	775
7	Virat Kohli	IND	756
8	Dimuth Karunaratne	SL	754
9	Babar Azam	PAK	750
10	Travis Head	AUS	728

Test Bowling Rankings

Rank	PLAYER	TEAM	RATING
1	Pat Cummins	AUS	904
2	Ravichandran Ashwin	IND	883
3	Shaheen Afridi	PAK	822
4	Tim Southee	NZ	814
5	Josh Hazlewood	AUS	810
6	Kagiso Rabada	SA	798
7	Neil Wagner	NZ	794
8	James Anderson	ENG	791
9	Mitchell Starc	AUS	768
10	Kyle Jamieson	NZ	764

ICC Test All-Rounder Rankings

POS	PLAYER	TEAM	RATING
1	Jason Holder	WI	382
2	Ravichandran Ashwin	IND	360
3	Ravindra Jadeja	IND	346
4	Shakib Al Hasan	BAN	338
5	Ben Stokes	ENG	313

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6	Mitchell Starc	AUS	307
7	Kyle Jamieson	NZ	303
8	Pat Cummins	AUS	244
9	Chris Woakes	ENG	235
10	Joe Root	ENG	225

Note: The rankings are as per the ICC Player Rankings update till December 22, 2021.

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PM Modi in Varanasi news: Prime Minister inaugurates multiple development projects in Varanasi; Check full list

PM Modi in Varanasi today: Prime Minister Modi in Varanasi on December 23, 2021, launched **multiple development projects worth over Rs. 850 crores.** PM Modi during his visit to Varanasi also launched the development initiatives which included inaugurating and laying the foundation stone of 22 projects in Varanasi, which is also PM's Lok Sabha Constituency. This was PM Modi's second visit to Varanasi in the last two weeks. He had inaugurated the ambitious Kashi Vishwanath Corridor during his previous visit to the city.

Varanasi | PM Narendra Modi inaugurates 22 developmental projects worth over Rs 870 crores in his parliamentary constituency

He also lays foundation stone for 'Banas Dairy Sankul', & distributes rural residential rights record 'Gharauni' pic.twitter.com/Rbh2zKFk6s

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 23, 2021

List of development projects in Varanasi launched by PM Modi

1. Laying the foundation stone of **'Banas Dairy Sankul'** at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park, Varanasi.

2. Laying the foundation stone for a biogas-based electricity generation plant for Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Plant in Ramnagar in Varanasi.

3. Launch of a portal and a logo which will be dedicated to the Conformity Assessment Scheme of milk products. The logo is developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards with the help of NDDB (National Dairy Development Board).

4. PM Modi during his visit to Varanasi will virtually distribute the rural residential rights record, 'Gharauni' under the Swamitva Scheme.

5. PM Modi will inaugurate multiple urban development projects. It will include the 6 projects of the redevelopment of Old Kashi wards, the beautification of two ponds, a parking and surface

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park at Beniabag, the provisioning of the advanced surveillance cameras at 720 locations in Varanasi under the Smart City Mission, and a sewage treatment plant in Ramna Village.

6. In Education, PM Modi will inaugurate the Inter-University Centre for Teachers Education and a teachers' education center at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies. He will also inaugurate the residential flats and staff quarters at BHU and ITI, Karaundi.

7. Under the health sector, Prime Minister will inaugurate a project comprising a nurses' hostel, doctors' hostel, and a shelter home at Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Cancer Center. A 50-bed integrated Ayush Hospital at Bhadrasi will also be inaugurated. A Foundation stone of the Government Homeopathic Medical College will also be laid.

8. Under **Road sector**, foundation stone will be laid for two 'four-to-six-lane' road-widening projects for Bhadohi and Prayagraj.

9. To facilitate tourism in the Holy City, the first phase of the tourism development project is related to Shri Guru Ravidas Ji Temple, Seer Govardhan, Varanasi.

10. Other development projects in Varanasi to be inaugurated by PM Modi will include the South Asia Regional Center, a speed breeding facility at the International Rice Research Institute, and an advocate building in Pindra Tehsil.

What is Banas Dairy Sankul?

Banas Dairy Sankul at Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority Food Park in Varanasi is spread across 30 acres of land. Banas Dairy Sankul will be built at a cost of about Rs. 475 crores and will also have the facility of processing 5 lakh liter of milk per day.

Today, foundation stone has been laid for 'Banas Dairy Sankul' as strengthening the dairy sector is one of the top priorities of our government: PM Narendra Modi in Varanasi
pic.twitter.com/8HyZnxtBSt

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 23, 2021

Banas Dairy Sankul will further strengthen the rural economy and will also help the farmers of the region by creating new employment opportunities for them.

PM Modi during his visit to Varanasi also transferred digitally around Rs. 35 crore bonus to the bank accounts of more than 1.7 lakh milk producers that are associated with Banas Dairy.

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Sony Zee merger: All you need to know

Sony Zee merger: Sony Pictures Networks India Private Limited (SPNI) and Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd. (ZEEL) announced on December 21, 2021 that they have signed definitive merger agreements to combine their linear networks, digital assets, production operations and program libraries.

Under the agreement, Zee Entertainment will be merged with Sony Pictures Networks to form a new combined company. The agreement comes after the conclusion of an exclusive negotiation period during which ZEEL and SPNI conducted mutual due diligence.

The newly merged entity will be publicly listed in India after the closing of the deal, which is subject to certain customary closing conditions, including regulatory, shareholder and third party approvals.

Sony Zee Merger: All you need to know

Under the merger deal, Sony Pictures Networks India will have a cash balance of USD 1.5 billion at closing. The current shareholders of SPNI and founders of ZEEL will infuse growth capital into the new merged entity.

The merged entity will aim to drive sharper content creation across platforms and strengthen its footprint in the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem.

Sony India will infuse a growth capital into ZEEL as a part of the merger so that it has approximately $1.575 billion at the time of closing. Based on the existing estimated equity values of ZEEL and Sony India, the indicative merger ratio would have been at 61.25 percent in favour of ZEEL.

Who will own how much stake?

Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc. (SPE) will own around 50. 86 percent stake in the new merged entity, while Zee founders will own a 3.99 percent stake. The remaining 45.15 percent stake will be held by public shareholders.

New merged company composition

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Managing Director & CEO- Punit Goenka

Puneet Goenka will continue to remain as the MD and CEO of the merged entity for a period of five years as part of the deal.

Board of Directors

The newly merged company will have a 9-member board and Sony will have the right to nominate the majority of directors. SPNI is expected to have five directors in the board, out of the total 9.

Few of them are mentioned below-

N.P. Singh- Current SPNI Managing Director and CEO (He will assume a current SPNI Managing Director and CEO)

Tony Vinciquerra- Chairman and CEO of Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE)

Ravi Ahuja - Chairman, Global Television Studios and SPE corporate development

Erik Moreno- Executive vice-president, corporate development and M&A, SPE.

Puneet Goenka will be the only ZEE executive to have a board seat.

Significance

Sony Zee merger is expected to achieve business synergies and it could be well-positioned to meet growing consumer demand for premium content across entertainment touchpoints and platforms.

The combined company will function under the stewardship of the Sony Group, a global leader in consumer technologies, gaming and entertainment, to be able to better compete with the world's largest streaming players.

What is SPNI?

Sony Pictures Networks India Private Limited (SPNI) is an indirect subsidiary of Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc. (SPE). Under the current agreement, SPE, will pay a non-compete fee to founders of ZEEL through a subsidiary, which will be used by them to infuse primary equity capital into SPNI, entitling ZEE founders to acquire shares of SPNI.

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Background

The Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) announced on September 22, 2021 that its board of directors have unanimously given in-principle approval for the merger between ZEEL and Sony Pictures Networks India (SPNI).

The companies had announced the merger on September 22, 2021 and there was a 90-day due diligence period for the merger deal, which came to a close on December 21, 2021.

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PT Thomas, Senior Congress Leader and MLA from Kerala, passes away

PT Thomas, the working President of Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) senior Congress MLA, passed away on December 22, 2021, at the age of 70. PT Thomas was a former MP who was battling Pancreatic Cancer and undergoing treatment at Christian Medical College, Vellore.

PT Thomas was known for his uncompromising stand on environmental protection. A three-time MLA, Thomas who rose through the ranks of the Congress Party had been politically active since his college days as a firebrand KSU leader at Maharaja's College, Ernakulam.

The **Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan**, in his condolence message on the demise of PT Thomas, said that Kerala has lost an outstanding parliamentarian. He was known for making his views inside and outside the assembly which were irrespective of his party's stance.

Kerala | PT Thomas, Congress MLA and Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) working president, passed away today

(Source: PT Thomas Facebook page) pic.twitter.com/fgdUd57bNj

— ANI (@ANI) December 22, 2021

Who was PT Thomas?

PT Thomas was a member of the Kerala Legislative Assembly who belonged to the Indian National Congress. Thomas, while he served as a Member of Parliament from Idukki (2009-2014), was also elected as an MLA from Thodupuzha (1991-96, and 2001-2006). PT Thomas was the sitting MLA from the Thrikkakkara constituency from 2016 until his death in 2021.

PT Thomas's tough stance on environment

The senior Congress leader's tough stance on the environment had bought him at the loggerheads with Congress when the party denied him a seat from Idukki Parliamentary Constituency back in 2014 despite him winning the elections from the seat in 2009 with a margin of 74,000 votes.

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Positions held by PT Thomas

Year	Positions held
1980	Member, Kerala Pradesh Congress Commit
1990	Member, Idukki District Council
2007	President, District Congress Committee
2009	Member, Committee on Personnel, Publi Grievances, Law and Justice Lok Sabha
2009-2014	MP, Lok Sabha, Idukki Lok Sabha Constitue
1991-1996, 2001-2006	MLA, Kerala Legislative Assembly, Thodupu assembly constituency
2016-Dec 2021	MLA, Kerala Legislative Assembly, Thrikkak assembly constituency

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Asian Champions Trophy 2021: India beat Pakistan 4-3 to win bronze medal

Asian Champions Trophy 2021: Indian men's hockey team beat Pakistan to win the bronze medal at the Asian Champions Trophy on December 22, 2021. The neck-to-neck contest ended with Manpreet Singh-led India beating arch-rivals 4-3 to secure a third place in the tournament.

Congratulations to the #MenInBlue for clinching the 3rd place in the Hero Men’s Asian Champions Trophy Dhaka 2021.

Well played, team .#IndiaKaGame #HeroACT2021 pic.twitter.com/j7UDwYoins

— Hockey India (@TheHockeyIndia) December 22, 2021

The Defending Champions had earlier suffered a shocking defeat in their semifinal match against Japan on December 21st. Pakistan had also lost 6-5 against South Korea in the other seminal in a thrilling match.

India lost 3-5 to Japan despite being the favourites to win the match after having beaten Japan 6-0 in their last round match and having topped the round-robin stage with an unbeaten record.

India and Japan's head-to-head record also shows a clear dominance of India with the team winning 16 matches of their total 18 encounters and Japan winning one and one ending in a draw. Hence, Japan's strong comeback was a complete shocker for the Manpreet Singh-led side.

Japan will now take on South Korea in the finals of the Asian Champions Trophy,

Asian Champions Trophy 2021 Hockey Bronze Medal Match: India vs Pakistan Highlights

• India took the lead in the opening stage of the game with Harmanpreet Singh hitting the first goal but Pakistan bounced back soon ending the first half at level.

• Pakistan took a one-goal advantage over India in the beginning of second half with Abdul Rana scoring the second goal.

• India's Varun Kumar scored the equaliser for India at the stroke of the fourth quarter and brought

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the score to 2-2.

• India soon edged past Pakistan and gained two goal momentum with Akashdeep Singh scoring the fourth and final goal.

• Pakistan tried hard to bounce back with a third goal by Ahmed Nadeem but failed to equalise or take lead despite having a two-man advantage towards the end of the match with two Indian players Sumit and Hardik Singh sitting out after getting yellow cards.

• India and Pakistan had faced each other earlier in the tournament in the round-robin stage when India had registered a 3-1 win.

Goal-strikers from India- Harmanpreet Singh, Sumit, Varun Kumar, Akashdeep Singh

Goal-strikers from Pakistan- Arfraz, Abdul Rana, Ahmed Nadeem

Man of the Match- Manpreet Singh

India vs Pakistan hockey head-to-head

Tournament	Matches	Wins by India	Wins by Pakistan	Draw
Summer Olympics	7	2	4	1
World Cup	5	3	2	0
Champions Trophy	19	7	12	0
Asian Games	15	4	8	3
Asia Cup	8	3	5	0
Asian Hockey Champions Trophy	9	6	2	2
Commonwealth Games	3	1	1	1
FIH Hockey World League	3	2	0	1
Afro-Asian Games	2	2	0	0

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Morning Current Affairs: 22 December 2021

PV Sindhu appointed BWF's Athletes Commission Member

PV Sindhu has been appointed as a member of the Badminton World Federation Athletes' Commission 2021-2025 along with five other players. The BWF announced the names of six new members of the commission on December 21, 2021. They include PV Sindhu, Zheng Si Wei (China), Iris Wang (USA), Robin Tabeling (NED), Kim Soyeong (KOR) and Greysia Polii (INA).

Asian Champions Trophy 2021: India to face Pakistan for third-place match

The Indian Men's hockey team will face Pakistan for the third-place play-off in the Asian Champions Trophy in Dhaka. This came after the Indian team lost 3-5 against Japan in the semi-finals. Japan will face South Korea in the final. India is the defending champion of the trophy, having won jointly in 2018 and individually in 2016.

Delhi to get first Teachers University

Delhi will get its first-ever Teachers University, as Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi Cabinet approved a proposal to establish the university on December 21, 2021. The Chief Minister said that the University will be dedicated to preparing excellent quality Teachers across different school stages.

Omicron 3 times more transmissible than Delta

Omicron COVID-19 variant is at least three times more transmissible than Delta variant based on current scientific evidence, warned the Union Health Ministry on December 21, 2021. The Ministry alerted the states and union territories and added that greater data analysis is required at the local and district level.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman to hold pre-budget consultations

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is expected to hold pre-budget consultations with prominent economists today, December 22, 2021. The consultations will be held related to the upcoming General Budget. The meetings will be held virtually.

Tripura to hire retired civil servants to complete pending departmental proceedings

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Tripura Cabinet on December 21, 2021 approved the proposal to engage retired civil servants and judicial officers to complete the departmental proceedings that have been pending for years. The decision was taken to reduce number of pending cases.

RSS raises agenda to rename Hyderabad as Bhagyanagar

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has decided to again raise the agenda of renaming Hyderabad as Bhagyanagar. The RSS has called a three-day coordination meeting in January's first week with the BJP to review the working of the affiliated organisations for upcoming assembly elections scheduled to take place in five states next year.

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National Mathematics Day 2021: Know Theme, Interesting Facts about Srinivasa Ramanujan

National Mathematics Day 2021: India observes National Mathematics Day every year on December 22 to celebrate the life and work of Srinivasa Ramanujan, a great mathematician who was born on this day in 1887. The National Mathematics Day in India was announced in 2012 by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan.

National Mathematics Day 2021 provides us an opportunity to admire the work of Srinivasa Ramanujan who even though had no formal training in pure mathematics, but his substantial contributions to the field of maths are still acknowledged. It also includes providing solutions to the problems that were then considered unsolvable. On National Mathematics Day 2021, read more about the Indian Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan and some of the interesting facts that make him one of the brilliant mathematicians that the world has ever seen.

Remembering "the man who knew infinity", one of the most renowned mathematician, Srinivasa Ramanujan, on his birth anniversary.

A natural genius and an inspiration for mathematicians across the world, he is remembered for his vast contributions in the field of number theory. pic.twitter.com/gAAObIfPNa

— Dharmendra Pradhan (@dpradhanbjp) December 22, 2021

National Mathematics Day 2021 Date

The **National Mathematics Day in India is observed annually on December 22** to mark the birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan and to celebrate his work in pure mathematics.

Who was Srinivasa Ramanujan?

The National Mathematics Day in India is celebrated to acknowledge the work of Srinivasa Ramanujan who with his brilliance earned honour in the field which was once only for western mathematicians.

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Srinivasa Ramanujan was born on December 22, 1887, in a Tamil Brahmin family in the city of Erode (now in Tamil Nadu). **A highly respected mathematician, he was known as 'The Man who knew infinity' because of his infinite love and passion as well as contributions made to Mathematics.**

Ramanujan, a mathematical genius, was able to solve algebra and trigonometric problems that his fellow mates found difficult to crack. At the age of 17, he won a scholarship to study at Kumbakonam's Government Arts College, however, Srinivasa Ramanujan failed in some of the subjects because of his focus only on Mathematics and lost the scholarship.

While tutoring the students and also contributing to the journal of Indian Mathematical Society, the math wizard continued his work.

At the age of 26, he was invited to Cambridge University for his statements on the 120 mathematics theorems on the continued fractions, infinite series, number theory, and improper integrals.

Srinivasa Ramanujan, having compiled more than 3,000 mathematical equations and results, the math wizard returned to the country in 1919 and passed away due to Tuberculosis in 1920.

Srinivasa Ramanujan: First Indian to be elected as a fellow at Trinity College

Srinivasa Ramanujan earned respect with his continued contributions to the field. He also went on to become the first Indian to be elected a fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge University.

National Mathematics Day 2021 Significance

National Mathematics Day is observed in India to honour the mathematical assertions made by Srinivasa Ramanujan in the field. His work and research opened new arenas of mathematical research.

The Royal Society in 2019 also remembered the contributions made by Srinivasa Ramanujan by tweeting a special message for him. The path-breaking work done by Ramanujan will also remain an inspiration for future generations in the field of Maths.

National Mathematics Day 2021: 5 Facts about Srinivasa Ramanujan

1. Srinivasa Ramanujan who was born in 1887, studied at the Government College in Kumbakonam in 1903. Ramanujan failed in the exams due to his negligence to the non-

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mathematical subjects.

2. Ramanujan started working as a clerk in Madras Port Trust where the mathematical genius was recognized by a colleague who was also a mathematician. Srinivasa Ramanujan was further referred by him to Professor GH Hardy of Trinity College, Cambridge University.

3. In 1917, Ramanujan was elected to the London Mathematical Society and in 1918 he was elected as a fellow to the prestigious Royal Society for the research done by him on Elliptic Functions and the theory of numbers.

4. In October 1917, Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan became the first Indian to be elected a fellow of Trinity College.

5. Srinivasa Ramanujan's work in the field of maths was such that he discovered his own theorems and also independently compiled 3900 results.

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Indian Army inducts first set of next-gen Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle

Indian Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane flagged off and inducted the first set of indigenously developed next-generation **Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle** at Bombay Engineering Group (BEG) on December 21, 2021.

The Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle will enhance the existing engineer reconnaissance capabilities of the Indian Army. As per army officials, it would be a major game-changer in support of mechanised operations in future conflicts.

The Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicles have been fully designed and developed within India. These next-generation vehicles can match the speed of the tanks and help in conducting mechanised operations on the Western Front, stated Lt General Harpal Singh.

Induction of these indigenous equipment (AERVs) will give a boost to operations especially on the western front and an imp step towards the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' in manufacturing defence equipment: Army chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane pic.twitter.com/Mwx0UNLdCE

— ANI (@ANI) December 21, 2021

Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle (AERV)- Top 7 Facts You Need to Know!

1. The Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle (AERV) is an Indian military engineering vehicle.It has been jointly developed by Vehicle Research and Development Establishment, Ahmednagar and Pune's Research and Development Establishment and manufactured by Ordnance Factory Medak.

2. The Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle is a vehicle that has been designed to meet the tactical and combat requirements of Military Engineers.

3. The vehicle helps combat engineers carry out terrestrial and underwater surveys in hostile terrains.

4. The Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle also provides Combat Engineering Support for operations in deserts, plains and riverine terrains.

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5. The combat engineers use the vehicle to carry out surveys to facilitate offensive and defensive operations and facilitate the construction of assault bridges across water obstacles.

6. The vehicle is not fitted with a gun but it has specialised equipment, including an echo-sounder, GPS, laser range finder and a water current meter.

7. The Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle is currently in service with the Corps of Engineers in the Indian Army.

Significance

The Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicle will enhance the existing engineer reconnaissance capabilities of the combat engineers within the Indian Army.

Army chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane said that induction of this indigenous equipment (AERVs) will give a boost to operations especially on the western front and an imp step towards the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' in manufacturing defence equipment.

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20 YouTube Channels Banned along with 2 Websites by Govt: Check the List here

YouTube ban 2021: The Government of India announced on December 21, 2021, that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has ordered the blocking of 20 YouTube channels as well as 2 websites for spreading anti-India propaganda and fake news content on the internet. The decision has been taken with closely coordinated efforts between the Intelligence agencies and the Information and Broadcasting Ministry.

In a closely coordinated effort between intelligence agencies and Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, the Ministry on Monday ordered the blocking of 20 channels on YouTube and 2 websites spreading anti-India propaganda and fake news on the internet: Govt of India pic.twitter.com/B1vVR0QI03

— ANI (@ANI) December 21, 2021

On blocking 20 YouTube Channels and 2 websites, the Indian Government further added that the blocked channels and websites belong to a coordinated disinformation network operating from Pakistan. They are responsible for spreading fake news content about various sensitive subjects related to India.

Why government has banned 20 YouTube channels?

The banned YouTube channels were used to post the divisive content in a coordinated manner on topics such as the Indian Army, Kashmir, Minority communities in India, CDS General Bipin Rawat, Ram Mandir, among others. They also posted content on the issues such as farmers' protests and CAA protests. The blocked YouTube channels and websites tried to incite the minorities in the country against the government.

The channels were used to post divisive content in a coordinated manner on topics like Kashmir, Indian Army, minority communities in India, Ram Mandir, CDS General Bipin Rawat, etc: Govt of India

— ANI (@ANI) December 21, 2021

The Government also added that the move to ban 20 YouTube Channels has been done amid the fear that these channels can be used to post content that will undermine the democratic process of the upcoming polls in five states in the country.

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List of 20 YouTube channels banned in India

S. No.	Banned YouTube Channels in India
1.	The Punch Line
2.	International Web News
3.	Khalsa TV
4.	The Naked Truth
5.	News24
6.	48 News
7.	Fictional
8.	Historical Facts
9.	Punjab Viral
10.	Naya Pakistan Global
11.	Cover Story
12.	Junaid Haleem Official
13.	Go Global
14.	Tayyab Hanif
15.	Zain Ali Official
16.	Mohsin Rajput Official
17.	Kaneez Fatima
18.	Sadaf Durrani
19.	Mian Imran Ahmad
20.	Najam UI Hassan Bajwa

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World Economic Forum annual meeting 2022 postponed

The World Economic Forum annual meeting 2022 will be postponed due to the continued uncertainty over the Omicron outbreak. The WEF meeting was scheduled to take place in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland between January 17-21, 2022

The WEF annual meeting is now likely to take place during early summer, World Economic Forum informed. The participants will now instead join a headline series of State of the World sessions that will bring together global leaders online to focus on shaping solutions to the world's most pressing challenges.

The World Economic Forum said in a statement that the current pandemic conditions make it extremely difficult to deliver a global in-person meeting. The body said that preparations have been guided by expert advice and have benefited from the close collaboration of the Swiss government at all levels.

World Economic Forum (WEF) will defer its Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland, in the light of continued uncertainty over #Omicron outbreak. The Meeting was scheduled to take place in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland between 17-21 Jan, 2022. It's now planned for early summer: WEF pic.twitter.com/ZaFbv2hRXh

— ANI (@ANI) December 20, 2021

Why has the WEF Annual meeting 2022 been deferred?

Though the World Economic Forum annual meeting has stringent health protocols, the high transmissibility of the new Covid-19 variant Omicron and its impact on travel and mobility have made deferral necessary, as per WEF.

WEF has also taken the decision to take into consideration the health and safety of everyone involved in physical meetings including participants, collaborators and the host community.

Impact

The postponement of the World Economic Forum annual meeting 2022 will not prevent progress through the continued digital convening of leaders from business, government and civil society,

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clarified WEF Founder and Executive Chairman Professor Klaus Schwab.

World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum (WEF)is an international non-governmental organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland that meets every year to deliberate upon global economic health. The WEF is an annual gathering of political leaders from across the world. The WEF is an independent and impartial international organisation

World Economic Forum Mission

The World Economic Forum aims to engage leading political, business and cultural figures to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

World Economic Forum 2021

The World Economic Forum 2021 was moved from Davos in Switzerland to Singapore due to COVID-19 concerns. This was the second time since its inception in 1971 that the event was hosted outside Switzerland and held in Asia for the first time. The WEF annual meeting is usually held every year in January at Davos, Switzerland.

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AFSPA in Nagaland: Govt extends Armed Forces Special Powers Act in Nagaland for 6 more months

AFSPA in Nagaland: The Central Government on December 30, 2021, issued a notification in which it **declared an entire state of Nagaland as a 'disturbed area' and extended the AFSPA, 1958 in the state for the period of another six months.** Govt extending the Armed Forces act **till June 30, 2022**, stated that Nagaland's 'disturbed and dangerous' situation has necessitated the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power. The Indian Army is also currently conducting a court of inquiry into an ambush that went wrong in Nagaland on December 4, 2021.

Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 (AFSPA) extended in Nagaland for six more months with effect from today. pic.twitter.com/Vkw3fPGeJK

— ANI (@ANI) December 30, 2021

The extension of AFSPA in Nagaland has come days after the Home Ministry **instituted a high-level committee chaired by a Secretary-level officer for examining the possibility of AFSPA repeal in Nagaland.** The committee was also scheduled to submit its report within 45 days. The decision came three weeks after 6 innocent civilians on December 4, 2021, in the state were killed in an Army ambush and eight more in the violence that was triggered in Mon District, Nagaland.

The withdrawal of the Disturbed area and AFSPA from Nagaland was to be based on the recommendations of the committee after a report is submitted by it within 45 days.

The Nagaland Assembly on December 20, 2021, had unanimously **passed a resolution demanding the repeal of AFSPA in Nagaland.**

Nagaland adopted resolution to repeal AFSPA

The resolution for the removal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act was adopted during a special session that was held in aftermath of the botched security ambush that claimed the lives of 14 civilians earlier in December 2021. Massive protests have been held in the Capital, Kohima, with the Nagaland cabinet also recommending the repeal of the law.

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The resolution to repeal AFSPA in Nagaland was adopted by a voice vote. Chief Minister of Nagaland Neiphiu Rio, while moving the resolution, said that **for the last 20 years Nagaland government has been recommending that AFSPA must be removed and the state must be taken off from the list of the 'disturbed areas'.**

AFSPA in Nagaland: Govt demands repeal of the law

Nagaland Government has declared on many occasions clearly that the state must be free from the act that gives soldiers sweeping powers to arrest without warrants or even shoot to kill in certain situations.

In view of the improved situation in the Northeast state, the Nagaland government has been consistently taking a stand that the state must not be declared a 'disturbed area' and the entire Naga Society has been calling to repeal AFSPA.

The Chief Minister while informing about the State govt's clear stand on the law further added that the declaration of a state or any other area as the 'disturbed area' under AFSPA is made by the Central Government generally for a period of 6 months only at a time.

Nonetheless, as per CM, the objections of the state government on continued imposition of AFSPA in Nagaland have been ignored by the Central Government and the declaration of the act in the state is renewed 'again and again'.

Repeal AFSPA: What led to the adoption of resolution by Nagaland govt?

The resolution against the Armed Forces Special Act has been adopted in the aftermath of the killing of 14 civilians by the security forces. It included 6 in a botched anti-terrorist operation and 8 in the subsequent incidents in the Mon district of Nagaland on December 4 and 5, 2021.

The passed resolution to repeal AFSPA in Nagaland condemned the massacre that took place in the Oting-Tiru Village area on December 4 which involved the indiscriminate firing by 21 para special forces of the Indian Army in which 13 innocent civilians were killed.

Nagaland Government also demanded an apology from the appropriate authority as well as an assurance that justice will be delivered to those who lost their lives in a botched military operation in Nagaland.

History of AFSPA in Nagaland

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The Armed Forces Special Powers Act is a 1958 act of the Indian Parliament that grant special powers to the Indian armed forces to maintain public order in disturbed areas.

One such act which was passed on September 11, 1958, was applicable to the Naga Hills, then the part of Assam.

The territorial scope of the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958, further expanded to seven states of the Northeast including Nagaland. It was enacted in the region by the Indian Parliament to give the Indian Security Forces special powers to deal with the Naga armed insurgency.

Naga armed insurgency is an ethnic conflict in Nagaland. It is an ongoing conflict that is fought between the ethnic Nagas and the governments of India and Myanmar. The ethnic group of Nagaland demands independent 'greater Nagaland'.

AFSPA states in India 2020

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act is in force in the following Indian States:

1. Assam
2. Nagaland
3. Manipur
4. Arunachal Pradesh
5. Jammu and Kashmir

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India vs South Africa Test, ODI series to be played without spectators

India vs South Africa Test series: India vs South Africa Test and ODI series will be played behind closed doors, with no spectators. The decision was informed by Cricket South Africa (CSA) on December 20, 2021.

CSA said in an official statement that it along with the BCCI took a joint decision "to protect the players and the tour by NOT making tickets available for the India vs Proteas offerings."

The cricket body informed that the decision was taken to avoid any breaches that could compromise the tour from a Covid-risk perspective and to also maintain a hazard-free bubble environment amid increasing COVID cases around the world and the fourth wave locally.

This decision was taken in order to avoid any breaches that could compromise the tour from a Covid-risk perspective and to also maintain a hazard-free bubble environment: Cricket South Africa

— ANI (@ANI) December 20, 2021

Read More: **KL Rahul appointed vice-captain for India's test series against South Africa**

CSA is exploring other alternative public viewing activations to ensure that a limited number of fans can enjoy the summer cricket atmosphere with other fans via activation sites. This will be done while observing the strictest safety measures and exercising duty of care.

The cricket body is expected to announce the available alternative public viewing activations as soon as the relevant approvals have been secured.

CSA Acting CEO Pholetsi Moseki said, ***"we acknowledge the interest expressed by the fans and other stakeholders on being able to return to stadiums and want to assure all cricket fans that this decision was not taken lightly, but was instead taken in the best interest of the game and in the interest of the health and safety of all patrons."***

India vs South Africa 2021 Series

Team India is currently in South Africa for a three-match test series and ODI series. The four-

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match T20 series has been postponed and will be played on a later date.

The first India vs South Africa test will take place on Boxing Day on December 26, 2021 at Centurion.

Read More: **India to tour South Africa for 3 Tests and 3 ODIs, T20Is to be played later: BCCI Secretary**

India vs South Africa Test Schedule

First India vs South Africa test- December 17-21

Second India vs South Africa test- December 26-30

Third India vs South Africa test- January 3-7

India vs South Africa ODI Schedule

First India vs South Africa ODI- January 11th

Second India vs South Africa ODI- January 14th

Third India vs South Africa ODI- January 16th

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Pradeep Kumar Rawat appointed as Indian ambassador to China

Indian ambassador to China 2021: Diplomat **Pradeep Kumar Rawat has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to China.** Rawat (Indian Foreign Services, 1990) is presently the Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of the Netherlands and is expected to take up his new assignment shortly. Pradeep Rawat has been serving as the envoy to the Netherlands since January 2021.

Pradeep Kumar Rawat will replace Vikram Misri as India's next ambassador to China. Misri completed a close to three-year term earlier in December 2021. Pradeep Rawat as India's next envoy in China will take charge amid the worst phase in relations between the two nations ever since the normalization of ties 1980s.

Pradeep Kumar Rawat, presently Ambassador of India to Netherlands has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to China. He is expected to take up the assignment shortly: Ministry of External Affairs

— ANI (@ANI) December 20, 2021

Who is Pradeep Kumar Rawat?

Indian ambassador to China Pradeep Kumar Rawat has spent the majority of his diplomatic career handling Beijing from New Delhi. From 2014 to 2017, Pradeep Rawat was the Joint Secretary (East Asia). From 2017 to 2020, Rawat was posted as the Indian Ambassador to Indonesia.

Pradeep Rawat joined the Foreign Services in 1990. He chose Mandarin as his foreign language.

Indian Ambassador to China: Pradeep Rawat familiar with border tensions

The new Indian Ambassador to China, Pradeep Kumar Rawat is no stranger to the border tensions as he has dealt with China in various capacities including as one of the most senior-most officials handling China policy from 2014 to 2017.

Pradeep Rawat first served in Hong Kong and then in Beijing between the year 1992 to 1997. In 2003, Rawat had his second-year term in Beijing, first as Counsellor and then as the Deputy Chief

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of Mission.

It was a phase that coincided with two breakthroughs on the boundary question with an appointment of Special Representatives in 2003 and an agreement in 2005.

India-China tension and border talks

The crisis between India and China was triggered along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) because of the transgressions by the Chinese Military starting in April 2020. The conflict between India and China is still unresolved and thousands of troops of both sides are still deployed in the areas.

The border talks between the two nations haven't made discernible progress. The past understandings on the boundary have now been seen in doubt after more than an 18-month long border crisis.

The current Indian Ambassador to China Mr. Misri had also called on the Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi on December 6, 2021, before he returned to New Delhi.

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IAF deploys first S-400 air defence system in Punjab

The Indian Air Force has deployed the first S-400 Triumf air defence missile system in the Punjab sector near Pakistan border. The deployment is to take care of any aerial threat from either Pakistan or China.

The deployment of the air defence system is expected to provide a major boost to India's air defence capabilities. The parts of the Russian missile system had started reaching India earlier this month. The unit is expected to be operationalized in the next few weeks.

India had signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with Russia in October 2018 to procure the S-400 defence system in a deal worth around Rs 35000 crores. Under the deal, five squadrons would be provided to India for tacking air threats from up to 400 km.

Read more: India receives S-400 Triumf air defence system from Russia, Know key details

First S-400 Triumf air defence system deployment

The deliveries related to the first squadron are expected to be completed by the end of this year. The equipment will be brought to India from Russia through both sea and air routes.

After the deployment of the first squadron, the Indian Air Force will focus on India's Eastern borders and provide resources for training of personnel within the country to handle the air defence system.
The Indian Air Force officers and personnel have received training on the system in Russia.

What is S-400 Triumf air defence system?

The S-400 Triumf is a mobile, surface-to-air missile (SAM) system that was developed by Russia's Almaz Central Design Bureau for Marine Engineering in 1990s as an upgrade to the S-300 family. The air defence system was brought into service in April 2007.

China was the first foreign buyer of the Russian air defence system in 2014. Later, several countries including India, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Belarus and Serbia have acquired or expressed interest in the system since.

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The S-400 air defence system has been described as **"one of the best air-defence systems currently made"** and among the most advanced systems.

Why is it important for India?

The deployment of the **S-400 Triumf air defence system will provide a major boost to Indian capabilities to shoot down any enemy fighter aircraft and cruise missiles at a long-range.**

The procurement of the system will provide an edge to India in the south Asian skies. The S-400 missile defence system is equipped with four different missiles that can engage with enemy aircraft, ballistic missiles and AWACS planes at a long range of 400-km, 250-km, medium range of 120-km and short range of 40-km.

Many experts have hailed the acquisition as a game-changer for Indian Air Force.

Source: ANI

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Morning Current Affairs: 21 December 2021

India deploys first S-400 air defence system in Punjab sector

Indian Air Force (IAF) is deploying the first squadron of the S-400 air defence missile system in the Punjab sector. The squadron has been deployed to take care of aerial threats from both China and Pakistan. The parts of the Russian missile system had started reaching India earlier this month. India had signed a deal worth around Rs 35,000 crore with Russia for the procurement of the defence system and five squadrons would be provided to India for tackling air threats from up to 400 km.

Read more here

Rafael Nadal tests positive for COVID-19

Former world number one, Rafael Nadal has tested positive for COVID-19. He tested positive upon his arrival in Spain after participating in the World Tennis Championship in Abu Dhabi. The 21-time Grand Slam champion himself tweeted confirming the news. He informed that he tested positive in the PCR test conducted when he reached Spain. He said that he had passed controls every two days in Kuwait and Abu Dhabi. The tennis star is scheduled to feature at ATP 250 in Melbourne, which will begin on January 4.

Rajya Sabha passes Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2021

The Rajya Sabha on December 20, 2021 passed the 'Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2021' to rectify a drafting "anomaly" created by a 2014 amendment to the parent legislation. The bill was passed by a voice vote. The opposition parties had not taken part in the debate. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the NDPS (Amendment) Bill, 2021 seeks amendment to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.The drafting "anomaly" reportedly crept in when the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act was amended in 2014 to allow better medical access to narcotic drugs and removing state barriers in transporting and licensing of essential narcotic drugs.

India vs South Africa ODI, Test series to be played without spectators

Cricket South Africa (CSA) informed on December 20, 2021 that CSA along with the BCCI have taken a joint decision to protect the players by not allowing spectators in the stands owing to

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increasing COVID-19 cases around the world and the fourth wave locally. The two cricket boards have decided to not make tickets available for India vs South Africa series. India will be playing three tests and three ODIs. The first test will be boxing day test, which will be played in Centurion starting from December 26.

Read more here

PM Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin hold telephone conversation

Russian President Vladimir Putin held a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 20, 2021. Both leaders expressed mutual intent for further development of a special and privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India. Putin thanked PM Modi for the hospitality extended to the Russian delegation during the high-level visit to New Delhi on December 6. The two leaders also discussed practical aspects of the implementation of the agreements signed during the talks.

Bharat Biotech seeks DGCI approval for clinical trials of its intranasal COVID-19 booster dose

Bharat Biotech has submitted an application seeking approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for the phase 3 clinical trial of its intranasal COVID-19 booster dose named 'BBV154'. An intranasal vaccine as will be easier to administer as a booster dose. The intranasal vaccines have the potential to prevent against transmission."

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Gabriel Boric, former student activist, elected as Chile's youngest president

Gabriel Boric, leftist lawmaker and former student activist has won Chile's Presidential Elections 2021. He beat right-wing candidate Jose Antonio Kast in Chile's presidential runoff with 56 percent votes on December 19, 2021, becoming Chile's youngest President ever.

The 35-year-old had come to the limelight in 2011 when he had led the student protests demanding better education. During his presidential campaign, he had promised to address economic inequality, boost green investment and raise taxes on the rich.

He had also promised to bring about a welfare state so that everyone has the same rights no matter how much money they have in their wallet.

Boric had just met the required minimum age to run in the presidential race. It comes seven years after he was first elected as a member of Chile's Chamber of Deputies.

Significance

Chile has one of the world's biggest income gaps, as about one percent of the country's population owns 25 percent of the total wealth.

Most of the citizens in the country are heavily indebted and have to pay wholly or at least partly for education and healthcare. Pensions are also made up of private savings.

Boric had said during the Presidential campaign, ***"If Chile was the cradle of neoliberalism in Latin America, it will also be its grave."*** Chile's neoliberal economic model was widely seen as sidelining the poor and working classes.

Mind-blowing scenes in Santiago, where hundreds of thousands have flocked onto the streets to celebrate Gabriel Boric's victory pic.twitter.com/uirvG1mVBg

— John Bartlett (@jwbartlett92) December 20, 2021

Boric had made the following promises during his campaign trail-

-To reduce work week from 45 to 40 hours

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-To advance "green development"

-To create 500,000 jobs for women

-To reform Chile's pension and healthcare systems to promote access for the poor.

About Gabriel Boric

•Gabriel Boric was born in Chile's far south in Punta Arenas. He studied law but never sat for the bar exam. He is unmarried.

•He will be by far Chile's most liberal leader after late President Salvador Allende, whose death in 1973 military coup had resulted in a brutal 17-year dictatorship.

•Boric has promised to produce real change in society by eliminating existing injustices.

•The former student leader had backed the 2019 anti-government revolt, which had prompted a referendum that resulted in a process to rewrite Chile's pro-business, dictatorship-era constitution.

•He had also led student protests to demand free schooling in 2011.

World's Youngest Presidents & Leaders		
Country	**Name**	**Age**
France	Emmanuel Macron	43 years
Costa Rica	Carlos Alvarado	41 years
Supreme Leader of North Korea	Kim Jong Un	37
Qatar Emir	Tamid bin Hamad Al Thani	41 years
King of Bhutan	Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck	41 years

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Captain Regent of San Marino	Giacomo Simoncini	27 years
President of El Salvador	Nayib Bukele	40 years

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PM Modi in Prayagraj: Prime Minister transfers Rs. 1,000 crores in SHGs bank accounts- Highlights

PM Modi visit Prayagraj latest news: Prime Minister Modi arrived in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh on December 21, 2021, **to participate in a 'one-of-its-kind programme' that will be attended by over 2 lakh women.** The event in a poll-bound state took place at around 1 PM. The programme in Prayagraj was held as per the Prime Minister's vision of empowering women, particularly at the grassroots level, by providing them with the necessary skills, resources, and incentives. With the upcoming UP elections, this will be another significant visit of PM Modi to the state. Before Prayagraj, he had also visited Varanasi to inaugurate the ambitious Kashi Vishwanath Corridor Project.

PM Modi participates in a one of its kind program, being attended by over 2 lakh women. The program is being held as per the vision to empower women, especially at grassroot level, by providing them with necessary skills, incentives&resources.

He will address the people shortly. pic.twitter.com/5sWVeRCbqF

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 21, 2021

PM Modi in Prayagraj participates in program of women empowerment

Prime Minister, in this endeavor to support women in Prayagraj, will transfer an amount of **Rs. 1,000 crores in the bank account of Self-Help Groups. It will benefit around 16 lakh women members of the SHGs.**

Prayagraj: PM transfers Rs 1000 cr in bank accounts of various SHGs, also transfers money to over 1 lakh beneficiaries of Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangala Scheme,which provides assistance to girl child. He also laid foundation stone of 202 Supplementary Nutrition Manufacturing Units pic.twitter.com/4r7USB7yjU

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 21, 2021

The transfer of the amount by PM Modi during his visit to Prayagraj will be done under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM). Under it, 80,000 SHGs will receive the Community Investment Fund (CIF) of Rs. 1.10 lakh per Self Help Group

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and 60,000 SHGs will receive the Revolving Fund of Rs. 15,000 per SHG.

PM Modi visit to Prayagraj: What will be on agenda?

While attending the program on women empowerment that will be attended by over 2,00,000 women, PM Modi will also-

1. Encouraging BC-SAKHIS

Encourage the Business Correspondent Sakhis (BC-Sakhis), by transferring the amount of Rs. 4000 as the first month's stipend in the account of 20,000 BC-Sakhis.

When BC-Sakhis start their work as the providers of the doorstep financial services at the grassroots level, they will be paid a stipend of Rs. 4,000 for 6 months. It will help them to stabilize in their work.

2. Transferring amount under Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangala Scheme

PM Modi during his visit to Prayagraj will also transfer a total amount of Rs. 20 crores to more than 1 lakh beneficiaries under Mukhya Mantri Kanya Sumangala Scheme.

It provides the conditional cash transfer to a girl child at different stages of her life. The total transfer under the scheme will be Rs. 15,000 per beneficiary.

At Birth- **Rs. 2,000**

On Completing one-year complete vaccination- **Rs. 1,000**

On Admission in Class-I- **Rs. 2000**

On Admission in Class VI- **Rs. 2,000**

On Admission in Class IX- **Rs. 3,000**

On Admission in any degree or diploma after passing Class X or XII- **Rs. 5,000**

Prayagraj: PM Narendra Modi addresses public at the launch of 'Kanya Sumangala Yojana'; CM Yogi Adityanath, Mathura MP Hema Malini and others present at the event

"The state has worked for women empowerment. This scheme will benefit the daughters of state," says PM Modi pic.twitter.com/oKgk35v0pD

— ANI UP/Uttarakhand (@ANINewsUP) December 21, 2021

3. Lay the foundation stone of Supplementary Nutrition Manufacturing Units

During PM Modi visit to Prayagraj, a foundation stone of 202 Supplementary Nutrition

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Manufacturing Units will also be laid. These units will be funded by the Self-Help Groups.

The Supplementary Nutrition Manufacturing Units will also supply the Supplementary Nutrition under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in 600 blocks of the State.

PM Modi in UP: Projects inaugurated ahead of assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh

Inauguration of Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur

Prime Minister Modi laid the foundation stone of the Ganga Expressway in the Shahjahanpur district. The expressway i UP's district will connect the Western Uttar Pradesh to Eastern Uttar Pradesh and will also connect directly to the Natio Capital Region (NCR).

Inauguration of Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi

Phase 1 of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi was inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi on December 13, 2021 corridor has been constructed at a cost of Rs. 339 crores connect two landmarks in Varanasi- Kashi Vishwanath Temp Ganga River.

Foundation stone of Noida International Airport and Inauguration of Kushinagar Airport

On November 25, 2021, Prime Minister Modi had laid the foundation stone of the **Noida International Airport in Jewa Uttar Pradesh.** The airport will be Asia's biggest airport and will also help in creating employment opportunities for mor than one lakh people in the region.

To facilitate seamless for Buddhist devotees, PM Modi on October 20, 2021, **inaugurated Kushinagar International Airport in Uttar Pradesh.** It became the third international airport in the state after Varanasi and Lucknow. Because o better connectivity, the region will see an easy movement of tourists to six Buddhist sites in UP as well as in North Biha

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Good Governance week 2021 observed from December 20-26

Good Governance week 2021: The central government is celebrating Good Governance week from December 20 to December 26, 2021. This was informed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievance (DARPG). The nationwide campaign has been launched for redressal of public grievances and improvising service delivery, especially in rural areas.

The DARPG will convene various events to celebrate the week from December 20-26 in collaboration with the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development and Ministry of External Affairs.

The events include the **launch of a nationwide campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances** and Improving Service Delivery, titled **"Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur".** It would also include the inauguration of the Exhibition on Good Governance Practices. The other events include Ease of Living and Next Phase of Reforms for Reducing Compliance Burden, Experience Sharing Workshop by DARPG on Best Practices and Mission Karmayogi - The Path Ahead.

Message of the Hon'ble PM on the occasion of Good Governance Week #GoodGovernanceDay #AmritMahotsav #PrashasanGaonKiAur pic.twitter.com/iwWZYqmbSp

— DARPG,Govt. of India (@DARPG_GoI) December 19, 2021

Good Governance week theme

The theme of Good Governance week is -"Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur" and it aims to take good governance to the rural areas. A film titled "Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur" will also be screened during the week.

Good Governance Week Portal will also be launched during the occasion and all district collectors of states and union territories will be given access to the online portal to upload and share the progress and achievements. The activities that are to be taken up by the districts of all states and UTs during the Good Governance Weeks include-

-Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur" campaign-- Organize special camps/events at Tehsil Headquarters/Panchayat Samitis

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-Redressal of pending backlog public grievances in CPGRAMS

-Updation of Citizen Charters

-Redressal of public grievances in the State portals

-Disposal of applications under Improving Service Delivery

-Adopt Best Good Governance practices and share requisite pictures on the portal

-Share one success story per district on the resolution of public grievances on the portal

Good Governance week

Good Governance week is observed to celebrate the strides made by India in promoting citizen-centric governance and improving service delivery in line with Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav celebrations to commemorate 75 years of progressive India. The series of programmes planned during the week will aim to highlight various good governance initiatives taken by the Centre.

The Good Governance week will conclude with the Good Governance Day celebration at Vigyan Bhawan on December 25. **Over 700 district collectors** are expected to take part in the campaign and visit Tehsil or Panchayat Samiti Headquarters for providing timely grievance redressal and improve service delivery.

Good Governance Day

Good Governance Day is celebrated on December 25th to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The Good Governance Day was established by the PM Modi-led government in 2014 to honor Prime Minister Vajpayee. The centre has decreed the Good Governance Day to be a working day for the government.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee served as the Prime Minister of India for three terms, first for a term of 13 days in 1996, then for 13 months from 1998 to 1999 and third for a full term from 1999 to 2004. The veteran politician was one of the co-founders and senior leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

He was the first non-Congress Prime Minister of India to serve a full term in office. He was born on December 25, 1924 and passed away on August 16, 2018.

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Goa Liberation Day: PM Modi launches development projects, felicitates freedom fighters of ‘Operation Vijay’

Goa Liberation Day 2021: Prime Minister Modi inaugurated multiple development projects worth Rs. 650 crores on December 19, 2021, at Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in Panaji, Goa. The projects were launched on Goa Liberation Day and during the occasion, he also felicitated the freedom fighters and the veterans of ‘Operation Vijay’. **The state observed ‘Goa Liberation Day’ annually to mark the success of the Indian Armed Forces’ ‘Operation Vijay’ that led to the liberation of Goa from Portuguese Rule.**

During his address on Goa Liberation Day, Prime Minister Modi acknowledged Goa’s top position in Good Governance, per capita income, and several other fronts. He also said that Swayampurna Goa, Atmanirbhar Bharat is a grand success in the state.

Delighted to be among my sisters and brothers of Goa, that too on the special occasion of Goa Liberation Day.

Began my visit by paying tributes at the Martyrs’ Memorial. We will never forget the monumental contributions of the brave freedom fighters of Goa. pic.twitter.com/mqEjDoYbWc

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 19, 2021

Goa Liberation Day 2021: Multiple projects launched by PM Modi

PM Modi, on the occasion, inaugurated multiple development projects worth Rs. 650 crores in Goa.

The projects included the renovated Fort Aguada Jail Museum, New South Goa District Hospital, a Super Specialty Block at the Goa Medical College, an Aviation Skill Development Centre at Mopa Airport, and the gas-insulated substation in Margao.

Goa Liberation Day 2021: Honouring freedom fighters, armed forces of ‘Operation Vijay’

PM Modi, during Goa Liberation Day, released a Special Cover and Special Cancellation to mark the commemoration of the freedom fighters and Indian Armed Forces in freeing Goa from

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Portuguese rule.

The special episode of Goa's history is shown on the Special Cover, while the Special Cancellation depicts the war memorial at the Indian Naval Ship Gomantak. It has been constructed in the memory of seven young and gallant sailors as well as other army personnel who died during 'Operation Vijay'.

'My Stamp' depicting the Hutatma Smarak at Patradevi was also released by PM Modi. He salutes the great sacrifices made by the martyrs of the Goa Liberation Movement.

Goa Liberation Day

Goa, Daman, and Diu Liberation day is observed every year on December 19 in Goa to commemorate the Indian Armed Forces annexing Portuguese-ruled Goa. The state was liberated on December 19, 1961, from around 450 years of Portuguese rule. Notably, India was completely free from the rule of Britishers on this day.

Operation Vijay: Ending 450 years of Portuguese rule in Goa

After India gained Independence from Britishers in 1947, a few regions in the Konkan region called 'Portuguese India' were among the last colonies in Asia. The regions also included the areas of Damaon, Goa, Silvassa, Diu, and Anjediva.

Independent India claimed the Portuguese territories by the Military Power means and armed action by the Indian Armed Force was code-named 'Operation Vijay'.

Operation Vijay involved the sea, land, and airstrikes for over 36 hours which resulted in the decisive victory for India ending the 451 years of Portuguese Rule.

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U-19 World Cup India Squad 2022: Yash Dhull to lead the team; Check full Indian Under-19 World Cup Squad

U-19 World Cup 2022 Indian Squad: The All-India Junior Selection Committee on December 19, 2021, announced the Indian squad for ICC Under -19 Men's World Cup 2022. The U-19 World Cup will be played from January 14 to February 2, 2022, in West Indies across the four host countries. Yash Dhull will lead the Under-19 Indian Squad in World Cup 2022 to retain the past successful streak of winning the World Cup titles. Check the complete list of Indian U-19 World Cup 2022 Squad below.

U-19 World Cup 2022

The 14th edition of the Under-19 World Cup tournament will see 16 teams competing for the trophy in a total of 48 matches.

The U-19 World Cup format will see the top two teams from each of the four groups advance to the Super League while the remaining teams will feature in the Plate across 23 days of competition. U-19 Indian Squad has been placed in Group B of Under-19 World Cup 2022.

U-19 Indian Squad, on January 15, 2022, will square off against South Africa. The team will lock horns against Ireland and Uganda on January 19 and January 22, 2022.

Here's India's squad for ICC U19 Cricket World Cup 2022 squad #BoysInBlue

Go well, boys! pic.twitter.com/im3UYBLPXr

— BCCI (@BCCI) December 19, 2021

India in U-19 World Cup tournament

India is the most successful team having won four titles back in 2000, 2008, 2012, and 2018. The country has been a runner-up in 2016 and also in the previous edition of the World Cup tournament in New Zealand which took place in 2020.

U-19 World Cup 2022 India Squad List

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U-19 India Squad
Yash Dhull (Captain)
Harnoor Singh
Angkrish Raghuvanshi
SK Rasheed (Vice-Captain)
Nishant Sindhu
Siddarth Yadav
Dinesh Bana (Wk)
Aradhya Yadav (Wk)
Raj Angad Bawa
Manav Parakh
Kaushal Tambe
RS Hangargekar
Vasu Vats
Vicky Otswal
Ravikumar
Garv Sangwan
Standby Players
Rishit Reddy
Uday Saharan
Ansh Gosai
Amit Raj Upadhyay
PM Singh Rathore

U-19 World Cup Winners list (1988-2020)

Year	Winners

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1988	Australia
1998	England
2000	India
2002	Australia
2004	Pakistan
2006	Pakistan
2008	India
2010	Australia
2012	India
2014	South Africa
2016	West Indies
2018	India
2020	Bangladesh

Under-19 World Cup

The ICC U-19 World Cup is an international cricket tournament which is organized by the International Cricket Council (ICC). The tournament is contested by the national Under-19 teams. The first U-19 World Cup tournament took place in 1988 as the Youth World Cup, however, it was not staged again until 1998. The first winner of the U-19 World Cup 1988 was Australia.

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International Human Solidarity Day 2021: Theme, Meaning, All You Need to Know

International Human Solidarity Day 2021: International Human Solidarity Day is observed annually on December 20th **to celebrate unity and diversity and raise public awareness regarding the importance of solidarity.**

The day seeks to remind governments to respect their commitments to international agreements and encourage debate on ways to promote solidarity for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals including poverty eradication.

International Human Solidarity Day 2021 Theme

The International Human Solidarity Day theme remains the same every year. The day focuses on promoting a culture of cooperation, equality and social justice, especially in developing countries.

International Human Solidarity Day Significance

The United Nations commemorates International Human Solidarity Day every year on December 20 as promotion of the culture of solidarity and the spirit of sharing is important for combating poverty.

The day seeks to bring nations and people of the world together to promote human rights, social and economic development and peace. United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda is also centred on people and planet, supported by a global partnership determined to lift people out of poverty, hunger and disease. The global partnership can be built only on a foundation of global cooperation and solidarity.

International Human Solidarity Day - 5 Interesting Facts

1. International Human Solidarity Day is a day to celebrate our unity in diversity.

2. It is a day to remind governments to respect their commitments to international agreements.

3. It is a day to raise public awareness of the importance of solidarity.

4. It is a day to encourage debate on the ways to promote solidarity for the achievement of the

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Sustainable Development Goals including poverty eradication.

5. It is a day of action to encourage new initiatives for poverty eradication.

International Human Solidarity Day History

The UN General Assembly was convinced that the promotion of the culture of solidarity and spirit of sharing is important for eradicating poverty. Therefore, UNGA by resolution 60/209 on December 22, 2005 identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underline the relations between people in the 21st century.

The International body decided to proclaim December 20 as International Human Solidarity Day to commemorate and spread awareness regarding the same.

The General Assembly had established a World Solidarity Fund by resolution 57/265 on December 20, 2002. The fund was set up in February 2003 as a trust fund of the United Nations Development Programme. The main objective of the fund is to eradicate poverty and promote human and social development in developing countries, especially among the poorest segments of their population.

810+ million people worldwide go to bed hungry every night. The majority of these people live in countries affected by conflict & violence.

On Monday's #SolidarityDay, learn how @WFP is harnessing the strength of solidarity to achieve #ZeroHunger. https://t.co/IYY1h66wiB pic.twitter.com/i83xhasMTr

— United Nations (@UN) December 20, 2021

International Human Solidarity Day meaning

What does solidarity mean?

The meaning of solidarity is to support one another. Human Solidarity has been identified as one of the fundamental values of international relations in the 21st Century, where those who suffer or benefit least deserve support from those who benefit most. This is extremely significant especially in the wake of growing inequality in today's time.

Concept of Solidarity & United Nations

The concept of solidarity has defined the work of the United Nations since its establishment, as

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the creation of the United Nations itself drew the people and nations together to promote peace, human rights and social and economic development. The United Nations was founded on the basic premise to maintain international peace and security. The organisation relies on the spirit of solidarity and cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.

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DRDO’s ADRDE conducts flight demonstration of Controlled Aerial Delivery System

ADRDE Flight demonstration of CADS-500: A flight test demonstration of **t**he Controlled Aerial Delivery System of 500 kg capacity (CADS-500) was conducted by the Aerial delivery research and development establishment (ADRDE) on December 18, 2021. The news of the CADS flight demonstration by ADRDE was announced by the Ministry of Defence. It further informed that ADRDE in Agra, Uttar Pradesh is a Research & Development Laboratory of DRDO and the flight demonstration of CADS done by ADRDE is part of the series of activities that are organized to celebrate ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’ commemorating 75 years of India’s Independence.

Controlled Aerial Delivery System-500: Significance

The Controlled Aerial Delivery System (CADS-500) is used for the precise delivery of the payloads up to 500 kgs at a predetermined location by making the use of manoeuvrable capabilities of the Ram Air Parachute (RAP).

Controlled Aerial Delivery System of 500 kg (CADS-500) lands precisely during demonstration trials by #ADRDE, DRDO. #AmritMahotsav #AtmaNirbharBharat https://t.co/Se51Kcp4ug pic.twitter.com/Vr8xBDkRQ5

— DRDO (@DRDO_India) December 19, 2021

CADS-500 by ADRDE: Details

The Controlled Aerial Delivery System (CADS) uses the Global Positioning System for the altitudes, coordinates and heading sensors for the heading information during its flight.

CADS- Controlled Aerial Delivery System, with its onboard electronic unit, automatically steers its flight path using the navigation towards the targeted location by the operating controls.

Flight demonstration of CADS-500

The system performance of CADS-500 was demonstrated at the drop-zone, Malpura. It took place from an altitude of 5000m. The Controlled Aerial Delivery System was para-dropped from AN-32 aircraft and then it was further steered to the predesignated landing point in an

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autonomous mode.

11 paratroopers of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Indian Army successfully chased the Controlled Aerial Delivery System (CADS-500) in the air and also landed simultaneously.

ADRDE, Agra: What is its role?

The Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) is the laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). ADRDE is located in Agra and its research scope includes the development of the systems for dropping brake parachutes, heavy loads, aircraft arrester barriers and towed targets.

Projects of ADRDE

1. Space Recovery Parachutes

2. Armament Delivery Parachutes

3. Balloon Barrage and Surveillance Systems

4. Airships and Related Applications

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Morning Current Affairs: 20 December 2021

India, Central Asian countries reiterate Afghan territory should not be used for sheltering terrorists

The foreign Ministers of India and five Central Asian countries reaffirmed the significance of UNSC Resolution 2593 (2021) which unequivocally demands that Afghan territory should not be used for sheltering, training, planning or financing terrorist acts and calls for concerted action against all terrorist groups. The foreign ministers in the third meeting of the India- Central Asia Dialogue, reiterated strong support for a peaceful, secure and stable Afghanistan.

Kidambi Srikanth becomes first Indian male shuttler to win silver at BWF World Championships

Kidambi Srikanth became the first Indian male shuttler to win silver at the BWF World Championships on December 19, 2021. He had earlier become the first Indian to enter the men's singles final at the Championships. He, however, had to settle for silver after losing to Singapore's Loh Kean Yew in the summit clash in straight sets of 21-15, 22-20. Loh Kean Yew has also become the first male shuttler from Singapore to have won the gold men.

Mathura to get grand temple after Ayodhya, Kashi?

BJP MP Hema Malini said on December 19, 2021 that after Ayodhya and Kashi, her constituency Mathura will get a grand temple like the Kashi Vishwanath corridor. She said that "Mathura, which is the birthplace of Lord Krishan who is the symbol of love and affection, I will say that there should be a grand temple. A temple is already there and can be beautified like Modi ji developed Kashi Vishwanath corridor."

Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to visit India next year

Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev will visit India in 2022, informed Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tileuberdi on December 19, 2021 during the 3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue. The FM said we are eager to maintain a trustworthy political dialogue and look forward to organizing a high-level visit by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to India next year. The visit will coincide with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan.

UP CM to distribute free mobiles, tablets to one lakh students on December 25

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Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Aditanath will distribute free mobiles and tablets to one lakh final year students studying in different streams on December 25,2021. The free mobiles and tablets will be distributed to the students at the Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Bajpayee Ekana Stadium in Lucknow in the first phase. A large number of students from every district of UP are expected to participate in the program.

Uttarakhand appoints Rishabh Pant as state brand ambassador

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami appointed Indian cricketer Rishabh Pant as the state brand ambassador on December 19, 2021. The Chief Minister wrote in a Twitter post, "One of the best cricket players of India, the idol of youth and Lal Shri Rishabh Pant of Uttarakhand has been appointed by our government as "State Brand Ambassador" with the aim of encouraging the youth of the state towards sports and public health."

Tripura devises 25-years action plan, sets goal on zero dropout

Tripura government has devised an action plan for the next 25 years that focuses on infrastructure development, better employment and education oppurtunities. The Tripura Chief Secretary Kumar Alok said that the path of Tripura's development for the next 25 years has been defined through the two-day Vision 2047 workshop that culminated on December 18.

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KL Rahul appointed vice-captain for India's test series against South Africa

KL Rahul was named as the vice-captain for India's upcoming 3-match Test series against South Africa by the all-India Senior Selection Committee on December 18, 2021.

The BCCI said in an official release that KL Rahul replaces Rohit Sharma as vice-captain, who was ruled out of the Test series owing to a hamstring injury.

NEWS - KL Rahul named vice-captain of Test team for South Africa series.

KL Rahul replaces Rohit Sharma as vice-captain, who was ruled out of the Test series owing to a hamstring injury.

More details here - https://t.co/7dHbFf74hG #SAvIND | @klrahul11 pic.twitter.com/6pQPTns9C7

— BCCI (@BCCI) December 18, 2021

Rohit Sharma had been named as the vice-captain of the Indian test team earlier, replacing Ajinkya Rahane. However, Sharma has been ruled out of India's test series against South Africa due to a hamstring injury that he sustained during a training session.

BCCI Secretary Jay Shah informed on December 13 that Rohit Sharma has been ruled out from the test series against South Africa. Priyank Panchal has replaced Rohit Sharma in India's test squad.

Read more: Who is Priyank Panchal?

Why is KL Rahul's appointment significant?

KL Rahul's appointment as the vice-captain marks a sharp rise for the player who had been kept out from the squad for almost two years till India's tour of England in August 2021.

KL Rahul has been in tremendous form this year so far. He, unfortunately, missed India's home Test series against New Zealand due to injury. He will be opening India's batting along with Mayank Agarwal in Rohit Sharma's absence.

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India's Test squad for South Africa tour: Virat Kohli (Captain), KL Rahul (vice-captain), Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Priyank Panchal, Shreyas Iyer, Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Wriddhiman Saha (wicket-keeper), R Ashwin, Jayant Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Mohd. Shami, Umesh Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Shardul Thakur, Md. Siraj

India vs South Africa Test Series 2021 schedule

South Africa vs India, 2021/22 – Test series		
Match	**Date**	**Venue**
1st Test	December 26- 30	SuperSport Park, Centurion
2nd Test	January 3-7	Wanderers, Johannesburg
3rd Test	January 11-15	Newlands, Cape Town

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BWF World Championship 2021 result: Kidambi Srikanth becomes first Indian male shuttler to win silver

Kidambi Srikanth became the first Indian male shuttler to win silver in men's singles event at the BWF World Championships on December 19, 2021. He settled for the silver after losing to Singapore's Loh Kean Yew in straight sets of 21-15, 22-20. The summit clash lasted for a total of 43 minutes.

Though Kidambi Srikanth had taken an early lead of 9-3, Yew bounced back taking the first game 21-15 and carried his momentum to take the second game as well. Yew has become the first male shuttler from Singapore to win a gold medal at the BWF World Championships.

Kidambi Srikanth had created history earlier on December 18th by becoming the first Indian shuttler to enter the men's singles final of the BWF World Championships in Huelva.

Kidambi Srikanth first Indian male shuttler to enter BWF World Championship finals

Kidambi Srikanth, who is currently ranked world no.14, not only became the first Indian male shuttler to qualify for the final at the prestigious event but the third Indian to achieve the feat after PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal.

The former world number one beat his Indian compatriot Lakshya Sen by 17-21, 21-14, 21-17 in a thrilling match that lasted for one hour and nine minutes in the men's singles semi-finals.

He had earlier defeated Dutch shuttler Mark Caljouw in two straight sets of 21-8, 21-7 to enter the men's singles semifinals of the BWF World Championships.

This is a significant achievement for Srikanth after missing his Olympic berth at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

Other Indians at BWF World Championship 2021

This was the first time when four Indian shuttlers qualified for the quaterfinals of BWF World

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Championships. The four shuttlers included Kidambi Srikanth, Lakshya Sen, PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy. Both Sindhu and Prannoy bowed out of the tournament in the quaterfinal stage.

Lakshya Sen settles for Bronze

India's Lakshya Sen would have been the youngest-ever finalist at the BWF World Championships singles' event had he won the semifinal match against Kidambi Srikanth. He, however, won the bronze medal, an honour that he will share with legendary Indian shuttler Prakash Padukone, who won bronze in 1983 and B Sai Praneeth, who won bronze in 2019.

PV Sindhu bows out early

PV Sindhu is the lone Indian shuttler to win the singles event at the BWF Championships. The current world no.7, who is also the defending champion of the event, bowed out from the **BWF Championships 2021 Women's Singles event** after losing to Taiwan's Tai Tzu-Ying in the women's singles quarterfinal event. She had won the BWF World Championships in 2019 in Basel, Switzerland. The event did not take place last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The BWF World Championships women's singles final will take place between Taiwan's Tai Tzu-Ying and Japan's Akane Yamaguchi.

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COVID-19 Vaccine COVOVAX: WHO approves emergency use of Serum Institute's Covid vaccine

Covovax vaccine in India: The World Health Organisation announced that it has given its **approval for the emergency use of COVOVAX Coronavirus Vaccine.** The COVID-19 vaccine has been manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII) under the license of the US company Novavax. The global health body, while announcing the emergency use of Covovax, stated that it issued the emergency use listing for Covovax, further expanding the basket of WHO-validated Covid vaccines against the Covid virus. The move of giving emergency use approval to Covovax will boost the ongoing efforts of vaccinating more people in lower-income countries.

image

What does Emergency use approval from WHO means?

The emergency use approval from the World Health Organisation is a prerequisite for being on the Covax drug list as well as for the international procurement.

COVID19 vaccine Covovax is now WHO approved for emergency use, showing excellent safety and efficacy, says Adar Poonawalla, CEO, Serum Institute of India pic.twitter.com/r5rvn9n8K0

— ANI (@ANI) December 17, 2021

Covovax gets emergency use approval from WHO:

Covovax by Serum Institute of India was assessed under the WHO Emergency Use Listing procedure. It was based on the review of data on the safety, quality, and efficacy, programmatic suitability, a risk management plan, and manufacturing site inspections carried out by the Drugs Control General of India (DCGI).

Covovax efficacy-

The Technical Advisory Group for EUL which was convened by World Health Organisation and experts from around the world determined that the Covovax vaccine meets the global health body's standards for the protection against Coronavirus.

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The group also came to the conclusion that the benefit of the Covovax vaccine far outweighs any risks and that the Serum Institute of India's vaccine can be used globally.

Serum Institute of India's Covovax vaccine

The Covid-19 vaccine named CovovaxTM is produced by the Serum Institute of India under the license from Novovax. Covovax by SII requires two doses and it is stable at 2 to 8 degree Celsius refrigerated temperatures.

The vaccine is also part of the COVAX facility portfolio, giving a much-needed boost to the ongoing efforts of vaccinating more individuals in developing and lower-income countries.

Covovax is the Indian version of the Novovax vaccine of the US brought in by the Serum Institute of India for children.

Covovax in India

The Serum Institute of India in October 2021 had put an application to the Drugs Controller General of India for the grant of market authorization of Covovax for restricted use in emergency situations.

Earlier in June 2021, SII had announced that it began the production of the first batch of Covovax vaccine after the clinical trials were launched in March.

List of Vaccines approved by WHO

Nine Covid-19 vaccines, including Covovax or Novovax, have been given the emergency or full use approval by WHO

1. Pfizer

2. Oxford-AstraZeneca (Covishield)

3. Oxford-AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria)

4. Sinopharm

5. Moderna

6. Janssen

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7. CoronaVac

8. Covaxin

9. Covovax

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Morning Current Affairs: 18 December 2021

SII's Covovax receives emergency use approval by WHO

The World Health Organisation has granted emergency use approval to the Serum Institute of India's manufactured Covovax vaccine. It will further help in expanding the list of WHO-validated Covid-19 vaccines. SII has been producing Covovax under the license from Novavax.

Goa CM inaugurates Goa Pink Police Force

The Chief Minister of Goa has inaugurated Goa Pink Police Force. It will patrol the beach areas and will provide aid in case a woman complains of abuse or accidents. The Pink Force in Goa is not only for women but it is for children as well. 11 prevention-dedicated teams have been formed with weaponry and communication facilities.

AUKUS joint steering group meeting

The inaugural meeting of the AUKUS Trilateral Joint Steering Groups was recently held by Australia, the USA and the UK. The groups were established as part of the governance structure of AUKUS in September 2021. The Group met on December 9 and December 14.

Foundation Stone of Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur to be laid down by PM Modi today

PM Modi will lay the foundation stone of Ganga Expressway in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh today. He will also address a rally at Railway ground. The expressway will pass through Meerut, Bulandshahr, Hapur, Budaun, Amroha, Bareli, Sambhal, Hardoi, Unnao, Pratapgarh, and Prayagraj districts.

New Program supporting innovations announced by India and US to tackle climate change and clean energy challenges

India and the United States have announced a new program that will support the innovations to tackle the clean energy and climate change challenges. The program will identify and support the technology showstoppers and other entrepreneurial initiatives in the area.

Government advises people to avoid mass gatherings, unnecessary travel amid Omicron case rise

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The Government of India has advised people to avoid mass gatherings and non-essential travel as the Omicron cases increase in the country. So far 101 Omicron cases have been reported from 11 states. The Government has asked people to receive a covid vaccine and follow covid appropriate behavior.

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International Migrants Day 2021: Theme, History and Significance of the day

UN International Migrants Day 2021: The world observes the International Migrants Day every year on December 18. As the countries faced the wrath of Covid-19, another crisis caused by the pandemic that left the most accomplished governments clueless was the migrant crisis. International Migrants Day 2021 is the reminder that the problems faced by migrants in every country are not over yet and governments are yet to come with policies that are constructive and inclusive.

However, the focus of International Migrants Day should also be put on the rich cultural, social, and economic contributions made by migrants and how they help in building a more inclusive society. On International Migrants Day 2021, let's know more about the history of the day and how Migrants Day is observed to tackle the challenges and problems of global migration.

International Migrants Day 2021 Date

The International Migrants Day is observed every year on **December 18.**

Sustainable development means progress for all. We can achieve this if we create equal societies that are inclusive of migrants, enabling them to maximize their potential. #IMD2021 pic.twitter.com/NM6kTggfhM

— IOM - UN Migration (@UNmigration) December 17, 2021

International Migrants Day 2021 Theme

The theme of International Migrants Day 2021 is **'Harnessing the Potential of Human Mobility'.** This years' theme of International Migrants Day acknowledges the contribution made by migrants of their knowledge, skills, and networks to build more resilient and stronger communities.

International Migrants Day 2021 History

In 1999, the UN General Assembly created the international convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families. However, on December 4, 2000, noting the large and increasing migrants across the world, the assembly decided December 18 as the International Migrants Day.

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International Migrants Day was created by the global body to commemorate the significance of strengthening international cooperation and migration regionally, bilaterally, and globally.

International Migrants Day 2021: What is the significance?

International Migrants Day 2021 is an affirmation that throughout human history, migration has been a step of courage and expression of an individual's will to overcome adversity to live a better life.

International Migrants Day plays a significant role in determining the movement of individuals because of forced or voluntary movements for the environmental issues such as poverty or disaster.

In today's world, migration draws increasing attention particularly. Migration day signifies that the difficulties and challenges faced by migrants require cooperation and collective action from countries around the world.

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Why North Korea has banned citizens from drinking, laughing, grocery shopping for 11 days?

What is happening in North Korea: In a bizarre move, North Korea has banned its citizens from laughing, drinking, and going grocery shopping for the next 11 days starting from December 17, 2021. Reportedly, the North Korean government authorities have ordered the citizens of the country to not show any signs of happiness. A North Korean from the northeastern border city of Sinuiju stated that in these 11 days in North Korea, the citizens must not drink alcohol, laugh or even engage in leisure activities.

Why North Korea has banned its citizens from laughing, drinking or grocery shopping?

The North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un has ordered aban on the citizens of the country to mark the 10th death anniversary of the former leader Kim Jong il's. He died of a heart attack on December 17, 2011, at the age of 69.

As per the orders, people are not supposed to show any signs of happiness while North Korea commemorates his death. This year, the mourning period will go on for 11 days as this is the 10th death anniversary. Generally, North Korea observes a 10-day mourning period every year.

The crackdown in the country started at the beginning of December 2021 as the North Korean Police have been preparing for the mourning period.

What is banned in North Korea during mourning period?

As North Korea enters 11 days mourning period from December 17, 2021, to mark the 10th death anniversary of the former North Korean leader, all leisure activities have been banned in the country.

North Korean residents are not allowed to go grocery shopping and the offenders will be arrested.

Even if a family member passes away during this time period, people will not be allowed to cry out loud and the body must be taken out after it is over.

The citizens are also not permitted to celebrate their own birthdays if they fall within these 11 days of mourning.

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What will happen if the imposed ban is not followed in North Korea?

Any violation of ban during the mourning period in North Korea in these 11 days will result in significant consequences.

The offenders will be arrested, as happens every year. Reportedly, in the past as well, many people in North Korea who were caught drinking during the mourning period were jailed and were treated as ideological criminals. The people were never seen again.

Every year since Kim Jin-Un's father's death, he pays his tribute at his father's memorial. However, this year, the state media did not immediately disclose any form of public activity by the North Korean leader on the morning of December 17, 2021.

Who was Kim Jong-il?

Kim Jong-il was the father of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. He passed away on December 17, 2011, due to a heart attack.

Kim Jong iI had ruled North Korea for 17 years in a repressive and brutal dictatorship. He was later succeeded by his third and the youngest son Kim Jong-Un, who is also the current leader of North Korea.

Kim Jong-il had led North Korea from 1994 after the death of the father Kim II-sung, the very first supreme leader of North Korea.

North Korea banned list: 5 things you cannot do in North Korea

Other than the recently announced ban on laughing, shopping in North Korea, some of the other shocking rules in the country are.

1. Citizens in North Korea are not allowed to watch foreign movies or listen to foreign music.

2. People cannot make international calls as they are considered crimes in the country.

3. In North Korea, all women and men are allowed to do only one of the 28 government-approved haircuts. 18 are for women and 10 for men.

4. Bible is prohibited in North Korea.

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5. If any crime is committed, not only the individual but their parents, grandparents, and children are also punished.

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Foundational Literacy Index: West Bengal on top in large states category; check full list of state rankings

Foundational Literacy Index 2021: The Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister recently released a report on the **'Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy'**. The report on the literacy rate in India is an indicator of literacy among children below the age of 10 years in Indian states that are further divided into different categories. On one hand, in the **'large states category',** West Bengal has topped the charts while Bihar is on the bottom, Kerala can be seen on a top spot in the **'small states category'.**

Under Foundational Literacy Index, regions have been divided into four categories- **large states, small states, Northeast and Union Territories'.** The report on the 'Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy' has been prepared by the 'Institute for Competitiveness' and was released by the ECA to PM.

Great news for West Bengal!

We have secured the top rank among larger states on the 'Foundational Literacy & Numeracy Index'.

I congratulate all teachers, guardians & members of our Education Department for this outstanding achievement!https://t.co/BQPNUiQX9r

— Mamata Banerjee (@MamataOfficial) December 17, 2021

Foundational Literacy Index 2021 Significance

The 'Index on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy' will help in establishing an understanding of the overall state of foundational learning across children aged below 10 years in the Indian States and the UTs.

5 pillars of Foundational Literacy Index

The Foundational Literacy Index 2021 includes 5 pillars comprising 41 indictors on the basis of which the states have been ranked for literacy among children. The 5 pillars are-

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1. Access to Education

2. Educational Infrastructure

3. Basic Health

4. Governance

5. Learning Outcomes

Foundational Literacy Index 2021: States performed poorly in Governance

The states that have been ranked in the Foundational Literacy Index 2021 have performed most poorly in Governance out of the 5 pillars. More than 50% of the States in India have scored below the National Average, i.e. 28.5 which is the lowest across all the pillars.

While highlighting the significance of literacy in the early stages of life, the government noted that education leads to positive externalities and the quality of education that is imparted during the formative years is particularly significant.

Foundational Literacy Index 2021: Large States ranking

State	Score	Rank
West Bengal	59	1
Tamil Nadu	55	2
Maharashtra	53	3
Karnataka	50	4
Gujarat	50	5
Rajasthan	47	6
Madhya Pradesh	39	7
Uttar Pradesh	38	8
Bihar	37	9

Foundational Literacy Index 2021: Small States Ranking

State	Score	Rank

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Kerala	68	1
Himachal Pradesh	57	2
Punjab	56	3
Uttarakhand	56	4
Haryana	53	5
Goa	51	6
Chhattisgarh	50	7
Andhra Pradesh	50	8
Telangana	46	9
Odisha	46	10
Jharkhand	45	11

Foundational Literacy Index 2021: Union Territories Ranking

Union Territories	Score	Rank
Lakshadweep	52.69	1
Delhi	50.74	2
Puducherry	50.08	3
Chandigarh	49.89	4
Jammu and Kashmir	49.16	5
Andaman and Nicobar Island	47.04	6
Dadar and Nagar Havelli	46.83	7
Daman and Dui	43.30	8
Ladakh	35.21	9

Foundational Literacy Index 2021: North Eastern States Ranking

North-Eastern States	Score	Rank
Mizoram	51.64	1

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Sikkim	**51.14**	**2**
Manipur	**50.95**	**3**
Assam	**46.55**	**4**
Nagaland	**42.47**	**5**
Meghalaya	**41.37**	**6**
Tripura	**37.18**	**7**
Arunachal Pradesh	**36.88**	**8**

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Government grants 'In-Principle' approval to set up largest nuclear power generating site in Maharashtra

Nuclear power in India Upsc: The Government of India has granted **'In-Principle' approval to set up six Nuclear Power Reactors of 1,650 MW each in technical cooperation with France.** The approval to the nuclear power reactors has been accorded to a site in Maharashtra's Jaitapur which will make it the largest nuclear power generating site in India with a total capacity of 9,900 MW. Currently, the techno-commercial discussions are to arrive at the project proposal with M/s. EDF, France is in progress.

The Government of India has been determined to provide all the impetus to promote the use of Nuclear Energy in India in sectors such as Health Services as well as the agricultural programs for indigenous developments and import substitutes.

Government accorded approval for setting up the largest nuclear power generating site at Jaitapur in Maharashtra with a total capacity of 9900 MW: Union Minister @DrJitendraSingh

Details: https://t.co/EDx6e5mD1f#ParliamentQuestion pic.twitter.com/yjanD0wvFq

— PIB India (@PIB_India) December 16, 2021

Nuclear Power in India: What is India's present Nuclear Power Capacity?

The present installed Nuclear Power Capacity in India is 6780 MW and the share of the nuclear power in the total electricity generation in India is about 3.1 percent in the year 2020-2021.

Why Nuclear Power is significant for India?

Nuclear Power, apart from having a huge potential to ensure India's long-term energy security on a sustainable basis, nuclear power is also clean and environment friendly. The Nuclear Power Plants in India have so far generated about 755 Billion Units of electricity saving about 650 million tonnes of CO2 emission.

India also expects to meet the net-zero targets through a combination of clean energy sources including Nuclear Power. In this context, India plans on increasing the present Nuclear Power

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Capacity of 6780 MW to 22480 MW by 2031 on the progressive completion of the Nuclear projects under construction and accorded sanctions. India has also planned more Nuclear Power reactors for the future.

List of Nuclear Power Plants in India

The operational nuclear power plants in India are-

Power Station	State
Kaiga	Karnataka
Kakrapur	Gujarat
Kudankulam	Tamil Nadu
Chennai (Kalpakkam)	Tamil Nadu
Narora	Uttar Pradesh
Rajasthan	Rajasthan
Tarapur	Maharashtra

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PM Modi honoured with Bhutan's highest civilian award - Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo

Highest Civilian Award of Bhutan: Bhutan conferred Prime Minister Modi with the **country's Highest Civilian Award- Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo** on December 17, 2021. The Head of the State of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk pronounced Prime Minister Modi's name for the highly prestigious civilian decoration of Bhutan and also highlighted the unconditional friendship between India and Bhutan. The neighbouring country also acknowledged the support that India provided to Bhutan during the COVID-19 pandemic under PM Modi's leadership.

Bhutan confers the country's highest civilian award - Ngadag Pel gi Khorlo upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi. pic.twitter.com/MDFpOAN8i3

— ANI (@ANI) December 17, 2021

Prime Minister of Bhutan Lotay Tshering also shared the news of PM Modi being conferred with Bhutan's Highest Civilian Award on Twitter. He also shared a photograph with Prime Minister Modi when he visited the Himalayan country back in 2020.

Overjoyed to hear His Majesty pronounce Your Excellency Modiji's @narendramodi name for the highest civilian decoration, Order of the Druk Gyalpo.https://t.co/hD3mihCtSv@PMOIndia @Indiainbhutan pic.twitter.com/ru69MpDWlq

— PM Bhutan (@PMBhutan) December 17, 2021

During his two-day visit to Bhutan in 2020, PM Modi had also thanked the PM of Bhutan as he had personally come to the airport to receive him. Strengthening the bilateral relations between the two countries, India has provided Rs. 5,000 crores to the ambitious five-year development plan of Bhutan.

India-Bhutan Relations: Key Facts

1. The diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan were established in 1968 with the establishment of a special office of India in Thimpu, Bhutan.

2. The basic framework of the bilateral relations between the two countries is the 'Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation' which was signed in 1949 and was later revised in February 2007.

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3. In 2018, India and Bhutan celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two nations.

4. Bhutan, being one of the most peaceful neighbor countries of India, has always received economic support from India for the country's socio-economic development since the early 1960s when Bhutan launched its five-year Plans.

5. One of the other reasons for the strong bilateral relations between India and Bhutan is also the mutually beneficial hydro-power cooperation between the two nations. Hydropower development has been the vital catalyst for the socio-economic development of Bhutan.

Prime Minister Modi: Other state honours and awards

Decoration	Country	Date
Order of Abdulaziz Al Saud	**Saudi Arabia**	**April 3, 2016**
State Order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan	**Afghanistan**	**June 4, 2016**
Grand Collar of the State of Palestine	**Palestine**	**February 10, 2018**
Order of Zayed	**United Arab Emirates**	**April 4, 2019**
Order of St. Andrew	**Russia**	**April 12, 2019**
Order of the Distinguished Rule Izzuddin	**Maldives**	**June 8, 2019**
King Hamad Order of the Renaissance	**Bahrain**	**August 24, 2019**
Legion of Merit	**United States**	**December 21, 2020**

Order of the Dragon King- Highest decoration of Bhutan

The Order of the Dragon King is the highest decoration of Bhutan and is awarded in recognition of a lifetime of service to the people and the Kingdom of Bhutan.

The honours exist in two categories. Order of the Dragon King is the pinnacle of the honour system in Bhutan and also takes precedence over all other orders, medals and decorations. Order of the Dragon King was founded on November 7, 2008, to reward those who devoted a

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lifetime of service to the nation and people of Bhutan.

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Morning Current Affairs: 17 December 2021

Miss World 2021 postponed because of rising COVID cases

Miss World 2021 has temporarily postponed its global broadcast finale to be held in Puerto Rico because of health and safety interests. The finale of Miss World 2021 has been rescheduled to be held in the next 90 days. The decision of postponing the beauty pageant was made by the organisers.

Sidharth Chattopadhyaya appointed as the Director-General of Police, Punjab

The Government of Punjab has appointed Sidharth Chattopadhyaya as the Director-General of Police, Punjab. He has replaced IPS Iqbal Preet Sahota from the position. As per the notification, Chattopadhyaya will look after the work of the Director-General of Police until a fresh appointment is made.

Prime Minister Modi to inaugurate and address All India Mayor's Conference in Varanasi

PM Modi on December 17, 2021, will inaugurate and address the All India Mayors' Conference in Varanasi. Mayor from different states of India will participate in the conference. The theme of the All India Mayors' Conference is 'New Urban India'.

Three bills to be introduced in Lower House of Parliament

The three bills that are scheduled to be released in Lok Sabha today are- The National Anti-Doping Bill, 2021, The Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2021 and The Chartered Accountants, the Costs and Works Accountants and the Company Secretaries (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Prime Minister Modi to meet 40 MPs from Uttar Pradesh today

Ahead of the Assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh, PM Modi will meet the BJP MPs from the state over breakfast on December 17, 2021. The meeting will be attended by nearly 40 party leaders. Today's meeting also comes after the inauguration of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to meet his French counterpart

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on December 17, 2021, will meet the Defence Minister of France

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Florence Parly for the 3rd Annual Defence Dialogue between India and France. The talks between the two officials will cover a wide range of aspects including defence cooperation, counter-terrorism operation among others.

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Who is Indian-American Mathematician Nikhil Srivastava who helped solve famous 1959 problem?

Nikhil Srivastava mathematician: Nikhil Srivastav, a genius Indian-American Mathematician, has been jointly selected for the **inaugural Ciprian Foias Prize in Operator Theory** by AMS (American Mathematical Society). Nikhil Srivastava teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. The two other awardees along with mathematician Nikhil Srivastava are David Spielman and Adam Marcus.

The prestigious prize will be awarded to Indian-American Mathematician Nikhil Srivastava and his colleagues on January 5, 2022. It will be conferred at the 2022 Joint Mathematics Meeting in Seattle which is also described as the largest mathematics gathering around the world.

Daniel Spielman is a Sterling Professor of Computer Science, a professor of mathematics, and a professor of data science and statistics. While Adam Marcus holds the Chair of Combinatorial Analysis at EPFL in Switzerland.

Indian-American Nikhil Srivastava help solve 1959 math problem

The prestigious Ciprian Foias Prize recognizes Nikhil Srivastava and his colleagues' highly original work that introduced and developed the methods for understanding the characteristic polynomial of matrices, namely the iterative sparsification method and the method of interlacing the polynomials.

American Mathematical society explained that these ideas, together, provided a powerful toolkit with many applications, notably in their breakthrough paper ‘Interlacing families II: mixed characteristic polynomials and the Kadison-Singer problem’ (Annals of Mathematics, 2015), **solving the famous ‘paving problem’ in operator theory, formulated by Isadore Singer and Richard Kadison in 1959.**

Who is Indian- American math genius Nikhil Srivastava?

Nikhil Srivastava is an associate professor of Mathematics at California University, Berkeley. Srivastava was born in New Delhi, India. He attended Union College in New York and graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science and Mathematics in 2005.

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In 2010, Indian-American Nikhil Srivastava received a PhD from Yale University in Computer Science

Other Awards won by Nikhil Srivastava

The latest Ciprian Foias Prize is the third major prize that has been won by the mathematics genius Nikhil Srivastava.

Earlier, he jointly won the George Polya Prize in 2014 and the prestigious Held Prize in 2021.

About Ciprian Foias Prize

The prestigious Ciprian Foias Prize in the Operator Theory is awarded for the notable work in the Operator Theory.

The prize in Operator Theory was established in 2020 in the memory of Ciprian Foias (1933-2020) by friends and colleagues. Foias was an influential scholar in Operator Theory and fluid mechanics.

The current amount of the Ciprian Foias Prize is US $5,000. The prize is awarded every three years. The inaugural Prize in 2022 has been awarded to Nikhil Srivastava, Daniel Spielman, and Adam Marcus.

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Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 passed by Parliament- Know all about it

The Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was passed by the Parliament on December 21, 2021 after it was given a go ahead in the Rajya Sabha. The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on December 20, 2021. The bill seeks to make amendments to the Representation of the People Act and allow electoral registration officers to seek the Aadhaar number of those who want to register as voters to establish their entity.

Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju clarified that the bill would allow the electoral roll to be linked with Aadhaar cards. It will be optional, not mandatory. Opposition Congress MP Shashi Tharoor argued that Aadhaar is only meant to be proof of residence, it's not proof of citizenship. "If you're in a position asking Aadhaar for voters, all you're getting is a document that reflects residence, not citizenship. You're potentially giving the vote to non-citizens," Tharoor said.

Aadhaar only meant to be proof of residence, it's not proof of citizenship. If you're in a position asking Aadhaar for voters, all you're getting is a document that reflects residence, not citizenship. You're potentially giving the vote to non-citizens: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor pic.twitter.com/WivlZooPGY

— ANI (@ANI) December 20, 2021

Following are the proposed amendments to Representation of the People Act-

1. Gender Neutral Process for Service Voters

The bill cleared by the Union Cabinet proposes to make the electoral process gender-neutral for service voters.

As per the current provision, while an army man's wife is entitled to be enrolled as a service voter, an army woman officer's husband is not. The new bill may change this.

The poll panel had asked the law ministry earlier to replace the term wife' with spouse' in the provision related to service voters in the Representation of the People Act.

2. Multiple cutoff dates for enrollment of youth

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The newly proposed amendments to the Representation of the People Act include allowing the youth to enroll as voters on four different dates every year. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has been pushing for multiple cut-off dates to allow more eligible voters to register.

Currently, only the youth turning 18 on or before January 1 of every year are allowed to be registered as voters. So if an election is held in a particular year, only an individual who turned 18 years on or before January 1 of that year is eligible to be enrolled in the voters' list.

The EC had contested that the January 1 cut-off date deprives several youth from participating in the electoral exercise held in a particular year.

The law ministry had recently informed a parliamentary panel that it is proposing to amend section 14(b) of the Representation of the People Act to insert four qualifying dates for voter registration- January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1 of every year.

3. Linking of electoral roll with Aadhaar

In March 2020, the then law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had informed the Lok Sabha that the ECI has proposed linking of electoral roll with Aadhaar to curb the menace of multiple enrolments of the same person at different places.

To enable this, amendments will be required to the electoral laws. The election panel has reportedly taken several measures to ensure the security and safety of the electoral roll data platform.

This would not mean that the electoral database system will enter the Aadhaar ecosystem. The system will only be used for authentication purposes.

As per ECI's proposal sent in August 2019, the electoral law should be amended to empower electoral registration officers to seek Aadhaar number of existing voters and those enrolling themselves in the voters' list. The poll panel has only proposed to link Aadhaar with electoral data to check multiple entries in electoral rolls and make them error-free.

4. Empower ECI to take over any premise for Elections

The bill cleared by the cabinet also includes another proposal that allows the Election Commission the powers to take over any premise for the conduct of elections. This comes after objections were raised over ECI's takeover of certain schools during the period of elections.

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Representation of the People Act, 1951

The Representation of the People Act, 1951 is an act of the Indian Parliament that provides for the conduct of election of both the Houses of Parliament and Houses of the Legislature of each State. The act includes provisions for qualification and disqualification for membership of the two Houses along with corrupt practices and other offences in connection with such elections.

The act was introduced in the Parliament by the then law minister Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and was enacted by the parliament under Article 327 of the Indian Constitution, just before the first general election.

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Semiconductor in India: Scheme worth Rs. 76,000 crores approved for semiconductor manufacturing in India

Semiconductor investment in India: Union Cabinet on December 15, 2021, gave its approval to a budget of Rs. 76,000 crores for the **designing and manufacturing of semiconductor chips in the country.** The amount has been sanctioned for an ambitious project named 'Programme for Development of Semiconductors and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem' and it will be spent over a span of six years.

Elaborating more on the semiconductor scheme in India, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that a historic decision has been taken in the field of Electronics in which the development of a complete ecosystem will take place in India. The country reached USD 75 billion in electronic manufacturing in 7 years and in the next 6 years, it will reach USD 300 billion.

An ambitious project to establish a complete ecosystem of semiconductors and display manufacturing has been sanctioned. Rs 76,000 crores will be spent on this project in 6 years: Union Minister Anurag Thakur pic.twitter.com/AMzjJ4PO63

— ANI (@ANI) December 15, 2021

Semiconductor scheme in India: Significance

The Government's move to approve the budget for the manufacturing and designing of semiconductors in India will help the country in being self-reliant in electronics manufacturing.

It will also result in massive Semiconductor investment in India and will result in 35,000 specialized jobs apart from the indirect employment for one lakh people.

Semiconductor scheme in India: Details

As Rs. 76,000 crores have been approved for the development of the semiconductors and display manufacturing ecosystem, the incentives have already been lined up for the firms that are engaged in silicon semiconductor fabs, display fabs, silicon photonics, compound semiconductors, semiconductor packaging, and design, sensors fabs.

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Also, with the semiconductor incentive scheme already in place, the Government of India expects investments in semiconductors of around Rs. 1.7 lakh crores and 1.3 lakh jobs in the next 4 years.

Under Government's semiconductor scheme, at least two greenfield semiconductor fabs and two display fabs in India, while at least 15 units of semiconductor packaging are also expected to be established.

What is semiconductor?

A semiconductor material has an electrical conductivity falling between that of a conductor such as an insulator, glass, and metallic copper.

What are semiconductors used in?

They are employed in the manufacture of various kinds of electronic devices, including transistors, diodes, and integrated circuits. Such devices have also found wide applications because of their reliability, compactness, low cost, and power efficiency.

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Cabinet approves proposal to raise legal marriage age of women from 18 to 21 years

Marriage age of women: Union Cabinet on December 15, 2021 **cleared a bill to raise women's legal marriage age from 18 to 21 years** after reviewing a proposal from a specially constituted task force. The task force had made its recommendations after holding extensive consultations with experts and young adults, especially young women.

The present legal marriageable age for women is 18 years and for men it is 21 years. The decision to raise the marriageable age of women will bring the marriageable age of men and women at par. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had first announced this plan during his Independence Day address in 2020.

As per reports, following the cabinet's approval of the proposal of raising the marriageable age of women, the centre is expected to introduce an amendment to the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 and consequently bring amendments to the Special Marriage Act and personal laws such as the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.

Jaya Jaitly Task Force

The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development had set up the special task force in June 2020 to examine various matters pertaining to the age of motherhood, lowering Maternal Mortality rates, improving nutritional and other related issues.

After reviewing all matters, the task force submitted its recommendations to Niti Aayog. The task force had received some objections from certain quarters.

Headed by Jaya Jaitly, the task force comprises Niti Aayog member Dr. V K Paul and Secretaries of the Women and Child Department, Health and Education ministries and of the Legislative Department.

The task force was constituted to look at the feasibility of increasing the marriage age and its implication on women and child health and how to increase access to education for women.

Task Force recommendations

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Besides raising the marriageable age of women to 21 years, the task force has recommended sex education to be formalised and introduced in the school curriculum.

It has also recommended training of women in polytechnic institutes, skills and business training and livelihood enhancement as a means to ensure that an increase in marriageable age can be implemented.

Why was the task force formed?

The government decided to form the task force to re-examine marriage age for women due to various reasons including to reduce Maternal Mortality Rate, infant mortality rate and improve overall health and mental wellbeing of women and their children and for the empowerment of women who get cut off from education and livelihood after early marriage.

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Army Chief Gen Naravane assumes charge as Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee

Chief of staff Committee India: Indian Army Chief Gen MM Naravane has taken charge as the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee comprising the three service chiefs. The post of the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee had fallen vacant after the death of the Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat in the IAF helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu on December 8, 2021.

Army Chief Gen MM Naravane has been appointed as the current Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee because of his seniority among the three service Chiefs. The Chief of Indian Air Force V R Chaudhari and the Chief of Indian Navy Admiral R Hari Kumar took over their respective positions on September 30 and November 30, 2021.

Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee: MM Naravane

MM Naravane is the current Chief of the Army Staff and the 58th Chairman of the Chiefs Staff Committee. Naravane took over as the Chief of Army Staff from Gen Bipin Rawat after the latter completed his term and was appointed as India's first Chief of Defence Staff.

Before his appointment as the Army Staff Chief, Naravane served as the 40th Vice Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army, General Officer Commanding in chief of Army Training Command, and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Command.

In June 1980, MM Naravane was commissioned into the 7th Battalion The Sikh Light Infantry.

Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee:

The Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee was the head of the Indian Armed Forces. The appointment of senior-most Chief of Staff was made to serve as a Chairman until he retired.

After the creation of Chief of Defence Staff, CDS became the permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Before that senior-most of the three Chiefs used to be the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

About Chiefs of Staff Committee

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The Chiefs of Staff Committee consists of the most senior military personnel. They advise on the operational military matters as well as on the preparation and conduct of the military operations. The Chiefs of Staff Committee consists of the heads of each branch of the armed forces: Chief of Air Staff, Chief of Naval Staff, and Chief of Army.

Chiefs of Staff Committee consists of CDS who is the Chairman and the professional head of the forces. The establishment of the Chiefs of Staff Committee goes back to the outbreak of World War II in 1939.

List of Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee (1947-2021)

Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee	Year
General Sir Robert Mcgregor Macdonald Lockhart	August to December 1947
Air Marshal Sir Thomas Elmhirst	December 1947 to January 1949
Admiral Sir William Edward Parry	January 1950 to October 1951
General Kodandera Madappa Cariappa	October 1951 to January 1953
Admiral Sir Charles Thomas Mark Pizey	January 1953 to July 1955
Air Marshal Subroto Mukherjee	July 1955 to November 1960
General Kodandera Subayya Thimayya	November 1960 to May 1961
Vice Admiral Ram Dass Katari	May 1961 to June 1962
Air Marshal Aspy Marwan Engineer	June 1962 to July 1964
Vice Admiral Bhaskar Sadashiv Soman	July 1964 to March 1966
General Jayanto Nath Chaudhari	March 1966 to June 1966
Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh	June 1966 to July 1969
Admiral Adhar Kumar Chatterji	July 1969 to February 1970
Field Marshal Manekshaw	February 1970 to January 1973
General Gopal Gurunath Bewoor	January 1973 to January 1975
Air Chief Marshal Om Prakash Mehra	January 1975 to January 1976
Admiral Sourendra Nath Kohli	January 1976 to February 1976

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General Tapishwar Narain Raina	February 1976 to May 1978
Air Chief Marshal Hrushikesh Moolgavkar	May 1978 to August 1978
Admiral Jal Cursetji	August 1978 to March 1979
General Om Prakash Malhotra	March 1979 to May 1981
Air Chief Marshal Idris Hasan Latif	May 1981 to August 1981
Admiral Ronald Lynsdale Pereira	August 1981 to February 1982
General Kotikalapudi Venkata Krishna Rao	March 1982 to July 1983
Air Chief Marshal Dilbagh Singh	July 1983 to September 1984
Admiral Oscar Stanley Dawson	September 1984 to November 1984
General Arun Shridhar Vaidya	December 1984 to January 1986
Admiral Radhakrishna Hariram Tahiliani	February 1986 to November 1987
Air Chief Marshal Denis La Fontaine	December 1987 to July 1988
Admiral Jayant Ganpat Nadkarni	July 1988 to November 1990
Air Chief Marshal Surinder Mehra	December 1990 to July 1991
General Sunith Francis Rodrigues	August 1991 to June 1993
Admiral Laxminarayan Ramdas	July 1993 to September 1993
General Bipin Chandra Joshi	October 1993 to November 1994
Air Chief Marshal Swaroop Krishna Kaul	November 1994 to December 1995
Admiral Vijay Singh Shekhawat	December 1995 to September 1996
General Shankar Roychowdhury	January 1996 to September 1997
Air Chief Marshal Satish Sareen	October 1997 to December 1998
General Ved Prakash Malik	January 1999 to September 2000
Admiral Sushil Kumar	October 2000 to December 2001
General Sundararajan Padmanabhan	December 2001 to December 2002

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Admiral Madhvendra Singh	December 2002 to July 2004
Air Chief Marshal Srinivasapuram Krishnaswamy	July 2004 to December 2004
General Nirmal Chander Vij	December 2004 to January 2005
Admiral Arun Prakash	January 2005 to October 2006
Air Chief Marshal Shashindra Pal Tyagi	October 2006 to March 2007
General Joginder Jaswant Singh	March 2007 to September 2007
Admiral Sureesh Mehta	September 2007 to August 2009
General Deepak Kapoor	August 2009 to March 2010
Air Chief Marshal Pradeep Vasant Naik	March 2010 to July 2011
Admiral Nirmal Kumar Verma	July 2011 to August 2012
Air Chief Marshal Norman Anil Kumar Browne	August 2012 to December 2013
General Bikram Singh	December 2013 to July 2014
Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha	July 2014 to December 2016
Admiral Sunil Lamba	December 2016 to May 2019
Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa	May 2019 to September 2019
General Bipin Rawat	September 2019 to December 2021
General MM Naravane	December 2021

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Durga Puja in Kolkata on UNESCO list

Durga Puja in Kolkata has been included by UNESCO in its representative list of **'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'.** It is now among the 14 Indian elements on the ICH list.

UNESCO tweeted, "Durga puja is now inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity! 14 ICH elements from India have been inscribed on this list by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage."

PM Narendra Modi tweeted that it is a matter of great pride and joy for every Indian. He said that 'Durga Puja highlights the best of our traditions and ethos. "Kolkata Durga Puja is an experience everyone must have," PM Modi added.

A matter of great pride and joy for every Indian!

Durga Puja highlights the best of our traditions and ethos. And, Kolkata’s Durga Puja is an experience everyone must have. https://t.co/DdRBcTGGs9

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 15, 2021

Durga Puja

• Durga Puja is a major annual festival celebrated most notably in Kolkata, West Bengal, in September or October month. The ten-day festival is also celebrated in other parts of India as well among the Bengali diaspora.

• The festival is held to worship Goddess Durga. Several months before the festival, small artisanal workshops make sculptures of Goddess Durga and her family-Lakshmi, Ganesh, Saraswati and Kartik -using unfired clay from the river bed of the Ganga River.

• The worship of Goddess Durga begins on the inaugural day of Mahalaya, when eyes are painted on the clay scuptures to bring the goddess to life. The scuptures are immersed in the river from where the clay came from on the tenth day of the festival, also known as Vijay Dashami.

• The festival symbolises ‘home-coming’ or return to one’s roots. The Durga Puja is the best instance of the public display of culture and art. It serves as a thriving ground for collaborative artists and designers.

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• The Durga Puja is celebrated by setting up of large-scale installations and pavilions in urban areas. People from all walks of life, culture and ethnicity come to admire the installations in the Durga Puja Pandal.

Significance of Durga Puja

Durga Puja is revered as the celebration of compassion, humanity, art and culture and during the festival time, the city of Kolkata is brightly lit with the decoration of colourful lights.

About UNESCO

UNESCO full form- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNESCO Director General- Audrey Azoulay, France (2017–present)

UNESCO, the cultural arm of the United Nations, seeks to build peace and bring together people and nations through international cooperation in education, sciences and culture. The UNESCO's programmes aim to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in the 2030 Agenda, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

UNESCO was established in 1945 as a successor of the League of Nations' International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. UNESCO's founding mission is to advance peace, sustainable development and human rights by facilitating collaboration and dialogue among nations.
UNESCO Intangible Heritage list

What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?

Intangible cultural heritage includes traditions or living expressions inherited from ancestors such as oral traditions, performing arts, rituals, social practices, festive events and knowledge and practices concerning nature, universe or traditional crafts. As per UNESCO, fragile, intangible cultural heritage is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the wake of growing globalization and an understanding of the intangible heritage of different communities helps build intercultural dialogue and also encourages mutual respect for each other.

Intangible Cultural Heritage list 2021

Al-Qudoud al-Halabiya	Syrian Arab Republic
Arabic calligraphy:	Saudi Arabia – Algeria – Bahrain – Egypt – Iraq – Jordan – Kuwait –

knowledge, skills and practices	Lebanon – Mauritania – Morocco – Oman – Palestine – Sudan – Tunisia – United Arab Emirates – Yemen
Art of Xòe dance of the Tai people in Viet Nam	Viet Nam
Ceebu Jën, a culinary art of Senegal	Senegal
Community festivities in Campo Maior	Portugal
Congolese rumba	Democratic Republic of the Congo – Congo
Dances and expressions associated with the Corpus Christi Festivity	Panama
Durga Puja in Kolkata	India
Dutar making craftsmanship and traditional music performing art combined with singing	Turkmenistan
Falak	Tajikistan
Falconry, a living human heritage	United Arab Emirates – Austria – Belgium – Croatia – Czechia – France – Germany – Hungary – Ireland – Italy – Kazakhstan – Republic of Korea – Kyrgyzstan – Mongolia – Morocco – Netherlands – Pakistan – Poland – Portugal – Qatar – Saudi Arabia – Slovakia – Spain – Syrian Arab Republic
Festive cycle around the devotion and worship towards Saint John the Baptist	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Fjiri	Bahrain
Gamelan	Indonesia

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Grand Festival of Tarija	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
Hüsn-i Hat, traditional calligraphy in Islamic art in Turkey	Turkey
Inuit drum dancing and singing	Denmark
Kaustinen fiddle playing and related practices and expressions	Finland
L-Gana, a Maltese folksong tradition	Malta
Malagasy Kabary, the Malagasy oratorical art	Madagascar
Moutya	Seychelles
Nora, dance drama in southern Thailand	Thailand
Nordic clinker boat traditions	Denmark – Finland – Iceland – Norway – Sweden
Pasillo, song and poetry	Ecuador
Pottery-related values, knowledge, lore and practices of the Awajún people	Peru
Songket	Malaysia
Tbourida	Morocco
The art of embroidery in Palestine, practices, skills, knowledge and rituals	Palestine

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Traditional craft skills and arts of Al-Naoor	Iraq
Traditional craftsmanship of making Dumbara Rat Kalla	Sri Lanka
Visoko multipart singing from Dolen and Satovcha, South-western Bulgaria	Bulgaria

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of India	
2021	Durga Puja in Kolkata
2017	Kumbh Mela
2016	Yoga Nawrouz, Novruz, Nowrouz, Nowrouz, Nawrouz, Nauryz, Nooruz, Nowruz, Navruz, Nevruz, Nowruz, Navruz
2014	Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab
2013	Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur
2012	Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir
2010	Chhau dance Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala

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2009	Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas
2008	Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana Tradition of Vedic chanting

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Morning Current Affairs: 16 December 2021

UNESCO includes Durga Puja in Kolkata on 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity' list

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on December 15, 2021 included "Durga Puja in Kolkata" on the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity". A total of 14 ICH elements from India have been inscribed on the list by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Virat Kohli confirms availability for India's ODI series in South Africa

Indian Test skipper Virat Kohli squashed all the rumours on December 15, 2021 by confirming his availability for the ODI series in South Africa. India will be touring South Africa for three tests and three ODIs, which will take place between December 26-January 23, 2021 across four venues. While India's test squad for the series has been announced, the ODI squad is yet to be announced. There were reports that Kohli has requested to be rested for the ODI series but the player cleared this during his press conference saying that he is very much available for selection and that he didn't have any communication with the BCCI to ask for rest.

Steve Smith to lead Australia in second Ashes Series, Pat Cummins out after COVID scare

Australia Test skipper Pat Cummins has been ruled out of the second Ashes Test against England after being deemed a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19. Cummins isolated himself as soon as he was detected to be close contact and has had a PCR test, which had come out negative. Cummins will still need to isolate for seven days and as a result, he will not be able to play in the second Ashes Test match in Adelaide. He is anticipated to be available for the third Ashes Test. Steve Smith will captain the Australian cricket team in the second test in Cummins' absence. and Travis Head will be the Vice-Captain.

PM Modi to participate in 'Swarnim Vijay Mashaals' reception ceremony at War Memorial today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the reception ceremony of 'Swarnim Vijay Mashaals' at the National War Memorial in New Delhi on December 16, 2021. This is a part of the Swarnim Vijay Varsh Celebrations to commemorate 50 years of India's victory in the 1971 war against Pakistan and the formation of Bangladesh. PM Modi had lit the Swarnim Vijay Mashaal from the Eternal Flame at the National War Memorial on December 16, 2020. He had also lit four

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flames that were to traverse along with different directions and since then, the four flames have traversed across the country including Siachen, Kanyakumari, Rann of Kutch, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Longewala and Agartala. The flames were also taken to the houses of gallantry award winners and 1971 war veterans and key battle areas. These four flames will again be merged with the Eternal Flame at the National War Memorial today by PM Modi.

Tamil Nadu, West Bengal report first Omicron case

Tamil Nadu reported its first case Omicron COVID-19 case on December 15, 2021 after a 47-year-old tested positive for the variant after returning from Nigeria. West Bengal also reported its first Omicron case after a seven-year-old boy from Murshidabad district tested positive. Maharashtra has so far reported 32 Omicron cases. Delhi also reported 4 new infections recently.

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Vijay Diwas 2021: History, Significance; Know what happened on December 16 in India?

16 December Vijay Diwas: Vijay Diwas in India is celebrated annually on December 16 to commemorate the country's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war leading to the creation of Bangladesh. India on Vijay Diwas 2021 pays homage to the soldiers who fought bravely during the war which ultimately helped the Indian Armed Forces in establishing their prowess. Vijay Diwas on December 16, 2021, marks the 50th-anniversary celebrations of India's glorified victory over Pakistan in the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation war. Vijay Diwas in India is not only a day of India's victory over Pakistan during the 1971 Indo-Pak war but is also a day that played a crucial role in establishing strong relations between India and Bangladesh.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Vijay Diwas 2021, Prime Minister Modi via tweet recalled the sacrifice made during the Indo-Pak 1971 war. He also added that both India and Bangladesh forces, together, fought and defeated the oppressive forces.

On the 50th Vijay Diwas, I recall the great valour and sacrifice by the Muktijoddhas, Biranganas and bravehearts of the Indian Armed Forces. Together, we fought and defeated oppressive forces. Rashtrapati Ji's presence in Dhaka is of special significance to every Indian.

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 16, 2021

Vijay Diwas 2021: What happened on December 16, 1971?

On December 16, 1971, India won a war against Pakistan after fighting for 13 days. The struggle for the Independence of East Pakistan began on December 3, 1971, which ended on December 16 with the unconditional surrender of the Pakistani Army.

India played a crucial role in Bangladesh Liberation War. The 1971 Indo-Pakistani war was a military confrontation that took place between the two nations during a Bangladesh Liberation war in East Pakistan from December 3 to December 16, 2021.

The then Major-General in the Pakistani Army, Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi announced to surrender to the joint forces of India and Bangladesh Mukti Bahini. He surrendered with the 93,000 Pakistani troops and also signed the Instrument of Surrender in Dacca (now Dhaka, the Capital of

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Bangladesh).

Bangladesh Liberation War: What was the reason behind the war and what was India's role?

Bangladesh liberation in 1971 was an armed conflict that was sparked by the rise of Bengali Nationalists in then East Pakistan. The Liberation war in Bangladesh started when the Pakistani military based in West Pakistan launched Operation Searchlight in March 1971 to pursue the systematic elimination of nationalist Bengali civilians in East Pakistan.

India joined the 1971 war after Pakistan launched airstrikes in North India. However, with the rapid alliance of allied forces of the Indian Military and Bangladesh's Mukti Bahini, the Pakistani Army was forced to surrender on December 16, 1971, leading to the creation of Bangladesh.

Vijay Diwas 2021: 5 things to know about Indo-Pak war

1. The conflict that sparked the Bangladesh Liberation War in East Pakistan was because of West Pakistan's ill-treatment of Bengali nationalists residing in East Pakistan.

2. The war between India and Pakistan in 1971 started because of the preemptive airstrike by Pakistan on North India.

3. On the night of December 4-5, 1971, the Western Naval Command of the Indian Navy successfully conducted a surprise attack on the Karachi port under the codename Trident.

4. The Mukti Bahini guerrillas in East Pakistan fighting for the Bangladesh Liberation war joined hand with the Indian Armed Forces to fight against the Pakistani troops in the east. Mukti Bahini also received weapons and training from the Indian Army.

5. The Soviet Union in the 1971 war sided with East Pakistanis and India in their Liberation movement. While, the United States, under the Presidency of Richard Nixon supported Pakistan during the 1971 Indo-Pak war materially and economically.

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Ramanujan Prize 2021: Neena Gupta becomes fourth Indian mathematician to win coveted Maths award

Ramanujan Prize 2021: Indian Mathematician Neena Gupta became the fourth Indian and third woman to win Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians 2021. Gupta was honoured with the 2021 DST-ICTP-IMU Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians from developing countries.

Neena Gupta is a mathematician at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata. She has won the Ramanujan Prize 2021 for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.

The 2021 Ramanujan Prize is jointly awarded by the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (Trieste, Italy), International Mathematical Union (IMU) and the department of science and technology under the Government of India.

Neena Gupta

•Neena Gupta is the fourth Indian to have won the Ramanujan prize. Three of the winners are faculty members of the ISI.

•She had received the prize for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.

•She was previously awarded the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for science and technology in 2019.

•She had also won the Young Scientists Award of the Indian National Science Academy in 2014 for her solution to the Zariski cancellation problem for affine spaces, which was a fundamental problem in Algebraic Geometry.

•Her solution has been described as one of the best works in the recent history of geometry anywhere in the world.

•Neena Gupta had developed a keen interest in mathematics from a very young age. She had

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done her schooling from Khalsa High School in Dunlop.

•She had joined Kolata's Bethune College for graduation and had completed her master's and doctoral degrees from ISI.

•She had joined Indian Statistical Institute as a faculty member soon after.

Ramanujan Prize

The Ramanujan Prize is given internationally to young mathematicians under the age of 45 years for outstanding work in the field.

The Ramanujan Prize award was established in 2004. The first recipient of the award was Brazilian mathematician Marcello Viana in 2005. The awards jury comprises eminent mathematicians from around the globe.

Besides Neena Gupta, the two other Indian mathematicians who won the Ramanujan Prize from ISI include- Ritabrata Munshi and Amalendu Krishna.

The Ramanujan Prize is conferred in the memory of ace mathematician Srinivasa Ramajuna Iyengar who made an immense contribution to mathematics in topics such as analytical theory of numbers and also worked on elliptic functions.

Ramanujan Prize Winners

2005 -Marcelo Viana, Brazil

2006 -Ramdorai Sujatha, India

2007 -Jorge Lauret, Argentina

2008 -Enrique Pujals, Argentina/Brazil

2009 -Ernesto Lupercio, Mexico

2010 -Shi Yuguang, China

2011 -Philibert Nang, Gabon

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2012 -Fernando Codá Marques, Brazil

2013 -Tian Ye, China

2014 -Miguel Walsh, Argentina

2015 -Amalendu Krishna, India

2016 -Chenyang Xu, China

2017 -Eduardo Teixeira, Brazil

2018 -Ritabrata Munshi, India

2019 -Hoàng Hip Phm (vi), Vietnam

2020 -Carolina Araujo, Brazil

2021 -Neena Gupta, India

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India’s first green hydrogen-based microgrid project in Andhra Pradesh

NTPC green hydrogen: National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Limited, a state-run power giant, announced on February 15, 2021, that it has awarded **a standalone fuel-cell based green hydrogen microgrid project at Simhadri in Andhra Pradesh.** A statement by Power Ministry stated that a project of fuel-cell-based Micro-grid with hydrogen production using electrolyzer in NTPC guest house has been awarded at Simhadri (near Vishakhapatnam).

India’s first green hydrogen-based microgrid project is in line with PM Modi’s vision of the country becoming carbon neutral by 2070 and for making Ladakh a carbon-neutral territory.

India’s first and one of the world’s largest #GreenHydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up at NTPC Simhadri, Visakhapatnam@OfficeOfRKSingh @mnreindia @MinOfPower @power_pib @RajKSinghIndia @CMDNTPC @PIB_India @PSUSCOPE pic.twitter.com/uHdPgSAnAH

— NTPC Limited (@ntpclimited) December 15, 2021

India’s first hydrogen-based microgrid project: Significance

The green hydrogen-based microgrid project will also be India’s first green hydrogen-based energy storage project and one of the largest in the world.

The green hydrogen project at Simhadri in Andhra Pradesh will be a precursor to large-scale hydrogen energy storage projects and will facilitate studying and deploying multiple microgrids in various off-grid and strategic locations in India.

First hydrogen-based microgrid project in Andhra Pradesh: Details

The hydrogen at India’s first hydrogen-based microgrid project will be produced using the advanced 240 kW Solid Oxide Electrolyser by taking the input power from the nearby floating solar project.

The hydrogen which will be produced during sunshine hours will be stored at high pressure and will be electrified using a 50 kW Solid Oxide Fuel Cell. As per the official notification, the system will work in standalone mode from 5 PM in the evening to 7 AM in the morning.

How first hydrogen-based microgrid project in AP will affect far-off regions?

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The configuration of the unique hydrogen-based microgrid project in Andhra Pradesh has been designed in-house by NTPC.

The hydrogen project in Andhra Pradesh is a unique project for the country and will open doors for decarbonizing the far-off regions of India such as Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, etc, hitherto dependent on diesel generators.

National Thermal Power Corporation

The present installed capacity of the state-run power giant is 67,907.5 MW comprising of 47 NTPC stations and 26 joint ventures stations.

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Death Anniversary: PM Modi pays tribute-Know all about the legacy of Iron Man of India

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel death anniversary: Prime Minister Narendra Modi remembered **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on his 71st death anniversary** on December 15, 2021. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was India's first deputy Prime Minister and was popularly known as 'Iron Man of India'. He played a key role in the Indian freedom movement, especially in unifying India post-independence.

Tributes poured in from leading dignitaries including the Prime Minister and Vice President of India on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's death anniversary. PM Modi tweeted, "Remembering Sardar Patel on his Punya Tithi. India will always be grateful to him for his monumental service, his administrative skills and the untiring efforts to unite our nation.

Remembering Sardar Patel on his Punya Tithi. India will always be grateful to him for his monumental service, his administrative skills and the untiring efforts to unite our nation.

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 15, 2021

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu tweeted, "Remembering the iconic freedom fighter, 'Iron Man of India' #SardarVallabhbhaiPatel on his Punya Tithi today. He was a towering statesman and an illustrious leader who cared deeply for the welfare of the farmers and worked incessantly for the uplift of the downtrodden."

The Vice President also hailed Sardar Patel's monumental role in the peaceful integration of over 560 princely states by calling him the ' Unifier of India'."His legendary life continues to inspire every Indian to work towards strengthening the unity & integrity of the nation and eliminating social evils from society," VP Naidu added.

The 'Unifier of India', Sardar Patel played a monumental role in the peaceful integration of over 560 princely states. His legendary life continues to inspire every Indian to work towards strengthening the unity & integrity of the nation and eliminating social evils from society.

— Vice President of India (@VPSecretariat) December 15, 2021

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Death Anniversary/ Punyatithi: 15 December

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Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Death

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had passed away on December 15, 1950 in Bombay after suffering a massive heart attack. His health had been on deteriorating throughout the summer of 1950. His meetings and working hours had been limited after he began coughing blood. He was confined to bed after November 2nd when he began losing consciousness frequently. He was flown to Bombay to recuperate after his condition was deemed critical on December 12.

Sardar Patel was seen off at the Delhi airport by the then Governor-General of India - C Rajagopalachari, President Rajendra Prasad and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Morarji Desai and Bombay Chief Minister B. G. Kher received him at the airport in Bombay and he was taken to Birla House in Bombay. He breathed his last there after suffering a massive heart attack.

Following his death, over 1500 India's civil and police services officers gathered to mourn his passing at his Delhi residence and pledged their complete loyalty and unremitting zeal in India's service in an unprecedented gesture.

A week of national mourning was declared then by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to pay homage to the late leader. He was cremated at Sonapur, respecting his wish to be cremated like a common man in the same place as his wife and brother. His cremation was attended by a crowd of one million including PM Jawaharlal Nehru, Governor-General Rajagopalachari and President Rajendra Prasad.

Why is Sardar Patel called the Unifier of India?

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel served as the first deputy Prime Minister of India from 1947 to 1950. He had also served as the acting Home Minister during the political integration of India post Independence and the 1947 Indo-Pakistani War.

He is called the 'unifier of India' as he had played a key role in the integration of all princely states into the Indian Union. The British mission had proposed two plans for transfer of power, one of which was the plan of 16 May 1946, which proposed a loose federation with extensive provincial autonomy and grouping of provinces based on religious majority.

The plan proposed the partition of India on religious lines and the **565 princely states** were given the option to join either India or Pakistan or remain independent. The plan was accepted after much deliberation and criticism.

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Several Indian nationalists feared that if these princely states did not accede to the Indian Union then most of the people and territory would be fragmented. It was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who took charge of the integration of the princely states into India. This is why he is remembered as a 'unifier of India'.

Patel was considered as the best man for the task of achieving conquest of the princely states by the Indian dominion. Patel persuaded the princes of 565 states by proposing favourable terms for the merger including the creation of privy purses for the rulers' descendants. He did not rule out of force but encouraged the rulers to act out of patriotism.

He had set the deadline of **August 15, 1947** for all the princely states to sign the instrument of accession document. Besides three princely states- Jammu and Kashmir, Junagadh, and Hyderabad, all others willingly merged with the Indian Union.

Hyderabad was the largest of all princely states and it includes parts of present-day Telangana, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. Junagarh was in Patel's home state of Gujarat. The Nawab of Junagadh had acceded to Pakistan under pressure from Naaz Bhutto but it was located far from Pakistan and its 80 percent population was Hindu. Junagadh was taken over by India by combining diplomacy with force under the directions of Patel.

Hyderabad was also similarly integrated into the Indian Union taken by force under Operation Polo. Patel had insisted that allowing Hyderabad to continue as an independent nation surrounded by India would have not made either Hindus or Muslims in the state feel secure.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Statue- Statue of Unity

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Statue- **Statue of Unity** was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on October 31, 2018, on Patel 143rd birth anniversary. The project was first announced in 2010 and the construction had began in October 2013. The Statue of Unity is the world's tallest statue with a height of 182 metres. It is located on the Narmada River in Kevadiya colony in Gujarat.

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IAF Chopper Crash: Group Captain Varun Singh, sole survivor of Tamil Nadu chopper crash, passes away

Tamil Nadu chopper crash: Group Captain Varun, the only survivor of the Tamil Nadu Chopper Crash passed away on December 15, 2021. The news of his demise was confirmed by the Indian Air Force via tweet. The helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu on December 8, 2021, also led to the **tragic demise of India's first CDS Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat, and 11 other officials.**

IAF is deeply saddened to inform the passing away of braveheart Group Captain Varun Singh, who succumbed this morning to the injuries sustained in the helicopter accident on 08 Dec 21. IAF offers sincere condolences and stands firmly with the bereaved family.

— Indian Air Force (@IAF_MCC) December 15, 2021

Group Captain Varun Singh was rescued after the IAF chopper crash in Tamil Nadu on December 8 that killed CDS Bipin Rawat. Group Captain Singh was being treated at the Bengaluru Military Hospital after he was moved from Wellington in Coonoor, Tamil Nadu. Group Captain Varun Singh was on life support.

Prime Minister Modi extended his condolences on the passing of Group Captain Varun Singh to his grieving family. PM Modi noted that Group Captain Varun Singh had served the nation with pride, valour and utmost professionalism, and his rich service to the nation will never be forgotten.

Group Captain Varun Singh served the nation with pride, valour and utmost professionalism. I am extremely anguished by his passing away. His rich service to the nation will never be forgotten. Condolences to his family and friends. Om Shanti.

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 15, 2021

Group Captain Varun Singh- Sole survivor of IAF Chopper crash

Group Captain Varun Singh was the sole survivor of the IAF chopper crash that led to the tragic death of India's first CDS Bipin Rawat along with 12 other officials. After declaring the deaths of all the officials, except Group captain Varun Singh, the Indian Air Force informed that Singh was

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being treated at a hospital in Tamil Nadu.

Singh had sustained serious injuries and was on life support. Later, he was airlifted to the hospital in Bengaluru and had survived the night. Even though Singh was reported to be critical, his health was better than before. On December 15, 2021, he succumbed to the injuries and passed away.

Also Read: **IAF Helicopter crashes in India- Find here list of Prominent Indians who died in military chopper crash**

Group Captain Varun Singh Biography

Group Captain Varun Singh was a Group Captain in the Indian Air Force. He served as the directing staff of the Defence Services Staff College in Wellington, Tamil Nadu.

Group Captain Varun Singh: Defence Career

Varun Singh joined the Indian Defence Services after he cleared the NDA exam in 2004. In the Indian Air Force, Varun Singh was a test pilot with the Light Combat Aircraft Squadron in IAF in Bengaluru. In 2017, Varun Singh was appointed to the Wing Commander and was recently promoted to the Group Captain of Indian Air Force.

Group Captain Varun Singh: Awards and Honours

Varun Singh was conferred with Shaurya Chakra on August 15, 2021, by President Ram Nath Kovind. Singh was then the Wing Commander with the Tejas Fighter Squadron of the Indian Air Force.

Group Captain Varun Singh was decorated with Shaurya Chakra for his presence of mind and courage in controlling the Tejas fighter during a mid-air emergency that had occurred on October 12, 2020.

Group Captain Varun Singh: Death

Varun Singh was a passenger who was accompanying the Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat who was enroute to make a speech to the military students and the staff at the DSSC when the IAF Mi-17V5 helicopter crashed near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu.

IAF Chopper Crash: Background

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A Mil Mi-17V-5 transport helicopter which was operated by the Indian Air Force was crashed on December 8, 2021, between Coimbatore and Wellington in Tamil Nadu. The chopper was carrying India's first Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat and 13 other officials, including his wife Madhulika Rawat and staff.

All the people on board the chopper were killed except Group Captain Varun Singh, who later succumbed to the injuries on December 15, 2021.

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NASA's Spacecraft Touches Solar Atmosphere for First Time in History

Nasa news about sun: NASA's spacecraft has done what was once imaginable. Parker Solar Probe by NASA on April 28, 2021 successfully entered the Corona of the Sun which is an extreme environment that's roughly 2 million degrees Fahrenheit. A historic moment of touching the sun for the very first time was achieved because of a large collaboration of scientists and the engineers, including the members of the Center for Astrophysics I Harvard & Smithsonian who had built and monitor a key instrument on the board the probe- **the Solar Probe Cup.**

NASA while announcing the news on Twitter wrote that 'Parker Solar Probe' touched the Sun. It also added that for the very first time in history, a spacecraft has flown through the Sun's atmosphere, the Corona.

Our #ParkerSolarProbe has touched the Sun!

For the first time in history, a spacecraft has flown through the Sun's atmosphere, the corona. Here's what it means: https://t.co/JOPdn7GTcv

#AGU21 pic.twitter.com/qOdEdIRyaS

— NASA (@NASA) December 14, 2021

Parker Solar Probe Mission: Why the solar mission is significant?

The goal of NASA's Parker Solar Probe Mission is to learn how the Sun works and as per the scientists it can be accomplished by flying into the solar atmosphere.

The only way to learn more about the workings of the Sun is through the spacecraft to cross the outer boundary which is also called the Alfven point. A basic part of the Solar mission was to be able to measure whether or not this critical point can be crossed.

NASA's spacecraft enters Corona of the sun: What is Corona?

The Corona is the outermost layer of the Sun's atmosphere where the strong magnetic fields bind the plasma and prevents the turbulent solar winds from escaping.

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The Alfven Point is when the solar winds go beyond a critical speed and break free of the Corona as well as the magnetic fields of the Sun. Before April 28, a spacecraft had been flying just beyond this point.

Michael Stevens, an astrophysicist further explained that if one looks up at the close-up pictures of the Sun, they can see these bright loops or hairs that seem to break free from the Sun but then reconnects with it. That's the region that the Parker Solar Probe has flown into- an area where the atmosphere, plasma and wind are magnetically stuck and are interacting with the Sun.

Parker Solar Probe Mission: What do we know about Solar Probe Cup?

According to the instrument scientist of the Solar Probe Cup, it is itself an incredible achievement of engineering. As per the data collected by Solar Probe Cup of Parker Solar Probe Mission, the spacecraft had entered the Corona three times on April 28, 2021, at one point for up to five hours.

The amount of light hitting the Parker Solar Probe determined how hot the spacecraft will get. While much of the solar probe is protected by a heat shield, solar probe cup is one of the only two instruments that had stick out and have no protection.

The solar probe cup of NASA is directly exposed to the sunlight. It has the capacity of operating at a very high temperature while also making the measurements. In order to avoid degradation, a solar probe cup has been developed of materials that are capable of high melting points like niobium, tungsten, sapphire, and molybdenum.

NASA creates history by touching solar atmosphere for the first time

The success of NASA's Parker Solar Probe represents much more than technological innovation. There are still various mysteries around Sun and the scientists through the probe are expecting to solve them.

While giving the reference, scientists explained that no one still actually knows why the outer atmosphere of the Sun is so much hotter than the Sun itself. It is known that the energy comes from the churning magnetic fields bubbling through the surface of the sun, however, it is still unknown how the Sun's atmosphere absorbs this energy.

In addition, the outbursts from the Sun can also have a direct impact on the Earth. The Parker Solar Probe helps in the better understanding of all these phenomena. The solar probe will continue to orbit the Sun and take measurements.

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President Ram Nath Kovind's state visit to Bangladesh: Know in 7 Points

President Ram Nath Kovind embarked on his **three-day state visit to Bangladesh** on December 15, 2021. The President will participate in Bangladesh's 50th Victory Day celebrations at Dhaka. The visit will be from December 15-17

The Bangladesh Victory Day Parade will have a 122-member tri-services contingent from the Indian armed forces. This year's Victory Day celebrations commemorate the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence and 50 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Bangladesh.

This is President Ram Nath Kovind's first foreign trip since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Incidentally, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first foreign trip after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic was also to Bangladesh in March 2021 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh’s Independence and the birth centenary of its founder ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

#WATCH | Delhi: President Ram Nath Kovind leaves for Dhaka for a state visit to Bangladesh. He will attend Bangladesh's 50th Victory Day celebrations as the guest of honour.
pic.twitter.com/Zhs1SCBpwU

— ANI (@ANI) December 15, 2021

Read More-PM Modi to lay foundation stone of Ganga Expressway project on December 18

President Ram Nath Kovind's state visit to Bangladesh: 7 Key Points

1. President Ram Nath Kovind will hold a delegation-level meeting with Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid.

2. President is also scheduled to meet Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen.

3. Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid invited President Kovind to represent India as a guest of honour at the Bangladesh Victory Day Parade.

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4. He will be the only foreign dignitary to attend the Victory Day celebrations in such a capacity. The Victory Day Parade will have a 122-member tri-services contingent from India.

5. The President is also scheduled to interact with the Mukti Jodhas', the people of Bangladesh who took up arms to fight for the freedom of their country during his three-day state visit to Bangladesh. A delegation of Indian veterans will also meet the President.

6. President Ram Nath Kovind is also scheduled to visit the National Martyrs' Memorial and the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum.

7. The President's visit to Bangladesh will provide a new opportunity to renew India's bonds with Bangladesh. The visit is also an occasion to take note of the width, depth, vitality and dynamism of contemporary ties between the two nations.

Background

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, which paved the way for the creation of Bangladesh. On December 16, 1971, around 93,000 Pakistani troops had surrendered before the joint forces of the Indian Army and the "Mukti Bahini" of Bangladesh.

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PM Modi lays foundation stone of Ganga Expressway project

Ganga Expressway project: Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the **Ganga Expressway project** in Shahjahanpur district, Uttar Pradesh on December 19, 2021. The Prime Minister said during his inaugural address that the Ganga expressway will open new avenues of development to the region and for Jawan and Kisan of Uttar Pradesh this will be an expressway of infinite opportunities.

PM Modi said that the Ganga Expressway will open new doors of progress for Uttar Pradesh. It will not only connect western Uttar Pradesh to Eastern Uttar Pradesh but it will also connect directly to the national capital and reduce the travel time between Delhi and Bihar.

The 594 km long Ganga Expressway will also have an airstrip to facilitate emergency landing and take-off of Air Force aircraft. More than half of the expressway will pass through western UP's districts- Meerut, Bulandshahr, Sambhal, Budaun, Hapur, Amroha and Shahjahanpur.

The land purchase for the Ganga Expressway was done at a time when COVID-19 was at its peak in the whole country and despite this, 94 percent of the land was purchased from 83000 farmers in just one year.

Ganga Expressway Project: 10 Important Things to Know!

1. The Ganga Expressway is an approved 594 km-long, 6-lane wide greenfield expressway that will be built in Uttar Pradesh, India.

2. The phase-1 of the expressway is expected to connect Bijauli village on NH-334 in Meerut district with Judapur Dandu village on NH-19 in Prayagraj District.

3. Ganga Expressway will pass through 12 of UP's districts from west to east- Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Sambhal, Budaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, Raebareli, Pratapgarh and Prayagraj. Upon completion, it will become the longest expressway of Uttar Pradesh, connecting the western and eastern regions of the state.

4. The total construction work of 594 km long Phase-1 that will connect Meerut to Prayagraj has been divided into 12 different packages. Following are the 12 packages-

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5. The UP Government has decided to extend the project on either end that is connect Meerut to Haridwar and Prayagraj to Ballia through Varanasi. A detailed report for Phase-2 has not been prepared as of now.

6. A total of 7386 hectares of land is required for the project, of which over 90 percent of the land has been purchased from 71,621 farmers in the last four months.

7. In total, 94 percent of the land has been purchased from a total of 82,750 farmers.

8. Around 18,55,000 saplings will be planted along the Ganga expressway for environmental protection.

9. The energy required for the operation of the project will be produced through solar power on the land acquired in the project.

10. Around nine public convenience centres, 14 major bridges, seven railway overbridges, 381 underpasses and 126 minor bridges will be built for the convenience of the people.

Background

The Uttar Pradesh cabinet had met at Prayagraj and cleared the decks to construct the Ganga Expressway between Meerut and Prayagraj on January 29, 2019. The final approval came through on November 26, 2020 for Rs 36,230 crore.

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Indian-Origin Leena Nair named CEO of French Luxury brand Chanel

Chanel CEO: Leena Nair of Indian-origin has been appointed as the CEO of Chanel, a French Luxury Brand. Leena Nair's name is now added to the list of leaders of Indian origin who have acquired significant positions in top global firms. Leena Nair who was the Chief Human Resources Officer of Unilever will step down from the position in January 2022. Nair will join the globally famous French-Luxury brand- Chanel and will be based out of London. Leena Nair began her career at Hindustan Unilever as a management trainee 30 years ago. Later, she became the first woman on the management committee of Hindustan Unilever. **Parag Agrawal, an IIT-Bombay graduate**, is another name from India who was in news a few weeks ago for being appointed as the new CEO of social media giant Twitter based in the US.

I am humbled and honoured to be appointed the Global Chief Executive Officer of @CHANEL, an iconic and admired company.

— Leena Nair (@LeenaNairHR) December 14, 2021

Leena Nair at Unilever

The new global CEO of Chanel Leena Nair during her time at Unilever had progressed through the roles in sales, factories, and human resources. After three years as the head of leadership and organizational development in London, Nair in 2016 was appointed as the CHRO of Unilever. She was responsible for the company's 1,50,000 people across more than 100 countries globally. Leena Nair was also a member of the Unilever Leadership Executive.

CEO at Unilever, Alan Jope thanked Leena Nair for her outstanding contribution to Unilever over the last three decades. She played a critical role in building the purpose-led, future-fit organisation, which is now the employer of choice in over 50 countries globally.

Overwhelmed by the love and support my appointment as @CHANEL CEO has got. Thank you! Please trust that I am reading every comment, even if I don't reply to everyone individually.

— Leena Nair (@LeenaNairHR) December 14, 2021

Leena Nair education

Leena Nair was a student of Holy Cross Convent School in Kolhapur, Maharashtra. Before

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graduation from XLRI-Xavier Institute of Management as the Gold Medallist (1990-1992), Nair had studied electronics engineering at Walchand College of Engineering (Maharashtra).

Leena Nair: Awards and Recognition

Year	Awards
2021	Role Model of Year, The Great British Businesswoman's Awards
2021	Fortune India's Most Powerful Women's List
2020	Global Indian of the Year- The Economic Times'Prime Women Leadership Awards
2018-20	Linkedin Top Voice
2019	Thinkers50 List- Thinkers who will Shape the Future of Business
2017-2019	Top 10 List of FT HERoes Champions of Women in Business by the Financial Times
2017	Recognized by HRH Queen Elizabeth II as one of the accomplished Indian business leaders in the UK

About Chanel

A French Luxury Fashion House- Chanel was founded by "Coco" Chanel in 1910. The famous brand focuses on women's luxury goods, ready-to-wear clothes, and accessories. Chanel is well-known globally for the perfume Chanel No. 5 and the Chanel suit.

Chanel played a crucial role in revolutionizing fashion- both high fashion and everyday fashion. It replaced the structured silhouettes, based upon the bodice and corset, with garments that are functional as well as flattering to the women's figure.

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Morning Current Affairs: 15 December 2021

President Ram Nath Kovind leaves for Dhaka

President Ram Nath Kovind has left for a state visit to Bangladesh. He will be the guest of honour at Bangladesh's 50th Victory Day celebrations.

Read more here

Indian-origin Leena Nair appointed Global CEO of Chanel

Indian-origin Leena Nair has joined French luxury fashion house Chanel as its Global Chief Executive Officer. She was the first female and youngest-ever Chief Human Resources Officer of Anglo-Dutch company, Unilever. While making the switch, Leena Nair said that she is humbled and honoured to be appointed as the Global CEO of Chanel. She said that she is so inspired by what Chanel stands for and highlighted that it is a company that believes in freedom of creation and cultivating human potential.

Read more here

Term of ED Director extended to a maximum of 5 years

The Parliament on December 14, 2021 passed the Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Bill 2021 to extend the term of Enforcement Directorate (ED) Director to a maximum of 5 years. The bill seeks to amend the Central Vigilance Commission Act 2003. The ED Director is currently appointed for a term of two years. The centra had moved an ordinance on the same on November 14, 2021 that had received the President's assent as well. The bill repeals the Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Ordinance 2021.

SII to develop COVID vaccine booster shot more effective against Omicron

Serum Institute of India's CEO Adar Poonawalla said on December 14, 2021 that they are working towards developing a vaccine booster shot that is more effective against the new Omicron COVID variant. He said that booster shots are a proven strategy to increase antibodies against COVID-19. He also informed that vaccines for children above 3 years will be launched in the next 6 months.

PM Modi to lay foundation stone of Ganga Expressway Project in Shahjahanpur on

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December 18

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of the Ganga Expressway project in Shahjahanpur district on December 18, 2021. The 594 km long expressway will also have an airstrip for emergency landing and takeoff of Air Force aircraft. More than half of the expressway will pass through Uttar Pradesh's Meerut, Bulandshahr, Hapur, Amroha, Budaun, Sambhal and Shahjahanpur districts. It will connect eastern Uttar Pradesh to western Uttar Pradesh and will also connect with the National Capital Region.

Read more here

RBI introduces corrective action framework for NBFCs

The Reserve Bank of India on December 14, 2021 issued the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework for the Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs). The framework will come into effect from October 1, 2022 based on the financial position of NBFCs on or post-March 31, 2022. RBI said that a separate circular will be issued regarding the applicability of the framework to the government NBFCs.

Nepal PM Sher Bahadur Deuba wins Election of President of Nepali Congress

Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has won the election of the President of Nepali Congress during the party's General Convention. He won 2733 votes while his contender Shashank Koirala won 1855 votes out of the total 4623 votes. Out of the total votes, 35 votes had been cancelled for various reasons.

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First TOPS athletes list for 2024 Paris Olympics

TOPS athletes list: The first list of TOPS athletes for the 2024 Paris Olympics was finalised during a meeting of the Mission Olympic Cell of the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports on December 13, 2021. The list includes 148 athletes including 20 new names from seven Olympic disciplines and six Paralympic disciplines.

The athletes identified for support under the Target Olympic Podium belong to different sporting disciples including shooting, weightlifting, wrestling, sailing, swimming, sailing, cycling and table tennis. The list also includes Para athletes from para-sports including Athletics, Badminton, Swimming, Archery, Shooting and Table Tennis.

The list of TOPS athletes from sporting disciplines including Athletics, Archery, Badminton, Golf, Gymnastics, Judo, Boxing, Rowing, Tennis, Fennis and Equestrian will be decided in a meeting later this month.

The meeting of the Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) marks the formal beginning of planning and preparation for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. Around seven athletes have been elevated from the Khelo India Scheme and are among the new inductees in the TOPS athletes list.

Mission Olympic Cell

The recently-reconstituted Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) includes seven former athletes as new members. The Olympic cell has offered suggestions for preparations for the Paris Olympic Games to enable India to build on the gains made during Tokyo Olympics 2020 when it won 7 medals including one gold medal. The MOC is now scheduled to meet every fortnight to plan for the next Olympic Games.

First TOPS athletes list-

Shooting - Core Group: Divyansh Singh Panwar, Aishwary PratapTomar, Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma, ElavenilValarivan, AnjumMoudgil, Manu Bhaker and RahiSarnobatVijayveer Sidhu. Development Group: YasahwiniDeswal and Chinki Yadav, Niraj Kumar, Sartaj Singh Tiwana, Dhanush Srikanth, ShahuTushar Mane, Hriday Hazarika, RudrankkshBalasahebPatil, ParthMakhija, Anish Bhanwala, Adarsh Singh, Udayveer Sidhu, Sarabjot Singh, Naveen, Shiva

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Narwal, KynanChenai, LakshaySheoran, Vivaan Kapoor, Gurjoat Singh, N Gaayathri, Sunidhi Chauhan, Nishchal, AyushiPodder, Shreya Agarwal, ShriyankaSadarangi, ZeenaKhitta, Abhindnya Ashok Patil, Tejaswini, Esha Singh, Rhythm Sangwan, Kirti Gupta, Manisha Kheer, Darshana Rathore, Kartikki Singh Shaktawat, Areeba Khan; Swapnil Suresh Kusale, Arjun Babuta, Anantjeet Singh Naruka and NishaKanwar.

Wrestling - Core Group: Ravi Kumar, BajrangPunia, Deepak Punia, VineshPhogat, Anshu Malik and Sonam Malil. Development Group: Sunil Kumar, Ravi, Ravinder, GouravBaliyan, Sajan, Sanju Devi, Aman, Aman, Rohit, YashTushir, Sandeep Singh, Deepak, Anirudh Kumar, Arjun Halakurki, Sandeep, Ashu, HanniKumari, Sarita, Nisha, Bhateri and Bipasha.

Weightlifting - Core Group: Jeremy Lalrinnunga and Mirabai Chanu. Development Group: AchintaSheuli, Soumya Sunil Dalvi, Garud Harshada Sharad, Kolli Varalakshmi PavaniKumari, Mangkhya Boni, R ArockiyaAlish, Sanker Sargar, GogoiSidhanta, CharuPesi, MarkioTario and SorkhaibamBindyarani Devi, N TomchouMeetei, Niraj Pradhan, Akanksha Vyavahare, Shivani Yadav, KajolSargar, Jyoti Yadav, Komal Kohar, Sarika Shingare and Ajay Singh.

Table Tennis - Core Group: A Sharath Kamal, Sathiyan Gnanasekaran, ManikaBatra and Sutirtha Mukherjee, Harmeet Desai and Archana Kamat. Development Group: Manav Thakkar, Manush Shah and Ayikha Mukherjee, Payas Jain, SFR Snehit, Swatiska Ghosh, Diya Chitale, Suhana Saini and Sreeja Akula.

Swimming - Core Group:Sajan Prakash and Srihari Nataraj. (Development Group to be taken up in the next meeting).

Cycling - Development Group: EsowAlben, Keithellakpam Jemsh Singh, Laitonjam Ronaldo Y Rojit Singh and E David Beckham (new inductee).

Sailing - Core Group: Vishnu Saravanan, Varun Thakkar, KC Ganapathy and Nethra Kumanan.

Para Sports

Archery Core Group: Harvinder Singh

Athletics: T Mariyappan, Sharad Kumar, Praveen Kumar, Sandeep Chaudhary, Sumit Antil, Sundar Singh Gurjar, Amit Saroha, DevendraJhajharia, Nishad Kumar, Navdeep and Yogesh Kathunia.

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Badminton: SuhasYathiraj, Krishna Nagar, Pramod Bhagat, Manoj Sarkar, Tarun Dhillon and Parul Parmar.

Shooting: Avani Lekhara, Manish Narwal and Singhraj Adana.

Swimming: Suyash Jadhav.

Table Tennis: Bhavina Patel.

What is TOPS Scheme?

TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) is a flagship program of the Sports Ministry that was launched in September 2014 to assist India's top athletes. The scheme was started by the Sports Ministry to improve India's performance at the Olympics and Paralympics.

The TOPS scheme aims to boost the preparations of these athletes to improve their chances of winning medals in the Olympics. The scheme was revamped in April 2018 to establish a technical support team to manage and provide a holistic approach to the TOPS athletes.

The lists of athletes for the TOPS Core and Development Groups are collectively drawn up by the TOPS team and their respective National Sports Federations. It entailed meticulous research, evaluation and projections of the athletes' performances before being placed before the MOC for consideration.

Background

India had ended its Tokyo Olympics 2020 campaign with seven medals, including one gold, two silver and four bronze medals, which is India's highest-ever medal tally. India's previous best medal haul at the Olympics was six at the 2012 London Olympics.

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PM Modi to address National Agro Summit on Dec 16 with focus on Natural Farming: 5 points on Natural Farming

National Agro Summit: Prime Minister Modi will **address the farmers virtually on December 16, 2021, at a valedictory function of an agro-event** which will be organized by the Government of Gujarat. During the National Summit on Agro and Food Processing, contours of natural farming will be presented. The three-day National Summit has kick-started from December 14.

The Union Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Aggarwal while informing about the event said that the National Agro Summit is the very first initiative where natural farming is one of the major focus. He also announced that a committee to set up in the near future to look into the demands of the protesting farmers will also discuss the promotion of natural farming.

Prime Minister Modi will virtually address the National Summit on Agro while the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the Chief Minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani, and others will be present during the National Summit on Agro and Food Processing.

Prime Minister @narendramodi to address National Summit on Agro and Food Processing on 16th December in which detailed contours of natural farming shall be presented

Read more: https://t.co/Vk8fbpev5X

— PIB India (@PIB_India) December 13, 2021

Natural Farming in India

1. Natural Farming in India has become a significant farm practice now as it requires less input cost and also ensures a higher income to the farmers in comparison to the other farming practices.

2. In the last two years in India, the number of farmers who have adopted Natural farming has been on rising in Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Gujarat. Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh are leading in natural farming.

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3. In the last financial year, an area of 4 lakh hectares was approved in 8 states for the promotion and training of natural farming under a scheme Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati. The scheme had started from 2020-21 fiscal onwards.

4. The Central Government has not yet captured the total area under natural farming. The farmers are being trained currently and the more sufficient data will be captured after the farmers will adopt the practice of Natural farming in their fields.

5. The Government of Gujarat has also framed a scheme under which it has trained over 20,000 master trainers in natural farming, who further will train more than 2 lakh farmers.

What is Zero Budget Natural Farming?

Zero Budget Natural Farming is identified as a promising tool for minimizing the dependence of the farmers on the purchased inputs and reducing the cost of agriculture by relying on the traditional field-based technologies which will lead to improved soil health.

Shift of agriculture practices under Natural Farming

The zero-budget natural farming emphasized the shift of agricultural practices from non-crops to the diversified multi-cropping system. Desi cow, its urine, and dung play a significant role in good agricultural production. Other traditional practices such as keeping the soil covered with a green cover whole year or mulching the soil with biomass are also some of the added practices to sustain productivity.

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Second edition of water innovation challenges launched to address global water woes

NITI Aayog, Atal Innovation Mission and Denmark Royal Embassy in India have together launched the second edition of water innovation challenges on December 13, 2021 to address the global water woes as a part of the **Indo-Danish Bilateral Green Strategic partnership.** The AIM-ICDK water challenge is being rolled out under the aegis of the Denmark Embassy in India and the Denmark Technical University (DTU).

Vice chairman NITI Aayog Dr. Rajiv Kumar said while addressing the virtual event that the collaboration will provide solutions to improve sustainable water supply in India and at the global level. He asserted that this will aid in catalysing global cross-sectorial learning environments, innovation and impact on SDGs.

"We need innovation to augment supply, conserve water & rationalize our water consumption as a regional disparity of water availability is one of the biggest problems in our country," he added.

Royal Danish Embassy Ambassador to India, H.E Freddy Svane said, "On the ground, the climate crisis is first and foremost a water crisis, especially in rural communities. I hope to see concrete and scalable water tech solutions coming from our 2022 AIM-ICDK Water Challenge."

Water Innovation Challenges- AIM-ICDK water challenge

Aim

The water innovation challenges aim to identify innovative and next-gen solutions to solve proposed challenges in collaboration with corporate and public partners. The initiative will engage young talents from leading universities across the nation and support them in building their skills and apply their technical disciplines and innovation capacity.

The challenge winners will get the opportunity to represent India at the International Water Congress 2022. The Denmark Embassy in India and Denmark Technical University (DTU) will also be preparing the Indian participants for the Global Next Generation Water Action (NGWA) program, which will be hosted by DTU.

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How to apply for the water innovation challenge?

Those interested in applying for the water innovation challenge can apply online on AIM & NITI Aayog's official website. The applications are live now.

Benefits

-The participants will receive awards in different categories.

-They will also be able to network with innovators across the globe.

-Opportunity to represent India at the International Water Congress 2022

Mission Director Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog Dr. Chintan Vaishnav said while launching the challenge said ***"The collaboration between AIM & ICDK is in line with our efforts to bring together stakeholders with an aligned vision of addressing & mitigating the water-related issues faced by our country & the world."***

He added saying that the India-Denmark partnership holds great potential for impactful innovations across other sectors as well most importantly health sector.

Significance

The water sector is at the top in terms of the need for innovations, especially in the current scenario when several developing countries including India face a water crisis when it comes to the availability and quality of water.

Background

Ten innovation teams were identified last year for the water innovation challenge and they were provided support to develop their products through partners. The teams had worked along with their peers from 5 countries and had participated in the finals held in May 2021. Out of the ten teams, five won six awards at the global finals.

Indo-Danish Bilateral Green Strategic partnership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Denmark PM Mette Frederiksen had co-chaired a virtual summit on September 28, 2020 during which both the PMs had agreed to elevate the Indo-Danish relations to a Green Strategic Partnership. The Green Strategic partnership will build on the existing agreement establishing a Joint Commission for Cooperation between India and Denmark.

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The partnership aims to advance political cooperation and expand economic relations between the two countries including green growth, create jobs and strengthen cooperation on addressing global challenges and opportunities. The partnership will focus on implementation of the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Source: PIB

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Supreme Court allows widening of Char Dham road; 5 things to know about Char dham road project

Char dham road project upsc: The Supreme Court of India on December 14, 2021, **permitted the Central Government for double lane widening of the roads for the Char Dham Project in the light of the security concerns.** An oversight committee has also been set up which will be headed by the former Justice A K Sikri for the direct reporting of the ambitious project. The oversight committee set up by the Supreme Court bench will receive all the support from the Ministry of Defence, Uttarakhand Government, Ministry of Road Transport and all the district magistrates.

Char Dham Road Project in Uttarakhand

The strategic 900-km-long Char dham project in Uttarakhand worth Rs. 1,200 crores aim at providing all weather-connectivity to four holy towns in Uttarakhand- Gangotri, Yamunotri, Badrinath and Kedarnath.

Supreme Court allows the Central government to construct three double-lane strategic highways for the Char Dham road project in Uttarakhand pic.twitter.com/Ru0Qb6s5zD

— ANI (@ANI) December 14, 2021

Government's plea for the widening of Char Dham Road: Background

The Supreme Court was hearing the plea by the Government of India seeking the modification of the September 8, 2020 order which had asked the Road Transport and Highways Ministry to follow 2018 circular stipulating the carriageway width of 5.5 metre on the Char dham highway project, which goes up to India's border with China.

The Ministry of Defence, in its application, mentioned that it seeks modification of the order and directions that the National Highways from Rishikesh to Gangotri, from Rishikesh to Mana and from Tanakpur to Pithoragarh may be developed to the two-lane arrangement.

5 Things to know about Char Dham Road Project

1. The Char Dham Road Project in Uttarakhand which connects the four shrines of Yamunotri,

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Gangotri, Badrinath, Kedarnath in the upper Himalayas, has an 899 km road.

2. Char Dham Highway expansion project worth Rs. 12,000 crores were envisaged back in 2016.

3. PM Modi laid the foundation stone back in December 2016. He described the project as a tribute to those who lost their lives in flash floods in Uttarakhand.

4. Even though Char Dham road project was primarily conceived to facilitate tourism and Char dham yatras, it always had a strategic angle as the highways will facilitate the seamless movement of troops to the areas that are closer to the China border.

5. The Ministry of Road had also earlier claimed that a substantial reduction in the road width to 5.5m in terms of 2018 circular will result in non-uniform carriageway width differing from 10m to 5.5m.

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India votes against UN Security Council draft resolution to securitize climate action- Know Why?

India at UNSC: India, in a major move, on December 13, 2021, voted **against a UNSC draft resolution that aimed to securitize climate action.** The UNSC resolution will also undermine the hard-won consensual agreements in Glasgow. The explanation to vote against the draft resolution by the United Nations Security Council was done by India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, T.S. Tirumurti. In his speech at the UNSC, he also spoke against drawing a separate link between climate change and security.

UNSC draft resolution on climate action: What does it say?

The UNSC draft resolution, sponsored by Nigeria and Ireland, **aims at enabling the United Nations Security Council to take up the routine discussions on climate change from the perspective of its impact on peace and conflict worldwide.**

As of now, the only appropriate United Nations Forum for discussing the matters related to climate change is the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). More than 190 members of UNFCCC meet multiple times every year.

With the argument that one of the lesser discussed aspects of climate change is its impact on international peace and security, the supporters of the draft resolution have argued that it is a subject that must be taken appropriately at the UN Security Council.

Why India has voted against UNSC draft resolution on climate change?

India in its explanation to vote against the UNSC draft resolution on climate change said that UNFCCC already offers an equitable and elaborate architecture with equal voice for every country as well as an adequate recognition of every country's and their government's national circumstances.

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations further stated that there is no actual need for the latest resolution except for bringing the issue of climate change under the UN Security Council and the reason is that most decisions can be taken without the involvement of various

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developing countries.

If the resolution is passed, the responsibility of climate change will be handed over to the body which neither works through consensus nor is reflective of the interests of the developing countries.

India, Russia, China against the UNSC draft resolution on Climate Change

From the beginning, India, Russia, China have been opposing the UNSC draft resolution on climate change, arguing that the interventions by the Security Council on the issue of climate change will further undermine the UNFCCC process.

It will also provide an unequal influence to only a handful of developed countries in the world on climate change decision-making.

Background

The UNSC draft resolution on climate change has been co-authored by Niger and Ireland. A zero draft of the resolution was circulated by Ireland and Niger following a September 23 high-level open debate on climate and security organized by Ireland.

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Who is Priyank Panchal? Know all about batsman who replaced injured Rohit Sharma in India test squad for SA series

Priyank **Panchal has replaced injured vice-captain Rohit Sharma in India's Test squad** for the South Africa tour. Rohit had sustained a left hamstring injury during his training session in Mumbai on December 13th and has been ruled out of India's upcoming 3-match Test series against South Africa.

This would be **Priyank Panchal's second call up into the Indian Test Squad**, as he was a part of India's extended squad as a standby player for the 4-match Test series against England at home. Priyank Panchal is one of the best opening batsman in domestic cricket. He has played over in 100 First-class cricket matches and scored over 7000 runs, which includes 24 centuries and 25 fifties.

The 31-year-old had also recently played for India A in South Africa. If he is included in the playing XI, it would be his debut test match as a part of the Indian senior men's cricket team. He will be the third specialist opener in India's Test squad for the South Africa tour besides KL Rahul and Mayank Agarwal.

Priyank Panchal replaces injured Rohit Sharma in India's Test squad. Rohit sustained a left hamstring injury during his training session here in Mumbai yesterday. He has been ruled out of the upcoming 3-match Test series against South Africa: BCCI pic.twitter.com/qoo0qG1AIj

— ANI (@ANI) December 13, 2021

Who is Priyank Panchal?

• Priyank Panchal has been a regular performer in India's domestic circuit. He has been the captain and top scorer for the Gujarat Ranji Trophy team for several years. He has also played for India A team and led them during their three-match series against South Africa A earlier this month.

• The 31-year-old has both experience and form, as he has played in over 100 first-class games. He is known to be one of the best opening batsmen in domestic cricket.

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• He is also a part-time right-arm medium pace bowler and has taken 22 wickets.

• He had led Gujarat's Ranji team to pick up their maiden Ranji Trophy title in the 2016-17 season and was the leading run-scorer with 1300 runs.

• He finished as the team's leading scorer with 542 runs in seven matches in the next Ranji Trophy season (2017-18) as well.

• He scored a whopping 898 runs in nine matches in the 2018-19 Ranji trophy season and scored another 367 runs in 8 matches in the Vijay Hazare trophy the same year.

• He has worked closely with India's current head coach Rahul Dravid while playing for India A team.

• He holds the record for making maximum runs by any batsman in first-class cricket in India since the 2016-17 season.

Priyank Panchal Career Stats

Matches- 100

Runs scored-7011

50s- 25

100s- 24 centuries

Best Score- 314 not out

Priyank Panchal Career Batting Stats

Format	M/ Innings	Runs/Best Score	SR	100s/50s	4s/6s
1st class 2008–	100/163	7011/ 314*	52.7	24/25	885/49
List A 2008–	75/75	2854/ 135*	78.8	5/18	305/28
T20 2014–	50/49	1327/ 79*	127.0	0/8	147/30

Priyank Panchal Career Bowling Stats

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Priyank Panchal Biography

Full Name- Priyank Kirit Panchal

Birth Date- April 09, 1990

State- Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Age- 31 years

Batting Style- Right-hand bat

Bowling Style- Right-arm medium pacer

Format	M/Inn	Balls Bowled/Runs Given	Wickets/4W	Best Bowling	SR
1st class 2008–	100/53	1638/761	14/ 0	3/0	117.0
List A 2008–	75/12	166/ 123	4/0	1/0	41.5
T20 2014–	50/6	66/83	4/ 1	4/19	16.5

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Morning Current Affairs: 14 December 2021

Earthquake of 7.6 magnitude hits Indonesia, Tsunami warning issued

An earthquake of 7.6 magnitude on the Richter scale struck 95km north of Maumere in Indonesia today, informed United States Geological Survey (USGS). Indonesia has issued a tsunami warning. The earthquake reportedly struck its region of East Nusa Tenggara, according to the Reuters.

Read more here

Today is National Energy Conservation Day 2021

National Energy Conservation Day is being observed across India today, on December 14th to raise awareness about the importance of energy conservation. The energy conservation day seeks to spread awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation.

Read more here

IIT Kanpur develops Bhu Parikshak

IIT Kanpur has developed a portable testing device called 'Bhu Parikshak' that can detect soil health in just 90 seconds through a mobile application. The device has been developed by a team led by Prof Jayant K Singh. The technology has been transferred to a start-up.

UK High Court to hear Nirav Modi's UK extradition appeal today

The UK High Court will hear fugitive economic offender Nirav Modi's extradition appeal today, December 14th. Nirav Modi, who is currently lodged at Wandsworth Prison in south-west London since his arrest in March 2019, was given permission to appeal against the Westminster Magistrates' Court extradition order on the grounds of mental health and human rights. Modi's legal team had presented arguments concerning his severe depression and high risk of suicide.

148 athletes including 20 new inducted in first list of TOPS athletes for 2024 Paris Olympics

A total of 148 athletes, including 20 new inductees in 7 Olympic disciplines and 6 Paralympic disciplines, have been included in the first list of Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) for 2024 Paris Olympics. This was decided at a meeting of the Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports on December 13, 2021.

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Rohit Sharma ruled out of South Africa test series due to injury

Indian ODI & T20 captain Rohit Sharma has been ruled out from India's test series against South Africa due to an injury, informed BCCI Secretary Jay Shah on December 13, 2021. Priyank Panchal has replaced Rohit Sharma in India's Test squad for South Africa tour. As per reports, Rohit Sharma sustained a left hamstring injury during his training session in Mumbai and has been ruled out of the 3-match Test series. India is scheduled to play 3-match ODI series after the 3 tests.

Read more here

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Indonesia Earthquake: 7.6 magnitude earthquake strikes Eastern Indonesia, tsunami warning issued

Earthquake Indonesia: In the latest, an earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale has struck Indonesia. According to the United States Geological Survey, the earthquake struck around 100 km north of the town of Maumere at a depth of 18.5 kilometers in the Flores Sea. Reportedly, Indonesia issued a Tsunami warning after the Earthquake. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center also announced that hazardous waves are possible for the coasts located within 1000 km of the Earthquake epicenter.

Earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale struck 95 km north of Maumere, Indonesia today: United States Geological Survey (USGS)

— ANI (@ANI) December 14, 2021

While informing about Indonesia Earthquake, the United States Geological Survey also said that the chances of casualties, however, are low, while also noting that the recent Earthquakes in Indonesia have caused secondary hazards such as landslides and Tsunamis that might have contributed to the losses.

Indonesia Earthquake: Why country experiences frequent quakes?

Indonesia experiences frequent volcanic eruptions and earthquakes because of its position on the Pacific 'Ring of Fire'. It is an arc of intense seismic activity where the tectonic plate collides. It stretches from Japan to Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin.

Indonesia earthquakes history

Indonesia Earthquake 2004

An earthquake in Indonesia in 2004 was the most devasting one. It had struck the country with 9.1 magnitude terror off the coast of Sumatra and had triggered a tsunami that had killed 2,20,000 people throughout the region, including around 1,70,000 in Indonesia.

Indonesia earthquake 2018

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Another powerful earthquake in 2018 had shaken the island of Lombok in Indonesia. Several other tremours were also followed over the next couple of weeks, killing more than 550 people on the holiday island and neighbouring Sumbawa.

Later in 2018, an earthquake of magnitude 7.5 and a subsequent tsunami in Palu on Sulawesi island of Indonesia also led to more than 4,300 people dead or missing.

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National Energy Conservation Day 2021 (December 14): All You Need To Know

National Energy Conservation Day 2021: National Energy Conservation Day is celebrated across India every year on December 14th to raise awareness about energy conservation. The day is also known as Energy Efficiency Day.

The Union Ministry of Power is celebrating National Energy Conservation Week under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav from December 8-14, 2021. Various programmes have been organised as a part of the celebration including workshops and discussions on the outcomes of Energy and Resource Mapping of MSME Clusters.

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) of India, which spearheads the National Energy Conservation Day celebrations every year, had implemented the Energy Conservation Act in 2001. The BEE is a constitutional entity that assists the government in the creation of energy-saving policies and programmes.

National Energy Conservation Day 2021 - 14 December

National Energy Conservation Day 2021 Theme

BEE has organized A National Level Painting Competitions on Energy Conservation for school children. The theme for this year is ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Energy Efficient India” and ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Cleaner Planet’.

National Energy Conservation Day 2021 Objective- Why is it celebrated?

National Energy Conservation Day 2021 is celebrated to spread awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation of energy. Energy conservation is one of the key action points in fighting climate change.

How can we conserve energy?

We can conserve energy by reducing energy consumption as much as possible and replacing non-renewable resources of energy with renewable energy sources. Conservation of energy is the most cost-effective solution to energy shortages. It is also more ecologically friendly option

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than increasing energy output.

Five simple ways to conserve energy -

1. Switching of lights and appliances when not in use.

2. Switching to renewable sources of energy like solar energy by installing solar panels.

3. Reusing electronics as much as possible rather than discarding them and getting new ones.

4. Using energy efficient products like LED bulbs.

5. Switching off car engines while waiting at the Red Light.

National Energy Conservation Day 2021 Programmes

The Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) will be expanding its flagship Gram UJALA programme by distributing LED bulbs under a highly subsidised rate of Rs 10 across 2579 villages in five states – Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka. CESL is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL).

The Gram UJALA programme was launched by Power Minister RK Singh in March 2021. The programme has already achieved a distribution mark of more than 33 lakh LED bulbs in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. It will be expanded to three other states as well from December 14.

National Energy Conservation Awards

National Energy Conservation Awards are conferred on the occasion of National Energy Conservation Day to honour innovation and accomplishments in energy conservation by industries, buildings and manufacturers of BEE star labeled appliances.

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Republic Day 2022 Chief Guest: India may host five Central Asian leaders as Republic Day Guests

Republic Day 2022 Chief Guest: India is planning to invite the **leaders of five Central Asian countries as Republic Day 2022 Chief Guests.** The five central Asian nations include Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. Out of the five nations, three share a border with Afghanistan.

As per reports, India has made an informal outreach to these nations through diplomatic channels. Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is likely to hold a dialogue with the foreign ministers of these five countries between December 18-19. The outreach will lay the groundwork for the leaders' level summit.

This comes against the backdrop of the country’s focus on the strategic region for connectivity, trade and security.

Leaders of 5 Central Asian Nations

Kazakhstan- Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

Uzbekistan- Shavkat Mirziyoyev

Tajikistan- Emomali Rahmon

Turkmenistan- Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow

Kyrgyzstan-Sadyr Japarov

These five leaders are likely to attend the Republic Day Celebrations in India in January 2022. This news is not yet confirmed and would depend on the COVID situation then. Out of these five central Asian nations, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan share a border with Afghanistan.

As per reports, there were plans to invite countries from the BIMSTEC grouping, which includes Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal. The move, however, did not

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materialise.

Why is this important?

India has been engaging with these five central Asian nations in the past few months over the current situation in Afghanistan, as these nations play a significant role in the region. India had recently hosted an NSA-level dialogue on the Afghanistan crisis with the five countries in New Delhi, during which they had expressed concern over the situation in Afghanistan.

This will be the first time that all Central Asian countries will be present as Republic Day guests and the second time so many countries will be invited together for India's Republic Day celebrations after India invited ASEAN grouping for the 2018 Republic day celebrations.

India shares cultural, civilization and historic linkages with central Asian countries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had become the first Prime Minister to visit all Central Asian countries in 2015, a first by any Indian Prime Minister since the five republics came into being after Soviet Union's breakup.

India's Republic Day Guests since 2014

Republic Day 2015 Chief Guest- US President Barack Obama

Republic Day 2016 Chief Guest- French President Francois Hollande

Republic Day 2017 Chief Guest-UAE's Md Bin Zayed Al Nahyan

Republic Day 2018 Chief Guests-10 ASEAN Countries

Republic Day 2019 Chief Guest - South African President Cyril Ramaphosa

Republic Day 2020 Chief Guest- Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro

Background

The visit by Central Asian leadership will mark the third meeting between Central Asian and Indian foreign ministers. The first took place in January 2019 in Uzbekistan's Samarkand, where India was represented by the then External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj. The second such meeting took place virtually last year.

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UK's Prime Minister Boris Johnson was expected to be the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day 2021 but he had to cancel due to the COVID situation in the United Kingdom at that time.

Among the central Asian nations, only Kazakhstan has been the chief guest at India's Republic Day before in 2009.

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National helpline against atrocities on SCs, STs launched- All you need to know

SC/ST helpline number: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched a National Helpline against atrocities on December 13, 2021. The complaint helpline number will help in preventing the abomination of the members belonging to Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The National helpline against atrocities on SCs, STs will ensure the execution of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

National Helpline number for SCs, STs- 14566

SC/ST Complaint number: Objective

The objective of the government's National helpline against atrocities on SCs and STs is to build an informed awareness about the provisions of the law that are aimed at ending discrimination and providing protection to all the members of the community.

NATIONAL TOLL FREE HELPLINE "14566" LAUNCHED FOR PREVENTION OF ATROCITIES ON MEMBERS OF
SCs AND STs.#atrocity #feelings #life #alone #emotions #justice@Drvirendrakum13 @DrAmbedkarInte2@Gov_of_india @sansad_tv pic.twitter.com/ofnOcVCwnN

— Ministry of SJ&E (@MSJEGOI) December 13, 2021

How to file sc/st atrocity case: National helpline against atrocities on SCs and STs

1. The National Helpline against Atrocities will be available around the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country.

2. The helpline number for the members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes can be accessed by making a call/VOIP either from a landline number or mobile across the country.

3. The service to file complaints against the atrocities on SCs and STs will be available in English, Hindi as well as other regional languages of States and UTs. The mobile application of the National Helpline against Atrocities will also be available.

4. A docket number will be given for each complaint that will be received from

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NGOs/Victims/Complainant regarding the non-compliance with the POA Act, 1989, and the PCR Act, 1955.

5. The status of the grievance can be easily checked and tracked by the complainants/NGOs online.

How National Helpline against atrocities will be helpful?

The system of National helpline against atrocities will ensure that every complaint is registered as an FIR, relief is provided to the victim, all the registered complaints are investigated, and that all the charge sheets filed are prosecuted in the court for further decision. It all should be within the given timelines in the Act.

The NHAA will also help in creating awareness about the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, and its rules as well.

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SANT Missile: DRDO successfully flight tests indigenously developed Stand-Off Anti-Tank Missile

SANT missile upsc: The Defence Research and Development Organisation and Indian Air Force on December 11, 2021, flight tested the indigenously developed and designed Stand-Off Anti-tank (SANT) Missile from Pokhran Range. According to Defence Ministry, the Sant missile test was successful in meeting all its objectives.

The Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the team associated with SANT Missile test. DRDO's Chairman Dr G Satheesh Reddy also said that the successful test of SANT missile will give a further boost to the indigenous defence capabilities of the Indian Armed Forces.

#WATCH | DRDO and Indian Air Force flight-tested indigenously designed and developed helicopter launched stand-off anti-tank (SANT) Missile from Pokhran range on today pic.twitter.com/nzdcPTWwAR

— ANI (@ANI) December 11, 2021

SANT Missile test- Objective

The flight test of indigenously developed SANT missile successfully met all its objectives. The advance guidance and tracking algorithms, release mechanism, all avionics with the integrated software, performed sufficiently and satisfactorily and the tracking systems also monitored all the events.

SANT Missile: Key Details

The indigenously designed and developed Stand-Off Anti-tank missile is equipped with a state-of-art MMW seeker. It is capable of providing high precision strike capability from a safe distance. SANT missile can neutralize targets in a range up to 10 kms.

SANT Missile for the armed forces has been designed and developed by the Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in Hyderabad in coordination with the other labs of DRDO and other industries.

Flight tests of indigenous stand-off weapons

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The flight test of SANT missile is the third in the series of indigenous stand-off weapons that are tested in recent times by the Government of India after the long-range bombs and the smart anti airfield weapons for strengthening the arsenal of the Indian Air Force.

The mission of indigenous development of various configurations for the different applications with advanced technologies is a firm step by the Indian Government towards ‘Atmanirbharta’ in defence.

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Max Verstappen crowned Formula One world champion

Max Verstappen was crowned Formula One world champion after a dramatic season-ending at Abu Dhabi Grand Prix on December 12, 2021. Verstappen overtook Lewis Hamilton who was heading for his 8th title, to win his first-ever Formula One title. He has become the first Dutch world champion. Hamilton's Mercedes team protested against Verstappen's win.

Max Verstappen took advantage of a crash by Nicholas Latifi to make a dash for the title in the last lap. Both Hamilton and Verstappen had both gone into the Abu Dhabi GP with 369.5 points. They started the final lap also wheel to wheel but the 24-year-old Red Bull F1 driver dashed the finish line to pick up the chequered flag.

Hamilton and Verstappen had both gone into the Abu Dhabi GP on 369.5 points, the first time the F1 world championship contenders had been level heading into the final round since Emerson Fittipaldi and Clay Regazzoni in 1974.

MAX VERSTAPPEN. WORLD CHAMPION!!!

A stunning season by an extraordinary talent#HistoryMade #F1 @Max33Verstappen pic.twitter.com/FxT9W69xJe

— Formula 1 (@F1) December 12, 2021

Mercedes to appeal against the decision

Hamilton was headed towards winning his 8th Formula One title and bettering Michael Schumacher's seven world champion titles. However, he was beaten by Verstappen, the Dutch F1 driver who flew past him in the closing lap at the Yas Marina circuit. It had appeared as Hamilton would emerge victoriously but Verstappen pulled ahead dramatically to be crowned world champion.

Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff had appealed against the result, claiming that the rules governing safety car procedures had been breached. The protests were rejected after a long hearing. However, Mercedes has announced that they will contest the verdict. They have 96 hours to formalise or withdraw an official appeal.

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For now, Verstappen is the new Formula One world champion. Speaking on his historic win, he said, "It's insane. My goal when I was little was to be a Formula One driver. You dream of podiums and victories. But when they tell you that you are world champion, it's incredible."

Lewis Hamilton, however, congratulated Verstappen saying, ***"Congratulations to Max and his team. We gave it everything this last part of the season and never gave up, that's the most important thing."***

The absolute class of the field

18 wins between them in 2021, and they battled until the very last lap of the season

The Verstappen-Hamilton rivalry will always be remembered#AbuDhabiGP #F1 pic.twitter.com/BsCqbA5GXm

— Formula 1 (@F1) December 12, 2021

Formula One 2021 Standings

Formula One 2021 Standings

Position	F1 Driver	Pts
1	M. Verstappen Red Bull	26
2	L. Hamilton Mercedes	18
3	C. Sainz Jr. Ferrari	15
4	Y. Tsunoda AlphaTauri	12
5	P. Gasly AlphaTauri	10
6	V. Bottas Mercedes	8
7	L. Norris	6

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	McLaren	
8	F. Alonso Alpine	4
9	E. Ocon Alpine	2
10	C. Leclerc Ferrari	1

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Dubai becomes first in the world to go 100% paperless; What is Dubai paperless strategy?

Paperless Dubai: In the first, Dubai has become the very **first government in the world to turn 100% paperless.** The Crown Prince of Emirates, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum shared the news while also pointing at the savings of 1.3 million Dirham (USD 350 Million) and 14-million-man-hours. All the external and internal transactions and the procedures in Dubai Government are now 100% digital. They are now managed from a comprehensive digital government service platform.

The Crown Prince in a statement said that achievement of going paperless marks the beginning of a new stage in Dubai's journey to digitize life in all its aspects- a journey that is rooted in innovation with a focus on creativity. Dubai's Crown Prince also said that the government plans on implementing advanced strategies to create as well as enhance digital life in Dubai in the next 5 decades.

What is Dubai Paperless Strategy?

Dubai Paperless Strategy comprises of being a fully paperless government, meaning that 100% of the internal processes and customer-facing services were to be digitized from 2021. Dubai Paperless Strategy means that the Government will no longer be issuing or asking for paper documents across all of its operations.

As part of the transition process, the focus of the Dubai Paperless Strategy was on implementing the necessary technology for enabling paper-free transactions.

The world's first fully paperless government! #DigitalDubai #DubaiPaperlessStrategy pic.twitter.com/75ikI43xtL

— Digital Dubai (@DigitalDubai) December 12, 2021

Five phases of Dubai Paperless Strategy

The ambitious Dubai paperless strategy was implemented in 5 consecutive phases. Each of them enlisted a different group of the Dubai Government's entities.

By the end of the 5th phase under the Dubai Paperless strategy, it was fully implemented across

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all the 45 government entities in emirates. The government entities provided more than 1,800 digital services and over 10,500 key transactions.

Dubai first in the world to go paperless: How is it significant?

Dubai Paperless Strategy helped in saving more than 1.3 billion Dirham and over 14 million man-hours across Dubai Government.

Dubai Government's complete digital transformation is also significant as it will facilitate the smart city experience for all its residents and will entirely remove the need for paper transactions and documents- be they be given to the customers or exchanged between the employees of the government entities.

Other countries on going paperless

The UK, United States, Canada, and Europe also expressed plans of digitizing their government operation on a larger scale, which will encompass the government procedures citizen identifications. However, the move of going digital faces the question of being more prone to cyber-attacks.

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Kashi Vishwanath Dham: PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Kashi Vishwanath Corridor

Kashi Vishwanath corridor: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the phase 1 of Kashi Vishwanath Dham in Varanasi on December 13, 2021. The Dham has been constructed at a cost of around Rs 339 crores. The Prime Minister earlier offered prayers to Lord Shiva at Kashi Vishwanath temple.

PM Modi said after inaugurating the project, "Today, a new chapter is being written in the history of Kashi Vishwanath. Kashi Vishwanath Dham premises is not just a grand 'bhavan' but a symbol of India's 'Sanatan' culture & traditions. Here you'll see how inspirations of the ancient are giving direction to the future."

The Prime Minister continued by saying that the Kashi Vishwanath temple premises which was only around 3000 square feet, has now become about 5 lakh square feet. "Now, 50,000 to 75,000 devotees can come visit the temple and its premises," PM Modi added.

Kashi Vishwanath Corridor project connects two iconic landmarks in the temple town - the Kashi Vishwanath temple to the banks of River Ganga in Varanasi. Under Phase I of the project, a variety of facilities have been opened for the pilgrims including Yatri Suvidha Kendras, tourist facilitation centre and vedic centers.

#WATCH The Kashi Vishwanath Corridor provides an accessible pathway connecting Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple to the banks of the River Ganga in Varanasi

(Source: DD) pic.twitter.com/2h35RV91HH

— ANI UP (@ANINewsUP) December 13, 2021

PM Modi offered prayers and also took a holy dip in the Ganga river in Varanasi. He also offered prayers at the Kaal Bhairav temple upon his arrival in Varanasi and then took a double-decker boat to Lalita Ghat from Khirkiya Ghat to visit Kashi Vishwanath temple.

#WATCH Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi pic.twitter.com/4pLpNubg2z

— ANI UP (@ANINewsUP) December 13, 2021

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The Chief Ministers of 12 states and deputy CMs of nine states were present during the inauguration of the Vishwanath Corridor project.

Kashi Vishwanath Dham Inauguration: PM Modi's address -5 Key Points

1. PM Narendra Modi spoke in Bhojpuri on the occasion of the inauguration of Kashi Vishwanath Corridor.

2. PM Modi said that the Kashi Vishwanath Dham premises is not just a grand 'bhavan' but a symbol of India's 'Sanatan' culture & traditions.

3. He expressed gratitude towards every labourer who has worked for the construction of this grand complex. The work of the project had continued even amid COVID-19 pandemic.

4. The Prime Minister said there is 'Virasat' and 'Vikas' in the new India.

5. PM Modi further asked the citizens for three resolutions - cleanliness, creation and innovation and continuous efforts to create a self-reliant India.

#WATCH The new India is proud of its culture and also has confidence on its ability...there is 'Virasat' and 'Vikas' in the new India, says PM Modi at Varanasi pic.twitter.com/xMJ8yehQiK

— ANI UP (@ANINewsUP) December 13, 2021

Kashi Vishwanath Dham Project Plan: All you need to know!

•The **Phase 1 of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham** has been constructed at a cost of Rs 339 crores.

•Shrikant Mishra, Priest at Kashi Vishwanath temple said, ***"The city is filled with enthusiasm as the temple is ready to become 'Vishwanath Dham' after years."***

•The '***Jyotirling***' of Kashi Vishwanath temple is considered to be the most important among other twelve Jyotirlingas. This is why lakhs of devotees come to offer prayers at the temple.

•The temple was only situated at 2,000 metres, but now it has been spread over 50,000 square metres.

• A total of 23 buildings will be inaugurated under Phase 1 of the project. They include a variety of facilities to the pilgrims visiting Kashi Vishwanath Temple including Tourist Facilitation Centre,

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Yatri Suvidha Kendras, Bhogshala, Food Court, Vedic Kendra, Mumukshu Bhavan, City Museum, Viewing Gallery among others.

•The project involved purchase and acquisition of over 300 properties around Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple. PM Modi's vision of taking everyone along was the principle that was applied even while conducting negotiations for these acquisitions. The acquisitions led to amicable rehabilitation of around 1400 shopkeepers, tenants and homeowners.

•There is no litigation pending in any court regarding acquisitions or rehabilitation related to the development of the project.

•The Kashi Vishwanath Dham project is now spread over a massive area of about 5 lakh square feet. The earlier premises was limited to just around 3000 square feet. The work on the project has been completed as per the planned schedule despite the COVID pandemic.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the Kashi Vishwanath temple will be presented as a new 'Dham' to the nation and world. He added saying, "**this 'Dham' will give a new, global identity to Varanasi."** The UP CM reviewed preparations and offered prayers at the Kashi Vishwanath temple yesterday, ahead of the inauguration of the 'Kashi Vishwanath Dham' by PM Modi.

Kashi Vishwanath Dham History

The Kashi Vishwanath Dham was conceptualised as a project to create an easily accessible pathway to connect Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple to the banks of the River Ganga. This is to realise PM Modi's vision to facilitate devotees who had to encounter congested streets when they practiced the traditional custom of taking dip in the holy river and collect Gangajal and offer it at the temple.

The foundation stone for the project was laid by the Prime Minister himself on March 8, 2019. He also took a keen interest at all stages of the project and held regular briefings, reviews and monitoring session. He constantly gave inputs and insights to improve the project and make it more accessible for pilgrims, especially those with disabilities.

The project has been designed to provide easy access for the old age people and those with different abilities with the provision of ramps, escalators and other modern facilities.

Background

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also scheduled to attend the 98th-anniversary celebrations of Sadguru Sadafaldeo Vihangam Yog Sansthan at Swarved Mahamandir in Varanasi on December

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14. The Prime Minister will also participate in a conclave including Chief Ministers of all BJP-ruled states- Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and Deputy CMs from Bihar and Nagaland.

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Morning Current Affairs: 13 December 2021

Miss Universe 2021 is India's Harnaaz Sandhu

India's Harnaaz Sandhu crowned Miss Universe 2021 at the **70th Miss Universe Pageant** in Eilat, Israel. The 21-year-old has created history by bringing home the crown 21 years after Lara Dutta won it in 2000. She was crowned Miss Universe by Mexico's Andrea Meza, the current Miss Universe. Harnaj Kaur hails from Chandigarh, Punjab.

Read more here

Kashi Vishwanath Corridor to be inaugurated today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the **Kashi Vishwanath Corridor** during this two-day visit to Varanasi starting from December 13, 2021. PM Modi is expected to visit Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple at 1 pm and inaugurate the corridor. The Prime Minister will also participate in a conclave comprising the Chief Ministers of 12 BJP-ruled states along with Deputy CMs of Bihar and Nagaland.

Read more here

Delhi Police Commissioner launches e-learning initiative

Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana launched an e-learning initiative by the southwest district police force on December 12, 2021 to help educate youths and impart skill training. The key aim behind the initiative is to prevent young offenders from re-offending. The platform will provide training, counseling and placement to trainees.

South African President tests positive for COVID-19

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa tested positive for COVID-19 on December 12, 2021. He has mild symptoms and is receiving treatment for the same. The President is on self-isolation in Cape Town. President Ramaphosa had undergone the COVID test after feeling unwell after leaving the State Memorial Service in honour of former Deputy President FW de Klerk in Cape Town. He is fully vaccinated and had recently returned from a trip to West Africa though he had tested negative for COVID-19 upon his return on December 8.

Israeli PM Bennett visits UAE for first-ever time

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Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is currently on his first-ever official visit to the United Arab Emirates. The trip is historic as **this is the first-ever visit to UAE by an Israeli leader.** This comes after Israel and UAE signed the US-backed initiative- Abraham Accords to normalise diplomatic relations between them. Other nations to have signed the accord include Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan. The Israeli leader is expected to meet the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed to discuss bilateral relations.

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Miss Universe 2021 Winner: India's Harnaaz Sandhu crowned Miss Universe 2021 after 21 years

Miss Universe 2021: Harnaaz Sandhu from India created history by bringing home the Miss Universe crown after a gap of 21 years after Lara Dutta had won the prestigious beauty pageant in 2000. Harnzaaz Sandhu, the 21-years old from Punjab, was representing India at the 70th Miss Universe 2021 taking place in Israel. Miss Universe 2021 edged out the contestants from South Africa and Paraguay to claim the Miss Universe Crown.

Miss Universe 2021 Harnaaz Sandhu was presented the crown by Andrea Meza, former Miss Universe 2000 from Mexico. The widely popular Miss Universe event was live-streamed globally.

Harnaaz Sandhu of India has been crowned the 70th Miss Universe, topping a field of some 80 contestants in a pageant that was touched by politics and the pandemic. https://t.co/tDXHcNqy0R

— The Associated Press (@AP) December 13, 2021

Miss Universe from India: Winners List

The crown of Miss Universe from India has been won three times:

Year	Winners
1994	Sushmita Sen
2000	Lara Dutta
2021	Harnaaz Sandhu

The new Miss Universe is...India!!!! #MISSUNIVERSE pic.twitter.com/DTiOKzTHl4

— Miss Universe (@MissUniverse) December 13, 2021

Miss Universe 2021: Harnaaz Sandhu Biography

Harnaaz Sandhu was born on March 3, 2000. She is an Indian model and a beauty pageant titleholder who won Miss Universe 2021 crown. Sandhu was raised in a Sikh family and she attended Shivalik Public School and the Post Graduate Government College for Girls from Chandigarh.

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Harnaaz Sandhu: Pagenatry career

Harnaaz Sandhu started competing in pageantry as a teenager. She won titles such as Miss Chandigarh in 2017 and Miss Max Emerging Star India 2018. After Harnaaz won the title of **Femina Miss India Punjab 2019, she competed in Femina Miss India and was placed in the top 12.**

Harnaaz Sandhu: Miss Diva 2021

Harnaaz Sandhu was shortlisted as one of the top 50 semifinalists of Miss Diva 2021. She was crowned as Miss Diva 2021 by the outgoing titleholder Adline Castelino.

Miss Universe 2021: Harnaaz Sandhu's message of self-love to the world

Harnaaz Sandhu who won the Miss Universe 2021 crown and broke the dry spell of 21 years, won hearts at the prestigious beauty pageant through her **message of self-love**.

In a speech on stage during the Miss Universe 2021 pageant, Harnaaz Sandhu from India urged young people around the world to **'know that you are unique and that's what makes you beautiful, stop comparing yourself to others."** To the loud applause from the audience, she added, **"I believed in myself, and that's why I'm standing here today."**

Miss Universe 2021 Top 5

The top 5 finalists of Miss Universe 2021 were

Top 5	Miss Universe 2021 finalists
1	Femina Miss India Punjab Harnaaz Sandhu
2	Miss South Africa Lalela Lali Mswane
3	Miss Paraguay Nadia Ferreira
4	Miss Columbia Valeria Maria Ayos Bossa
5	Miss Philippines Beatrice Luigi Gomez

List of Miss Universe Winners (2000-2021)

Year	Country	Winners
2000	India	Lara Dutta
2001	Puerto Rico	Denise Quiñones
2002	Russia and Panama	Oxana Fedorova and Justin Pasek

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2003	Dominican Republic	Amelia Vega
2004	Australia	Jennifer Hawkins
2005	Canada	Natalie Glebova
2006	Puerto Rico	Zuleyka Rivera
2007	Japan	Riyo Mori
2008	Venezuela	Dayana Mendoza and
2009	Venezuela	Stefanía Fernández
2010	Mexico	Ximena Navarrete
2011	Angola	Leila Lopes
2012	United States	Olivia Culpo
2013	Venezuela	Gabriela Isler
2014	Colombia	Paulina Vega
2015	Philippines	Pia Wurtzbach
2016	France	Iris Mittenaere
2017	South Africa	Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters
2018	Philippines	Catriona Gray
2019	South Africa	Zozibini Tunzi
2020	Mexcio	Andrea Meza
2021	India	Harnaaz Sandhu

Miss Universe Beauty Pageant

Miss Universe is an annual beauty pageant that is run by the US-based Miss Universe Organisation. Miss Universe Pageant is one of the most-watched beauty pageants in the world with an estimated audience of over 500 million viewers in over 190 territories.

Along with Miss International, Miss Earth, and Miss World, Miss Universe is one of the big four International Beauty Pageants. The advocacy of Miss Universe Pageant is humanitarian issues and a voice to affect positive change in the world.

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New ICMR testing kit to detect Omicron in 2 hours

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in Dibrugarh, Assam has designed a **new testing kit that will be able to detect Omicron COVID variant in two hours.** The development comes at a time when several states across the country are reporting the Omicron variant. At least 33 cases have been detected in the country so far.

Till now, it used to take at least 3-4 days to detect the new Omicron variant of COVID-19 using the kits currently available in the market. The authorities have been working towards detecting the cases quickly in order to speedily enforce containment measures and do contact tracing.

The latest kit that can detect Omicron in just 2 hours has been developed by a team of scientists of Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC) for the Northeast region. The testing kit will enable detection of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in real-time.

Who has developed the kit that can detect Omicron in 2 hours?

-A team of scientists led by Dr. Biswajyoti Borkakoty has **developed** the new testing kit with the ability to detect the Omicron in 2 hours from a given sample.

-The ICMR-RMRC in Dibrugarh has **developed** a hydrolysis probe-based real-time RT-PCR test for detection of Omicron variant (B.1.1.529).

-The new testing kit is now being produced on a bulk basis by a Kolkata-based company, GCC biotech on a public-private partnership (PPP) model.

Significance

This is significant as currently, a minimum of at least 36 hours are needed for targetted sequencing and 4-5 days for whole-genome sequencing to detect the new variant.

Is the new kit accurate?

The new testing kit has been tested against specific synthetic gene fragments of Omicron variant within two different highly specific unique regions of the spike protein and reference wild type

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control synthetic gene fragments, informed the study lead, Dr. Borkakoty. He added saying that as per internal validation, the tests are 100 percent accurate.

Background

ICMR-RMRC Dibrugarh had in July 2020 become the third government laboratory in India to successfully manage to isolate the COVID-19 virus (SARS-CoV-2). So far, the new Omicron COVID variant has been detected in states including Karnataka, Delhi, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

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Extended Range Pinaka Rocket successfully tested by DRDO- All you need to know

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) announced on December 11, 2021, that **an Extended Range Pinaka (Pinaka-ER) Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System has been successfully tested at Rajasthan's Pokhran Range.** Pinaka-ER launcher system has been designed by DRDO Laboratory Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) with the High Energy Materials Research Laboratory in Pune, the technology has already been transferred to the Indian Industry.

#WATCH | Extended Range Pinaka (Pinaka-ER) Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System successfully tested at Pokhran Range. The system is designed by DRDO Laboratory ARDE along with HEMRL, Pune, the technology has been transferred to the Indian industry.

(Source: DRDO) pic.twitter.com/DPXoaB7xpi

— ANI (@ANI) December 11, 2021

About Pinaka-ER Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System

According to Defence Research and Development Organisation, the Pinaka-ER Multi Barrel Rocket System Launcher is the upgraded version of the earlier version of Pinaka which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade.

The latest system has been designed by DRDO in the light of newly emerging requirements with advanced technologies enhancing the range.

Objective

Reportedly, the development of the enhanced Pinaka System was taken up by the government and armed forces for achieving the longer-range performance. All the flight articles at the time of the test were tracked by various range instruments for checking the accuracy of the rockets hitting the targets.

Test-firing of indigenously developed Pinaka rockets

Earlier in June 2021, India had successfully test-fired the enhanced range versions of

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indigenously developed Pinaka rockets as well as 122mm caliber rockets from multi-barrel Rocket Launcher at Integrated Test Range in Odisha.

25 enhanced Pinaka rockets were launched in succession against the targets at different forms of ranges. As per the Defence Ministry, all the mission objectives were met during the launches. The enhanced range version of Pinaka rockets is capable of destroying targets at distances up to 45 km.

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International Mountain Day 2021: Theme, History and Significance of the day

International Mountain Day 2021: December 11 is observed every year as the International Mountain Day to raise awareness about the importance of mountains to life and to climate. International Mountain Day was designated by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to acknowledge the fact that mountains are home to 15% of the total population of the world and they also host about half of the world's biodiversity hotspots. However, mountains in today's world have been facing the threat of climate change and overexploitation and are in the dire need of protection. On International Mountain Day 2021, read more about the history of the day, and why is Mountain Day significant.

International Mountain Day 2021 Date

International Mountain Day is observed globally every year on December 11. The day was inducted by the UN General Assembly.

#Sustainabletourism can help preserve the cultural heritage of mountain peoples and destinations.

How are you celebrating International Mountain Day today?https://t.co/9FHXvbZkjs#UNMountains @UNmountains pic.twitter.com/mN2FixkL5H

— FAO Forestry (@FAOForestry) December 11, 2021

International Mountain Day theme 2021

The International Mountain Day 2021 theme is **'Sustainable Mountain Tourism'**. The theme signifies that sustainable tourism in mountains is a way to preserve the cultural, natural, and spiritual heritage of the mountains around the world.

International Mountain Day history

The International Mountain Day was first celebrated in 2003 after the year 2002 was first declared by the United Nations as the UN International Year of Mountains.

However, the history of the International Mountain Day can be traced back to the year 1992 when

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the document on Sustainable Mountain Development was adopted as part of the action plan agenda 21 of the Conference on Environment and Development.

Significance of International Mountain Day 2021

The International Mountain Day aims at creating awareness about the significance of mountains and the role that they play in maintaining biodiversity. Mountain Day also sheds light on the opportunities and constraints in mountain development.

However, the International Mountain Day 2021 is of extreme relevance because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect it had on mountain tourism. Mountain Day acknowledges that the covid pandemic has further compounded the vulnerabilities of the mountain communities.

International Mountain Day 2021: 5 famous mountain treks in India

1. Hampta Pass Trek, Himachal Pradesh

2. Markha Valley Trek, Ladakh

3. Valley of flowers trek, Uttarakhand

4. Dzongri Trek, Sikkim

5. Chokramudi trek, Munnar

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Morning Current Affairs: 11 December 2021

India successfully tests Extended Range Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System

An extended range Pinaka (Pinaka-ER) Multi Barrel Rocket launcher System has been successfully tested by India at Pokhran Range. The rocket launcher system is designed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Laboratory ARDE along with HEMRL.

PM Modi to address function on 'Depositors First: Guaranteed Time-bound deposit Insurance Payment up to Rs. 5 lakh' tomorrow

Prime Minister Modi on December 12, 2021, will a function on 'Depositors First: Guaranteed Time-bound deposit Insurance Payment up to Rs. 5 lakh' at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi. The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, RBI Governor and MoS Finance will also be present on the occasion.

India airlifts stranded Indians from Kabul, Afghanistan

A special flight arrived to India from Kabul in Afghanistan carrying 110 stranded people in the war-torn country. The flight bought 10 Indians and 94 Afghans including the members of the Afghan Hindu-Sikh minority community. Ancient Hindu scriptures and three holy Shree Guru Granth Sahib Ji were also brought back.

Assam decides to extend tenure of women reservation in urban local bodies

Assam Cabinet has decided to amend the Assam Municipal Act 1956 for providing women reservations for 10 years. The move will enable women representation in the governance and decision-making process.

Andhra Pradesh CM announces Rs. 50 lakhs ex-gratia to family of Lance Naik B Sai Teja

The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has announced Rs. 50 lakh ex-gratia to the family of Lance Naik B Sai Teja. He lost his life in the Tamil Nadu helicopter crash on December 8, which also claimed the lives of 13 brave souls including Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat.

Delhi reports second case of Omicron variant

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Delhi Government has announced that the second case of Omicron variant has been reported in the National Capital. The individual was fully vaccinated and was coming from Zimbabwe, he had also travelled to South Africa.

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Prime Minister Modi inaugurates Saryu Nahar National Project in UP- All you need to know

Saryu Nahar Pariyojana: PM Modi inaugurated **Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh** on December 11, 2021. The work on Saryu Nahar National Project had started in 1978, however, because of a lack of continuity of budgetary support, adequate monitoring, and interdepartmental coordination, the ambitious project got delayed and was not completed even after nearly 4 decades.

In 2016, Saryu Nahar National Project was brought under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana with a target of completing it in a time-bound manner. The renewed focus on the project by the Central Government resulted in the project being completed in the time period of only about 4 years.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates the Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur. pic.twitter.com/zD3bFteTtT

— ANI UP (@ANINewsUP) December 11, 2021

About Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur

The Saryu National Project in Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh has been built with a total cost of more than Rs. 9,800 crores, out of which more than Rs. 4,600 crores have been provisioned in the last 4 years.

The ambitious Saryu Nahar National Project involves the interlinking of 5 rivers- Saryu, Ghaghara, Banganga, Rapti, and Rohini in order to ensure the optimum usage of water resources in the region.

Also Read: Ken-Betwa River interlinking Project; all you need to know about project worth Rs.44,605 crores

Why Saryu Nahar National Project in UP is significant?

The project inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi will provide assured water for irrigation of over 14 lakh hectares of land and will benefit about 29 lakh farmers of over 6200 villages.

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Saryu Nahar National Project will benefit 9 districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh namely- Shravasti, Bahraich, Balrampur, Siddharthnagar, Gonda, Sant Kabir Nagar, Basti, Maharajganj, and Gorakhpur.

The farmers of the mentioned region who were also the worst sufferers of the inordinate delay in the project will now immensely benefit from the upgraded irrigation potential. With the help of the project, the farmers will now be able to grow crops on a larger scale and maximize the agri-potential of the region.

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Royal Gold Medal 2022: Indian architect Balkrishna Doshi wins world's highest honour for Architecture

Balkrishna Doshi, an acclaimed architect from India has won 'Royal Gold Medal 2022' which is one of the world's highest honours for Architecture. The news of Balkrishna Doshi winning the honour was announced by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). In a statement, the institute said that 94-years old Doshi, with a **70-year career and over 100 built projects** has influenced the direction of architecture in India and its adjacent regions through both his teaching and practice.

On hearing the news, Balkrishna Doshi said that he is pleasantly surprised and humbled to receive the Royal Gold Medal 2022 from the Queen of England. Balkrishna Doshi also expressed his heartfelt gratitude to his wife, his daughters, and most importantly his team and the collaborators at Sangath his studio.

Prime Minister Modi via tweet also congratulated Balkrishna Doshi on winning Royal Gold Medal 2022 and said that his contributions to the world of architecture are monumental.

Spoke to the distinguished architect Shri Balkrishna Doshi Ji and congratulated him on being awarded the Royal Gold Medal 2022. His contributions to the world of architecture are monumental. His works are globally admired for their creativity, uniqueness and diverse nature. https://t.co/Fk25Gp7zg0

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 10, 2021

Why Balkrishna Doshi is being honoured with Royal Gold Medal 2022?

According to the Royal Institutes of British Architects, Doshi's buildings combine pioneering modernism with vernacular, informed by deep traditions of India's climate, architecture, craft, and local culture. Doshi's projects include administrative and cultural facilities, residential buildings, and housing developments.

Balkrishna Doshi became internationally known for his social housing projects, urban planning, as well as for his work in education, in India and as a visiting professor at universities around the world.

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Some of Balkrishna Doshi's Key projects:

1. **Shreyas Comprehensive School Campus (1958-63), Ahmedabad**
2. **Atira Guest House low cost housing (1958)**
3. **The Institute of Indology (1962)- Building to house rare documents**
4. **Ahmedabad School of Architecture. It was renamed CEPT University in 2002**
5. **Tagore Hall & Memorial Theatre (1967)**
6. **Premabhai Hall (1976) theatre and auditorium**
7. **The Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore (1977-1992)**
8. **Sangath (1981), the institute for his architecture practice, Vastu Shilpa**
9. **Kanoria Centre for Arts (1984), an arts and creative hub**
10. **Aranya Low Cost Housing (1989), Indore**

About Balkrishna Doshi

Balkrishna Doshi was born in Pune in 1927 to an extended family of Furniture makers. He studied at the JJ School of Architecture, Bombay. Doshi worked with Le Corbusier as Senior Designer (1951-54) in Paris and later four more years in India to supervise projects in Ahmedabad. Balkrishna Doshi also worked with Louis Khan as an associate for building IIM, Ahmedabad and they also continued to collaborate for over a decade.

What is Royal Gold Medal?

The Royal Gold Medal, which is given in recognition of a lifetime's work, is approved personally by Queen Elizabeth II. The medal is a given to a person or a group of people who have had a significant influence on the advancement of architecture.

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NASA launches X Ray observatory to unlock secrets of black hole and other mysterious objects

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on December 9, 2021, launched a new X-Ray mission that aims at unlocking the secrets of the black hole and other extreme cosmic objects. NASA's new X-ray space observatory is one of its kind and is called the Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer or IXPE.

The mission to launch NASA's X-Ray observatory lifted off at 1.00 am EST aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket at Kennedy Space Center in Florida. The ambitious mission is a collaboration between NASA and the Italian Space Agency. While announcing the launch on social media, the US Space Agency said that the new quest will unlock the secrets of some of the most energetic objects, from black holes to neutron stars.

Go #IXPE! Our newest X-ray observatory blasted off at 1:00am EST.

This begins a new quest to unlock the secrets of some of the most energetic objects in our universe, from black holes to neutron stars. https://t.co/Cx6HCb5rFS pic.twitter.com/G6Yt7snD3N

— NASA (@NASA) December 9, 2021

Significance

The first space X-ray observatory of its kind, IXPE has been built to study some of the most energetic objects in the universe- powerful particle jets spewing from feeding black holes, the remnants of exploded stars, and much more.

The launch of IXPE has also marked a bold and unique step forward for the X-ray astronomy. It will also inform the researchers and scientists more about the precise nature of Cosmic X-ray sources that can be learned by studying their brightness and color spectrum alone.

About NASA's X-Ray observatory- IXPE

IXPE or Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer is not as big or strong as the Chandra x-ray observatory- NASA's flagship X-ray telescope. However, as IXPE lacks in imaging power, it can

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make up by seeing an aspect of cosmic X-ray sources that have gone largely unexplored until now- Polarisation.

IXPE will also be the US Space Agency's first mission to explore the polarization signatures of a variety of X-ray sources.

NASA's IXPE includes three identical space telescopes with sensitive detectors that are capable of measuring the polarization of cosmic X-rays. Each telescope has a set of nested, cylinder-shaped mirrors that will collect X-rays and will feed them to a detector that captures a picture of incoming x rays and measures both the direction and amount of polarization.

How IXPE will help scientists in unlocking secrets of mysterious objects in space?

Scientists, by analyzing the polarized X-rays with IXPE, will be able to learn more about the structure and behavior of celestial objects, surrounding environments as well as how the physics of X-rays come to be.

The result will also allow the scientists in answering the fundamental questions about extremely complex environments in space where the electric, gravitational and magnetic fields are at their limits.

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International Solar Alliance receives Observer Status from UN General Assembly

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has granted Observer Status to the International Solar Alliance. The news was announced by India's Permanent Ambassador to the UN, T S Tirumurti on December 9, 2021. He also termed it as a historic decision and said that the International Solar Alliance has become an example of positive global climate action through partnerships benefitting global energy growth and development.

Historic decision by UN General Assembly today to grant Observer Status to International Solar Alliance

In 6 years, @isolaralliance has become example of positive global climate action through partnerships to benefit global energy growth & development

Thank all Member States pic.twitter.com/2bO4EaesnH

— PR/Amb T S Tirumurti (@ambtstirumurti) December 10, 2021

The 76th President of the UN General Assembly Abdulla Shahid, in a separate media post, informed that the UN General Assembly based on the 6th Committee Report unanimously decided to invite the International Solar Alliance to participate in the sessions and work of the UNGA in the capacity of an 'Observer'.

Congratulations!!! Today, the General Assembly, based on the Sixth Committee report, adopted resolution 76/123 & unanimously decided to invite the International Solar Alliance to participate in the sessions & work of the General Assembly in the capacity of an "Observer". pic.twitter.com/2Si4Tk6zQy

— UN GA President (@UN_PGA) December 10, 2021

International Solar Alliance General Assembly

The 4th General Assembly of the International Solar Alliance was held in October 2021 in which a total of 108 countries around the world participated. It included the 74 member countries, 34 Observer and Prospective countries, 33 Special invitee organisations, and 23 Partner Organisations.

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The launch of the International Solar Alliance was announced back in 2015 by Prime Minister Modi and the former President of France Francois Hollande at the 21st Session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties in France.

What is the Objective of International Solar Alliance?

ISA's mission is for a rapid increase in solar energy usage so that the countries can achieve an ambitious goal of net-zero carbon emission by the middle of the century, in a bid for limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5C.

USA joins International Solar Alliance

With an aim of accelerating the global adoption of solar energy, the United States of America joined the ISA as a member country in November 2021. With this, the US became the 101st country to sign the framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance.

Other countries that have recently joined the International Solar Alliance are Greece, Israel, and Sweden.

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Human Rights Day 2021: Theme, Slogan, History, Importance, Motto, Quotes, Messages

Human Rights Day 2021: The world observes Human Rights Day every year on December 10 to make people aware of their basic rights and also to acknowledge the absence of human rights in various countries. Human Rights is described as a broad range of fundamental rights and freedoms to which each and every human being living on Earth is entitled to. In the current political scenario, Human Rights Day 2021 must not be an observance of one day, but it should also bring our focus towards the people living in regions that still lack basic human rights forcing them to live under crisis and instability. To know more about Human Rights Day, read its significance, history and check the theme of this year announced by the UN.

Human Rights Day 2021 Theme

The theme announced by the UN for Human Rights Day 2021 is 'Reducing Inequalities and Advancing Human Rights'.

The theme of Huma Rights Day 2021 is related to equality and to Article 1 of UDHR which states that all human beings in the world are born free and are equal in dignity and rights. The principles of non-discrimination and equality are at the heart of human rights.

On #HumanRightsDay UN Human Rights Chief @mbachelet says equality is the solution to global setbacks exacerbated by COVID-19: Equality means that we embrace our diversity and demand that we are all treated without any kind of discrimination.
Read: https://t.co/hKAHmnHqBR pic.twitter.com/Bvpwm087Lg

— UN Human Rights (@UNHumanRights) December 9, 2021

Human Rights Day 2021 Date

Human Rights Day is observed every year on December 10 signifying the absolute rights to which all human beings are entitled, irrespective of their age, sex, race, language, religion, or political or other opinions.

Human Rights Day History

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The United Nations General Assembly in 1948 adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It has since then become a milestone document proclaiming the rights that every individual is entitled to, as a human being, regardless of their language, sex, religion, color, birth.

The Declaration of Human Rights by the UN is also the most translated document in the world which has been available in more than 500 languages.

Human Rights Day 2021 Significance

Human Rights Day is significant as it highlights and makes people aware of the institutions that are empowered to prevent inequality, protect the most vulnerable, abuses, and discrimination, and punish the perpetrators of human rights violations.

Human Rights Day has become more significant in post COVID-19 world which has further deepened the poverty, inequality, and other gaps in human rights protection.

Human Rights Day 2021 provides an opportunity to close these gaps and to build a world that is better, more sustainable, and resilient.

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Morning Current Affairs: 10 December 2021

Prime Minister Modi to inaugurate Saryu Nahar National Project in UP on December 11

PM Modi will inaugurate Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh tomorrow. The project has been built at a cost of over Rs. 9,800 crores. Saryu Nahar National Project involves the interlinking of 5 rivers- Saryu, Ghaghara, Rohini, Rapti & Banganga.

Observer Status granted to International Solar Alliance by UNGA

The United Nations General Assembly has granted an Observer Status to the International Solar Alliance. The news was shared by the Ambassador of India to UN TS Tirumurti. In a tweet, Tirumuti mentioned that ISA has become an example of positive global climate change action through partnerships.

Subject Expert Committee to meet today to discuss Covishield booster dose

The SEC will hold a meeting on December 10, 2021, to discuss the approval of the Covishield booster dose in the country. It will also be the first meeting regarding the booster dose. The Serum Institute of India had previously informed that they have an adequate stock of COVID vaccine.

India extends ban on scheduled international flights till January 31, 2022

The Government of India has decided to extend a ban on scheduled international commercial flights till January 31, 2022. The suspension, however, is not on the international cargo operations and the flights that have been particularly approved by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and Delhi Special Police Establishment (Amendment) Bill, 2021 passed in Lok Sabha

The Lower House of Parliament has passed the Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2021, and Delhi Special Police Establishment (Amendment) Bill, 2021. Both the bills seek to replace the two ordinances. The object of the amendments in the bills is to cap the tenure of directors of the CBI and Enforcement at 5 years.

US, India, Israel, UAE Quad meeting might happen in early 2022

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The Ambassador of Israel to India, Naor Gilon informed that the Quad meeting between India-US-Israel-UAE can happen in early 2022 in Dubai. The Sherpas from the four nations identified for the meet will identify the fields of cooperation in infrastructure.

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US FDA authorizes AstraZeneca's Evusheld for pre-exposure prevention of COVID-19

The United States health authorities on December 8, 2021, authorized the use of synthetic antibodies that have been developed by AstraZeneca for preventing Coronavirus infections in individuals who react badly to the COVID-19 vaccines. The emergency use authorization has been given to AstraZeneca's Evusheld, a long-acting antibody combination, for the prevention of COVID-19. The first doses of AstraZeneca's Evusheld are expected to be available soon. It is also for the first time that US Food and Drug Administration has given EUA (Emergency Use Authorization) for such a purely preventive treatment.

Today, we issued an EUA for new long-acting monoclonal antibodies for the pre-exposure prevention of #COVID19 in certain adults and pediatric individuals. https://t.co/Yg1aUtBu7O pic.twitter.com/CvZAXcR8j2

— U.S. FDA (@US_FDA) December 8, 2021

About AstraZeneca's Evusheld

AstraZeneca's Evusheld combines two types of synthetic antibodies (tixagevimab and cilgavimab).

Evusheld is given as two intramuscular infections, one straight after the other. The two antibodies will help the body's immune system in fighting off the virus by targeting its spike protein, which allows it to enter the cells and infect the body.

Who can receive AstraZeneca's Evusheld?

Evusheld by AstraZeneca will be authorized only for individuals who have a weakened immune system or those who cannot receive COVID-19 vaccination for medical reasons, such as strong allergic reactions. The drug, in those cases, can be administered to people aged 12 and up.

Two cocktails of AstraZeneca's antibodies are authorized for the prevention of infection in the US for those who have been exposed to the virus shortly before, or those who have a strong chance of being exposed to COVID-19, such as prisons or employees of retirement homes.

However, US FDA has warned that the drug Evusheld is not a substitute for the vaccination in

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individuals who are eligible to receive them. Evusheld cannot also be administered to someone who is already infected with the virus.

US FDA authorization to Evusheld

The authorization by US FDA was based on a clinical trial which was carried out on unvaccinated people over 59 years of age, or with chronic disease or high risk of infection.

The side effects of the Evusheld may include bleeding from the injection site, allergic reaction, fatigue, and headache.

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Farmer's suspend 15-month protest, to vacate protest sites at Delhi border from December 11

Farmers protests suspended: After 15 long months, the farmer leaders have decided to suspend their agitation and will vacate the protest sites at the Delhi border from December 11, 2021. Farmer leader Gurnam Singh Charuni said, ***"We have decided to suspend our agitation. We will hold a review meeting on Jan 15. If Govt doesn't fulfill its promises, we could resume our agitation."***

The decision after a long review meeting by farmer leaders of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha. Another farmer leader Darshan Pal Singh also confirmed that the protesting farmers will vacate the protest sites on December 11.

Protesting farmers will vacate the protest sites on December 11: Farmer leader Darshan Pal Singh pic.twitter.com/Ftg76o7Rd1

— ANI (@ANI) December 9, 2021

This comes after the protesting farmers received a letter from the government of India with promises of forming a committee on MSP and withdrawing cases against them immediately. The letter said, ***"As far as the matter of compensation is concerned, UP and Haryana have given in-principle consent."***

Protesting farmers receive a letter from Govt of India, with promises of forming a committee on MSP and withdrawing cases against them immediately

"As far as the matter of compensation is concerned, UP and Haryana have given in-principle consent," it reads pic.twitter.com/CpIEJGFY4p

— ANI (@ANI) December 9, 2021

Farmers have begun removing tents from their protest site in Singhu on Delhi-Haryana. A farmer said, ***"we are preparing to leave for our homes, but the final decision will be taken by Samyukt Kisan Morcha."*** Several farmers were founding celebrating at the Singhu border following the announcement of the suspension of their year-long protest against the three farm laws.

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Shiromani Akali Dal MP Harsimrat Kaur Badal said, "I congratulate the farmers on their victory today. But, 700 farmers lost their lives during their year-long protest against farm laws. We will always stand with and for the farmers."

#WATCH | Farmers celebrate at Singhu border following the announcement of suspension of their yr-long protest against farm laws & other related issues

Today they received a letter from Centre with promises of forming a committee on MSP &withdrawing cases against them immediately pic.twitter.com/e8TgOhX9X3

— ANI (@ANI) December 9, 2021

Farmers protests complete one year

On November 26, 2020, farmers belonging to almost 31 farmer organisations came together to collectively protest against the three farm bills passed during the Monsoon Session of the Parliament in 2020 by initiating sit-in protests at different border points of Delhi. The farmer groups also held nationwide protests, strikes and demonstrations throughout this past year.

The farmer groups were protesting against the following three farm reform bills-

1. The Farmers' Produce Trade And Commerce (Promotion And Facilitation) Bill

2. The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill

3. The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill

What was the issue?

The three farm bills were passed during the Monsoon session of the Parliament in September 2020 amid ruckus, especially in the upper house Rajya Sabha. Though the bills were reportedly passed to provide more support to the farmers, the farmers feared that they might lose more than they could gain after the implementation of the new Farms Laws.

Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Minister of State for Food Processing Industries of India, the sole Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) MP in Modi's cabinet resigned in protest against the three farm laws. SAD was one of BJP's oldest allies. Most farmer groups joined the agitation including Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU), All India Kisan Union (AIKS) and All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) and jointly called the reforms as "anti-farmer".

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The farmer groups began sit-in protest at Delhi's borders and also called for Bharat Bandh on several occasions to put more pressure on the centre. Several opposition parties supported the farmer leaders' call for the repeal of the three farm laws.

PM Modi announces repeal of all three farm laws

In a welcoming announcement, Prime Minister Narendra Modi finally announced the repeal of all three farm laws during his address to the nation on the occasion of Guru Nanak Jayanti on November 19, 2021. The bill seeking to repeal the three laws has been passed by the Parliament during the Winter Parliament. The Prime Minister urged all farmers, who have been camping at Delhi borders since over a year, to return home to their families.

PM Modi said then, ***"Whatever I did, I did for farmers. What I'm doing, is for the country. With your blessings, I never left out anything in my hard work. Today I assure you that I'll now work even harder, so that your dreams, nation's dreams can be realised."***

While farmers welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement, they also said that the agitation will continue until the three laws are repealed. Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait had tweeted saying that the agitation will not be taken back until the farm laws are scrapped in the Parliament.

Samyukta Kisan Morcha also welcomed PM Modi's decision to repeal all 3 anti-farmer laws but said that they will wait for the announcement to take effect through due parliamentary procedures.

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Ken-Betwa River interlinking Project; all you need to know about project worth Rs.44,605 crores

Ken-Betwa Link Project Current Affairs: The funding and implementation of the **Ken-Betwa River interlinking project** have been approved by the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The total cost of the ambitious Ken-Betwa interlinking of river projects has been assessed to be Rs. 44, 605 crores at 2020-21 price levels. The project of river inter-linking will be completed in the period of 8 years.

The Cabinet has approved the central support of Rs. 39,317 crores for the project, covering a grant of Rs. 36,290 crores and a loan of Rs. 3,027 crores. What is the Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project and which of the regions will be benefitted from the ambitious project?

What is Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project?

The Ken-Betwa interlinking project is the first project under the National Perspective Plan for the interlinking of rivers. Both Ken and Betwa rivers are the tributaries of the Yamuna river.

The Ken-Betwa River interlinking project will involve the transfer of water from Ken to the Betwa river through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal that will link the two rivers, Kotha Barrage, the Lower Orr Project, and the Bina Complex Multipurpose Project.

Ken-Betwa link project is in which state?

The Ken-Betwa river interlinking project will be extremely beneficial for Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Ken is one of the major rivers in the Bundelkhand region of Central India. It flows through the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Betwa river, on the other hand, rises in the Vindhya range. It flows northeast through Madhya Pradesh and Orchha to Uttar Pradesh.

Which regions will be benefitted from Ken-Betwa Project?

The Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project will be extremely beneficial to the water-starved

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Bundelkhand region which is spread across the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

The government's project will be significantly beneficial to the districts of Tikamgarh, Panna, Chhatarpur, Damoh, Sagar, Datia, Shivpuri, Vidisha, and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh and Mahoba, Banda, Jhansi, and Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh.

The project will also pave the way for more interlinking of the river projects in the country and it will also showcase to the world India's vision and ingenuity.

How Ken-Betwa River interlinking project will be significant?

The ambitious project of the Government of India will generate 103 MW hydropower and 27MW solar power. It will also provide the annual irrigation of 10.62 lakh hectares and will facilitate the drinking water supply to a population of about 62 lakh.

The boost to socio-economic prosperity in the backward Bundelkhand region is also expected through this project, as it will assist in the increase of agricultural activities and employment.

Background

An agreement for the Ken-Betwa River interlinking project was signed in March 2021 between the Jal Shakti Minister and the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh for implementing the first major centrally-driven river interlinking project in India.

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Defence Minister's statement on military chopper crash in Tamil Nadu: Group Captain Varun Singh on life support

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh briefed the Parliament on December 9, 2021 about the IAF helicopter crash involving Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, his wife and other senior defence personnel near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu.

The Minister said, **" With profound grief and heavy heart, I stand to convey the unfortunate news of the crash of the military helicopter in the noon of 8th December 2021, with India's first Chief of Defence Staff, Gen Bipin Rawat onboard."** The Minister informed that the last rites of CDS General Bipin Rawat will be performed with full military honours.

The Defence Minister said in his statement in the Lok Sabha that the last rites of the other military personnel will also be performed with appropriate military honour. He extended his condolences to the families of all those who died in the tragic incident. Both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha observed two-minute silence of the demise of the Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, his wife and other personnel.

Group Captain Varun Singh sole survivor

Out of 14 people on board the ill-fated chopper, 13 persons lost their lives. The bodies of those who died in the unfortunate chopper crash were brought to the Madras Regimental Centre from Military Hospital, Wellington in Nilgiris district. Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin paid floral tribute to CDS Bipin Rawat and others who died in the Coonoor chopper crash, at Madras Regimental Centre in Nilgiris district.

The mortal remains of CDS Bipin Rawat, his wife and other personnel are now being taken to the Sulur airbase from Madras Regimental Centre in Nilgiris district to be flown to Delhi.

Group Captain Varun Singh is the lone survivor of the crash. The Defence Minister informed that Group Captain Varun Singh is on life support in Military Hospital, Wellington. He asserted that all efforts are being made to save his life.

Group Captain Varun Singh is on life support in Military Hospital, Wellington. All efforts are being

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made to save his life: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in his statement in Lok Sabha on the military chopper crash in Tamil Nadu pic.twitter.com/GLU8owBIBk

— ANI (@ANI) December 9, 2021

President Ram Nath Kovind tweeted, ***"My thoughts are with Gp Capt Varun Singh who has survived the tragic chopper crash. I pray for his speedy recovery and long life."***

My thoughts are with Gp Capt Varun Singh who has survived the tragic chopper crash. I pray for his speedy recovery and long life.

— President of India (@rashtrapatibhvn) December 9, 2021

IAF orders tri-service inquiry into helicopter crash

The Defence Minister also informed in the Lok Sabha that the Indian Air Force (IAF) has ordered a tri-service inquiry into the military chopper crash. The inquiry team, led by Air Marshal Manavendra Singh, reached the crash site in Wellington yesterday itself and has started its investigation. Air Marshal Manvendra Singh is the Commander of the Indian Air Force's training command and a helicopter pilot himself.

The flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder of the Mi-17V5 chopper that crashed yesterday has reportedly been recovered from the crash site. The critical equipment has been retrieved.

Air Marshal Manvendra Singh is heading the tri-services inquiry into the IAF Mi-17 that crashed yesterday. Singh is Commander of Indian Air Force's training command and a helicopter pilot himself: IAF Officials pic.twitter.com/tzOBlxB6oF

— ANI (@ANI) December 9, 2021

Suspended Rajya Sabha MPs call off today's protest in honour of CDS Bipin Rawat

Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge, who is also the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha, said that they have decided not to protest against the suspension of 12 Rajya Sabha MPs today in honour of CDS Bipin Rawat and other soldiers who died in the chopper crash in Tamil Nadu. He said that the leaders will also attend Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's address in the Lok Sabha.

Background

PM Narendra Modi had held a meeting with senior ministers in the Parliament earlier today including Union Ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Pralhad Joshi, Nirmala Sitharaman and

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Anurag Singh Thakur. The government is faced with the responsibility of announcing the next Chief of Defence Staff soon.

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2021 Anti-corruption Champions Award: Malawi's Martha Chizuma named among 12 Anti-corruption Champions

2021 Anti-corruption Champions Award: The US State Department of State has named **12 new Anti-corruption Champions** who have demonstrated leadership, courage and impact in preventing, exposing, and combating corruption. The names were announced on the eve of International Anticorruption Day and the Summit for Democracy.

The **central theme of Summit for Democracy** convened by US President Joe Biden **was combating corruption.** The Summit seeks to bring together nations to learn from each other about what works best in fighting corruption and how to address the shortcomings.

This is the second group of International Anticorruption Champions. The International Anti-Corruption Champions Award was constituted in February 2021 when an Indian Social Activist Anjali Bharadwaj was named among the first group of 12 courageous individuals.

Anti-Corruption Champions Award Significance

US President Joe Biden had announced the new International Anti-Corruption Champions Award to recognise individuals who have worked tirelessly, in the face of adversity, to defend transparency, combat corruption and ensure accountability in their own countries.

The US state department's statement read, "Often when speaking of massive, complex challenges like corruption, we lose sight of the fact that our ability to make meaningful progress and change people’s lives for the better comes down to the work of individuals – people who through sheer tenacity, creativity, and bravery, show us that even the most daunting problems are surmountable."

2021 Anti-corruption Champions Award winners

The latest Anti-corruption Champions Award honorees include-

1. Dorothy Bradley - Belize

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2. Nikolay Staykov - Bulgaria

3. Alexandra Attalides - Cyprus

4. Carlos Giovanni Ruano Pineda- Guatemala

5. Gabriela Alejandra Castellanos - Honduras

6. Jamiliya Maricheva - Kazakhstan

7. Juris Juriss - Latvia

8. Riad Kobeissi - Lebanon

9. Martha Chizuma - Malawi

10. Denise Namburete - Mozambique

11. Dr. Torplus Yomnak - Thailand

12. Carlos Paparoni - Venezuela.

Martha Chizuma named Anti-corruption Champion

Malawi's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) director Martha Chizuma was named one of the 12 new Anticorruption Champions. She was chosen for the award for demonstrating leadership, courage and impact in preventing, exposing and combating corruption. The US Embassy said in a statement, “Making progress in this work requires tremendous courage. To fight corruption, we need leaders from every part of our societies to step up. Thank you Martha Chizuma for showing us how it’s done.”

Chizuma had exposed abuse of office, illegalities in public appointments and other corrupt acts while she was in office.

International Anti-corruption Day

The International Anticorruption Day is observed every year on December 9th to raise public awareness regarding anti-corruption. The day has been observed every day since the passage of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption on October 31, 2003.

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Google Trends 2021: What was trending in 2021 in India?

Google trends India: Google India on December 9, 2021, announced the results for its year in search 2021 mentioning the top search trends of 2021 in India. The listing of top google trends in India has revealed what Indians searched in the year 2021 across sports, news, entertainment, personalities, among other categories. As per **Google India's 'Year in Search 2021'**, the Indian Premier League (IPL) has filled the top spot for the trending query overall in 2021. IPL is further followed by CoWIN, ICC T20 World Cup, Tokyo Olympics, and Euro Cup in the overall top trending searches in India. Find the list of top trending searches by Indians in 2021 varying across categories throughout the year.

Most searched person on Google 2021 in India

Neeraj Chopra, Aryan Khan has topped the list of the most-searched person on Google in India 2021. With his historic performance in Tokyo Olympics, Chopra bought home country's first-ever medal in athletics.

Neeraj Chopra is followed by Aryan Khan, son of Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan, who became a part of a major controversy after he was booked by NCB in a cruise drug case in October 2021.

The other names in the most searched person on Google 2021 in India also include Shehnaaz Gill, PV Sindhu, Natasha Dalal.

Google Trends India: India searches 'How to make Oxygen at Home' in 2021

As India battled the severity of COVID-19 in April-May 2021 facing the collapse of health infrastructure, one of the most common searches in 'How to' by India was **'How to make oxygen at home'.** The search under the same category that topped the chart of Google trends in India in 2021 is 'How to register for COVID vaccine'.

'Near me' Google searches in 2021 in India

The top trending searches in India under the 'Near me' category involved largely of the services related to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the top searches under 'Near me' were the 'COVID vaccine near me', searches such as 'food delivery near me' and 'COVID hospital near me' also saw a spike in Google trends searches in 2021 in India.

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Google Trends India 2021 top 'Overall' Searches

Ranking	Overall
1	Indian Premier League
2	CoWIN
3	ICC T20 World Cup
4	Euro Cup
5	Tokyo Olympics
6	COVID Vaccine
7	Free Fire redeem code
8	Copa America
9	Neeraj Chopra
10	Aryan Khan

Top ‘near me’ searches on Google in India in 2021

Ranking	Near Me
1	COVID Vaccine near me
2	COVID test near me
3	Food delivery near me
4	Oxygen Cylinder near me
5	Covid hospital near me
6	Tiffin service near me
7	CT scan near me
8	Takeout restaurants near me
9	Fastag near me
10	Driving School near me

Top ‘How to’ searches in 2021 on Google in India

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Ranking	How to…
1	How to register for Covid vaccine
2	How to download vaccination certificate
3	How to increase oxygen level
4	How to link PAN with AADHAAR
5	How to make Oxygen at Home
6	How to buy dogecoin in India
7	How to make Banana bread
8	How to check IPO allotment status
9	How to invest in Bitcoin
10	How to calculate percentage of marks

Top 'What is…' searches in 2021 in India on Google

Ranking	What is…
1	What is Black Fungus
2	What is the factorial of hundred
3	What is Taliban
4	What is happening in Afghanistan
5	What is remdesivir
6	What is the square root of 4
7	What is steroid
8	What is toolkit
9	What is Squid Game
10	What is delta plus variant

Top searched movies on Google in India in 2021

Ranking	Movies

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

Top ‘News Events’ searched by Indians on Google in 2021

Ranking	News Events
1	Tokyo Olympics
2	Black Fungus
3	Afghanistan News
4	West Bengal elections
5	Tropical Cyclone Tauktae
6	Lockdown
7	Suez Canal Crisis
8	Farmers Protest
9	Bird Flu
10	Cyclone Yaas

Most searched personalities on Google in India in 2021

Ranking	Personalities
1	Neeraj Chopra

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

Top searched ‘Sports Events’ in 2021 on Google in India

Ranking	Sports Events
1	Indian Premier League
2	ICC T20 World Cup
3	Euro Cup
4	Tokyo Olympics
5	Copa America
6	Wimbledon
7	Paralympics
8	French Open
9	La Liga
10	English Premier League

Top searched ‘recipes’ on Google in India in 2021

Ranking	Recipes
1	Enoki Mushroom
2	Modak

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3	Methi matar malai
4	Palak
5	Chicken Soup
6	Porn Star Martini
7	Lasagna
8	Cookies
9	Matar Paneer
10	Kada

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IAF Helicopter crashes in India- Find here list of Prominent Indians who died in military chopper crash

Helicopter crashes in India: In a tragic incident, an Indian Air Force helicopter Mi-17V5 carrying India's most senior military general, Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika and senior defence officers and IAF pilots crashed in the Nilgiri hills in Tamil Nadu on December 8, 2021. Out of the total 14 passengers on board, 13 were confirmed to be dead by the Indian Air Force including CDS General Bipin Rawat and his wife.

General Bipin Rawat was India's first Chief of Defence Staff. He was on his way to deliver a lecture at the Defence Services Staff College in Wellington. **This is one of the worst chopper crashes in the history of the Indian Armed forces.** The tragic chopper crash sent shockwaves across the country and the country's top leaders dropped all their scheduled events to convene emergency meetings to decide the next line of action following such horrific news.

Read more: CDS Bipin Rawat, wife confirmed dead among 13 people in military chopper crash

This is not the first time that General Bipin Rawat was involved in a military chopper crash. **In February 2015, General Bipin Rawat had a miraculous escape when the helicopter he was travelling in crashed.** He was travelling in a single-engine helicopter based on the 1950s' Alouette Aérospatiale 315B Lama of France, The Cheetah, which plunged nose down from the height of 20 metres, right after taking flight. General Rawat, then Lt General was heading towards the 3 Corps headquarters in Dimapur Nagaland. He escaped with minor injuries then.

The IAF Mi-17V5 helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu is a grim reminder of the 1963 Poonch helicopter crash, which killed six top Army and Air Force officers. There have been several tragic chopper crashes after that as well involving prominent Indians including former Andhra Pradesh CM YS Rajasekhara Reddy, Sanjay Gandhi, Royal Scion from Madhya Pradesh Madhavrao Scindia, Nagaland CM Dorjee Khandu and actress Soundarya.

Helicopter crashes in India

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1963 Poonch helicopter crash

The IAF Aerospatiale Alouette III helicopter carrying six officers was on its way to Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir when it crashed. The officers were on their way to inspect a new water-head that was constructed after electricity and power supply was affected in the town. The chopper reportedly collided with telegraph lines at an altitude of 200 feet.

The officers who died in the unfortunate helicopter crash include-

Lieutenant General Daulat Singh, General officer commanding in chief, western command

Air Vice-Marshal EW Pinto, Air officer commanding, western command

Lieutenant General Bikram Singh, General Officer Commanding, 15 Corps

Major General KND Nanavati, Military Cross, General Officer Commanding 25 Infantry Division

Brigadier SR Oberoi, Military Cross, Commander 93 Infantry Brigade

Flight Lieutenant SS Sodhi

May 30, 1973 plane crash

Mohan Kumaramangalam, Union Minister of steel under Indira Gandhi's government died in the crash of Indian Airlines Flight 440 in New Delhi on May 31, 1973. He was 56.

June 23, 1980

Sanjay Gandhi, Congress leader and younger son of former Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi, died after the advanced Pitts S-2A aircraft that he was flying on crashed soon after taking off from Safdarjung airport in Delhi. He was performing an aerobatic maneuver over his office when he reportedly lost control and crashed. He was just 33. The only passenger in the plane, Captain Subhash Saxena, also died in the crash.

July 9, 1994

Surendra Nath, the then Punjab governor was traveling to Kullu from Chandigarh when the 14-seater Beechcraft plane he was traveling in crashed in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh on July 9, 1994. The 68-year-old former IPS officer and 12 others including nine members of his family

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died in the crash.

November 14, 1997

The then Union Minister of State for Defence, N.V.N. Somu and three members of the armed forces including a Major General died in a chopper crash on November 14, 1997.

May 2001

The then Arunachal Pradesh education minister, Dera Natung and five others died when their Pawan Hans helicopter crashed near Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh due to poor visibility.

September 30, 2001

The royal scion from Madhya Pradesh and Congress leader Madhavrao Scindia died in a plane crash while travelling to Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh to address a Congress rally. His chartered flight crashed in an Uttar Pradesh village in September 30, 2001. He was 56.

March 3, 2002

Then Lok Sabha Speaker and Telugu Desam Party leader GMC Balayogi died in a chopper crash in Andhra Pradesh's Krishna district on 3 March 2002.

17 April, 2004

Actress KS Sowmya, popularly known as Soundarya, died in a helicopter crash on April 17, 2004 while travelling Karimnagar from Bangalore. She was 31.

September 2004

The then Meghalaya community development minister, C Sangma along with three legislators and six others was killed in a helicopter crash in September 2004.

March 31, 2005

Noted industrialist OP Jindal, who was also Haryana's power minister then died in a helicopter crash in March 2005. The state's Agriculture Minister Surender Singh also died in the crash. They were flying back to Chandigarh from Delhi.

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September 3, 2009

YS Rajasekhara Reddy, the then-Andhra Pradesh chief minister, in a very tragic incident died when the twin-engined Bell 430 helicopter carrying him crashed in the Nallamala Hills in Andhra Pradesh. He was flying to a village in Chitoor district.

April 30,2011

Dorjee Khandu, the then Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister also died when the helicopter carrying him and four others crashed in a forest, about 30 km away from Tawang near the India-China border on April 30, 2011. He was travelling from Tawang to Itanagar. The former CM's body was recovered about 5 days later near Sela Pass, close to India's border with China.

May 9, 2012

A helicopter carrying the then Jharkhand chief minister Arjun Munda, his wife and three others crash-landed at Ranchi's Birsa Munda airport. All survived but sustained injuries.

July 2014

Seven IAF personnel, including two officers, died when the ALH Dhruv helicopter carrying them from Bareilly to Allahabad crashed in Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh

October 2014

Three Army officers died when a Cheetah helicopter belonging to an Army aviation unit in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh crashed shortly after takeoff.

April 3, 2018

An IAF helicopter Mi-17 V5 crashed near Kedarnath in April 2018 while flying on a state mission. All four aircrew and two ground staff members, survived the crash.

February 27, 2019

IAF helicopter Mi-17 V5, which had taken off from Srinagar on a routine mission, crashed near Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam. All six onboard sustained fatal injuries.

May 21, 2021

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IAF pilot Abhinav Chaudhary died when his MiG-21 fighter jet crashed in an open field in Langeana village in Moga district in Punjab.

Know more about India’s first Chief of Defence Staff

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International Anti-Corruption Day 2021 (December 9) - Your Right, Your Role: Say No to Corruption

International anti-corruption day: The anti-corruption day is observed annually on December 9 to raise awareness against corruption and the measures that can be implied to fight it. The act of corruption, which exists in all forms of societies, is considered a threat to democracy by the international community. The **anti corruption day 2021** is a reminder as well as an opportunity to address the issue which impacts every significant structure and the lives of people. The International anti-corruption day 2021 sheds light particularly on the problems persisting in the bureaucratic structures of the countries which in turn impacts the functioning of every institution.

International anti-corruption day 2021 campaign aims at strengthening the relations between countries to take a stance against corruption and to develop measures to curb corruption as well as to recover the corrupted money. Know more about anti-corruption day 2021 and why is it significant in a democratic society.

International anti corruption day theme 2021

The theme of the International anti corruption day 2021 is **'Your right, your role: Say no to corruption'.**

Today is Int'l Anti-Corruption Day (9 Dec)!

"Your right, your role: Say #NoToCorruption". @UNDP is committed to assisting countries to prevent & address corruption by working closely with all stakeholders & partners. #IACD2021 Statement by @ASteiner https://t.co/MlVF3YJKn4 pic.twitter.com/XCRBfRWFg1

— UNDP Anti-Corruption (@UNDPGAIN) December 9, 2021

History of International anti-corruption day

To fight corruption, the United Nations Convention against Corruption was adopted by the General Assembly on October 31, 2003. The international anti-corruption day is organized by the UN Development Programme in which all the agencies work together to fight against corruption and discourage acts that can that facilitate the practice of corruption.

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International anti-corruption Day 2021 significance

The anti corruption day 2021 aims at highlighting the rights and responsibilities of everyone- including the government officials, states, law enforcement officers, government officials, private sector, media representatives, public, youth, and civil society- in tackling the problem of corruption.

The international anti-corruption day 2021 encourages and acknowledges that the systems, policies and the measures are need to be in place for the common people to speak up and say no to corruption.

Anti-corruption campaign in India: Where does it stand?

India, in 2021, ranked at 82 out of 194 countries in the global ranking that measures the bribery risks in the countries globally. In 2020, the country ranked at 77th position, however, slipped its rank by five spots with a score of 44.

India, in the area of corruption, performed better than Bangladesh, Pakistan, China as well as other neighbouring countries. Only Bhutan ranked at 62, which was higher than India among the bordering nations.

International anti-corruption day 2021: Countries with highest and lowest risk of corruption

Highest- North Korea and Turkmenistan are the countries that have the highest risk of corruption in business as well as other sectors.

Lowest- Scandinavian nations such as Norway, Denmark, Finland are named among the countries that have the lowest risk of bribery or corruption.

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Morning Current Affairs: 9 December 2021

‘National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (Amendment) Bill, 2021’ to be moved in Rajya Sabha today

The Central Government will move a bill on pharma institutes, research in Rajya Sabha today for consideration and passing. The bill was passed by Lok Sabha on December 6, 2021. The bill on the pharma institutes seeks to give special status to 6 more institutes of pharmaceutical education and research.

Cremation of Chief Defence Staff Bipin Rawat, his wife to be held on December 9 at Delhi Cantt

The cremation of CDS General Bipin Rawat and his wife will be on December 9, 2021, in Delhi Cantonment. Their mortal remains are expected to arrive in New Delhi today. General Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat and 11 other armed forces personnel died after a military helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu on December 8.

To tackle Omicron, WHO calls to speed up vaccination programme

The World Health Organisation has asked countries around the world to speed up their COVID-19 vaccination programmes to tackle the highly infectious Omicron variant of COVID-19. The Director-General of WHO also said that the new variant’s spread suggests that it will have a major impact on the COVID pandemic.

Executive Director of Serum Institute of India Dr Suresh Jadhav passes away

The Executive Director of Serum Institute of India (SII) Dr. Suresh Jadhav passed away at the age of 72 after a long illness. Dr. Jadhav was known to be instrumental in the development of the Covishield vaccine on COVID-19. The Chief Scientist of WHO Dr. Soumya Swaminathan expressed her condolences via Twitter on the demise of Dr Jadhav.

United States passes bill to ban imports from China’s Xinjiang

The United States passed a bill by a vote of 428 to 1 to ban imports from the Xinjiang region of China. The ban on imports has been announced as they are made with forced labour. The bill has come days after the United States announced a diplomatic boycott of Beijing Winter Olympics 2022 over the human rights abuses in Xinjiang, China.

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After US, Australia, UK, Canada announces diplomatic boycott of Beijing Winter Olympics

Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia have also announced a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics 2022 over concerns about human rights exploitation in China. The announcement from the nations has come days after the US announced the diplomatic ban.

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Rohit Sharma replaces Virat Kohli as India's new ODI, T20I captain

New Indian ODI captain: Rohit Sharma has been named as the new captain of the Indian ODI and T20I teams. The All-India Senior Selection Committee announced the same on December 8, 2021. He will be succeeding Virat Kohli, who had announced his decision to step down as the T20 captain in September 2021.

Rohit Sharma already took the helm as the T20 captain of Team India during its recent T20 series against New Zealand in November 2021. He will take over as the ODI captain during the three-match ODI against South Africa, which will start from January 2022.

Virat Kohli will remain the captain of the Indian test side.

Stay tuned for more updates.

The All-India Senior Selection Committee also decided to name Mr Rohit Sharma as the Captain of the ODI & T20I teams going forward.#TeamIndia | @ImRo45 pic.twitter.com/hcg92sPtCa

— BCCI (@BCCI) December 8, 2021

Read more: **Virat Kohli steps down as T20 captain, to remain captain for ODI/ Test formats**

Rohit Sharma has also been named as the new vice-captain of the Indian Test team, replacing out-of-form Ajinkya Rahane. This was informed when the BCCI announced the 18-member squad for the upcoming three-match test series against South Africa.

India's Test squad for South Africa tour

Virat Kohli (Capt), Rohit Sharma (vc), KL Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Shreyas Iyer, Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant(wk), Wriddhiman Saha(wk), R Ashwin, Jayant Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Mohd. Shami, Umesh Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Shardul Thakur, Md. Siraj.

Standby Players: Navdeep Saini, Saurabh Kumar, Deepak Chahar, Arzan Nagwaswalla.

The key changes in the Indian squad include inclusion of Hanuma Vihari and exclusion of players like Ravindra Jadeja, Shubman Gill, Axar Patel and Rahul Chahar due to injuries.

Squad: Virat Kohli (Capt),Rohit Sharma(vc), KL Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara,

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> Ajinkya Rahane, Shreyas Iyer, Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant(wk), Wriddhiman Saha(wk), R Ashwin, Jayant Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Mohd. Shami, Umesh Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Shardul Thakur, Md. Siraj. pic.twitter.com/6xSEwn9Rxb
>
> — BCCI (@BCCI) December 8, 2021

India vs South Africa Test Series

India vs South Africa 1st test (Boxing Day Test) -December 26, Centurion

India vs South Africa 2nd test- January 3, Johannesburg

India vs South Africa 3rd test-January 11, Cape Town

The three-match test series will be followed by a 3-match ODI series.

India vs South Africa ODI Series

India vs South Africa 1st ODI- January 19, Paarl

India vs South Africa 2nd ODI- January 21, Paarl

India vs South Africa 3rd ODI- January 23, Cape Town

Rohit Sharma - ODI Captaincy Record

As Rohit Sharma takes over as Team India's ODI Captain, it is also important to look at his captaincy track record so far in the 50 over format of the game. Until now, Rohit Sharma had got opportunity to captain the Men in Blue only in absence or unavailability of Virat Kohli. Rohit made his ODI captaincy debut in 2018 against Sri Lanka, a match that India won by 7 wickets. The statistics reveal that Rohit has so far led India in 10 ODIs and has managed to win 8 of them. This puts his winning ratio at 80%.

Rohit Sharma - ODI Captaincy Record		
Date	**Versus**	**Result**
10 December 2017	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka won by 7 wickets
13 December 2017	Sri Lanka	India won by 141 runs
17 December 2017	Sri Lanka	India won by 8 wickets
18 September 2018	Hong Kong	India won by 26 runs
19 September 2018	Pakistan	India won by 8 wickets

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21 September 2018	Bangladesh	India won by 7 wickets
23 September 2018	Pakistan	India won by 9 wickets
28 September 2018	Bangladesh	India won by 3 wickets
31 January 2019	New Zealand	New Zealand won by 8 wickets
03 February 2019	New Zealand	India won by 35 runs

Table updated as on 9th December 2021

Rohit Sharma – T20I Captaincy Record

In T20 Internationals, Rohit has captained the Men in Blue more times than in ODIs. Similar to ODIs, Rohit made his captaincy debut for T20I in 2017 against Sri Lanka and won the match for India by 93 runs. So far, in T20Is Rohit has led India in a total of 22 matches and won 18 out of them. This puts his success ratio in the shortest format of the game to 81%.

Rohit Sharma - T20I Captaincy Record		
Date	**Versus**	**Result**
20 December 2017	Sri Lanka	India won by 93 runs
22 December 2017	Sri Lanka	India won by 88 runs
24 December 2017	Sri Lanka	India won by 5 wickets
24 February 2018	South Africa	India won by 7 runs
06 March 2018	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka won by 5 wickets
08 March 2018	Bangladesh	India won by 6 wickets
12 March 2018	Sri Lanka	India won by 6 wickets
14 March 2018	Bangladesh	India won by 17 runs
18 March 2018	Bangladesh	India won by 4 wickets
04 November 2018	West Indies	India won by 5 wickets

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06 November 2018	West Indies	India won by 71 runs
11 November 2018	West Indies	India won by 6 wickets
06 February 2019	New Zealand	New Zealand won by 80 runs
08 February 2019	New Zealand	India won by 7 wickets
10 February 2019	New Zealand	New Zealand won by 4 runs
03 November 2019	Bangladesh	Bangladesh won by 7 wickets
07 November 2019	Bangladesh	India won by 8 wickets
10 November 2019	Bangladesh	India won by 30 runs
02 February 2020	New Zealand	India won by 7 runs
17 November 2021	New Zealand	India won by 5 wickets
19 November 2021	New Zealand	India won by 7 wickets
21 November 2021	New Zealand	India won by 73 runs

Table Updated as on 9th December 2021

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CDS Bipin Rawat, wife confirmed dead among 13 people in military chopper crash

Gen. Bipin Rawat news: Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat and his wife Madhulika Rawat have been confirmed to be among the 13 people who died in the IAF Mi-17V5 helicopter crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu earlier today. This was confirmed by Indian Air Force in an official tweet.

With deep regret, it has now been ascertained that Gen Bipin Rawat, Mrs Madhulika Rawat and 11 other persons on board have died in the unfortunate accident.

— Indian Air Force (@IAF_MCC) December 8, 2021

There were 14 people on board the helicopter along with CDS Bipin Rawat and his wife, out of whom 13 have been confirmed dead. General Rawat who was also India's first Chief of Defence Staff was on a visit to the Defence Services Staff College in Wellington, Tamil Nadu. CDS Bipin Rawat was to address the faculty and the students officers of the Staff Course when the helicopter crashed near Coonoor in Nilgiris District.

Gen Bipin Rawat had taken off from the Sulur Airbase for Wellington and he was accompanied by his wife Madhulika Rawat, SO Lieutenant Colonel Harjinder, DA Brigadier LS Lidder, were among the other defence officials who were in the helicopter crash.

The sole survivor of the helicopter crash, Group Captain Varun Singh is undergoing treatment for his injuries at the Military Hospital in Wellington, Tamil Nadu.

Deeply anguished by the sudden demise of Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat, his wife and 11 other Armed Forces personnel in an extremely unfortunate helicopter accident today in Tamil Nadu.

His untimely death is an irreparable loss to our Armed Forces and the country.

— Rajnath Singh (@rajnathsingh) December 8, 2021

Bipin Rawat: India's first Chief of Defence Staff

General Bipin Rawat was India's first Chief of Defence Staff. He was appointed for the topmost position in December 2019 with which Gen. Rawat became one point advisor to the Government

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in matters related to the military including the Navy, Army and Air Force.

CDS Bipin Rawat had in decade long career had also served in the most difficult terrains including the Northern and Eastern Command.

PM Modi remembers Gen. Rawat as an outstanding soldier

Prime Minister Modi in a series of tweets acknowledged the bravery and valour of Gen. Bipin Rawat. Prime Minister remembered Gen. Rawat as an outstanding soldier, a true patriot who contributed greatly to modernising the Indian Armed Forces.

Gen Bipin Rawat was an outstanding soldier. A true patriot, he greatly contributed to modernising our armed forces and security apparatus. His insights and perspectives on strategic matters were exceptional. His passing away has saddened me deeply. Om Shanti.
pic.twitter.com/YOuQvFT7Et

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 8, 2021

CDS Bipin Rawat Biography

Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat was commissioned into the Indian Army in December 1978. General Bipin Rawat was a Four-Star General of the Indian Army and was the first Chief of Defence Staff of India. He was appointed as the country's first CDS on December 30, 2019, and had assumed his office from January 1, 2020.

Before being the first Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat had served as the 57th and the last Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee as well as the 26th Army Staff Chief of the Indian Army.

Gen. Bipin Rawat was a veteran of counterinsurgency warfare and had served in the most difficult terrains of India including the eastern and northern commands. Gen. Bipin Rawat was a graduate of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington. he had received his doctorate degree from CCS University, Meerut for his research work on the military-media strategic studies.

Gen. Bipin Rawat- Military Career

CDS Bipin Rawat was commissioned into the 5th Battalion of 11 Gorkha Rifles in 1978 which was also the same unit as his father. Bipin Rawat had much experience in high-altitude warfare had also spent 10 years conducting counter-insurgency operations.

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After being promoted to the Major General, Bipin Rawat took over as the General Officer Commanding 19th Infantry Division. As a Lt. General, he commanded over III Corps before taking over the Southern Army in Pune.

Gen. Rawat was appointed as the 27th Chief of Army Staff in 2016. He was also the third officer from the Gorkha Brigade to become the Chief of Army Staff.

On his visit to the United States in 2019, Gen. Bipin Rawat was inducted into US Army Command and General Staff College.

Gen. Bipin Rawat: Personal Life

General Bipin Rawat was born in Uttarakhand in 1958 into the Hindu Garhwali Rajput Family. His family has been serving in the Indian Army for multiple generations. General Rawat had attended Dehradun's Cambrian law School and then St. Edward's School in Shimla. Rawat then joined National Defence Academy and the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. Rawat graduated from Defence Services Staff College, Wellington.

Gen. Bipin Rawat died in a helicopter crash on December 8, 2021, with his wife Madhulika Rawat. Gen. Rawat is survived by two daughters.

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She is a Changemaker programme launched for women in politics

The National Commission for Women (NCW) launched **'She is a Changemaker' programme** for women politicians on December 7, 2021. The pan-India capacity building programme has been launched for women representatives at all levels, from gram panchayats to the parliament including political workers and office bearers of national and state-level political parties.

The capacity building programme will be undertaken in coordination with region-wise training institutes. The main objective of the programme will be to undertake capacity building of women political leaders.

Objective

'She is a Changemaker' programme's main objective will be to improve the leadership and decision-making skills of grassroot women political leaders and their communication skills including oration and writing skills.

She is a Changemaker programme: All details

The She is a Changemaker programme includes a series of training programmes. They were launched by National Commission for Women Chairperson Rekha Sharma in collaboration with Rhambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini, Thane, Maharashtra.

The three-day capacity building programme will be organised for women in Municipal Corporation from December 7-9, 2021.

The NCW Chairperson said during the launch event that increased women participation in politics is the need of the hour and the Commission is committed towards helping them in their journey to the Parliament.

Benefit

The She is a Changemaker programme aims to benefit every woman who wishes to make an identity for herself in politics and help her claim her rightful space in politics. Sharma said, "I hope that ‘She is a Changemaker’ project will mark a new beginning in the lives of women who are

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determined to bring a positive change in the society."

About National Commission for Women

The National Commission for Women (NCW) is the statutory body of the central government. It generally advises the government on all policy matters affecting women.

The commission was established on January 31, 1992. The first-ever head of the commission was Jayanti Patnaik.

Key Objectives of the Commission

The key objective of the national commission is to-

-Represent the rights of women in India

-To provide women a voice for their issues and concerns

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BrahMos Supersonic Missile successfully test fired by DRDO: All you need to know

India successfully **test-fired an air version of BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile** on December 8, 2021, from the integrated test range of Chandipur, off Odisha Coast. The mission by DRDO has been described as a 'major milestone' in the development of BrahMos. The air version of the BrahMos missile was test-fired from the supersonic fighter aircraft Sukhoi 30 MK-I at 10.30 am.

The test-firing of the BrahMos missile has been described as a major milestone in the development of BrahMos. As per DRDO, the launch of the supersonic missile also met all the objectives and has also cleared the way for the serial production of the air-version BrahMos Missile.

Air version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was successfully test-fired from supersonic fighter aircraft Sukhoi 30 MK-I from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off Odisha coast today: DRDO

— ANI (@ANI) December 8, 2021

The secretary of the Department of Defence Research and Development and the Chairman of DRDO congratulated the teams that were involved with the flight test. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also praised DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation), the Indian Air Force as well as other stakeholders behind the success of the mission.

Significance of BrahMos Supersonic Missile test firing

The launch of the BrahMos Supersonic Missile will be a major milestone in BrahMos development. The launch has cleared the system for the serial production of BrahMos missiles in India.

Major airframe assemblies that are responsible for forming an integral part of the Ramjet Engine are indigenously developed including the non-metallic airframe sections.

Also Read: DRDO successfully test-fires short-range surface to air missile for Indian Navy- Check details

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About BrahMos

BrahMos is a product of collaboration between India (DRDO) and Russia (NPOM) for the production, development and marketing of the supersonic cruise missile. The offensive missile weapon system has also been inducted into the Indian Armed Forces. The air version of BrahMos supersonic missile was last flight tested by DRDO in July 2021.

Short Range Surface to air Missile flight tested

The Defence Research and Development Organisation on December 7, 2021, also flight-tested the Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile. The latest launch by India will further facilitate the Indian Navy in targeting aerial threats.

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Coral reefs in Western Indian Ocean to be extinct by 2070?

Coral reef ecosystem extinction: Most of the coral reefs in the western Indian Ocean face high risk of extinction in the next 50 years due to global warming and overfishing, as per a new study. The study conducted by a group of researchers claims that coral reefs from Seychelles to South Africa might become functionally extinct by 2070.

The researchers explain that the collapse of the coral reef means the exctinction of the entire reef system, as though we may still be able to find few reef species, it would not be possible to construct a reef anymore.

The possible extinction of the coral reefs could cause a huge loss to biodiversity and hamper livelihood and food sources of thousands of people living in the neighbouring areas. The study was published in the journal- Nature Sustainability.

What are coral reefs?

Coral reef is an underwater ecosystem, which is composed of skeletons of colonial marine invertebrates called coral. The coral reefs are formed of colonies of coral polyps that are held together by calcium carbonate. Most of the coral reefs are built from stony corals, whose polyps cluster in groups.

The coral species that build coral reefs are known as hermatypic or hard corals, as they extract calcium carbonate from seawater to create a hard, durable exoskeleton that protects their soft, sac-like bodies.

Other coral species that are not involved in reef-building are known as soft corals. These corals are flexible organisms that often resemble plants and trees.

Each individual coral is referred to as a polyp and these polyps live on the calcium carbonate exoskeletons of their ancestors while adding their own exoskeleton to the existing coral structure. The coral reef gradually grows with time, one tiny exoskeleton at a time.

Where are coral reefs found?

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Most coral reefs grow in warm, shallow, clear, sunny and agitated water. They are found all over the world's oceans. The biggest coral reefs are found in clear, shallow waters of tropics and subtropics. The largest coral reef system, the Great Barrier Reef, is located in Australia. It is more than 2,400 kilometers long.

When were coral reefs first discovered?

The Coral reefs first appeared 485 million years ago, displacing the microbial and sponge reefs of the Cambrian.

What will happen if coral reefs become functionally extinct?

The collapse of a coral reef means the collapse of the coral reef system as when a reef collapses, it loses its ability to operate as a reef system. While some species may still be present, they would no longer be able to form a reef. This would impact all the coastal services ranging from tourism, fisheries and coastal protection from sea-level rise. It would put the low-income households and communities living in nearby areas at risk of losing their livelihood and food sources. The coral reef system also serves as critical nurseries for juvenile fish.

According to David Obura, chair of the IUCN corals group, who led the study, the huge tourism sector in east Africa is heavily dependent on heathy coral reefs.

How do we know coral reefs are collapsing?

The researchers had analysed the health of coral reefs in 10 countries in the neighbouring areas of the western Indian ocean. The analysis revealed that the coral reefs, especially those in the island nations are in grave danger due to the increasing temperature of the water due to global heating.

The rising sea temperatures is driving bleaching events when corals let out algae residing in their tissue, turning them entirely white, to become more regular.

While, the coral reefs in north Seychelles and other areas near the east African coast have been labelled as vulnerable and on the verge of collapse, due to overfishing, the reefs in the Comoros and Mascarene Islands and Madagascar's eastern and southern regions have been classified as critically endangered.

What are the reasons for the collapse of coral reefs?

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Some of the key reasons for the collapse of coral reefs are -

-Global Warming

-Overfishing

-Pollution

-Habitat degradation

Due to these above reasons, the world's coral reef cover has almost become half since the 1950s. The researchers stated that the most urgent threat is from climate change up to 50 years from now. They stated that whether or not we can meet the target of limiting global warming to 1.5C in the future depends on what we do in the next 10 years and hence, we should be concerned about the next 10-year horizon.

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CDS General Bipin Rawat, Wife among 13 Dead as IAF Mi-17V5 helicopter crashes in Tamil Nadu

Army Helicopter Crash in Tamil Nadu: The Indian Air Force in an official tweet confirmed that **General Bipin Rawat and his wife Madhulika Rawat are among the 13 people who have died in the unfortunate crash** of the Indian Airforce Helicopter Mi-17V5 between Coimbatore and Sulur in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu on December 8,2021.

The lone survivor of the tragic crash is Group Captain Varun Singh SC, Directing Staff at DSSC who is currently undergoing treatment at the Military Hospital in Wellington. CDS Bipin Rawat was on a visit to Defence Services Staff College, Wellington (Nilgiri Hills) to address the faculty and student officers of the Staff Course today when their military helicopter crashed onto the Niligiris and burst into flames.

The mortal remains of CDS General Bipin Rawat and his wife along with other 11 Armed Forces personnel who died in the helicopter crash are expected to arrive in Delhi by tomorrow evening.

The IAF tweet read, ***"With deep regret, it has now been ascertained that Gen Bipin Rawat, Mrs Madhulika Rawat and 11 other persons on board have died in the unfortunate accident. Gp Capt Varun Singh SC, Directing Staff at DSSC with injuries is currently under treatment at Military Hospital, Wellington."***

With deep regret, it has now been ascertained that Gen Bipin Rawat, Mrs Madhulika Rawat and 11 other persons on board have died in the unfortunate accident.

— Indian Air Force (@IAF_MCC) December 8, 2021

There were a total of 14 people aboard the ill-fated Mi-17V5 chopper, out of whom 13 have been confirmed dead. The 14 people aboard the military chopper included **CDS Gen Bipin Rawat**, his wife Madhulika Rawat, Brig LS Lidder, Lt Col Harjinder Singh, NK Gursewak Singh, NK Jitendra Kr, L/Naik Vivek Kumar, L/Naik B Sai Teja and Hav Satpal.

Read more about CDS Bipin Rawat here

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired an emergency Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)

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meeting at 6:30 pm today. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will make an official statement regarding the tragic incident in the Parliament tomorrow. He had visited CDS Bipin Rawat's residence in Delhi earlier today.

Air Force Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhary rushed towards the crash site in Sulur, Tamil Nadu as soon as the tragic news came out. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin is also on his way to Coimbatore from Chennai Airport and then will move to Nilgiris by road.

President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, who is the commander-in-chief of Indian Armed Forces, has also cancelled all his scheduled events in Mumbai and is heading back to the national capital. The President tweeted, ***"I am shocked and anguished over the untimely demise of Gen. Bipin Rawat and his wife, Madhulika ji. The nation has lost one of its bravest sons. His four decades of selfless service to the motherland was marked by exceptional gallantry and heroism. My condolences to his family."***

It’s deeply painful for me to learn of the loss of lives in the chopper crash. I join the fellow citizens in paying tributes to each of those who died while performing their duty. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.

— President of India (@rashtrapatibhvn) December 8, 2021

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also tweeted, *"Gen Bipin Rawat was an outstanding soldier. A true patriot, he greatly contributed to modernising our armed forces and security apparatus. His insights and perspectives on strategic matters were exceptional. His passing away has saddened me deeply. Om Shanti."*

Gen Bipin Rawat was an outstanding soldier. A true patriot, he greatly contributed to modernising our armed forces and security apparatus. His insights and perspectives on strategic matters were exceptional. His passing away has saddened me deeply. Om Shanti.
pic.twitter.com/YOuQvFT7Et

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 8, 2021
As India’s first CDS, Gen Rawat worked on diverse aspects relating to our armed forces including defence reforms. He brought with him a rich experience of serving in the Army. India will never forget his exceptional service.

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 8, 2021

Crash Due to Heavy Mist

While the IAF has ordered inquiry into the matter of Army Helicopter Crash in Tamil Nadu, several

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online media reports have emerged saying that the crash might-have occurred due to heavy mist in the area. The mishap of Helicopter crash carrying CDS and other Officers happened at Nanjappanchathiram area between Coimbatore and Sulur, Tamil Nadu. Following the crash, early visuals showed the helicopter in flames amid dense forest cover.

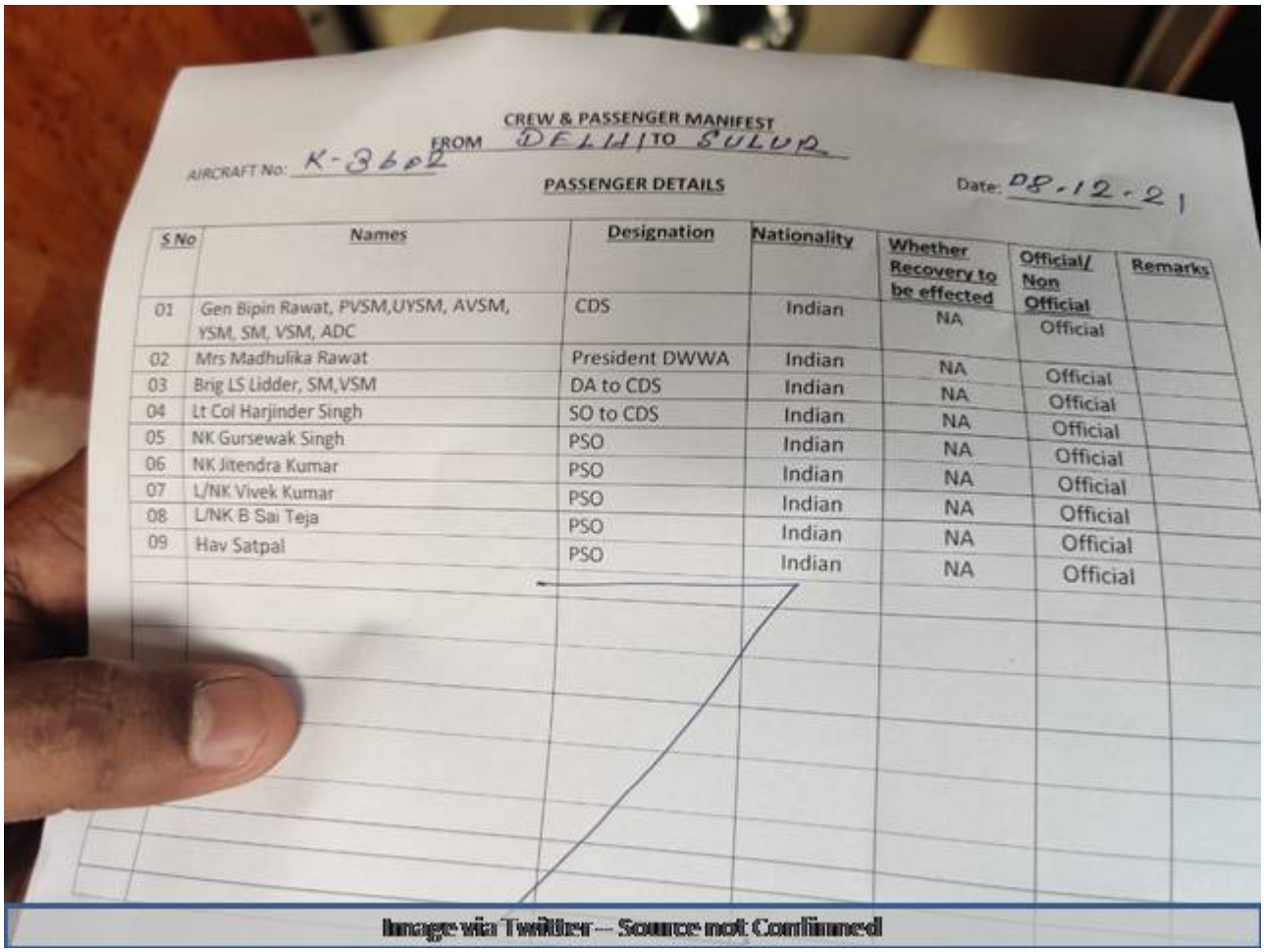
#WATCH | Latest visuals from the spot (between Coimbatore and Sulur) where a military chopper crashed in Tamil Nadu. CDS Gen Bipin Rawat, his staff and some family members were in the chopper.

(Video Source: Locals involved in search and rescue operation) pic.twitter.com/YkBVlzsk1J

— ANI (@ANI) December 8, 2021

Army Helicopter Crash - List of Passengers

A total of 14 people including CDS Bipin Rawat, his wife, Defence Assistant, security commandos and Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots were on board the ill-fated Mi-17V5 Helicopter which crashed today in Tamil Nadu.



CREW & PASSENGER MANIFEST

AIRCRAFT No: K-3602 FROM DELHI TO SULUR

PASSENGER DETAILS

Date: 08-12-21

S No	Names	Designation	Nationality	Whether Recovery to be effected	Official/ Non Official	Remarks
01	Gen Bipin Rawat, PVSM,UYSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, ADC	CDS	Indian	NA	Official	
02	Mrs Madhulika Rawat	President DWWA	Indian	NA	Official	
03	Brig LS Lidder, SM,VSM	DA to CDS	Indian	NA	Official	
04	Lt Col Harjinder Singh	SO to CDS	Indian	NA	Official	
05	NK Gursewak Singh	PSO	Indian	NA	Official	
06	NK Jitendra Kumar	PSO	Indian	NA	Official	
07	L/NK Vivek Kumar	PSO	Indian	NA	Official	
08	L/NK B Sai Teja	PSO	Indian	NA	Official	
09	Hav Satpal	PSO	Indian	NA	Official	

Image via Twitter — Source not Confirmed

IAF orders Inquiry

Following the tragic crash of -17V5 carrying CDS Bipin Rawat, the IAF has ordered a high-level inquiry into the matter to identify the cause of the crash. Following the crash, the Indian Air Force in a tweet sent out from its official Twitter handle said that An IAF Mi-17V5 helicopter, with CDS Gen Bipin Rawat on board, met with an accident today near Coonoor, Tamil Nadu. An Inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the cause of the accident."

An IAF Mi-17V5 helicopter, with CDS Gen Bipin Rawat on board, met with an accident today near Coonoor, Tamil Nadu.
An Inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the cause of the accident.

— Indian Air Force (@IAF_MCC) December 8, 2021

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DRDO successfully test fires short range surface to air missile for Indian Navy- Check details

DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) successfully test-fired a **short-range surface-to-air missile off the coast of Odisha** on December 6, 2021. A vertical-launched short-range missile will be deployed onboard various frontline ships of the Indian Navy. As per the Defence Ministry, the flight testing of the surface-to-air-missile system was conducted to validate the integrated operation of all its weapon system components.

The Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO and the Indian Navy on the successful testing of surface-to-air missile. He also said that **the latest missile system will further enhance the defence capability of the Indian Naval Ships against aerial threats.** Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik also tweeted about the successful test-firing of the missile system for the Indian Navy.

Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile for @IndianNavy was flight tested from ITR Chandipur. The missile was tested against an electronic target at a low altitude. The weapon is planned for integration onboard naval ships. pic.twitter.com/vYGTMjXQNw

— DRDO (@DRDO_India) December 7, 2021

Launch of surface to air missile system

The launch of the short-range surface-to-air-missile system was conducted from a vertical launcher against an electronic target at a very low altitude in Odisha. The flight part of the missile along with health parameters was also monitored during the launch with the use of tracking instruments.

Details of short range surface-to-air-missile system

The newly launched missile for the Indian Navy has an operational range of 50 to 60 km. It features the mid-course inertial guidance through the fibre optic gyroscope as well as the optic radar homing in the terminal phase.

According to the Defence Ministry, all the sub-systems of the surface to air missile performed as

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per the expectation during the launch.

Why test firing of surface to air missile system was significant?

The launch of a short-range surface-to-air missile system for the Indian Navy was held to validate the integrated operation of all the weapon system components. It includes the canisterised flight vehicle, vertical launcher unit with controller and weapon control systems among others.

The first trial of the missile system was held on February 22, 2021, but this was a confirmatory trial to prove the consistent performance of the configuration and integrated operation.

India's successful tests of powerful missiles

To give a boost to the armed forces, India has successfully conducted tests of various powerful missiles. Some of them are:

1. India successfully launched Agni-5 in October 2021. It is a surface-to-surface ballistic missile.

2. In August 2021, India tested DRDO's Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile.

3. In July 2021, an indigenously developed New Generation AKASH missile (Akash-NG) was test-fired. It is a Surface to Air missile defence system.

4. Man-Portable Anti Tank Guided Missile was also flight tested by DRDO.

5. In June 2021, Agni-Prime- a new missile of the Agni series- was test-fired by DRDO.

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RBI Monetary Policy Statement 2021: Repo rate unchanged at 4.0%, Real GDP growth retained at 9.5 percent in FY 21-22

RBI Monetary Policy Statement December 2021: The RBI Monetary Policy Committee has decided to **keep the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) unchanged at 4.0 percent** based on the assessment of the evolving macroeconomic situation. This was decided after the RBI Monetary Policy Committee meeting, which was held from December 6-8, 2021, informed RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.

The RBI Monetary Policy Committee also decided to keep the **reverse repo rate under the LAF unchanged at 3.35 percent and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate at 4.25 percent**. The MPC also decided to **continue its accommodative stance** as long as necessary to revive and sustain growth and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target.

The decisions are in line with RBI's objective of achieving the medium-term target for consumer price index (CPI) inflation of 4 percent within a band of +/- 2 percent while supporting growth.

Check the tweet below to watch full address by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das

Address by Shri Shaktikanta Das, Governor, Reserve Bank of India https://t.co/dJRQ7nUy9L

— ReserveBankOfIndia (@RBI) December 8, 2021

RBI Monetary Policy Committee Statement- Know in 10 points

1. Global Economy Assessment: The spike in infections across the world along with the emergence of the Omicron variant and persistence of supply chain disruptions and elevated commodity prices continue to weigh on global economic activity. The global trade is slowing down after a sharp rebound due to the disruptions in port services and turnaround time along with elevated freight rates. The commodity prices have also remained elevated despite some softening since late October and further drop towards November end. Headline inflation has increased in several advanced economies (AEs) and emerging market economies (EMEs), which has led several central banks to continue tightening and others to bring forward policy normalisation.

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2. Domestic Economy Assessment: The real gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by 8.4 percent year-on-year (y-o-y) in the second quarter of FY 2021-22, following a growth of 20.1 percent during the first quarter, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on November 30th. The economic recovery has been gaining momentum with exports and imports exceeding their pre-COVID levels. The real gross value added (GVA) also increased by 8.5 percent y-o-y during the second quarter of the current fiscal. The domestic economic activity is expected to get more momentum in the third quarter with expanding vaccination coverage and subsiding of new infections.

3. GDP Projection: The **real GDP growth projection has been retained at 9.5 percent in the Fiscal Year 2021-22,** comprising 6.6 percent in Q3 and 6.0 percent in Q4 of 2021-22. The real GDP growth is projected to be 17.2 percent for the first quarter of FY 2022-23 and 7.8 percent for the second quarter of FY 2022-23.

4. Urban demand has been on a rebound along with intensive services activities with improving consumer optimism, supported by festival demand. The exports grew for the ninth month in a row in November. There was also a rise in non-oil, non-gold imports amid reviving domestic demand.

5. Inflation: The headline CPI inflation went up to 4.5 percent in October from 4.3 percent in September due to crop damage from heavy rainfalls in October in several states. The fuel inflation touched an all-time high of 14.3 percent in October, driven up by the international prices of liquefied petroleum gas and kerosene. The core inflation excluding food and fuel also remained elevated at 5.9 percent during September-October.

6. Liquidity conditions: As per MPC, the liquidity conditions remained in large surplus through the fixed-rate reverse repo and the variable rate reverse repo (VRRR) operations under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) averaging 8.6 lakh crore in October-November. The reserve money expanded by 7.9 percent year-on-year, while the Money supply (M3) and bank credit by commercial banks rose by 9.5 percent and 7.0 percent respectively year-on-year. India’s foreign exchange reserves also rose by USD 58.9 billion in 2021-22 to USD 635.9 billion.

7. Economic Outlook: As per MPC, the inflation trajectory will depend on several factors going forward. The rise in vegetable prices due to heavy rains in October and November is likely to reverse in winter. The supply side interventions by the Government continue to restrain the pass-through of elevated international edible oil prices to domestic retail inflation. The crude oil prices have seen a significant correction in the recent period.

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8. CPI Inflation Projection: The core inflation is though still impacted by high industrial raw material prices, transportation costs and global logistics and supply chain bottlenecks. The CPI inflation is projected to be 5.3 percent for 2021-22, which includes 5.1 percent in Q3, 5.7 percent in Q4 of FY 2021-22. The CPI inflation for Q1 of FY 2022-23 is projected at 5.0 percent and at 5.0 percent for Q2 of the same fiscal year.

9. Recovery: The domestic economic activity recovery is expected to be increasingly broad-based with the expanding vaccination coverage and fall in fresh COVID-19 cases. The rural demand is expected to remain resilient. The rise in contact-intensive activities is expected to continue to bolster urban demand. The RBI surveys predict improving business outlook and consumer confidence.

10. Omicron impact: However, the **volatile commodity prices along with persisting global supply disruptions along with the new Omicron COVID variant and financial market volatility pose risks to the outlook.** The RBI has retained its projections for real GDP growth taking all these factors into consideration and assuming no resurgence in COVID-19 infections in India.

The next Monetary Policy Meeting is scheduled for February 7-9,2022.

Background

The last RBI Monetary Policy Committee meeting was held October 6-8,2021 when it had decided to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 4.0 percent and reverse repo rate unchanged at 3.35 percent and bank rate and marginal standing facility (MSF) rate unchanged at 4.25 percent. The MPC had also retained the real GDP growth projection at 9.5 percent in 2021-22, including 7.9 percent in Q2, 6.8 percent in Q3 and 6.1 percent in Q4 of 2021-22.

FAQs on RBI

Who is the current RBI Governor?

Shaktikanta Das

How often is the RBI Monetary Policy Committee meeting held?

Once in two months

What is the composition of the Reserve Bank of India?

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The Reserve Bank of India has one Governor and four Deputy Governors.

RBI Emblem- The RBI emblem has a Panther and Palm tree

Read more: **RBI Monetary Policy Statement October**

RBI Monetary Policy Statement August 2021

RBI Monetary Policy Statement June 2021

RBI Monetary Policy Statement April 2021

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Jnanpith Award 2021: Nilmani Phookan, Damodar Mauzo bag top literary honour: Full list of Jnanpith Awardees

Jnanpith Award winner 2021: Eminent **Assamese Poet Nilmani Phookan Jr. has won the 56th Jnanpith Award** while the **57th Jnanpith Award has gone to the Konkani novelist Damodar Mauzo**. Jnanpith Awards, India's highest literary honour is bestowed on the writers for their outstanding contribution to the Literature.

56th Jnanpith Award is announced for 2020 and the 57th Jnanpith Award is announced for the year 2021. Both Phookan and Mauzo are the winners of the Sahitya Akademi Award and are known for their significant contribution to the respective regional literature. Damodar Mauzo is based out of Majorda, Goa and Nilmani Phookan is from Guwahati, Assam.

Winner of 56th Jnanpith Award- Assamese Poet Nilmani Phookan

Assamese Poet Nilmani Phookna has received the highest literary honour 'Jnanpith Award'. He has been honoured for his lifelong devotion to literature.

It is also for the third time that Assam has received Jnanpith Award. Before Nilmani Phookan, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya in 1979 and Mamoni Raisom Goswami in 2000 were also awarded the literary honour.

Famous works of Jnanpith Awardee Nilmani Phookan

Padma Shri Awardee Nilmani Phookan is a poet of renown and is known for his works-

Kobita

Gulapi Jamur Lagna

Surya Henu Nami Ahe Ei Nodiyedi

Manas-Pratima

Phuli Thaka Suryamukhi Phultor Phale

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Awards & Recognition

Year	Awards
2001	Gyanpeeth Award for Lifetime Contribution in Literature
1981	Sahitya Akademi Award in Assamese
	President of Assam Sahitya Sabha

Konkani Writer Damodar Mauzo- Winner of 57th Jnanpith Award

Damodar Mauzo, a 77 years old Konkani writer has been awarded the 57th Jnanpith Award. Mauzo is known for his novels such as Tsunami Simon and Karmelin and the short stories including Other Stories from Goa and Teresa's Man.

The books written by Jnanpith Award winner Damodar Mauzo have also been translated into various Indian languages. While commenting on the news of receiving the Jnanpith Award, Mauzo said that he was elevated while receiving the honour but also realized that there are many writers of the same calibre and better than who deserved the highest literary honour.

This is also the second time that a Konkani writer won Jnanpith Award. The first one was awarded in 2006 to Ravinder Kelelar.

Famous works of Damodar Mauzo

Short Fiction	Novels	Children's Books	Biographical
Gathon (1971)	Sood (1975)	Ek Ashillo Babulo (1976)	Oshe Godle Sher Goembaab (200
Zagranna (1975)	Karmelin (1981)	Kani Eka Khomsachi (1977)	Unch Haves Un Mathem (2003
Rumad Ful (1989)	Tsunami Simon (2009)	Chittarangi (1995)	A Documentary f titled 'Bhai Mauz (2014)
Bhurgim Mhugelim Tim (2001)			
Sapan Mogi (2014)			

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Jnanpith Award

The famous Jnanpith Award is the oldest and highest literary award. It is honoured annually by Bharatiya Jnanpith to an author for their outstanding contribution to the literature. Jnanpith Award was instituted in 1961 and is bestowed only on the Indian writers who write in the Indian languages that are included in the 8th schedule of the Constitution of India and English.

Full List of winners of Jnanpith Award

Year	Winners	Language
2000 (36th)	Mamoni Raisom Goswami	Assamese
2001 (37th)	Rajendra Shah	Gujarati
2002 (38th)	Jayakanthan	Tamil
2003 (39th)	Vinda Karandikar	Marathi
2004 (40th)	Rehman Rahi	Kashmiri
2005 (41st)	Kunwar Narayan	Hindi
2006 (42nd)	Ravindra Kelekar	Konkani
	Satya Vrat Shastri	Sanskrit
2007 (43rd)	O. N. V. Kurup	Malayalam
2008 (44th)	Akhlaq Mohammed Khan 'Shahryar'	Urdu
2009 (45th)	Amarkant	Hindi
	Sri Lal Sukla	Hindi
2010 (46th)	Chandrashekhara Kambara	Kannada
2011 (47th)	Pratibha Ray	Odia
2012 (48th)	Ravuri Bharadhwaja	Telugu
2013 (49th)	Kedarnath Singh	Hindi
	Bhalchandra Nemade	

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2014 (50th)		Marathi
2015 (51st)	Raghuveer Chaudhari	Gujarati
2016 (52nd)	Shankha Ghosh	Bengali
2017 (53rd)	Krishna Sobti	Hindi
2018 (54th)	Amitav Ghosh	English
2019 (55th)	Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri	Malayalam
2020 (56th)	Nilamani Phookan	Assamese
2021 (57th)	Damodar Mauzo	Konkani

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Who is Anil Menon? - Know all about new Indian-origin NASA astronaut

Indian-origin NASA astronaut: Anil Menon, an Indian-origin doctor, is among the 10 new astronaut recruits selected by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for its future space missions. He was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota to Indian and Ukrainian parents.

The 45-year-old is a lieutenant colonel at the US Air Force and has served NASA previously as the crew flight surgeon for various expeditions on the International Space Station (ISS). He is married and has two children.

NASA announced its 2021 class of astronauts on December 6, 2021 from among over 12000 people who had applied to the space agency in March 2020. Among the selected 10 new astronauts, six are men, while four are women.

Read more: New exoplanet smaller, denser than Earth detected with 8 hour-long year

Read more: Satellite for tracking global surface water to launch in 2022, confirms NASA

NASA's Class of 2021

NASA's new astronaut recruits include- Anil Menon, Nichole Ayers, Marcos Berrios, Christina Birch, Jessica Wittner, Luke Delaney, Deniz Burnham, Andre Douglas, Jack Hathaway, Christopher Williams.

All the ten astronauts who are between the age of 32-45 years belong to diverse backgrounds. They will be spending the next two years training at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

They will learn how to operate and maintain the International Space Station. They will also be trained for spacewalks, safely operate a T-38 training jet, develop robotics skills and learn Russian to communicate with their counterparts.

They will be assigned to missions aboard the ISS or deeper into space after graduation.

Significance

The new group of NASA astronauts have exciting spaceflight opportunities ahead of them, which include missions to the Moon. They will be a part of NASA's Artemis program, which aims to send the first woman and person of color to the Moon's surface as early as 2025.

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From Alaska to Florida, the 10 women and men selected for our 2021 astronaut candidate class bring an incredible range of experience—which they'll use as we explore the Moon and expand our presence in low-Earth orbit.

Meet the team: https://t.co/P2roLmayhI pic.twitter.com/hyQV4PLKG2

— NASA (@NASA) December 6, 2021

About Anil Menon

•Anil Menon will be reporting for training as an astronaut in January 2022. He had graduated in neurobiology from Harvard University in 1999. He later did his master's in mechanical engineering from Stanford University in 2004. He also completed doctor of medicine from Stanford Medical School.

•The 45-year-old was NASA- SpaceX's first flight surgeon in 2014. He had helped launch SpaceX's first humans to space during the Demo-2 mission in 2018.

•He was the lead flight surgeon for five SpaceX launches and also worked on its Starship project. He had also helped build a medical organization to support the human system during future missions.

•He has supported four long-duration crew members on the ISS as deputy crew surgeon for Soyuz 39 and Soyuz 43 missions and prime crew surgeon for Soyuz 52 mission.

•He had also served as a lieutenant colonel in the US Air Force and logged over 100 sorties in F-15 fighter jet. He has helped transport over 100 patients as part of the critical care air transport team.

•As a doctor, he was the first responder during the 2010 Haiti earthquake, 2015 Nepal earthquake and the 2011 Reno Air Show accident. He was also deployed during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

•He had also spent a year as a rotary ambassadorial scholar in India to study and support India's polio vaccination programme.

Background

NASA's last class of astronauts had graduated in 2017. Two of its members, **Indian-origin Raja**

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Chari and Kayla Barron, are currently aboard the International Space Station as a part of NASA-SpaceX's Crew-3 Mission. The Indian American astronaut, Raja Chari is the commander of the mission.

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ICC Player of the Month: David Warner, Tim Southee nominated, check full list of nominees

ICC Player of the Month November 2021: Pakistani batter Abid Ali, Australian opener David Warner and fast bowler from New Zealand Tim Southee were shortlisted on December 7, 2201, for **ICC Men's Player of the Month for November 2021**. While Nahida Aktar from Bangladesh, Pakistan's Anam Amin are among the nominees for ICC Women's Player of the Month November 2021.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the nominations ICC Player of the Month for November 2021 on the basis of the performance across all the formats. It also included the matches from the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in UAE and Oman. ICC Player of the month is picked from the nominees every month on the basis of the score and records in the major cricket tournaments in the particular month.

ICC Player of the Month nominations for November announced https://t.co/dVHvmCw5Om via @ICC

— ICC Media (@ICCMediaComms) December 7, 2021

Australian Cricketer David Warner nominated for stand out performances

An explosive opener from Australia David Warner who was also the **Player of the Tournament for ICC T20 World Cup** had given marvelous performances in the semifinal against Pakistan and in the final match played against England.

The nomination for ICC Player of the Month has gone to David Warner for the aggregated 209 runs at an average of 69.66 in four T20 Internationals. Warner's score proved to be a crucial figure as Australia lifted their first ICC Men's T20 World Cup Trophy.

Vote for ICC Player of the Month

The nominations for ICC Player of the Month November 2021 have been announced by the ICC. An independent ICC voting Academy and fans around the world will be able to vote to decide the winners of Player of the Month. Fans are also invited to cast their votes till December 12, 2021,

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and the results of ICC Player of the Month will be announced next week.

ICC Player of the month November 2021: Full list of nominees

ICC Men's Player of the month nominees

Nominees	Country
Abid Ali	**Pakistan**
Tim Southee	**New Zealand**
David Warner	**Australia**

ICC Women's Player of the month nominees

Nominees	Country
Nahida Akter	**Bangladesh**
Anam Amin	**Pakistan**
Hayley Matthews	**West Indies**

ICC Player of the Month

The ICC Player of the month for both Men and Women players is a monthly award which is presented since January 2021. The award is presented by the International Cricket Council for recognizing the cricketers who have performed best across all forms of international cricket formats in a particular month.

ICC Men's Player of the month (January-October 2021): Full list of winners

Month		Winners	
January		**Rishabh Pant**	
February		**Ravichandran Ashwin**	
March	**2021**	**Bhuvneshwar Kumar**	
April		**Babar Azam**	
May		**Mushfiqur Rahim**	
June		**Devon Conway**	

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July	**Shakib Al Hasan**
August	**Joe Root**
September	**Sandeep Lamichhane**
October	**Asif Ali**

ICC Women's Player of the Month (January-October 2021): Full List of winners

Month		Winners	
January		**Shabnim Ismail**	
February		**Tammy Beaumont**	
March		**Lizelle Lee**	
April		**Alyssa Healy**	
May		**Kathryn Bryce**	.
June	**2021**	**Sophie Ecclestone**	
July		**Stafanie Taylor**	
August		**Eimear Richardson**	
September		**Heather Knight**	
October		**Laura Delany**	
November		TBD	

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Morning Current Affairs: 8 December 2021

Australia becomes 2nd nation to boycott 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics

After US, Australia has announced a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics over concerns about human rights abuses in Xinjiang, particularly against the Uyghur minority community. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said that the decision should come as "no surprise" that their diplomats and politicians would boycott the event. He said that the decision has been taken in Australia's national interest. Beijing also has its own diplomatic freeze on Australia, which also led its officials to boycott the games. The move comes after US President Joe Biden announced that it will not be sending an official US delegation to the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

Olaf Scholz to be sworn in as new Chancellor of Germany

Olaf Scholz will be sworn in as the new Chancellor of Germany on December 8, 2021. He would be succeeding acting German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who will be stepping down after ruling for 16 years. She had become the first female chancellor of Germany when she took office in 2005. She has been described as the most powerful woman and one of the world's most successful political leaders. Scholz had visited India once before in 2012 when he was the Mayor of Hamburg. He had visited Delhi and Mumbai during his India tour.

Read more here

Indian origin Anil Menon among new NASA astronaut recruits

Indian-origin doctor Anil Menon is among the 10 new astronauts recruited for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s future space missions. The 45-year-old was born and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He was born to Ukrainian and Indian immigrant parents. He had previously served NASA as the crew flight surgeon for various expeditions on the International Space Station (ISS). He is a lieutenant colonel at the US Air Force.

Read more here

Omicron has 'increased infectivity' but no 'severe profile': Dr Fauci

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Dr Anthony Fauci said on December

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7, 2021 that as per emerging evidence, Omicron COVID variant has increased infectivity and not a "severe profile". He said that the molecular evidence suggests that the mutations that are seen in Omicron suggest that they are associated with increased infectivity. He said that during a white house briefing that real-world evidence is accumulating rapidly on a daily basis, which will allow us to determine the increase in cases.

Padma Shri Nanda Kishore Prusty passes away,

Padma Shri awardee Nanda Kishore Prusty passed away on December 7, 2021. Prime Minister Narendra Modi took to Twitter to pay condolences and remember his contribution to the field of education. PM Modi tweeted, "Pained by the demise of Nanda Prusty. The much-respected 'Nanda Sir' will be remembered for generations due to his efforts to spread the joys of education in Odisha. He drew the nation's attention and affection a few weeks ago at the Padma Awards ceremony."

Nanda Kishore Prusty was a 98-year-old school teacher, popularly known as Nanda Sir, who provided free education to many generations of children since independence. He was awarded the Padma Shri by President Ram Nath Koving in November 2021.

Section 144 imposed in Lucknow till January 5

The Lucknow Police has invoked Section 144 CrpC in Lucknow district from December 7 - January 5, 2022. The law has been imposed in the wake of Christmas and New Year's celebrations amid Covid-19 threat and protest declared by various farmers' organisations. No person without proper police permission will be allowed to take out a procession of five-person or more than that. Police will also be deployed at examination centres of UPCS, PSC, or any other government-related exams to stop cheating or any other disruption.

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Winter Olympics 2022: Why US has announced diplomatic boycott of Winter Olympics in Beijing?

The **United States has announced the diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing**, China. The news was shared by the White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki on December 6, 2021. Biden Administration in the US has decided to not send an official delegation to the Winter Olympics which are scheduled to take place next year in Beijing.

Reportedly, the **US athletes will participate in the 2022 Winter Olympics**, but the administration will not send the US government officials to the upcoming games. The same policy will also be applied to the Paralympic Games to be held in Beijing, China. The White House Press Secretary said that the US has been looking to send a clear message to China.

The last time the United States had fully boycotted the Olympics was in 1990 when the former President of the United States Jimmy Carter was in office.

#BREAKING US announces diplomatic boycott of Beijing Winter Olympics pic.twitter.com/zlYEkmje7x

— AFP News Agency (@AFP) December 6, 2021

Why US has announced diplomatic boycott of 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing?

The move by the United States for the diplomatic boycott of Winter Olympics 2022 in Beijing is to escalate pressure on China **over the allegations of forced labour and human rights abuses in the Western region of China Xinjiang.** The atrocities that are happening particularly against the Uyghur population and the other religious and ethnic minority groups.

With the latest decision, the US plans on sending a clear message that as long as human rights abuses will continue in China, there cannot be ‘business as usual’.

Not a right step to penalize US athletes

The United States has informed its allies abroad of its decision. The Press Secretary of the White House also said that the government did not feel it was right or fair to penalize the US athletes

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who have been training themselves for years.

However, the diplomatic boycott of the games also does not signify that it is the end of the concern that the US will raise about ongoing human rights abuses in China.

A delegation from the United States is generally sent to the Olympics. Notably, in Tokyo 2020 Olympics, first lady Jill Biden had lead the diplomatic delegation of the country.

Biden and Jinping Summit

It should be noted that the **2022 Winter Olympics Beijing was not a topic of discussion during the three-and-a-half-hour summit that was held between US President Joe Biden and President of China Xi Jinping.**

The summit between the two rivals also did not yield any major breakthroughs, and none were also expected ahead of time. US President had raised trade issues, human rights, and Chinese aggression against Taiwan.

2022 Winter Olympics Beijing

2022 Winter Olympics are an upcoming international winter multi-sport event that will take place in Beijing from February 4 to February 20, 2022. Beijing was selected as the host city for Winter Olympics 2022 in July 2015 at the IOC session in Kuala Lampur.

The Winter Olympics 2022 will also be the first winter Olympics in China and the second overall Olympics to be held in China.

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Former CEC Sunil Arora joins International IDEA's board of advisers

Former Chief Election Commissioner of India**, Sunil Arora has been invited to join the Board of Advisers for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).** IDEA has a 15-member board of advisers, all of whom are eminent personalities from a wide variety of backgrounds.

The election commission of India said in an official statement that Sunil Arora will bring rich leadership experience, knowledge and skills to contribute significantly to the working of the International Institute.

Sunil Arora had served as the **23rd Chief Election Commissioner of India** from December 2018 to April 2021. It was under his tenure that the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections were conducted.

Sunil Arora, former Chief Election Commissioner of India has been invited to join the Board of Advisors for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA): Election Commission of India pic.twitter.com/49vVh7knKR

— ANI (@ANI) December 7, 2021

About Sunil Arora

•Sunil Arora had joined the election commission of India on September 1, 2017. He was elevated as the Chief Election Commissioner on December 2, 2018 and served for almost 42 months till April 12, 2021.

•Under his tenure, the election commission had successfully conducted the General Election to the 17th Lok Sabha in 2019 and 24 State Assembly Elections including by-elections.

•Sunil Arora is a 1980 batch Indian Administrative Service officer, who has served at various key departments in the central government and the state government of Rajasthan.

•It was under his leadership, ECI provided a big push to its digital program with a host of initiatives such as creating a unified database for electors, setting up of a national helpline 1950 and launch of the CVigil App.

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•It was also one of Sunil Arora's personal initiatives to provide a postal ballot facility to senior citizens and Persons with Disabilities to enable them to vote from their homes.

•He also ensured that the polling stations were shifted to the ground floor to make elections accessible and inclusive.

International IDEA

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) was established in 1995. It is an intergovernmental organization based in Stockholm, Sweden. India is one of the founding members of the institute.

The key mission of International IDEA is to support sustainable democracy worldwide. It currently has 34 member countries, which include new, old, small and large democracies from all continents.

Background

Sunil Arora had earlier assumed Chairmanship of the Association of World Election Bodies (AWEB) for the term 2019-21 when India took over the Chair of the body from Romania. Under his chairmanship of the body, the election commission of India ensured further enhancement of capacity building.

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Asia Youth Para Games 2021: Indian shuttlers bag 15 medals: Sanjana, Hardik, Palak clinch three each

Asia Youth Para Games: The Indian badminton contingent in the Asia Youth Para Games 2021 finished the campaign with 15 medals against their name. At Asia Youth Para Games, for India, Tokyo Paralympian Palak Kohli, Hardik Makkar, and Sanjana Kumari won three medals each. **The Indian Para shuttlers at the Asian Youth Para Games 2021 won total of 4 Gold, 7 Silver, and 4 Bronze.**

The 4th Asia Youth Para Games (AYPG) were Bahrain's biggest Para sport event ever which took place from December 2 to December 6, 2021. At Asia Youth Para Games 2021, around 750 Para athletes under 23 years of age from 30 countries around the world competed for cross nine sports.

Asian Youth Para Games 2021:

Gold Medallist Indian Shuttlers-

1. **Nithya Sre- WS- SH6**
2. **Sanjana Kumari- WS SL3**
3. **Palak Kohli and Sanjana Kumari- WD SL3-SU5**
4. **Nehal Gupta and Abhijeet Sakhuja- MD SL3- SL4**

Silver Medallist Indian Shuttlers-

1. **Nithya Sre and Aditya Kulkarni- XD SH6**
2. **Jyoti- WS SL4**
3. **Naveen S.- MS SL4**
4. **Hardik Makkar- MS SU5**
5. **Karan and Ruthick- MD SU5**
6. **Hardik and Sanjana- XD SL3-SU5**

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7. **Jyoti- WD SL3-SU5**

Bronze Medallist Indian Shuttlers

1. **Palak Kohli- WS SU5**
2. **Palak Kohli and Nehal Gupta- XD SL3-SU5**
3. **Naveen S. and Hardik Makkar- MD SU5**
4. **Santhiya- WS SL3- SU5**

Asia Youth Para Games 2021

The 4th edition of the Asia Youth Para Games 2021 was held in Manama, Bahrain from December 2 to 6, 2021. Around 750 para-athletes under the age of 23 years participated in the mega games which were organized in the conjunction with the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) of Bahrain along with the support of the local government.

The previous edition of Asia Youth Para Games was held in Dubai, UAE in 2017. Japan had finished at the last edition followed by Iran and China.

Sports played at Asia Yout Para Games-

Goalball, Para-athletics, Para-Badminton, Boccia, Para Powerlifting, Para Table Tennis, Para-Swimming, Para-Taekwondo, and Wheelchair Basketball.

Asian Youth Para Games 2021 Medal tally

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Iran	34	44	19	97
2	Thailand	24	20	11	55
3	Japan	21	7	7	35
4	Indonesia	12	11	14	37
5	India	11	11	14	36

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6	South Korea	9	5	18	32
7	Uzbekistan	9	1	4	14
8	Hong Kong	8	9	9	26
9	Iraq	8	4	9	21
10	Malaysia	3	3	4	10
11	Bahrain	3	3	2	8
12	Singapore	3	2	0	5
13	Saudi Arabia	2	5	9	16

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International Civil Aviation Day 2021: Date, Theme, History and Role of ICAO

International Civil Aviation Day 2021: The International Civil Aviation Day is observed on December 7, 2021 **to help generate and reinforce worldwide awareness of the importance of international civil aviation** to the social and economic development of States. The day also aims to throw light on the unique role of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in helping States to cooperate and realize a global rapid transit network at the service of all mankind.

International Civil Aviation Day theme 2021

The ICAO Council has established a special anniversary theme for International Civil Aviation Day every five years that coincide with the ICAO anniversaries such as 2014, 2019, 2014 and 2029. The council representatives choose a single theme for full 4-year intervening period between the anniversaries.

The International Civil Aviation Day theme from now till 2023 will be ***"Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development".***

International Civil Aviation Day Significance

The importance of civil aviation as an engine of global connectivity is even more relevant now as the United Nations and world nations have adopted Agenda 2030 and have embarked towards a new era in global sustainable development.

International Civil Aviation Day History

The International Civil Aviation Day was set up on December 7, 1994 as part of ICAO's 50th-anniversary activities. On the occasion, 54 nations had gathered in the Grand Ballroom of the Stevens Hotel in Chicago at the invitation of the United States. The event saw the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, also known as the 'Chicago Convention'.

The Chicago Convention is the international agreement, which permitted the global civil aviation system to develop peacefully, in a manner suitable to all people and countries across the world. S

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution to officially recognise observance of

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International Civil Aviation Day on 7 December in 1996.

Chicago Convention

Chicago Convention or the Convention on International Civil Aviation was signed on December 7, 1944 by 52 States. The Chicago Convention was established to promote cooperation and create and preserve friendship among the nations and people of the world. The convention established the core principles permitting international transport by air.

It led to the creation of the specialized agency - International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) - which has overseen it ever since. ICAO came into being on April 4, 1947 after the convention received ratification from all remaining 26 states. ICAO became a specialised agency of the United Nations in October 1947. The Chicago Convention mainly sets forth the purpose of the ICAO.

Role of ICAO

The ICAO is funded and directed by 193 national governments to support cooperation in air transport as signatory states to the Chicago Convention (1944). The key role of the organisation is to maintain an administrative bureaucracy supporting these diplomatic interactions and research new air transport policy and standardization innovations.

ICAO through its seven regional offices also serves as a critical coordination platform in civil aviation. The main role of ICAO is to develop policies and undertake educational outreach, compliance audits, perform studies and analysis, develop coalitions and conduct training, auditing and capacity building activities and provide assistance and builds aviation capacity through many other activities and cooperation of member states.

ICAO Vision: To achieve the sustainable growth of the global civil aviation system.

ICAO Mission: To serve as the global forum for international civil aviation.

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Indian Armed Forces Flag Day 2021: Theme, History, Why is it Celebrated?

Indian Armed Forces Flag Day 2021: Armed Forces Flag Day is observed every year on December 7 in the country to honour the martyrs and the soldiers in uniform who heroically fight and continue to protect the country's borders and honour. The Flag Day of India 2021 also comes with an opportunity of collecting funds that can be further used for the welfare of ex-servicemen, serving personnel and for rehabilitating the battle casualties.

The Armed Forces Flag 2021 is dedicated to raising the contributions of the citizens of India as a thank you for the selfless services of our armed personnel. On Armed Forces Flag Day, small flags are distributed in return for donations. On the Indian Armed Forces Day 2021, read more about the history of the day and why is it significant in the current scenario.

Armed Forces Flag Day 2021 Date

Indian Armed Forces Flag Day is observed in India every year on December 7. The day encourages the people of India to collect funds and various other contributions for the benefit of the Armed Forces Staff.

Indian Armed Forces Flag Day 2021 History

The Armed Forces Flag Day in India has been celebrated since 1949. On August 28, 1949, a committee set up by the Defence Minister of India had agreed to observe the Armed Forces Flag Day every year on December 7. The decision was taken to meet the needs of the defence armed personnel in post-Independent India.

Significance of Armed Forces Flag Day 2021

The Armed Forces Flag Day was initially observed to collect donations for the armed personnel and to give flags to the general public to raise awareness. However, flag day has taken on a much greater significance as the day also encourages the people of India to take responsibility to care for and work in any way for the welfare of the armed personnel.

Flag Day 2021 is also a moment to express the gratefulness to the military troops of India who leave their families behind to serve selflessly.

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Armed Forces Flag Day 2021: 5 Interesting facts related to Indian Flag Day

1. The Defence Minister's Committee in 1949 had established the original Flag Day Fund. However, in 1993, the Defence Ministry of India decided to consolidate the related welfare funds into a single Armed Forces Flag Day Fund.

2. The three branches of the Indian Armed Services- the Indian Air Force, the Indian Army and the Indian Navy- on Flag Day put on various cultural events, myriad of performances, and various other activities for the citizens of India.

3. On Armed Forces Flag 2021, in exchange for the donations, the little flags in deep blue, red and light blue signifying the three-armed services of India are distributed.

4. For the contribution, an Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF) has been established by the Indian Government to aid the rehabilitation and welfare of the ex-servicemen.

5. In India, there are around 32 lakh ex-servicemen, with an additional 60,000 added every year owning to the superannuation.

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Morning Current Affairs: 7 December 2021

US to boycott 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing?

US President Joe Biden's administration has decided not to send an official US delegation to the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing in a symbolic protest against China's ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang. This was informed by White House press secretary Jen Psaki on December 6, 2021.The US athletes will still participate in the Winter Olympics, but the administration will not be sending government officials. The same will apply to paralympic Games in Beijing.

PM Modi to dedicate multiple development projects in UP's Gorakhpur district today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate multiple projects to the people of Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur district on December 7, 2021 including a fertilizer plant and an All India Institute Of Medical Science (AIIMS). PM Modi will be dedicating national development projects worth over Rs 9,600 crore to the city. The AIIMS Gorakhpur will aim to not only serve the districts of Purvanchal in Uttar Pradesh but also neighbouring Bihar and Nepal. The AIIMS has been built at a cost of over Rs 1,000 crore, the foundation stone for which had been laid by the Prime Minister on July 22, 2016.

India, Russia sign record 28 agreements including 10-year defence cooperation agreement

India and Russia signed record 28 MoUs and agreements on December 6, 2021 across a wide range of sectors including defence, education, culture, trade, energy, and intellectual property accountancy. The agreements included cooperationin in the field of defence for the next 10 years from 2021 to 2031. The agreements were signed during the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to India for the 21st annual India- Russia summit.Both countries have also started a new 2+2 mechanism to increase cooperation between them.

India to host SCO cyber security seminar, China & Pakistan to participate

India is hosting two-day cyber security seminar for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) countries in New Delhi on December 7-8,2021. The seminar will see participation from representatives of all SCO member states including Russia, China, Pakistan,Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. The seminar will be held under the auspices of SCO - Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS). Pakistan has confirmed participation of its

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delegation.

RDIF to provide one-shot Sputnik Light vaccine to India

The Russian Direct Investment Fund will expand India-Russia partnership in the fight against COVID by providing one-shot Sputnik Light vaccine and Sputnik M vaccine for adolescents in India. RDIF has reached agreements with the leading Indian pharmaceutical companies including the Serum Institute of India (SII) to facilitate necessary production capacities of its vaccines in India. India has now become a leading production hub for Sputnik V and Sputnik Light vaccines. Sputnik Light is a highly effective vaccine, as per the latest findings by the Gamaleya Center in Russia. The vaccine has showed efficacy between 78.6-83.7 per cent among the elderly.

India's tour for South Africa: Cricket SA announces updated schedule

Cricket South Africa (CSA) on December 6, 2021 announced updated schedule of India men's tour of South Africa. The tour will now begin from December 26. The tour has been reduced from three series to two with only Tests and ODIs matches going to be played. The matches will take place from December 26 to January 23, 2022, across four venues. The four match T20I series has been rescheduled for another time in the new year.

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Important Current Affairs for UPSC 2021: Important Days in December 2021

Important days in December 2021: We have compiled a list of important current affairs days and events in December 2021 that will be important for UPSC, SSC CGL, RRB NTPC and other competitive exams. The important days in December 2021 include state visits by heads of state in and out of India, armed forces days, space launches, statehood days and inauguration of development projects such as Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor, AIIMS Gorakhpur and revamped Kashi Vishwanath corridor.

The days cover all important national and international days of importance for December 2021 and aim to boost the general awareness of all competitive exam aspirants and help them revise important current affairs topics at ease.

Important Current Affairs Events in December 2021

December 1: **World AIDS Day**

57th BSF Raising Day

Nagaland's statehood Day (Nagaland became the 16th state of India on December 1, 1963)

December 2: **National Control Pollution Day 2021 (Bhopal Gas Tragedy)**

Assam Day or Asom Divas (The day commemorates advent of the first king of Ahom kingdom in Assam)

December 3: **International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021**

Dr Rajendra Prasad's 136th Birth Anniversary

December 4: **Indian Navy Day**

Solar Eclipse December 2021

Padma Shri Vinod Dua passes away

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Former CM of unified Andhra Pradesh Konijeti Rosaiah passes away

Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor

December 5: FIH Men's Junior Hockey World Cup final

December 6: **Mahaparinirvana Divas** (BR Ambedkar’s death anniversary)

Maitri Diwas (India was one of the first countries to establish bilateral diplomatic ties with Bangladesh on (December 6, 1971)

Russian President visits India, 21st India-Russia Summit

Aung San Suu Kyi sentenced to jail for 4 years

Demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992

December 7: Indian Armed Forces Flag Day

International civil aviation day

PM Modi to inaugurate AIIMS Gorakhpur

December 9: National anti-corruption day

NASA's Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer (IXPE) mission launch

December 10: Human Rights Day

December 11: International Mountain Day

UNICEF Day

December 13: PM Modi to inaugurate Kashi Vishwanath corridor

December 14: National Energy Conservation Day

December 15: President Ram Nath Kovind to pay State Visit to Bangladesh (15-17)

International Tea Day

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December 16: Vijay Diwas (50th Victory Day celebrations of Bangladesh)

UN Arabic Language Day

December 18: Minorities Rights Day (India)

December 19: Goa’s Liberation Day

December 21: Winter solstice

December 22: National Mathematics Day

James Webb Space Telescope launch day

December 23: Kisan Divas or National Farmers' Day

December 24: National Consumers Day

December 25: Good Governance Day (Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary)

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India-Russia defence deal 2021: India, Russia sign procurement deal of AK-203 assault rifles

India- Russia defence deal: **In a major boost to India's defence sector, a procurement deal of over 6 lakh AK-203 rifles were signed between India and Russia on December 6, 2021.** As India and Russia begin their 2+2 first-ever ministerial dialogue on December 6, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Russian counterpart Sergey Shoigu signed a contract for the manufacture of nearly 6 lakh AK-203 rifles under a joint venture in Amethi, UP.

The deal between India and Russia was signed following the bilateral meeting between the Defence Ministers of both nations.

As the President of Russia Vladimir Putin has arrived in India for the annual talks with Prime Minister Modi, both India and Russia are expected to sign more than 10 agreements following the talks between the two leaders. The agreements will be in the area of culture, space, science and technology, defence etc.

Delhi | Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Russian Defence Minister General Sergey Shoigu sign agreements between India and Russia pic.twitter.com/QDF3greES4

— ANI (@ANI) December 6, 2021

India-Russia Defence Deal 2021

India and Russia have signed defence deals to facilitate and boost the military cooperation between the two nations. The deals will also be significant for India in expanding its defence mechanism at the border amid the continuous threat from China.

1. Deal for the procurement of over 6 lakh AK-203 assault rifles. The procurement deal is worth over Rs. 5,000 crores.

2. Another agreement between India and Russia has been signed on Protocol on amending the agreement on cooperation in the field of Kalashnikov series small arms manufacturing dated back to February 18, 2019.

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3. The Defence Ministers of India and Russia signed an agreement to extend the military-technical cooperation between the two nations for the next decade, from 2021 to 2031.

Defence Cooperation important pillars of partnership: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

The Defence Minister of India Rajnath Singh, during his opening remarks at the bilateral meeting with the Russian counterpart, said that defence cooperation is one of the most important pillars of a partnership between the two nations.

India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation is a well-established mechanism for the past two decades. The Union Minister expressed hope that the India-Russia partnership will bring peace to the entire region and will also bring stability.

India-Russia Defence Minister Meet: Background

The Defence Minister of India and Russia meet annually, alternately in India and Russia. The leaders discuss and review the status of ongoing projects as well as other issues of military-technical cooperation.

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New Exoplanet GJ 367b: Exoplanet smaller, denser than Earth detected with 8 hour-long year

New Exoplanet GJ 367b: Astronomers have detected one of the smallest planets outside our solar system where **a year is just 8 hours long.** The new exoplanet is reportedly **smaller and denser than Earth, whose surface temperature may reach 1,500 degrees Centigrade– hot enough to melt rock and metal.**

The exoplanet is located **31 light-years from the Earth** and takes only **eight hours to orbit its star.** The scorching-hot new exoplanet is just a bit larger than Mars with a diameter of just over 9,000 kilometres and just about as dense.

The discovery of the planet has been recorded in a new study that was published in the **Science journal**. The exoplanet is one of the lightest among the nearly 5,000 exoplanets with half the mass of Earth.

What are exoplanets?

Exoplanets are planets that orbit a star outside our solar system.

Exoplanet GJ 367b: All you need to know

•Exoplanet GJ 367 b is one of the “ultra-short period” (USP) group of exoplanets that orbit their star in less than 24 hours. The exoplanet was discovered using NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS).

•The spectrum of its star was later studied from the Earth using the HARPS instrument on European Southern Observatory’s 3.6m telescope.

•The mass and radius of the exoplanet was determined using a combination of different evaluation methods with an accuracy of 14 and 7 percent respectively.

Exoplanet GJ 367b Mass- 55 percent of Earth's mass

Exoplanet GJ 367b Radius- 72 percent of Earth’s radius

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•As per co-author Dr Vincent Van Eylen, the size and mass of the planet were calculated using two methods, both of which involved analysing the light of the planet's star:-

- One method was to measure the minute dip in emitted light from the star as the planet passed in front of it. This was done using data from TESS.

- The other was to calculate the mass of the planet from the effect it had on the movement of the star. The detected motion was slight, no more than walking speed at a rate of 80cm a second.

•By determining the planet's radius and mass, the researchers were also able to draw conclusions about the exoplanet's inner structure.

•The exoplanet is reportedly a **low-mass rocky planet with a higher density than the Earth.** The high density indicates that the planet has an iron core.

•The properties of the exoplanet are similar to those of Mercury, which also has a disproportionately large iron and nickel core.

•However, the extreme proximity of the planet to its star means that **it is exposed to an extremely high level of radiation, over 500 times stronger than what the Earth experiences.**

•The **planet's surface temperature reportedly can reach up to 1500 degrees Celsius**, a temperature capable of melting all rocks and metals.

About the exoplanet's star

The star of the newly discovered exoplanet is only about half the size of the Sun. The red dwarf called GJ 367 is not only smaller but also cooler than the Sun.

According to researchers, these red dwarfs, also known as 'class M stars', are orbited by at least 2-3 planets, each of which is at least four times the size of Earth.

The planets associated with such red dwarf stars are easy to find and characterize and are among the most common stellar objects in our cosmic neighborhood and are suitable targets for exoplanet research.

Significance

As per the research team, the discovery is a step forward in their search for a "second Earth". The study shows that astronomers can determine the properties of even very small planets. The study, led by astronomers at the Institute of Planetary Research at the German Aerospace

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Center, involved 78 researchers.

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ICC Men's Test Team Rankings 2021: India grabs No.1 spot after beating New Zealand in Mumbai

ICC Men's Test Rankings: Team India reclaimed the top spot in ICC Men's Test Team Rankings by winning a test series by 1-0 against defending World Test Champions New Zealand. **The Kohli-led team won the series against the Blackcaps with a massive 372- runs at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.** The Men in Blue required only 45 minutes on the fourth morning of day 4 of Test cricket against New Zealand and registered their biggest win. India has now won 14 consecutive test series at home and 11 straight under Skipper Virat Kohli.

India now ranks first in the ICC Men's Test Team Rankings.#INDvsNZ
pic.twitter.com/6KZynaEAa6

— ANI (@ANI) December 6, 2021

ICC Men's Test Team Rankings: India vs New Zealand Test match series 2021

The latest ICC Men's Test Rankings have been given on the basis of the performance during India vs New Zealand Test Match. The first test match between India and New Zealand was held on November 25 and the second test match was on December 3, 2021. India's Vice-Captain Ajinkya Rahane team India in the first Test against New Zealand was led by in the absence of skipper Virat Kohli.

Virat Kohli becomes first cricketer in history to register 50 wins in international formats

Indian Skipper Virat Kohli on December 6, 2021, became the first cricketer in history to register 50 wins in all the international formats. The significant achievement came after India defeated New Zealand by 372 runs in the Mumbai Test and clinched the two-match series.

Kohli had skipped the first test match between India and New Zealand in Kanpur but had returned to lead in the second match held in Mumbai.

Virat Kohli's 50th Test win against New Zealand has added to his tally of 59 T20Is victories and 153 ODI victories, making him the only cricketer to achieve the feat in international cricket.

Congratulations @imVkohli. The first player with 50 international wins in each format of the

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game.#TeamIndia pic.twitter.com/51zC4hceku

— BCCI (@BCCI) December 6, 2021

ICC Men's Test Team Rankings: Full List of ICC Test Rankings Dec 2021

ICC Men's Test rankings have placed India on top after the team won against New Zealand with comfortable 372 runs, also marking its test wins by runs. As per ICC cricket rankings, India is now at the No. 1 spot with a rating of 124. New Zealand is placed second and Australia is third.

POS	Team	Matches	Points	Rating
1	India	28	3,465	124
2	New Zealand	25	3,021	121
3	Australia	17	1,844	108
4	England	35	3,753	107
5	Pakistan	27	2,481	92
6	South Africa	19	1,675	88
7	Sri Lanka	30	2,485	83
8	West Indies	33	2,480	75
9	Bangladesh	16	779	49
10	Zimbabwe	11	342	31

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Myanmar: Ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi jailed for four years- Know why?

Myanmar News: The **ousted leader of Myanmar Aung San Suu Kyi was sentenced to jail for four years by the country's junta** on December 6, 2021, for incitement against the military and for breaching the COVID-19 rules. This is the first of a series of possible sentences that can see Nobel laureate imprisoned for decades. The 76- years old Aung San Suu Kyi has been detained since the military ousted her government on February 1, 2021, ending Myanmar's brief period of democracy.

As reported by AFP news agency, Aung San Suu Kyi has been sentenced to two years for incitement against the military and another 2 years for breaching a natural disaster law related to Coronavirus. Former President of Myanmar Win Myint has also been jailed for four years, but they will not yet be taken to prison.

The court on December 6 delivered its first verdict against the Civilian leaders who were detained by a military coup on February 1, 2021.

Myanmar court jails ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi for four years for inciting dissent against the military and breaching Covid rules: AFP News Agency

(File photo) pic.twitter.com/UGcMVvNg83

— ANI (@ANI) December 6, 2021

What are charges against Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi?

Aung San Suu Kyi, the former State Counsellor of Myanmar, faces a dozen cases including multiple corruption charges in addition to the violations of the state secrets act, COVID-19 regulations, and a telecoms law which carry the combined maximum sentences of more than a century in prison.

The supporters of Aung San Suu Kyi are claiming the cases to be baseless and that they are designed to end her political career and to tie her up in legal proceedings while the military in Myanmar consolidates power.

Is Suu Kyi being given due process?

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According to Myanmar Court, Suu Kyi is being given due process by an independent court which is led by a judge appointed by her own administration. However, the international community has condemned the ongoing violence in the country and has also been demanding Suu Kyi's release.

The trial of Suu Kyi which is happening in Capital Naypyitaw has also been closed to the media and the public information outlets of the Myanmar junta have not mentioned the proceedings. Suu Kyi's lawyers have also been barred from communicating with the media and the public.

Aung San Suu Kyi and her history of facing detention

Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi has a long history of being a political prisoner. She rose to prominence in 1988 and became the General Secretary of the National League for Democracy (NLD) in Myanmar. She formed NLD with the help of several retired army officials who criticized the previous military junta in Myanmar.

In the elections held in 1990, NLD won 81% of seats in the Parliament, however, the results were nullified as the military government in the country effused to hand over power to NLD.

Suu Kyi was detained before the elections and had remained under house arrest from 1989 to 2010, for almost 15 of the 21 years. She also became one of the most prominent political prisoners in the world.

Political crisis in Myanmar

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military took control of a democratically elected government in the country on February 1, 2021, and detained State Counsellor of Myanmar Aung San Suu Kyi and several other civilian leaders.

The country has since been paralyzed with protests and the military junta's deadly crackdown on its opponents, which it calls terrorists. The violence in the country has led to more instability.

The crisis in the country had happened in the wake of rising conflict between the government and the military. The military officials had claimed massive fraud in democratic elections which were held in November 2020.

The November elections in Myanmar were the only second democratic vote that had taken place in the country ever since it emerged from 50 years of military rule in 2011.

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FIH Men's Hockey World Cup Winner 2021: Argentina beat six-time champions Germany to lift Junior hockey world cup, India finish 4th

Junior hockey world cup winner 2021: Argentina defeated six-time winners Germany 4-2 in the FIH Men's junior hockey world cup 2021 final at the Kalinga Stadium in Odisha on December 5, 2021. This is their second Junior Men's Hockey World Cup title. Argentina has become the only third team after Germany (six wins) and India (2001, 2016) to win multiple Junior Hockey WC titles.

¡DALE CAMPEÓN! #LosLeoncitos levantaron la copa en el Mundial Junior 2021 #JWC2021 @VisaArgentina @Sancor_Salud @adidasAR@YPFoficial @DeportesAR @GatoradeARG @DeportesAR @enardinfo pic.twitter.com/ID5qwS0o5j

— ARG Field Hockey (@ArgFieldHockey) December 5, 2021

Defending champions **India finished fourth in the junior hockey world cup 2021 after losing 1-3 to France** in the third-place match. This was India's second clash with France in the tournament. The team had clashed against France in its opening game as well on November 24th, which it narrowly lost by 4-5.

The Netherlands beat Belgium 6-4 to be placed fifth in the tournament, while Spain beat Malaysia 4-1 to be placed in 7th place. A total of 16 teams participated in the FIH Men's junior hockey world cup 2021 in Odisha.

FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2021 Final Ranking	
Rank	**Team**
1	Argentina
2	Germany
3	France

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4	India
5	Netherlands
6	Belgium
7	Spain
8	Malaysia
9	South Africa
10	South Korea
11	Pakistan
12	Poland
13	Canada
14	Chile
15	United States
16	Egypt

Junior Hockey World Cup Winners List (1979- Present)

Year	Host	Winner
1979	Versailles, France	Pakistan
1982	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	West Germany
1985	Vancouver, Canada	West Germany
1989	Ipoh, Malaysia	West Germany

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1993	Terrassa, Spain	West Germany
1997	Milton Keynes, England	Australia
2001	Hobart, Australia	India
2005	Rotterdam, Netherlands	Argentina
2009	Johor Bahru, Malaysia & Singapore	Germany
2013	New Delhi, India	Germany
2016	Lucknow, India	India
2021	Bhubaneswar, India	Argentina
2023	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	

FIH Men's Hockey World Cup 2021

The FIH Men's Hockey Junior World Cup 2021 was hosted by Bhubaneswar, Odisha between November 24- December 5, 2021. The top 16 teams had participated in the tournament including India, Germany, Belgium, Argentina, Canada, South Africa, Egypt, Pakistan, Korea, Malaysia, Poland, France, Chile, Spain, USA and the Netherlands.

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PM Modi in Gorakhpur: Prime Minister inaugurates AIIMS, fertiliser factory, ICMR lab in Gorakhpur

Gorakhpur news today: The three mega development projects worth over Rs. 9,600 crores were inaugurated by PM Modi in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh on December 7, 2021. PM Modi in Gorakhpur inaugurated the projects that will facilitate the economic development of the state**.** Gorakhpur in UP is also the home turf of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath.

The projects to be inaugurated by PM Modi in Gorakhpur included the **Gorakhpur Fertilizer Plant, the AIIMS Gorakhpur, and the new high-tech lab of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Gorakhpur.** Prime Minister Modi's visit to Gorakhpur, UP can also be seen in the light of upcoming elections in the state.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates development projects in Gorakhpur. Governor Anandiben Patel and CM Yogi Adityanath also present at the event. pic.twitter.com/v6bKidTzhl

— ANI UP (@ANINewsUP) December 7, 2021

The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath while informing about the projects said that the arrival of Prime Minister Modi in Gorakhpur will fulfill the dreams of the Eastern UP that were previously neglected by the failures of previous governments. He further added that the three mega projects will constitute the biggest investment in UP so far.

Fertilizer Plant in Gorakhpur

Prime Minister Modi during his visit to UP dedicated to the nation the Gorakhpur Fertilizer Plant. The foundation stone of the plant was laid by the Prime Minister in 2016.

The fertilizer plant in Gorakhpur, which after being in disuse for more than 30 has been revived by the government and built at a cost of Rs. 8,000 crores. As per PMOs, the revival of the plant in Gorakhpur is due to PM Modi's vision of achieving self-sufficiency in the production of urea.

Gorakhpur fertilizer plant will provide the indigenous neem-coated urea at 12.7 LMT per annum. It will also be of great benefit for the farmers of the Purvanchal region as well as the adjoining areas.

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The project of the Fertilizer Plant in Gorakhpur has been established under the guidance of Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited which has been working towards reviving Sindri, Gorakhpur, and Barauni fertilizer plants.

AIIMS Gorakhpur

The fully functional complex of AIIMS Gorakhpur was dedicated to the nation by Prime Minister Modi during his visit to Gorakhpur, UP. AIIMS has been constructed at a cost of over Rs. 1,000 crores. PM Modi had laid the foundation stone of the AIIMS complex earlier in 2016.

AIIMS in Gorakhpur has been established under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana. Through this scheme, institutes are being set up all over India to improve the regional imbalances in the availability of quality tertiary-level healthcare.

The facilities that are available at AIIMS Gorakhpur include a medical college, 750-bed hospital, AYUSH building, nursing college, hostel accommodation for the UG and PG students, and residential accommodation for all staff.

ICMR in Gorakhpur

PM Modi during his visit to Gorakhpur also inaugurated the new building of ICMR- Regional Medical Research Centre which has been instrumental in tackling the Japanese encephalitis/acute encephalitis syndrome in Gorakhpur.

The new building of ICMR in Gorakhpur with state-of-the-art facilities will open new horizons of research in the field of communicable and non-communicable diseases. ICMR will also help in the capacity building and provide support to other medical institutes of the region.

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Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2021: History, Interesting Facts and why is it celebrated?

Mahaparinirvan Din 2021: Mahaparinirvan Diwas is observed annually on December 6 to mark the death anniversary of Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Constitution of India. Popularly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, he is known for his significant contribution in shaping India that it is today. **Mahaparinirwan Diwas 2021 marks Dr. B R Ambedkar's 65th death anniversary** and reminds us of the role that he played as an economist, as an activist, and as the flag bearer of Dalit activism in India.

Babasaheb Ambedkar, who breathed his last on December 6, 1956, was born in Madhya Pradesh and was the 14th and the last child of his parents. On Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2021, let's read more about the history of the day and learn the exact meaning of Mahaparinirvan.

President Ram Nath Kovind paid floral tributes to Babasaheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar on his Mahaparinirvan Diwas at Parliament House Lawns, New Delhi. pic.twitter.com/nywxlYGFNh

— President of India (@rashtrapatibhvn) December 6, 2021

Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2021 Date

Mahaparinirvan Diwas in India is observed annually on December 6 to mark the death anniversary of Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar.

What is Mahaparinirvan Diwas?

In the Buddhist tradition, 'Parinirvana' means and refers to someone who has attained nirvana in his lifetime and after death. BR Ambedkar's death anniversary is referred to as Mahaparinirvan Diwas as he renounced Hinduism and had inspired the Dalit Buddhist Movement in the country. Mahaparinirvan Diwas signifies an equal society that B R Ambedkar had visualized for India.

Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2021 Significance

Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2021 sheds light on the work and the ideals of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the key role he played in shaping the country Post Independence. The Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee, BR Ambedkar embraced the philosophy of Buddhism and promoted a society that is free from the shackles of a rigid and unfair caste system.

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Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2021: 5 Interesting Facts about B R Ambedkar

1. B R Ambedkar who had renounced Buddhism in 1956, was born to a Hindu family of Maharashtra's Mahaaar Caste. It was considered as a lower caste and the people belonging to the same were referred to as 'untouchables'.

2. Dr. Br Ambedkar, known for his academic achievements, did masters in 64 subjects and had studied across the world for 21 years. He was also the first Indian to pursue a doctorate.

3. Dr. B R Ambedkar is the only Indian whose statue has been erected alongside Karl Marx in Museum in London.

4. B R Ambedkar became the first lawyer who belonged to the lower caste in India.

5. Babasaheb Ambedkar was posthumously conferred with Bharat Ratna by the Indian Government. It is the country's highest Civilian Award.

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Morning Current Affairs: 6 December 2021

PM Modi to inaugurate Kashi Vishwanath Corridoron December 13

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Kashi Vishwanath Dham corridor on December 13, 2021. The corridor will also see a statue of Maratha Queen Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar, who once reconstructed the temple. The event will be telecasted live across the country. The corridor is expected to connect the Kashi Vishwanath Temple with the Ganga River. The entire project is expected to cost about Rs 800 crore.

Russian President Vladimir Putin to arrive in India today

Russian President Vladimir Putin will arrive in India today to take part in the 21st India-Russia summit along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This would be the Russian President's second visit outside the country this year and a first in-person meeting with PM Modi since the 2019 BRICS Summit. During the visit, the two countries are expected to sign a major deal worth over Rs 5,100 crore for producing AK-203 assault rifles within India.

Read more: **Russian President Vladimir Putin to visit India on December 6th**

Nine Omicron cases detected in Jaipur

A total of nine Omicron cases have been reported in Rajasthan's Jaipur, as per the state health department. This came after the samples of 34 people were sent for genome sequencing and nine were found to be positive for Omicron. The remaining 25 tested negative. These people include the family that came from South Africa and their close contacts. The family has already been admitted to Rajasthan University of Health Sciences.

NTAGI to hold a meeting on child immunisation, additional COVID-19 vaccine dose

The National Technical Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) will be holding a meeting on issues of child immunization and additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine on December 6, 2021. The group is expected to come up with comprehensive policies for both issues during the meeting. An additional dose is given to those people who have problems with their immune functions. It is different from a booster dose, which is given after a pre-defined period after the primary doses.

Cyclone Jawad to weaken into low-pressure area in next 6 hours

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Cyclonic storm 'Jawad' that hit Odisha, West Bengal and other parts of the eastern coast, is expected to weaken into a low-pressure area on December 6, 2021. IMD said that the depression, remnant of Cyclonic Storm Jawad, over the northwest Bay of Bengal near north Odisha coast moved northeastwards and weakened into the well-marked low-pressure area (WML) over northwest Bay of Bengal and weaken further into the low-pressure area (LPA) during next 06 hours. NDRF DG Atul Karwal also stated that the impact of Cyclone Jawad was not as strong as expected.

Read more: **Cyclone Jawad weakens into low-pressure area, impact not so strong as expected**

Nagaland Governor strongly condemns 'civilians killings'

Nagaland Governor Jagdish Mukhi on December 5, 2021 condemned the killings of civilians by security forces in Oting village in Nagaland's Mon district. The Governor in a communique said that the Government has already constituted a special investigation team (SIT) to launch immediate investigation into the incident for delivery of Justice. The high-level SIT team will investigate the incident from all angles. The Nagaland Governor also informed that a court of inquiry has been instituted against the army personnel involved.

Read more: **Know what happened in Nagaland's Mon district**

FIH Men's Junior World Cup: India finishes fourth after 3-1 defeat against France

France defeated India by 3-1 in the third-place match of the FIH Men's Junior Hockey World Cup 2021 in Bhubaneshwar on December 5, 2021. This was India's second defeat against France after losing their opening game against them on November 24, 2021. France has now finished third in the junior hockey world cup.

Read more: FIH Men's Hockey World Cup Winner 2021: Argentina beat six-time champions Germany to lift Junior hockey world cup, India finish 4th

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Nagaland Civilian deaths: Home Minister Amit Shah to give statement on Nagaland firing incident in Parliament today

Nagaland Civilian killings: Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting with the top ministers in the Parliament on December 6, 2021 over the Nagaland firing incident and the government's strategy in both Houses. , the sources said. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is later scheduled to give a statement on the killing of civilians in Nagaland in both the Houses of the Parliament. At least 13 civilians including a soldier lost their lives during open firing by security troops between Oting and Tiru villages in Nagaland's Mon district on December 4, 2021.

The Special Forces in that area were reportedly tipped off by the intelligence agencies about the movement of some terrorists of the NSCN (KY) and ULFA. The unit had reportedly deployed different teams for surveillance and ambush after receiving the inputs about the movement of terrorists in the Tiru area of the Mon district of Nagaland.

The Home Minister had earlier expressed his anguish over the unfortunate incident in Nagaland's Oting, Mon. He said, ***"I express my deepest condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives. A high-level SIT constituted by the State govt will thoroughly probe this incident to ensure justice to the bereaved families."***

Anguished over an unfortunate incident in Nagaland's Oting, Mon. I express my deepest condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives. A high-level SIT constituted by the State govt will thoroughly probe this incident to ensure justice to the bereaved families.

— Amit Shah (@AmitShah) December 5, 2021

Nagaland civilian deaths: What happened in Nagaland's Mon District?

A group of civilians were travelling in the Bolero vehicle when they were fired at by the security troops at a point between Oting and Tiru village under Mon District after they crossed one of the ambush parties and reached the area of the second one which fired at the civilians.

Six civilians were killed in the initial firing. **One soldier also died in the firing** and several others were injured. The civilians were reportedly daily-wage labourers from **Oting village** who were returning home from a coal mine.

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The bodies of the civilians were found in the van when volunteers from the village went searching for them after they failed to return for several hours.

The locals retaliated to the killings by setting two vehicles belonging to the security forces on fire. The security troops were then surrounded by over 200 protesting civilians till the police arrived. The situation is now under control and the police is conducting spot verification.

six civilians were killed as the troops fired for effect, the sources said adding that the initial confusion may have caused as the civilians were carrying a hunting rifle.
After the incident took place, the Special Forces troops were waiting for the police to arrive when 14 troops were surrounded by over 200 civilians protesting against the killings.

Nagaland CM orders high-level SIT probe

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio ordered a high-level probe into the incident. He tweeted saying, ***"The unfortunate incident leading to the killing of civilians at Oting, Mon is highly condemnable. High-level SIT will investigate & justice delivered as per the law of the land. Appeal for peace from all sections."***

The unfortunate incident leading to killing of civilians at Oting, Mon is highly condemnable.Condolences to the bereaved families & speedy recovery of those injured. High level SIT will investigate & justice delivered as per the law of the land.Appeal for peace from all sections

— Neiphiu Rio (@Neiphiu_Rio) December 5, 2021

Home Minister Amit Shah also tweeted, ***"Anguished over unfortunate incident in Nagaland's Oting, Mon. I express my deepest condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives. A high-level SIT constituted by State govt will thoroughly probe this incident to ensure justice to the bereaved families."***

Anguished over an unfortunate incident in Nagaland's Oting, Mon. I express my deepest condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives. A high-level SIT constituted by the State govt will thoroughly probe this incident to ensure justice to the bereaved families.

— Amit Shah (@AmitShah) December 5, 2021

Nagaland Governor strongly condemns 'killing of civilians'

Nagaland Governor Jagdish Mukhi on December 5, 2021 strongly condemned the killings of civilians by security forces in Oting village in Nagaland's Mon district. He also conveyed deepest

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condolences to the bereaved families and wished speedy recovery to the injured persons. He also appealed to all to maintain peace.

Army orders Court of Inquiry

The Indian Army expressed regret over the incident and ordered a Court of Inquiry into the civilian killings. The army said in a statement that the incident and its aftermath are deeply regretted and assured that appropriate action will be taken as per the course of law after the court of inquiry.

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Padma Shri Vinod Dua passes away at 67, confirms daughter Mallika Dua

Vinod Dua, veteran journalist, and Padma Shri awardee passed away on December 4, 2021. Vindo Dua was suffering from a prolonged illness following a COVID-19 infection. The news of Vinod Dua's demise was confirmed by her daughter Mallika Dua via a social media post. 67 years old Vinod Dua, a veteran journalist, was moved last week to the Intensive Care Unit of Apollo Hospital in New Delhi. Mallika Dua also informed that the cremation will be held at the Lodhi crematorium in Delhi on December 5, 2021.

Vinod Dua, with an illustrious career that spanned four decades, was a pioneer in broadcast Hindi journalism with stints in Doorsharshan and other prominent media houses. Vinod Dua's legacy goes across the 80s, 90s, and 2000s, with his latest avatar on digital new age media. Vinod Dua was also known to have revolutionized the election coverage of India.

In June 2021, Vinod Dua had lost his wife Padmavati Dua, also known as Chinna Dua, to COVID-19. She was a radiologist.

Senior journalist Vinod Dua passes away, confirms his daughter and actress Mallika Dua. His cremation will take place tomorrow, she posts.

(Pic Source: Vinod Dua Twitter account) pic.twitter.com/CmkSgOrWfP

— ANI (@ANI) December 4, 2021

Vinod Dua- First electronic media journalist to win Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award

Vinod Dua for his contribution to journalism was awarded several awards. He became the first electronic media journalist in 1996 to win the **Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award**.

Other Awards & Honours

Year	Awards
2008	Padma Shri

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2017	**RediInk Award for his lifetime Achievement in the field of Journalism**

Vinod Dua's 'Zaika India Ka' and other programs

Vinod Dua who considered himself more of a broadcaster and not just a journalist hosted several programs on Doordarshan as well as later on in his career.

Dua hosted programs such as 'Janwani', where the national broadcaster Doordarshan asked direct questions on the political and social relevance of the country.

Another milestone of Vinod Dua's career was 'Parakh'. It was also a weekly Current Affairs show which was broadcast in Doordarshan.

Vinod Dua's much-loved show was 'Zaika India Ka' in which he traveled across various cities of India, stopped by the roads, highways and tasted several dishes from the roadside dhabas.

Vindo Dua: Personal Life

Vinod Dua and his wife Chinna Dua were admitted to a hospital in May 2021 after they both were tested positive for COVID-19. Vindo Dua's health has been repeatedly suffered since then and he had been in and out of the hospitals.

Vindo Dua is survived by two daughters, Bakul Dua, a Clinical Psychologist, and the comic-actor Mallika Dua.

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Covid-19 Omicron Cases in India Today: Check Full List of States that have reported Omicron Variant

Covid-19 Omicron cases state-wise in India: India is witnessing a sharp rise in Omicron variant cases with the total Omicron case tally rising to 961 as of December 30, 2021. The National Capital is the worst-hit with a total of 263 Omicron cases, followed by Maharashtra that has reported 252 Omicron cases so far.

Delhi's Health Minister Satyendar Jain warned of community transmission of Omicron in Delhi, saying that people with no travel history have also been found infected with Omicron, which means that it is gradually spreading in community. He also said that the Omicron variant has been found in 46 per cent of 115 samples sequenced in Delhi till now.

Read more: Omicron gradually spreading in community: Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain

Overall, 22 states and UTs have reported cases of the new Omicron Covid variant in India including Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Gujarat, Manipur, Kerala, Ladakh, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana.

In order to curb further spread of the highly transmissible Omicron Covid variant, several states have brought back restrictions such as night curfew and shutting down of religious places for outsiders. Mumbai recently imposed Section 144 till January 7 to check the rapid spread of Covid-19 in the city.

Full List of States that have reported Omicron Variant

State-wise Tally of Omicron Cases			
S. No.	**State**	**No. of Omicron Cases**	**No. of discharges/ recoveries/ migrations**
1	Delhi	263	57
2	Maharashtra	252	99
3	Gujarat	97	42

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4	Rajasthan	69	47
5	Kerala	65	1
6	Telangana	62	10
7	Tamil Nadu	45	24
8	Karnataka	34	18
9	Andhra Pradesh	16	1
10	Haryana	12	2
11	West Bengal	11	1
12	Madhya Pradesh	9	7
13	Odisha	9	1
14	Uttarakhand	4	0
15	Chandigarh	3	2
16	Jammu and Kashmir	3	3
17	Uttar Pradesh	2	2
18	Goa	1	0
19	Himachal Pradesh	1	1
20	Ladakh	1	1
21	Manipur	1	0
22	Punjab	1	1
Total		**961**	**320**

Background

The new Omicron variant of COVID-19 was first reported to the World Health Organisation (WHO) by South Africa on November 25. WHO named the new variant B.1.1.529 as Omicron and classified it as a variant of concern after it was suspected to be highly contagious. The severity of the new Omicron variant is not yet clear with several experts suggesting that it might be milder

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than the currently predominant COVID variant- Delta, which had caused the devastating second wave in India.

Read more: **What is S Gene dropout in Omicron? How can it confirm the presence of Omicron variant; Know here**

Omicron Variant of COVID: High Risk Countries List Released by India

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India-Russia Summit 2021: India, Russia sign 28 MoUs, issue joint statement- All you need to know

Russian President visit to India: Russian President Vladimir Putin visited India on December 6, 2021 to participate in the **21st India – Russia Annual summit** with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. President Putin was accompanied by a high level delegation. He held warm and friendly bilateral talks with PM Modi on the sidelines of the summit. During their talks, the two leaders expressed satisfaction at the sustained progress in the ***'Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership'*** between both countries despite the challenges posed by the Covid pandemic.

The two leaders further welcomed holding of the **first 2+2 dialogue between foreign and defence ministers of India** and Russia in New Delhi and the meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military & Military-Technical Cooperation in New Delhi on 6 December 2021.

The Russian President said during his meeting with PM Modi, *"We perceive India as a great power, a friendly nation, and a time-tested friend. The relations between our nations are growing and I am looking into the future."* PM Modi also affirmed, *"In the last few decades, the world witnessed many fundamental changes and different kinds of geopolitical equations emerged but the friendship of India and Russia remained constant."*

We perceive India as a great power, a friendly nation, and a time-tested friend. The relations between our nations are growing and I am looking into the future: Russian President Vladimir Putin in meeting with PM Narendra Modi in Delhi pic.twitter.com/Dr95gvWBsD

— ANI (@ANI) December 6, 2021

Know more about the AK-203 Rifles deal here

India signs deal with Russia to buy S-400 Triumf Missiles

PM Modi- Vladimir Putin Meeting: Key Highlights

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during the meeting that despite the challenges posed by COVID, there is no change in the pace of growth of India-Russia relations. He said, "our special & privileged strategic partnership continues to become stronger." He also added saying that the

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relation between India and Russia is truly a unique and reliable model of interstate friendship.

The Russian President said that currently, the mutual investments stand at about 38 billion with a bit more investment coming from the Russian side. He said, "we cooperate greatly in military & technical sphere like no other country. We develop high technologies together as well as produce in India."

On Afghanistan

Russian President Putin said that naturally they are concerned about everything that has to do with terrorism. He emphasised that fight against terrorism is also fight against drug trafficking and organized crime and with that regard, they are concerned about the developments of the situation in Afghanistan.

The two leaders agreed that both countries share common perspectives and concerns on Afghanistan and appreciated the bilateral roadmap, which was agreed upon during the NSA-level meeting for consultation and cooperation on Afghanistan.

Naturally, we're concerned about everything that has to do with terrorism. Fight against terrorism is also fight against drug trafficking & organized crime. With that regard, we are concerned about the developments of the situation in Afghanistan: Russian President Vladimir Putin pic.twitter.com/0UjxiWsLMn

— ANI (@ANI) December 6, 2021

Economic Cooperation

The two leaders underlined the need for greater economic cooperation between the two countries and emphasized on new drivers of growth for long term sustained economic cooperation. They also appreciated successful mutual investments and expressed desire for greater investments in each others' countries.

Regional Connectivity

The proposed Chennai - Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor and International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) featured in the discussions between the two leaders. The two leaders expressed desire for greater inter-regional cooperation between Russian regions, in particular Russian Far-East, with Indian states.

Covid-19 Pandemic

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The two leaders appreciated the ongoing bilateral cooperation between the two nations in the fight against the Covid pandemic including the humanitarian assistance extended by both in critical times.

PM Modi further thanked President Putin for the welfare of Indian community in Russia especially during COVID pandemic. Both leaders also discussed the need for mutual recognition of vaccine certification to enable smooth travel for citizens of both nations.

Economic Recovery

They also discussed regional and global developments, including the post-pandemic global economic recovery.

Global Issues

The Russian President and PM Modi noted that both sides shared common positions on many international issues. They agreed to further strengthen their cooperation at multilateral forum including the UN Security Council.

The Russian President congratulated PM Modi for India's ongoing non-permanent membership of the UNSC and successful BRICS Presidency in 2021. PM Modi also congratulated Russia for its ongoing chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

President Putin further invited Prime Minister Modi to visit Russia for the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit in 2022.

India-Russia Joint Statement

The two leaders also issued a joint statement titled "India-Russia: Partnership for Peace, Progress and Prosperity". The joint statement aptly all prospects of bilateral ties.

India and Russia also signed record **28 MoUs and agreements** in different sectors including defence, trade, energy, education, cultural exchange, outer space, intellectual property and geological exploration.

India, Russia sign procurement deal of AK-203 assault rifles

Why is Putin's visit to India significant? What does it mean for India-Russia ties?

The Russian President's visit to India was the first in-person meeting of Vladimir Putin and PM

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Narendra Modi after their meeting on the sidelines of the 2019 BRICS summit in Brasilia. The is also the Russian President's second visit outside Russia this year, the first being in June to meet US President Joe Biden in Geneva. This is significant in itself as the Russian President had skipped an in-person visit to the G-20 summit and the COP 26 UN climate change conference in Glasgow and also rescheduled a planned visit to China due to the pandemic.

Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said that Russian President Putin's visit was short but highly productive and substantive. He said there were excellent discussions between the two leaders and 28 agreements/MoUs were concluded during this visit. He further pointed out that the fact that Russian President Vladimir Putin decided to visit India for our annual summit is an indication of the importance he attaches to the bilateral relationship and his personal rapport with PM Narendra Modi.

President Putin's visit is short but highly productive & substantive. There were excellent discussions between the two leaders. 28 agreements/MoUs were concluded during this visit. These agreements include those between Govt to Govt and business to business: FS HV Shringla https://t.co/Ia8KALnUZx

— ANI (@ANI) December 6, 2021

Five facts to show India-Russia ties are beyond a symbolic gesture:-

1. Russian President Vladimir Putin honoured PM Narendra Modi with the Order of St Andrew in 2019, making him the only foreign dignitary to receive Russia's highest honour.

2. Russia is India's top arms supplier, reclaiming the spot in the last two years. The India-Russia cooperation has been growing across several sectors besides defence as well, including energy, pharmaceuticals, cyber, hig-tech and digital finance. Russia also actively seeks to engage in India's 'Make in India' programme.

3. India had pledged to contribute its **first-ever one-billion-dollar worth credit line** for the development of Russia's Far East.

4. Russia had extended its support to India at the UN after its decision to do away with Article 370. It had also stepped up efforts to provide arms to India amid its border tensions with China along the LAC in 2020. India had also supported Russia on the Crimea issue at the United Nations.

5. India and Russia have also been brought closer due to the situation in Afghanistan.

Read more: India pledges 1 billion USD as 'Line of credit' for development of Far East

Read more: List of major International Awards conferred upon Prime Minister Modi

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Background

The last India-Russia annual summit took place in September 2019 during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Vladivostok city in the far-east region of Russia. The 2020 annual summit could not take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Read more: **PM Modi becomes first Indian prime minister to visit the Russian Far East Region.**

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Indian Navy Day 2021- Why is it celebrated on December 4?

Navy Day 2021: The Indian Navy Day is observed annually on December 4 to recognize and acknowledge the role and the achievements of the Indian Navy. **Navy Day is celebrated on this day to mark the anniversary of Operation Trident which was launched during the Indo-Pak war in 1971.** Indian Navy Day 2021 also pays tribute to all the Navy personnel to sacrificed their lives in some of the major operations to protect the country.

Indian Navy day is celebrated with various events organized on this day. To honour the Indian Navy and acknowledge their contribution, Prime Minister Modi extended his greetings via a tweet on Indian Navy Day 2021 and mentioned the exemplary contributions of the Navy. He also mentioned Navy personnel being at the forefront during the crisis situation.

Greetings on Navy Day. We are proud of the exemplary contributions of the Indian navy. Our navy is widely respected for its professionalism and outstanding courage. Our navy personnel have always been at the forefront of mitigating crisis situations like natural disasters. pic.twitter.com/Cc4XgbMYuz

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 4, 2021

Indian Navy Day 2021: Operation Trident during Indo-Pak war in 1971

Navy Day is celebrated on December 4 to commemorate the launch of Operation Trident by India against Pakistan in the 1971 war.

During the war between the two countries in 1971, Pakistan had launched an offensive on the Indian airbases on December 3 and in response to the attack, India dispatched 3 missile boats towards Karachi, Pakistan at a maximum speed.

The Indian Navy, during Operation Trident, sank four Pakistani vessels including the PNS Khaibar which killed hundreds of Pakistani Navy Personnel. On Indian Navy Day, those who sacrificed their lives during the war are also remembered.

Indian Navy Day 2021 Significance

The Indian Navy Day highlights the success and dedication of the Indian Navy personnel. The

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day also gives an opportunity to educate children and Indian citizens about the victory of India in the 1971 war. On Indian Navy Day, several events take place such as air displays, marathons, tattoo ceremonies to remember the day of glory in India's history.

Indian navy Day 2021: 5 Facts about Indian Navy

1. The Indian Navy is the naval branch of the Indian Armed Forces which is led by the President of India as the Commander-in-Chief.

2. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the Maratha Emperor is considered to be the Father of the Indian Navy.

3. The Indian Navy was established in 1612 by the East India Company.

4. It was named later the Royal India Navy and after Independence, it was reconstituted as the Indian Navy in 1950.

5. Indian Navy also promoted bilateral relations between countries through joint exercises, humanitarian missions, and goodwill visits.

Indian Navy Day 2021: List of some of major Indian navy Ships

INS Vikramaditya

INS Vikrant

INS Chakra

INS Arihant

INS Delhi

INS Maysore

INS Rana

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Morning Current Affairs: 4 December 2021

PM Modi to inaugurate and lay foundation stone of multiple projects in Dehradun today

Prime Minister will inaugurate and lay foundation stone of multiple projects worth Rs. 18,000 crores in Dehradun today. He will lay the foundation stone of 11 development projects which will also include the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor.

Former Chief Minister of unified Andhra Pradesh K Rosaiah passes away

Former CM of unified Andhra Pradesh and former Governor of Tamil Nadu, Konijeti Rossiah passed away in Hyderabad at 88. He was shifted to a private hospital after he was unwell. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh YS Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed his grief over the demise of the former Chief Minister.

Protesting farmers to take decision in SKM meeting fixed today

An aegis of farmers union, Samyukt Kisan Morcha is most likely to take action on ongoing farmers protest today. The decision will come days after the Repeal of the Farm laws Bill. Samyukt Kisan Morcha said that they are waiting for Central Government to respond formally to all the demands raised by them.

18 countries to celebrate ‘Maitri Diwas’ to commemorate India-Bangladesh friendship

‘Maitri Diwas’ will be marking the day that India recognized Bangladesh 10 days before its Liberation in 1971. Maitri Diwas will be celebrated in 18 countries all over the world. India was also one of the first countries in establishing bilateral diplomatic relations with the newly independent Bangladesh in 1971.

Russian President Vladimir Putin to visit India on December 6; to attend 21st India-Russia Annual Summit

The President of Russia Vladimir Putin will visit India on December 6, 2021. He will be in the country to attend the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit as well as the series of meetings that will take place between the two nations. The Summit will take place in the afternoon of December 6.

PM Modi to visit Gorakhpur on December 7

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Prime Minister Modi will visit Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh on December 7, 2021. In the poll-bound state, he will dedicate to the nation the development projects worth over Rs. 9,600 crores.

Government approves plan for production of over 5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles

To give a big boost to self-reliance in Defence Manufacturing in India, the Central Government has given its approval to the plan for the production of over 5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles at Korwa, Amethi in Uttar Pradesh.

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Gita Gopinath promoted to be IMF's First Deputy Managing Director

The Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Gita Gopinath will take up a new role as the First Deputy Managing Director of IMF. Gopinath will be the second-rank official at IMF. She will replace the First Deputy Managing Director Geoffrey Okamoto who plans on leaving the IMF early in 2022.

Gita Gopinath served as the Chief Economist of IMF for 3 years. She was announced to return to her academic position at Harvard University next year in January but decided to stay.

IMF's Managing Director, Kristalina Georgieva acknowledged that Gita Gopinath's contribution to IMF has been exceptional, particularly her intellectual leadership in helping the global economy as well as the fund to work on the worst economic crisis.

Today, I'm announcing FDMD @gwsokamoto will leave the IMF early next year & proposing chief economist @GitaGopinath to become the new FDMD.

— Kristalina Georgieva (@KGeorgieva) December 2, 2021

As the first female Chief Economist of IMF, Gita Gopinath has earned respect and admiration across the member countries as well as the institution with a proven track record in leading the work on various issues.

IMF under Gita Gopinath's leadership

The Research Department of the International Monetary Fund under Gita Gopinath's leadership has gone from 'strength to strength', highlighting Fund's contribution to multilateral surveillance. There is a new analytical approach to help the countries respond to the international capital flows.

Also, her recent work on a pandemic plan for ending the COVID-19 crisis by setting the targets of vaccinating the world at a feasible cost was also appreciated.

Role of the First Deputy Managing Director of IMF

The First Deputy Managing Director of IMF will take the lead on surveillance and the related policies will oversee research and flagship publications. FDMD will also help in fostering the

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highest quality standards for the International Monetary Fund publications.

About International Monetary Fund

IMF is an international financial institution which is headquartered in Washington DC. It consists of 190 countries. International Monetary Fund was formed in 1944 and it started on December 27, 1945.

IMF works on improving the economies of its member countries and its other objectives also include promotion of international monetary cooperation, high employment, international trade, sustainable economic growth, exchange-rate stability, and making the resources available to the member countries at the time of financial stability.

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Germany to ban unvaccinated from public places; Delhi proposes similar plan

Germany will soon ban non-vaccinated people from large parts of public life. This was stated by outgoing German Chancellor Angela Merkel on December 2, 2021 after a meeting with the country's federal and state leaders.

While speaking to reporters, Merkel said that the situation in the country is serious and called the measures an “act of national solidarity. She said that these stringent steps are necessary to address concerns that hospitals could become overloaded with people suffering from COVID infection, which is likely to be more serious among people who have not been vaccinated.

The German Chancellor informed that the parliament will soon consider a general vaccine mandate in an effort to curb coronavirus infections amid the detection of a potentially more contagious **Omicron COVID variant.** Germany has again reported a record rise in COVID cases with 70,000 newly confirmed cases in 24 hours.

Read: **What do we know about new COVID variant Omicron?- Two cases detected in India**

Germany to ban unvaccinated from public life

This means that the unvaccinated people in Germany will soon be excluded from non-essential stores, restaurants and sports and cultural venues.

As per the new rules, a household with an unvaccinated person over 14 years of age can meet only two people from another household. There will be no limit for households in which everyone is vaccinated.

The unvaccinated people in Germany will still be allowed to meet in private settings, but only in limited numbers.

Germany is also now emphasising on wearing of masks and will impose new limits on private meetings. All staff in hospitals and nursing homes will also have to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Read more: **What is S Gene in COVID Test?: How it confirm the presence of Omicron**

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variant; All You Need to Know

Germany sets goal of 30 million vaccinations by 2021 end

Germany is also planning to set a goal of achieving 30 million vaccinations by the end of the year. To boost this effort, the nation plans to allow dentists and pharmacists to administer the shots.

Only about 68.7 percent of the German population is fully vaccinated as of now, which is far below the government's minimum goal of 75 percent.

List of countries imposing stricter measures on unvaccinated people

Delhi, India: The Delhi government has urged the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) to ban entry of unvaccinated people in public places and transport including public buses, metros, malls cinema halls, religious places, parks, restaurants, monuments, government offices and other public places from December 15th.

Austria: Australia has imposed a 20-day lockdown for almost 2 million unvaccinated people. The move comes as there is a spike in COVID-19 infections across Europe. Austrian Chancellor Alexander Schallengerg stated that they are not taking this step lightly and that it was the need of the hour.

Greece: Greece has decided to introduce fines for all Greeks who are not vaccinated. The government is making vaccines mandatory for all above 60 years of age. Those who don't get a vaccine shot will have to pay 100-euro ($113) fine every month and the funds will go to hospital services. Only 60,000 among the 580,000 unvaccinated people over 60 years of age have received the vaccine shot in November.

Spain: Spain is banning unvaccinated travelers. The nation will now allow entry of only those travelers, who provide proof of vaccination.

Hungary: Hungary has allowed employers to make vaccinations compulsory for staff to push people to get vaccinated. Those who don't get vaccinated will be placed on unpaid leave.

Lithuania: All citizens over 16 years of age need to provide Covid immunity certificates to enter any cafe or restaurant, shopping mall, beauty salon or any other public indoor place in the country.

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Ireland has also imposed a vaccine mandate.

In Ukraine, government officials and teachers who are not fully vaccinated are being sent on unpaid leave. All public services are also only allowed to operate if all their staff us fully vaccinated.

Italy: Italy will also ban unvaccinated people from popular social and sports activities.

Overall, governments across Europe are scrambling to tighten Covid-19 curbs in the wake of a record rise in COVID-19 infections across the continent.

Background

The rise in COVID-19 cases over the past several weeks and detection of the new omicron variant has prompted warnings from scientists and doctors in Germany that its medical services could become overstretched in the coming weeks unless some stringent action is taken.

Few hospitals towards the south and east of the country have already transferred patients to other parts of the country due to a shortage of intensive care beds.

Germany recorded 73,209 newly confirmed cases on December 2, 2021. The nation has also reported 388 new deaths, which takes the overall death toll to 102,178.

Solar Eclipse December 2021: How to watch last Solar Eclipse of 2021 in India? Know Date, Timing
Current Affairs Quiz: 2 December 2021

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Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill, 2021 passed in Lok Sabha: All you need to know

Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill, 2021 was passed by Lok Sabha on December 1, 2021, that aims at establishing a national board and the state boards for the regulation and supervision of ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology) clinics and ART banks for the ethical and safe practice of ART services.

ART Bill, 2021 was passed with a voice vote after a reply to the debate by the Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya who explained that the bill has been brought with a need to regulate the services of assisted reproductive technology to protect the affected women and children from exploitation.

What is Assisted Reproductive Technology?

Assisted Reproductive Technology refers to the fertility treatments and procedures that help with the difficulties or an inability of conceiving children.

Assisted Reproductive Technology in India

Assisted Reproductive Technology has seen unprecedented growth in India in the last few years. The country has the highest growth in ART centres and the number of ART cycles performed every year.

However, on one hand, where ART has given hope to people suffering from infertility, the process has also introduced a plethora of legal, ethical, and social issues. There is no standardization of the protocols and the reporting is still very inadequate. There is no law to regulate Assisted Reproductive Technology and it is regulated through guidelines.

ART services in India

The clinics in India offer nearly all the Assisted Reproductive Technology services- intrauterine, gamete donation, in-vitro fertilization, pre-implantation genetic diagnostics, intracytoplasmic sperm injection, and gestational surrogacy.

Why India needs Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill?

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The Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill, 2021, is needed to regulate multiple embryo implantation and to protect the children born through ART. The Oocyte donor also needs to be supported by the insurance cover.

There is a need to regulate cryopreservation of oocytes, sperm, and embryos by the ART banks and the legislation intends at making the Pre-Genetic Implantation Testing mandatory to benefit the child born through ART.

ART clinics and banks need to be regulated by establishing the National Board, State Boards, State Regulation Authorities, and National Registry for the regulation and supervision of ART clinics and ART banks. It will prevent misuse and will promote the safe and ethical practice of assisted reproductive technology services.

Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill, 2021: All you need to know

1. The bill states that the existing Assisted Reproductive Technology clinics and banks in India conducting the procedures of ART partly or exclusively will have to make an application to the registration authority within 60 days from the date of establishment of the National Registry.

2. The bill stated that the services of Assisted Reproductive Technology will be available to a woman above the legal age of marriage and below the age of 50. For men, they must be above the legal age of marriage and below 55.

3. Oocyte donor will be an ever-married woman who has at least one live child of her own with the age of 3 years and can donate oocyte only once in her life. No more than 7 Oocyte will be retrieved from the Oocyte doctor.

4. The Assisted Reproductive Technology clinic will need to provide professional counseling to the commissioning couple as well as to the women about the implications. The chances of success of ART procedures in the clinic must also be discussed.

5. ART clinics must also inform about the disadvantages, advantages, and the cost of the procedures, the risk of multiple pregnancies, medical side effects. It will help the commissioning couple in making an informed decision.

6. Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill, 2021 also provides for the offences and penalties for contravention of provisions.

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Indian army new uniform: Indian Army to get new combat uniform with a digital disruptive pattern

Indian army new combat uniform: The Indian Army will soon have a new combat uniform with a "digital disruptive" pattern. The new uniform is expected to be showcased at the Indian Army Day parade on January 15, 2021.

The Indian Army's new uniform is expected to be more durable and comfortable in both summers and winters. It is expected to be light and more climate-friendly. It would enable the army personnel to feel more comfortable.

The new uniform is expected to be inducted into the Indian Army from next year.

Read more: List of Countries with Omicron Variant- Two Omicron cases detected in India, says ICMR DG Balram Bhargava

Indian army new combat uniform: Top 5 things to know

1. The new camouflage uniform will have a **"digital disruptive" pattern.**

2. Indian Army's new uniform has reportedly been finalised after wide-ranging discussions and analysis of military uniforms of several countries.

3. The new uniform will be comfortable as well as much more durable in all seasons, including summers and winters.

4. The Indian Army uniform will feature a mix of colours including olive and earthen.

5. The new uniform has been designed taking into considerations aspects such as areas of deployment of the troops and climatic conditions in which they operate.

When will the Indian Army's new uniform be revealed?

Indian Army's new uniform will be unveiled in January 2022 during the Army Day celebrations. The new digital pattern combat dress will be worn by one of the contingents during the Army Day

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parade.

The Army Day parade would also see other contingents wearing different combat uniforms, which were worn by the Indian Army in the past.

Why is the Indian Army getting a new uniform?

As per officials, the decision to bring out a new combat dress for the Indian Army was taken at the Army Commanders' Conference held recently. The camouflage uniforms will be totally different from the existing dress.

The Indian Navy had also similarly unveiled a new camouflage uniform last year.

Read more: Current Affairs Quiz: 2 December 2021
Read more: Fortune India 50 Most Powerful Women: FM Nirmala Sitharaman, Nita Ambani grabs top place; Full list here

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International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021: Theme, Date, History, Importance- All you need to know

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities: More than 100 million Disabled persons globally are children. The **International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021 is observed every year globally on December 3.** The day is dedicated to the people who have been living with disabilities of any form and aims to bring attention to the day-to-day challenges that they face. The aim to observe International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021 is also to promote the well-being of those living with disabilities in all spheres of society. International Day of Persons with Disabilities reminds that how significant is it to provide equal opportunities to persons with disabilities so that they can also equally participate and contribute to society.

Happy International Day of Persons with Disabilities!

Raise your voice for the rights, well-being & inclusion of persons with disabilities everywhere.

https://t.co/Vba1Q3BkOv #IDPD #GlobalGoals pic.twitter.com/N38EMFqWQ7

— UnitedNationsEnable (@UN_Enable) December 3, 2021

International Day of Persons with Disabilities Theme 2021

UN has announced the theme for IDPD 2021 to be **"Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world."** The theme has been adopted for highlighting the issues faced by disabled people at the time of the COVID pandemic.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities Date

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is observed globally every year on **December 3.**

History of International Day of Persons with Disabilities

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities was announced by the UN General Assembly

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Resolution 47/3 in 1992. The aim behind the proclamation was to increase awareness of the issues that are faced by those living with disabilities in every aspect of social, economic, political, and cultural life.

Role of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted in 2006. CRPD work towards advancing the rights and the well-being of people with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other international Development Frameworks.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021 Significance

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities sheds light on the issues faced by disabled people and how they suffer from lack of equal opportunities in education and at work, and poor health. It in turn affects their lifestyle and well-being. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is to aware the world about their issues and to figure out steps so that a more inclusive society is created for them.

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Morning Current Affairs: 3 December 2021

Delhi plans to stop entry of non-vaccinated people in public places from December 15

The Delhi government is mulling over stopping the entry of bnon-vaccinated people in public places of Delhi from December 15, as per sources. The Delhi Disaster Management Authority in a meeting on November 29, 2021, it was proposed to stop the entry of those without vaccination in public places of Delhi. The decision on the same has however been postponed till the next DDMA meeting.

Omicron milder than Delta variant at primary level: South African doctor

Dr Angelique Coetzee, a South African doctor, who chairs the South African Medical Association informed that the patients she has examined so far have been exhibiting "milder" symptoms than those affected by the more prevalent Delta variant. She informed that some of the common symptoms of those infected with the Omicron COVID variant include fatigue. body ache and pain and some even developed severe headaches and tiredness. None of them however mentioned loss of smell or taste.

Karnataka CM to chair high-level meet on Omicron variant today

After the detection of two Omicron cases in Karnataka, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has said that detailed SOPs and guidelines will be rolled out soon after a meeting with experts and senior officials. The CM informed that he is getting all details from the lab. He said that the state government has an elaborate plan and new SOPs have to be formed. A 46-year-old male and a 66-year-old male were found to be infected with the new COVID variant.

India vs New Zealand 2nd Test toss delayed

The toss of the second test between India vs New Zealand has been delayed due to wet outfield at the Wankhede Stadium. The match is supposed to be held today. Virat Kohli will be leading Team India in the second test. The Indian squad includes skipper Virat Kohli, Ajinkya Rahane, Suryakumar Yadav, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer, Wriddhiman Saha, KS Bharat, Ravindra Jadeja, R. Ashwin, Axar Patel, Jayant Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Umesh Yadav, Md. Siraj and Prasidh Krishna.

India, EU to enhance clean energy and climate partnership

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India and the European Union have agreed to work together on a detailed programme until 2023 to implement the 2016 EU-India Clean Energy and Climate Partnership. The main focus is to increase technical cooperation between the two countries in energy efficiency, renewable energy and also in cooperation within the International Solar Alliance and green hydrogen.

US reports 5 more cases of Omicron, tightens COVID-19 measures

The United States has reported five more cases of the new Omicron COVID-19 variant, taking its cumulative tally to eight. The five new cases have been confirmed in New York State. US President Joe Biden announced new guidelines for international travelers, for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people, after the detection of the new variant. All inbound travelers coming to the US will have to get tested for COVID-19 within a day before their flight regardless of their vaccination status, rather than three days before travel mandate. Biden said that we are going to fight this variant with science and speed and not chaos and confusion.

Current Affairs Quiz: 2 December 2021

Current Affairs in Short: 2 December 2021

Top 5 Current Affairs: 2 December 2021

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Fortune India 50 Most Powerful Women: FM Nirmala Sitharaman, Nita Ambani grabs top place; Full list here

Fortune India most powerful women: Fortune India recently released a list of its top 50 most powerful women in India in 2021. The list mentions the names of various popular figures who are known for their accomplishments in their respective fields. The Fortune India most powerful women list recognizes the achievements of women as well as their contribution in different domains.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has grabbed a top position followed by Reliance's Nita Ambani who is a Chairperson and founder of Reliance Foundation. Her second place in Fortune India's 50 Most powerful women list acknowledges her vision and the impactful leadership at the Reliance Foundation, particularly at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The list released by Fortune India also includes **Soumya Swaminathan, Chief Scientist of WHO, and Gita Gopinath of the International Monetary Fund.** The other names are Tessy Thomas, Suchitra Ella, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Reddy sisters, and Isha Ambani.

OUT NOW

Fortune India's annual listing of the country's 50 most powerful #women in #business is a platinum rated ranking. In this 11th edition, we look at the #power women who have made an impact in business—in #India and abroad.

Grab your copy now.https://t.co/dkQu0EADEV pic.twitter.com/zeMmWe3OaQ

— Fortune India (@FortuneIndia) November 8, 2021

50 Most Powerful Women in India: Full List

Rank	India's Most powerful women
1.	Nirmala Sitharaman
2	Nita Ambani

3	Soumya Swaminathan
4.	Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw
5.	Suchitra Ella
6.	Arundhati Bhattacharya
7.	Gita Gopinath
8.	Tessy Thomas
9	Rekha M. Menon
10.	Reddy Sisters
11.	Anshula Kant
12.	Renu Sud Karnad
13.	Shohana Bhartia
14.	Kalli Purie
15.	Revathi Advaithi
16.	Leena Nair
17.	Mallika Srinivasan
18.	Swati Piramal
19.	Vishakha Mulye
20.	Vibha Padalkar
21.	Isha Ambani
22.	Bela Bajaria
23.	Falguni Nayar
24.	Aparna Bawa
25.	Zia Mody
26.	Soma Mondal

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27.	**Vinita Gupta**
28	**Priya Nair**
29.	**Sindhu Gangadharan**
30.	**Pallavi Shroff**
31.	**Anjali Bansal**
32.	**Kaku Nakhate**
33.	**Divya Gokulnath**
34.	**Samina Hamied**
35.	**Ameera Shah**
36.	**Zarin Daruwala**
37.	**Geetha Manjunath**
38.	**Priyanka Chopra**
39.	**Meena Ganesh**
40.	**Mira Kulkarni**
41.	**Nivruti Rai**
42.	**Neerja Birla**
43.	**Aruna Jayanthi**
44.	**Aparna Purohit**
45.	**Renuka Ramnath**
46.	**Monika Shergill**
47.	**Suparna Mitra**
48.	**Aashu Suyash**
49.	**Harshbeena Zaveri**
50.	**Padmaja Ruparel**

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Fortune Most Powerful Women

The list of most powerful women by Fortune is put out annually by the Fortune Magazine since the year 1998. Earlier, it was as a cover package in 1998 with a simple idea that women all over the world have been gaining significant power in the corporate world.

The Fortune most powerful women list selected the women leaders in philanthropy, business, education, government, and the arts.

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Cyclone Jawad update: Cyclone Jawad weakens into low-pressure area, impact not so strong as expected

Cyclone Jawad update: The remnant of **Cyclonic Storm 'JAWAD' (WML)** over northwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining West Bengal-Bangladesh coasts weakened into a Low Pressure Area over the same region on December 6, 2021, informed India Meteorological Department.

IMD had earlier said that the Depression over the northwest of Bay of Bengal near north Odisha coast had moved northeastwards and weakened into WML over the northwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining West Bengal and Bangladesh coasts and will weaken further into a low pressure area during next 6 hours.

The WML (remnant of Cyclonic Storm 'JAWAD') over northwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining West Bengal-Bangladesh coasts has weakened into a Low Pressure Area over the same region at 0830 hrs IST of today, the 06th December 2021

— India Meteorological Department (@Indiametdept) December 6, 2021

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) Director General Atul Karwal said on December 4th that the **impact of Cyclonic storm 'Jawad' was not as strong as it was expected.**

Cyclonic storm Jawad

Cyclone Jawad had made its landfall on December 4, 2021 about 230 km southeast of Vishakhapatnam, 410 km south-southwest of Puri and 490 km south-southwest of Paradip (Odisha). A **deep depression in the Bay of Bengal had intensified into the cyclonic storm 'Jawad', IMD had informed on December 3, 2021.**

The centre and state governments had made all preparations to deal with the impact of the cyclone by keeping all agencies on standby to ensure no loss of life and minimise property damage.

Cyclone shelters were set up for people living in low-lying areas and all actions were taken to stock up drinking water, food grains and other essential supplies. Teams from different ministries were also positioned for speedy maintenance and restoration of power, roads, water supply, and

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other essential services in case of any disruption due to the cyclone.

Farmers were also pre-warned so that they can safeguard their crops to minimize damages to their crops. The fishermen had also been advised not to venture into the sea.

The Konark Festival & International Sand Art Festival was called off following the advisories issued by the Odisha Spl Relief Commissioner in the wake of Cyclonic Storm Jawad.

Background

PM Narendra Modi had chaired a high-level meeting on December 2nd to review preparedness for Cyclone Jawad. During the meeting, PM Modi directed the concerned officials to take all necessary measures to ensure the safe evacuation of people and to ensure maintenance of all essential services and their quick restoration in case of disruption.

A total of 46 NDRF teams were sent to Odisha, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh and were deployed there and 18 more teams were on standby. The Indian Coast Guard and the Indian Navy had deployed ships and helicopters for relief, search and rescue operations. The Air Force and Engineer task force units of the Army were also on standby with boats and rescue equipment. Disaster Relief teams and Medical Teams were are also on standby at the locations along the eastern coast.

All concerned Ministries were also working in synergy to counter the impact of the cyclone-

-The Power Ministry had activated emergency response systems and was keeping in readiness transformers, DG sets and other necessary equipment to ensure immediate restoration of electricity in case of disruption.

-The Communications Ministry also kept all the telecom towers and exchanges under constant watch and is fully prepared to restore the telecom network if disrupted.

-The Health Ministry had also issued an advisory to all States/ UTs that are likely to be affected for health sector preparedness and response to COVID in affected areas.

-The shipping ministry had also taken all measures to secure shipping vessels and has also deployed emergency vessels

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Omicron Covid Variant: SII seeks approval for Covishield vaccine as booster dose amid new variant concerns

The Serum Institute of India, amid the rising Omicron variant concern, has sought **approval from India's drug regulator for the Covishield vaccine as a booster dose.** With the approval, SII has cited an adequate stock of Covishield vaccine in the country. The demand by the vaccine manufacturer has been made due to the emergence of a new Covid variant- Omicron. With this, SII has also become the first Indian company to seek approval for the COVID-19 booster dose.

SII seeks approval for Covishield vaccine as booster dose amid Omicron variant concerns

Read @ANI Story | https://t.co/kTfs7kDFeO#Omicron #COVID19 #VaccineBooster #Covishield pic.twitter.com/0wa7oF60OH

— ANI Digital (@ani_digital) December 2, 2021

Booster dose in India: What is the status?

The Government of India, on the question of Covid-19 booster dose in the country, informed the Parliament that the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization and the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Coronavirus are considering the scientific evidence on the booster dose. They are trying to identify the effectiveness and significance of booster dose for COVID-19.

States such as Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Kerala, and Karnataka have also urged the Govt of India for the booster dose amid the fear of another variant of concern, Omicron.

Oxford scientists may come out with a new vaccine against Omicron: Adar Poonawalla

The Chief Executive Officer of Serum Institute of India, Adar Poonawalla has said that there is a possibility that scientists at Oxford may come out with a new COVID-19 vaccine which will act as a booster dose in 6 months time against the new Covid variant Omicron.

New Omicron Variant

The new variant of Covid- Omicron was first reported to the World Health Organisation by South

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Africa on November 24, 2021. As per the UN health body, Omicron’s high number of mutations in the spike protein makes it much more transmissible than all the previous strains, including Delta. The medical officials of South Africa have also reported that the variant was found in the fully vaccinated people and cases are mild.

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India to tour South Africa for 3 Tests and 3 ODIs, T20Is to be played later: BCCI Secretary

India tour of South Africa 2021: Team India will tour South Africa for three tests and three ODIs as per schedule, confirmed Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Secretary Jay Shah on December 4, 2021.

The four T20Is, which were also originally a part of the tour, have been postponed and will now be played on a later date, the BCCI Secretary informed. The news comes in the wake of detection of the new Omicron COVID variant in South Africa, which has now been reported in several other countries across the globe including India.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and Cricket South Africa (CSA) were in constant touch over the same. There were reports earlier of the two sides discussing to push back the India South Africa 2021 series by a week due to the threat of Omicron. It is now confirmed that India will be heading to South Africa to play the scheduled 3 tests and ODIs, while the T20Is, which were to be held in January 2022 have been postponed.

Read more: What do we know about new COVID variant Omicron?

India tour of South Africa 2021 schedule

Team India is scheduled to travel to South Africa later this month to play **three Tests, three ODIs and four T20 Internationals.** The India tour of South Africa 2021 is scheduled to begin on December 17th.

India's tour of South Africa Dates

India vs South Africa 2021- 2022 Test Schedule

First India vs South Africa test- December 17-21

Second India vs South Africa test- December 26-30

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Third India vs South Africa test- January 3-7

India vs South Africa 2022 ODI Schedule

First India vs South Africa ODI- January 11th

Second India vs South Africa ODI- January 14th

Third India vs South Africa ODI- January 16th

India vs South Africa 2022 T20 Schedule

India vs South Africa, 1st T20I -January 19th

India vs South Africa, 2nd T20I- January 21st

India vs South Africa, 3rd T20I- January 23rd

India vs South Africa, 4th T20I- January 26th

Background

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has named the new COVID-19 variant B.1.1.529 as Omicron. The variant was first identified in South Africa. WHO Chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on December 1, 2021 that at least 23 countries from five of six WHO regions have now reported cases of Omicron and the number is expected to go up further.

Read more: **Omicron Variant of COVID: High Risk Countries List Released by India**

Read more: **What is S-Gene- How will it confirm the presence of Omicron COVID-19 variant?**

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National Control Pollution Day 2021: Know Theme, Date, History, Objectives, Key Facts

National Pollution Control Day 2021: The pollution prevention day is observed annually on December 2 in India in memory of the people who lost their lives in the tragic 1984 Bhopal Gas Tragedy. The horrific industrial accident took place in the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant in Bhopal killing thousands of people. The National Pollution Prevention Day also works towards spreading awareness regarding the pollution caused by industrial processes, industrial disasters and making people aware of the impact of pollution and significance to control the related acts.

1984 Bhopal Gas Tragedy

The National Pollution Prevention Day remembers the night of 2-3 December when the leak and spread of Methyl Isocyanate gas (toxic) in the plant killed thousands of people. Bhopal Gas Tragedy is still known to be the world's worst industrial disaster to date. The after-effects of the accident were also severe as the increased cases of cancer and birth defects were reported.

The gas leak in the Bhopal disaster exposed over 5 lakh people to poisonous gas. As per the Official Records of the Madhya Pradesh Government, a total of 3,788 people were killed in the Bhopal gas leak and 5,74,366 people had sustained injuries.

National Pollution Control Day Date

The National Pollution Control Day is India is observed annually on December 2.

Objective of National Pollution Prevention Day 2021

The National Pollution Control Day is a reminder of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy which showed how pollution and the presence of toxic gases in the environment can be hazardous.

National Pollution Prevention Day aims to aware of not only people but the authorities as well regarding the industrial pollutants and the impact they can have on future generations. The pollution control day is not only for the people who lost their lives but to also spread awareness on controlling and managing the industrial disasters which can happen due to human negligence.

National Control Pollution Day 2021 Significance

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Around 7 million people all over the world die every day because of air pollution, says the National Health Portal of India. It also informs that condition of air pollution is so much worse that 9 among 10 individuals in the world do not have access to safe or pure air. The highly affected ones are the old people and children.

Given the data, the significance of national control pollution day cannot be undermined. Where the world leaders are already discussing lowering carbon footprints, the importance of pollution prevention day is at an all-time high.

Pollution Control Day: 5 key facts related to pollution

1. People who have been living in places with high levels of air pollutants have at least a 20% higher risk of death from lung cancer than those who have been living in less polluted areas.

2. Every year, more than 1 million sea birds and 100 million mammals are killed because of pollution.

3. Children contribute to only 10% of the pollution

4. Climate change happens because of air pollution

5. Almost all the deaths that are linked to air pollution occur in low and middle-income countries, making them more vulnerable to the problem.

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Pension payable to employees to be determined on rules existing at time of retirement: SC

Employee pension claim: The Supreme Court observed on December 2, 2021 that the **pension payable to an employee upon retirement shall be determined based on the rules existing at the time of retirement.** The court also stated that the law does allow the employer to apply the rules differently in relation to persons who are similarly situated.

The SC bench of judges comprising Justices MR Shah and BV Nagarathna gave the ruling while considering a civil appeal against an order dated August 29, 2019, which was passed by the Division Bench of the Kerala High Court wherein the High Court had dismissed an appeal.

What is the case appeal about?

The civil appeal was filed by Dr G Sadasivan Nair, who was appointed as a lecturer in the School of Legal Studies of Cochin University Of Science And Technology in September 1984. Before he was appointed as a lecturer, the appellant was a lawyer practicing in the District Court and Kerala Subordinate Courts Kerala between March 11, 1972 and February 2, 1980.

He had then pursued his Ph.D. programme between March 1980-February 1984 and resumed practice as an advocate in the Kerala High Court and Subordinate Courts after getting his PhD up till the date of his appointment as a lecturer in the University.

Dr G Sadasivan Nair made a representation before the Registrar of the University on November 10, 2004 to consider his practice of 8 years at the Bar to determine the pensionary benefits payable to him on his superannuation.

The Registrar of the University declined his request in January 2006. The appellant then approached the Chancellor of the University contending that the Registrar had rejected his request without following the relevant rules in their proper perspective. However, he received no response from the Chancellor.

He then submitted a writ before the Kerala High Court on the same grounds and the court on April

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3, 2006 directed the Chancellor to decide within four months, as to whether the appellant was entitled to get the benefit under Rule 25(a), Part III, KSR.

As per Kerala HC's judgment dated April 3, 2006, the University Chancellor gave the appellant an opportunity of hearing on July 12, 2006, and subsequently dismissed his petition on October 7, 2006, by holding that the Government or any other statutory body had the right to modify the service conditions.

The appellant then submitted a writ petition before the High Court. The Single Judge of the High Court on January 25, 2012, dismissed the writ by ruling that the Government had the right to unilaterally alter the service conditions of employees during their service.

The bench had asserted then that what was applicable was the rule prevailing as on the date of retirement and not that which existed on the date of entering service. The appellant then approached the top court.

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What is S Gene dropout in Omicron? How can it confirm the presence of Omicron variant; All You Need to Know

S gene dropout: The missing S-gene is one of the proxy indicators for detection and diagnosis of Omicron COVID variant. Dr. Naveen Dang, Director of Dr Dangs Lab confirmed that genome sequencing can confirm the presence of the new Omicron Covid variant.

As per the latest reports, Omicron virus symptoms include extreme fatigue, headache and body pain, instead of loss of smell and taste and high body temperature that is generally caused by other COVID Variants. This was informed by South African doctor Dr Angelique Coetzee, who had a major role in the detection of the new COVID variant.

Read more: SII seeks approval for Covishield vaccine as booster dose amid new variant concerns

Read more: List of countries where Omicron COVID variant has been detected

What is S-Gene?

S-Gene is one of the S gene targets that is not detected due to mutations. It is termed as S gene dropout or S gene target failure, which is a marker to identify the Omicron variant.

How to detect whether S-gene is missing?

•Omicron covid variant has mutations in the S gene. While the regular RT-PCR kits will be able to identify whether the person is COVID positive or negative, they will not be able to identify if the positive result is due to mutation in the S gene.

•Most tests generally target a large number of genes. Currently, the tests in India test E, N and Rd Rp genes and if one of these genes is identified as positive, the test result would be positive.

•Most of the tests in India have not been testing the S-gene as there was no need for it earlier. But in the case of a test where there are multiple genes and one of them is included in the SG, if the test comes out positive for all the genes but negative for S-gene, it can be assumed that this

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is an S-gene dropout or S-gene failure target failure.

•If this happens, then by default the variant can be identified as Omicron and such sample should be on a priority basis, as per Dr. Dang.

•Any sample that shows S-gene dropout will then be sent for gene sequencing studies and only after that it will be confirmed whether it is the Omicron variant or not.

Has Omicron been reported in India?

Not yet. India is on high alert in the wake of a rise in the number of countries reporting cases of Omicron, which is currently being reported as the new highly transmissible variant of COVID-19, more contagious than Delta. While few passengers traveling from 'high-risk' countries have tested positive for COVID-19 but no Omicron cases have been reported so far in India.

Omicron Covid variant reportedly has about 50 mutations, out of which almost 30 mutations are in its spike protein, which makes it different from other variants of concern (VoC).

There is currently very little data on Omicron since it was detected very recently. It is still too early to say how contagious or severe the new Omicron variant is.

Read more: Omicron Variant of COVID: High Risk Countries List Released by India

Travel bans unfair: UN Chief

The Omicron variant was first identified in South Africa on November 26, 2021, just a week back. This was followed by countries imposing travel bans on South African nations to stop the spread of the variant.

WHO Director-General criticised the blunt measures stating that they are hurting the economy of the South African nations and penalising them, while instead they should be thanked for identifying and reporting the variant in time.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also slammed the travel bans targeting specific countries and regions, calling them "unfair" and "ineffective." He said, "with a virus that is truly borderless, travel restrictions that isolate any one country or region are not only deeply unfair and punitive -- they are ineffective."

The UN Chief instead called for increased testing for travelers. Other experts have also called for

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vaccination of maximum people with both the doses and strict adherence to COVID protocols to curb the spread of the new strain of COVID-19.

Read more: **COVID ‘Omicron’ Variant: India issues revised guidelines for international arrivals**

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World Athletics Awards 2021: India Legend Anju Bobby George named ‘Woman of the Year’; Full list of winners

World Athletics Awards: At the World Athletics Awards 2021, a retired Indian sprinter Anju Bobby George was awarded ‘Woman of the Year’ by the World Athletics for her efforts in advancing the sport in India and for inspiring more women to follow her footsteps and achieve their dreams of being a successful athlete.

At the World Athletics Awards 2021, the Olympic Champions Elaine Thompson-Herah of Jamaica and Norway’s Karsten Warholm were named the World Athletes of the year. The ceremony of the prestigious World Athletics Awards was held in a virtual mode on December 1, 2021.

Olympic champions @FastElaine and @kwarholm crowned World Athletes of the Year.

This way for the full list of winners at this year's #WorldAthleticsAwards

— World Athletics (@WorldAthletics) December 1, 2021

Anju Bobby George from India has been honoured with the ‘Woman of the year’ award for being a constant voice for gender equality in her role as the Senior Vice-President of the Indian Athletics Federation.

Anju Bobby George: Woman of the year 2021 by World Athletics

Anju Bobby George is a retired Indian athlete who had made history by winning the bronze medal in the long jump at the World Championship in Athletics held in Paris in 2003.

George became the first Indian athlete to win a medal in the World Championships in Athletics. Later in 2005, she also went on to win a gold medal at the IAAF World Athletics Final.

Truly humbled and honoured to be awarded Woman of the Year by @WorldAthletics

There is no better feeling than to wake up everyday and give back to the sport, allowing it to enable and empower young girls!

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Thank you for recognising my efforts. pic.twitter.com/yeZ5fgAUpa

— Anju Bobby George (@anjubobbygeorg1) December 1, 2021

Anju Bobby George is still actively involved in the sport. In 2016, the former International long jump star from India opened an academy for the young girls of the country which has already given a world U20 medalist. George also mentors young school girls for future leadership positions within the sport.

Awards & Honours

Year	Awards
2002	Arjuna Awards
2003	Khel Ratna
2004	Padma Shri

Elaine Thompson-Herah: World Athlete of the Year 2021

Elaine Thompson-Herah from Jamaica retained one of the finest sprint seasons in 2021. She retained her Olympic 100 m and 200 m titles in Tokyo Olympics and added a third gold medal in the 4x100m relay.

Thompson-Herah on top of her Olympic triple, also clocked the world-leading times of 10.54 and 21.53 over 100m and 200m. With this, she moved to the second on the world all-time lists and came within touching distance of the long-standing world records.

World Athletics Awards 2021: Full list of winners

Category	Winners
World Athletes of the Year	Elaine Thompson-Herah and Karsten Warh
Female Rising Star	Athing Mu
Male Rising Star	Erriyon Knighton
Member Federations Award	Federacion Costarricense de Atletismo (Co Rica)
Inspiration Award	Mutaz Barshim and Gianmarco Tamberi
President's Award	Peter Diamond, Executive Vice President of

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	Olympic Programming
Coaching Achievement Award	**Bobby Kersee**
Woman of the Year Award	**Anju Bobby George**
Jean-Pierre Durand World Athletics Photograph of the Year	**Photograph by Ryan Pierse of the women's jump qualifying at the Tokyo Olympic Gam**

World Athletics Awards

World Athletics hosts the annual World Athletics Awards at the end of each year. The awards recognize the achievements of the athletes and the other people who are involved in the sport, including federations, coaching among others. As part of the ceremony, members may also be inducted into the IAAF Hall of Fame. Until 2017, the World Athletics Awards were the World Athletics Gala.

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Morning Current Affairs: 2 December 2021

Home Minister to lay foundation stone of Maa Shakumbhari Vishwavidyalaya in Saharanpur

Union Minister of Home Affairs and Cooperation Amit Shah is scheduled to lay the foundation stone of Maa Shakumbhari Vishwavidyalaya around 1 pm on December 2, 2021 in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh. The news comes just months ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in 2022.

Anju Bobby George awarded as Woman of the Year by World Athletics

World Athletics has awarded sprinter Anju Bobby George as 'Woman of the Year' for her efforts in advancing the sport in India. She has also inspired more women in the country to follow in her footsteps.

Anju Bobby George is a former international long jump star, who is still actively involved in the sport. She had opened a training academy for young girls in 2016. The academy has already helped produce a world U20 medallist. She also mentors schoolgirls for future leadership positions within the sport.

Read more: India track & field legend Anju Bobby George named ‘Woman of the Year’; Check Full list of winners

Afghanistan's nominal GDP likely to contract by 20 percent within 1 year

Afghanistan's nominal GDP is likely to contract by 20 per cent within just one year, as per United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on December 1, 2021. The nation's GDP is expected to contract from USD 20 billion in 2020 to USD 16 billion. The decline may reach 30 per cent in the following years if urgent correct measures are not taken, according to a new socio-economic report. The nation's annual per capita income has already declined from USD 650 in 2012 to USD 500 in 2020.

WHO Chief confirms presence of Omicron variant in 23 countries

The new Omicron Covid variant has been detected in 23 countries, informed World Health Organisation Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on December 1, 2021. WHO Chief

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said that the emergence of the Omicron variant has captured global attention and at least 23 countries from five of six WHO regions have reported cases of Omicron. He said that they expect the number to grow. The United States has reported its first case of the 'Omicron' variant of COVID-19. The case was detected in the US state of California.

India, Russia to sign deal on AK-203 rifles during Putin's visit

India and Russia are scheduled to sign a deal on supplying 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles on December 6, 2021, during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India. The deal would provide a major boost to India and Russia military ties. All the necessary approvals have already been accorded to the deal including a final go-ahead from the Cabinet Committee on Security.

Lok Sabha passes Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020

The Lok Sabha passed the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 with a voice vote on December 1, 2021. The bill seeks to establish a national board and state boards for the regulation and supervision of ART clinics and ART banks to ensure safe and ethical practice of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) services. The bill was brought after due consultations to regulate the assisted reproductive technology services in order to protect the affected women and children from exploitation.

WTA suspends all tournaments in China

The Women's Tennis Association (WTA) has announced suspension of all tournaments in China after concern over Chinese Tennis player Peng Shuai's safety. The WTA has been involved in a tussle with the Chinese government over the player's well-being in the last few weeks after she had posted a sexual assault allegation against a top Chinese government official on November 2nd.

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Omicron Variant of COVID: High Risk Countries List Released by India

Revised guidelines for international arrivals: In view of a new covid variant Omicron, the Health Ministry of India has issued revised guidelines for international arrivals in India. The latest guidelines for people coming to India have come into effect from December 1, 2021. **The Government has released the list of countries from where the travellers will be required to follow additional measures on their arrival in India.** The guidelines for the international arrivals, as revised by the government, includes mandatory submission of 14 days travels details, uploading negative RT-PCR test report before the journey, and COVID-19 test post arrival, among others.

Read More: Check Guidelines for international arrivals in India

Omicron variant was first detected in South Africa which has now become a potential threat reported by various countries around the world. WHO has categorized the new covid variant as 'Variant of Concern' and many countries have also started imposing travel bans on the travellers arriving from South Africa and the neighbouring nations.

Even though India has not reported even a single case of Omicron variant, seeing the rapid infection in South Africa and other neighbouring countries, the variant can affect India's recovery from the deadly second wave of the pandemic.

Omicron variant: High Risk Countries List Released by India

List of countries from where the travellers will have to follow additional measures on their arrival in India. It will include post-arrival testing as well. The countries are:

Countries in Europe including the United Kingdom

South Africa

Brazil

Botswana

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China

Mauritius

New Zealand

Zimbabwe

Singapore

Hong Kong

Israel

Omicron covid variant: Scheduled international flights unlikely to resume from December 15

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has said that because of the ongoing global scenario with the emergence of the new variant of concern, the appropriate decision regarding the resumption of international flights will be taken soon.

It has become highly unlikely that the scheduled international flights will resume from December 15, 2021. The flights in question will be most particularly from the high-risk countries.

Omicron Variant of covid: WHO warns against new covid variant

The World Health Organisation, in the latest, warned against the new Covid-19 variant Omicron by saying that the risk related to the new variant is extremely high. The global health body emphasized that the very emergency of Omicron is another reminder where many of us think that COVID-19 is over.

Omicron variant has become a cause of concern because of its high transmissibility as well as the risk of evading effects of the vaccine.

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World's most expensive cities list: Tel Aviv ranked world’s costliest city- Check full list

World's most expensive city: Tel Aviv has become the **world's most expensive city to live in**, surpassing Paris and Singapore as per the Economist Intelligence Unit's Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2021.

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), Tel Aviv climbed from 5th place to the top in 2021 due to the rising value of the Israeli currency shekel against US Dollar and the increase in the price of grocery and transport.

While Tel Aviv has topped the Cost of Living Index 2021, Paris and Singapore are jointly ranked second, followed by Zurich and Hong Kong at the fourth and fifth spots. Syria’s Damascus was ranked as the world’s cheapest city.

List of world's top 10 expensive cities

1. Tel Aviv, Israel

2. Paris (France)

2. Singapore

4. Zurich, Switzerland

5. Hong Kong

6. New York, US

7. Geneva, Switzerland

8. Copenhagen, Denmark

9. Los Angeles, US

10. Osaka, Japan

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Worldwide Cost of Living 2021 Index

The Worldwide Cost of Living Index examines the cost of living in 173 cities and measures against impactful global events. The cost of living index reported that the prices for goods and services on average have risen by 3.5% year-on-year, which is the highest inflation rate seen in the last five years.

The Cost of Living 2021 Index has ranked Israel's Tel Aviv at the top for the first time, making it the world's most expensive city to live in. Tel Aviv has pushed Paris down to jointly share second place with Singapore.

Paris, Zurich and Hong Kong were ranked at the top of Cost of Living Index last year. The cost of the living study is conducted twice a year by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

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Sanjeev Kaushal becomes Chief Secretary of Haryana; Check full list of Chief Secretaries of all States & UTs

The Haryana Government on November 30, 2021, appointed the **senior IAS Officer Sanjeev Kaushal as the new Chief Secretary of Haryana.** Sanjeev Kaushal has replaced Vijai Vardhan who retired on September 30, 2021. Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal was the senior-most officer after Vijai Vardhan and had been a frontrunner for the position.

The new Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal will be the 35th Chief Secretary of Haryana since it was carved out as a separate state in 1966. **Sanjeev Kaushal is due for retirement in July 2024.** His brother Sarvesh Kaushal had earlier served as the Chief Secretary of Punjab.

The Government of Haryana also affected the transfer of PK Das, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Department. He has been posted as ACS to Haryana Government, Financial Commissioner, Revenue & Disaster Management & Consolidation Departments.

@mlkhattar 1986 IAS pic.twitter.com/EVjscvT4Lp

— CMO Haryana (@cmohry) November 30, 2021

Sanjeev Kaushal- New Chief Secretary of Haryana

• Sanjeev Kaushal is the 1986-batch IAS Officer who will also hold charge of the general administration, training, personnel, parliamentary affairs, administrative and vigilance reforms departments, and the secretary in charge of plan coordination.

• Before his appointment as the Chief Secretary of Haryana, Sanjeev Kaushal was the Additional Chief Secretary, Haryana, and Financial Commissioner, Revenue & Disaster Management and Consolidation Departments.

• In the first term of the BJP government in Haryana, he had served as the Principal Secretary to CM ML Khattar.

Previous experiences

Sanjeev Kaushal has experience of working with two State Governments, the Indian Government,

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two large Public sector Undertakings, the largest Municipal Corporation of Haryana.

Sanjeev Kaushal, the new Chief Secretary of Haryana, immediately after joining IAS was posted as the Assistant Collector (Training), Madurai (Tamil Nadu) in 1987-88. In 1988-90, he was also the sub-collector, Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu).

List of Chief Secretaries of all States and UTs

S.No.	State	Name	
	States		
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Smt. Nilam Sawhney	
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	Sh. Naresh Kumar	
3.	Assam	Sh. Jishnu Barua	
4.	Bihar	Sh. Deepak Kumar	
5.	Chhattisgarh	Sh. R . P Mandal	
6.	Goa	Sh. Parimal Rai	
7.	Gujarat	Sh Anil Mukim	
8.	Haryana	Sanjeev Kaushal	
9.	Himachal Pradesh	Sh. Anil Khachi	
10.	Jharkhand	Shri. Sukhdev Singh	
11.	Karnataka	Sh. T M Vijay Bhaskar	
12.	Kerala	Dr. Vishwas Mehta	
13.	Madhya Pradesh	Sh. Iqbal Singh Bains	
14.	Maharashtra	Sh. Sanjay Kumar	
15.	Manipur	Dr. Rajesh Kumar	
16.	Meghalaya	Sh. M S Rao	
17.	Mizoram	Sh. Lalnunmawia Chuaungo	

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18.	Nagaland	Sh. C. Temjen Toy
19.	Odisha	Sh. Asit Kumar Tripathi
20.	Punjab	Smt. Vini Mahajan
21.	Rajasthan	Sh Niranjan Kumar Arya
22.	Sikkim	Sh.S.C Gupta
23.	Tamil Nadu	Shri K Shanmugam
24.	Telangana	Sh Somesh Kumar
25.	Tripura	Sh. Manoj Kumar
26.	Uttar Pradesh	Sh.Rajender Kumar Tiwari
27.	Uttarakhand	Sh.Om Prakash
28.	West Bengal	Sh Alapan Bandyopadhyay
	Union Territories	
29.	Andaman & Nicobar	Sh. Chetan B. Sanghi
30.	Chandigarh	Sh. V.P. Singh Badnore, Administrator
31.	Dadra And Nagar Haveli and Daman And Diu	Sh. Praful Patel, Administrator
32.	Jammu and Kashmir	Sh. BVR Subrahmanyam
33.	Ladakh	Sh. Umang Narula, Advisor to LG
34.	Lakshadweep	Sh. Dineshwar Sharma, Administrator
35.	NCT of Delhi	Sh. Vijay Kumar Dev

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36.	Puducherry	Sh. Ashwani Kumar

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Solar Eclipse December 2021: How to watch last Solar Eclipse of 2021 in India? Know Date, Timing

Solar Eclipse 2021 December 4: The last Solar Eclipse of 2021 will occur on December 4, 2021. The Solar Eclipse will not be visible from India but people can watch it through NASA livestream. The total solar eclipse will be visible only from Antarctica while some other parts in the southern region will be able to witness a partial Solar Eclipse.

The Solar Eclipse on December 4 will be a total solar eclipse as opposed to the annular solar eclipse that had occurred on June 10, when a ring of fire was visible from many parts of the world. The celestial event will be last in this year but people in India will not be able to see it directly.

Read more: What do we know about new COVID variant Omicron?

Solar Eclipse 2021 in India Date and Time

Solar eclipse 2021 time in India: 12. 30 pm

Total Solar eclipse 2021 time in India: 1.14pm

The partial Solar Eclipse 2021 will begin around 12.30pm on December 4. The solar eclipse will peak at around 1.03pm and a total solar eclipse will begin from 1.14pm and end at 1.36pm.

Solar Eclipse 2021 December Date and Time- World

Solar Eclipse 2021 Date: December 4th

Solar Eclipse 2021 Timings in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)

5:29 am UTC- Partial Solar Eclipse

07:00 am UTC- Total solar eclipse will begin

07:33 am UTC - Maximum Solar eclipse

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08:06 am UTC- Total solar eclipse will end

09:37 am UTC - Partial eclipse will be over

When does Solar Eclipse occur?

Solar eclipse occurs when the Moon comes between the Sun and the Earth and partially or fully blocks the Sun's light in some areas and casts a shadow on the Earth. A total solar eclipse occurs when the Sun, Moon, and Earth are in a direct line.

A total solar eclipse appears when the Moon passes between the Earth and the sun. The Sun is approximately four hundred times larger than the Moon and also 400 times further away from the Moon. This makes it look like both the Sun and Moon are similar in disk size causing the eclipse. This total solar eclipse comes two weeks after the partial lunar eclipse of November 19.

Which countries will witness partial solar eclipse 2021?

The countries on the southern tip of South American will be able to witness partial solar eclipse along with other countries in the southern region including New Zealand, Australia, South Georgia and Sandwich Islands, Saint Helena, Crozet Islands, South Africa, Falkland Islands, Namibia and Lesotho.

Solar Eclipse 2021 in India- How to watch?

While Solar Eclipse 2021 will not be visible from India but Indians will still be able to watch it on several live stream channels including YouTube and nasa.gov/live.

NASA live stream of Solar Eclipse 2021- NASA live broadcast of the Solar Eclipse will be telecasted from Union Glacier, Antarctica on December 4th.

NASA Solar Eclipse live stream starting time-12pm IST (the eclipse will begin half an hour later).

Total Solar eclipse - 1:14 pm IST.

Important Note: NASA has warned against watching the Sun directly during the eclipse. The space agency has suggested people to wear special solar viewing or eclipse glasses.

First Solar Eclipse 2021

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The **first solar eclipse of 2021** occurred on June 10, 2021. The annular solar eclipse was a rare sight as the sun was completely covered by the Moon's shadow and light emitted from around it gave a **'Ring of Fire'** sort of an appearance. The 'ring of fire' was partially visible from some parts of India such as Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

Current Affairs Quiz: 2 December 2021

Current Affairs in Short: 2 December 2021

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Rajya Sabha MP suspension: Suspension of 12 Rajya Sabha MPs not revoked; Opposition stages walkout

Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu said on November 30, 2021 that the **suspension of 12 Rajya Sabha MPs for unruly behaviour during the last day of the Monsoon session of the Parliament will not be lifted.**

Twelve Rajya Sabha opposition MPs have been suspended from the Winter Session of the Parliament for violence that broke out on the last day of the Monsoon Session in August.

Rajya Sabha Chairman turned down the appeal of Leader of Opposition, Congress' Mallikarjun Kharge, saying that the suspension will remain as the MPs "haven't expressed remorse".

Opposition stages protest

When the Opposition's request to revoke the suspension was turned down, their party leaders staged a walkout and gathered to protest at the Mahatma Gandhi statue in Parliament premises. Congress MP Rahul Gandhi was also among the opposition MPs protesting against the suspension order.

Congress leader in the Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury also expressed solidarity with the 12 suspended Rajya Sabha MPs and said that they will stage walkouts if the punishment is not revoked.

Leader of Opposition Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge said, ***"We are demanding the revocation of suspension of 12 Opposition members of the Rajya Sabha. We will hold a meeting and decide the future course of action."***

We are demanding the revocation of suspension of 12 Opposition members of the Rajya Sabha. We will hold a meeting and decide the future course of action: Leader of Opposition Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge pic.twitter.com/QjAUpiyJGd

— ANI (@ANI) December 1, 2021

All the 12 suspended Rajya Sabha MPs have also started a sit-on protest against their

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suspension from the Upper House of the Parliament for the remaining part of the Winter session.

Delhi | Suspended Opposition members of Rajya Sabha sit on protest against their suspension from the House for the remaining part of the Winter session of Parliament
pic.twitter.com/Fo5DKcgkgX

— ANI (@ANI) December 1, 2021

Why have 12 Rajya Sabha MPs been suspended?

The 12 Rajya Sabha members were suspended on the first day of the Winter session of the Parliament over 'unruly and violent behavior' during the Monsoon Session of Parliament.

Who are the 12 suspended Rajya Sabha MPS

Suspended Congress MPs- R Bora, Syed Nasir Hussain, Chhaya Verma, Phulo Devi Netam, Rajamani Patel, Akhilesh Prasad Singh

Suspended Shiv Sena MPs- Priyanka Chaturvedi and Anil Desai

Suspended TMC MPs-Dola Sen and Shanta Chhetri

Suspended CPI MP- Binoy Viswam

Suspended CPM MP- Elamaram Kareem

Speaking on the suspension of 12 Rajya Sabha MPs, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said ***"Centre has to realize that in this country other voices deserve to be heard. Parliament is for debate & discussion, you've to allow people to express their views, only then can you truly run a democratic Parliament."***

Centre has to realize that in this country other voices deserve to be heard. Parliament is for debate & discussion, you've to allow people to express their views, only then can you truly run a democratic Parliament: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on suspension of 12 Rajya Sabha MPs
pic.twitter.com/6vEMCW9OZy

— ANI (@ANI) December 1, 2021

Background

The Monsoon Session of the Parliament had ended two days before schedule on August 11, 2021 after several disruptions as there was an impasse between the centre and opposition parties

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over discussion on allegations that the Pegasus spyware was used to monitor several politicians, journalists and activists in India. The opposition MPs in the Rajya Sabha reportedly clashed with the security personnel in the upper house on August 11.

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BSF Raising Day 2021: Border Security Force marks 57th Raising Day; Full List of BSF DGs

BSF Raising Day 2021: The Border Security Force (BSF) is celebrating its 57th Raising Day on December 1, 2021. It is the country's border guarding organization on its border with Bangladesh and Pakistan. **Border Security Force is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces of India which was raised in the wake of the 1965 Indo-Pak war on December 1, 1965, to ensure the security of borders in India.**

BSF in a tweet wrote, ***"01 December 2021 on #BSFDay2021 as we turn 57, our 'journey' in the service of the motherland continues for eternity. It is an honour to serve and protect. A promise we shall forever keep: Jeevan Paryant Kartavya."***

01 Dec 2021
On #BSFDay2021 as we turn 57, our 'journey' in the service of the motherland continues for eternity.
It is an honour to serve & protect.

A promise we shall forever keep:

- #JaiHind #FirstLineofDefence#NationFirst pic.twitter.com/HLoxqORukc

— BSF (@BSF_India) November 30, 2021

When is BSF Raising Day celebrated?

The Raising day of Border Security Force is celebrated on December 1 to mark its origination in 1965. In 2021, BSF celebrates its 57th Raising Day.

On their Raising Day, greetings to the @BSF_India family. BSF is widely respected for its courage and professionalism. The force makes a significant contribution towards securing India and is also at the forefront of many humanitarian efforts in times of crisis and calamities. pic.twitter.com/HybLzgsnDO

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) December 1, 2021

BSF: Challenges and security of international border

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Border Security Force Jammu has been manning about 192 km of the international border with Pakistan and has also been deployed on the Line of Control along with the Indian Army.

2021 particularly witnessed the potential of the Border Security Force as it faced challenges from its counterparts such as tunneling, drone activities, and smuggling attempts. But true to its tradition, BSF faced all attempts of an adversary.

BSF: Significance of work on international border

• Because of BSF's robust domination and surveillance on the international border, there has been continued peace on the International Border of Jammu.

• BSF Jammu continuously carries out the anti-tunnel devices along with the International border and because of its efforts, the force was able to detect two tunnels on the international border in January 2021. The force also made a huge dent in the infiltration attempts by ANE's from Pakistan.

• BSF troops neutralized one Pakistan smuggler who was trying to smuggle narcotics from the Kathua border in June 2021, wherein the BSF has seized about 27 kilograms of narcotics on the international border.

• BSF Jammu has worked at the forefront in assisting the border population in the Jammu area continuously.

• The Border Security Force battalions have led in providing medical help and assistance at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic to the border population.

• The international border population was made aware by the BSF battalion of the drone operations that were carried out by Pakistan. Drone awareness programs were also organized by the Border Security Force.

BSF: List of Director-Generals (1965 to 2021)

The first Director-General of Border Security Force (BSF) was K F Rustamji IPS who served from July 21, 1965, to September 30, 1974. The current Director-General of BSF is Pankaj Kumar Singh. He has been serving since September 1, 2021.

No.	Name	Start	End

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1.	Khusro Faramurz Rustamji	21 Jul 1965	30 Sep 1974
2.	Aswini Kumar	01 Oct 1974	31 Dec 1978
3.	Sharawan Tandon	01 Jan 1979	30 Nov 1980
4.	K Rama Murti	01 Dec 1980	31 Aug 1982
5.	Birbal Nath	02 Oct 1982	30 Sep 1984
6.	M.C. Mishra	01 Oct 1984	31 Jul 1987
7.	H.P. Bhatnagar	01 Aug 1987	31 Jul 1991
8.	T. Ananthachary	01 Aug 1991	31 May 1993
9.	Prakash Singh	09 Jun 1993	31 Jan 1994
10.	D.K. Arya	01 Feb 1994	04 Dec 1995
11.	Arun Bhagat	04 Dec 1995	01 Oct 1996
12.	A.K. Tandon	01 Oct 1996	04 Dec 1997
13.	E.N. Rammohan	04 Dec 1997	30 Nov 2000
14.	Gurbachan Singh Jagat	30 Nov 2000	30 Jun 2002
15.	Ajay Raj Sharma	01 Jul 2002	31 Dec 2004
16.	R.S. Mooshahary	10 Jan 2005	27 Feb 2006
17.	A.K. Mitra	27 Feb 2006	30 Sep 2008
18.	M.L. Kumawat	01 Oct 2008	31 Jul 2009
19.	Raman Srivastava	01 Aug 2009	31 Oct 2011
20.	U.K. Bansal	01 Nov 2011	30 Nov 2012
21.	Subhash Joshi	19 December 2012	28 February 2014
22.	D K Pathak	8 March 2014	29 February 2016
23.	K.K. Sharma	1 March 2016	30 September 201
24.	Rajni Kant Mishra	1 October 2018	31 August 2019

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25.	V.K. Johri	1 September 2019	10 March 2020
26.	Surjeet Singh Deswal	11 March 2020	17 August 2020
27.	Rakesh Asthana	18 August 2020	28 July 2021
28.	Surjeet Singh Deswal	28 July 2021	31 Aug 2021
29.	Pankaj Kumar Singh	1 September 2021	

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Morning Current Affairs: 1 December 2021

BSF marks its 57th Raising Day

The Border Security Force is celebrating its 57th Raising Day on December 1, 2021. BSF is India's border guarding organisation, which is deployed along its border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. BSF is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces of India. It was raised on December 1, 1965 amid the 1965 India-Pakistan War. The force was raised to ensure security of the borders of India. The BSF Jammu is currently deployed along India's 192 km-long International Border with Pakistan. The force is also deployed on the Line of Control along with the Indian Army.

Pulwama Encounter Update

An encounter had broken out between security forces and terrorists in Qasba Yar area of Pulwama district, according to Jammu and Kashmir. As per reports, top JeM terrorist commander Yasir Parray, an IED expert and a foreign terrorist Furqan were neutralized in the encounter. Both were reportedly involved in several terror crime cases.

Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 to be tabled in LS

Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya is expected to move the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 in the Lok Sabha today. The Bill seeks for regulation & supervision of assisted reproductive technology clinics, prevention of misuse, safe & ethical practice of reproductive technology services.

Centre examining Expert Committee recommendation to approve Covaxin for use among 2-18 year olds

The Central government is examining the recommendation of the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) to grant approval for restricted use of Covaxin among children aged between 2-18 years. The Health Ministry informed this in the Rajya Sabha on November 30th. The centre has been deliberating over the same with the expert committee keeping the Interim Phase II/III clinical trial data of COVAXIN on healthy volunteers aged 2 to 18 years, which was submitted by Bharat Biotech.

Omicron in India?

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There are no confirmed cases of Omicron in India so far, according to the central government. However, a South Africa returnee had tested positive for COVID-19 earlier and now two of the person's high-risk contacts have also tested positive for COVID-19. All three people have been shifted to an institutional quarantine. Their samples have been sent for Whole Genome Sequencing to NCDC, Delhi and it could take more than a week for the results to come.

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World AIDS Day 2021: Theme, Date, History, and Why is AIDS day important?

World AIDS Day: The world observes AIDS Day on December 1 every year to highlight the work done to eliminate the epidemic and to raise awareness about HIV. World AIDS Day 2021 commemorates the ones who passed away due to HIV and extends support to those who are living with a life-threatening condition. **World AIDS Day 2021,** apart from raising awareness about the problem, will also provide an opportunity to let people know about their rights and how they can protect themselves against the discrimination and stigma that is caused because of AIDS.

World AIDS Day 2021 theme

The theme of World AIDS Day 2021 is **'End inequalities. End AIDS'.** On World AIDS Day, the World Health Organisation and its partners have been highlighting the need for a special focus on reaching people who are left behind. The global health body is calling on global leaders to rally to end the inequalities that drive AIDS.

AIDS Full form-

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

"Without the inequality-fighting approach we need to end AIDS, the world would also struggle to end the #COVID19 pandemic and would remain unprepared for future pandemics. That would be profoundly dangerous for us all," says @Winnie_Byanyima on her #WorldAIDSDay statement. pic.twitter.com/iYtlMS5aLF

— UNAIDS (@UNAIDS) November 30, 2021

History of World AIDS Day

The very first World AIDS Day was observed in the year 1988. WHO, while giving the data on World AIDS Day, informed that 3.77 crore people all over the world were living with AIDS in 2020.

Even though the world has made significant progress ever since the HIV virus was first discovered in 1984, the UN body says that the targets of 2020 have not ye met. HIV (Human immunodeficiency virus) remains a major public health issue affecting millions of humans around the world. HIV virus attacks the immune system as well as reduced the resistance to other diseases.

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Why is World AIDS Day important?

World AIDS Day is important as it reminds the people and governments that the HIV virus is very much prevalent and there is a need to remain vigilant against it. World AIDS Day 2021 remind the people in authority that there still is a need to raise money and awareness, educate people, and fight prejudices against AIDS.

World AIDS Day 2021: How a person can be affected by AIDS?

There are various number of reasons through which an individual can be infected by HIV AIDS-

1. AIDS can be contracted through body fluids such as semen, blood, pre-seminal fluid, vaginal and rectal fluids, and through the breast milk of an infected woman.

2. Sharing razor blades, injection needles, knives, can infect AIDS.

3. Unprotected sex with a person who is infected with AIDS can also pass on the deadly disease to another person.

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