

Week 3 Current Affairs Update

15th - 21st January 2021

EVENTS

NATIONAL

TRANSPORTS

HISAR AIRPORT INAUGURATED UNDER RCS-UDAN



Date: 16th January 2021

First flight to the newly constructed Hisar airport in Haryana from Chandigarh was flagged off under the Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN).

Key Points:

- Hisar airport is a public licensed airport that is suitable for 18 seat type aircraft.
- The airline Aviation Connectivity & Infrastructure Developers Pvt. Ltd (Air Taxi) was awarded the Hisar – Chandigarh – Hisar route under the UDAN 4 bidding process.
- The airline has become the first start-up airline of the country to assist the nation with Air Taxi services.
- Thus, the Inauguration Marks Commencement of India's First Air Taxi Services from Chandigarh to Hisar.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

PRADHAN MANTRI KAUSHAL VIKAS YOJANA 3.0



Date: 16th January 2021

The Government of India has launched the third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY).

Key Points:

- The scheme is launched for the current fiscal year i.e. till March 2021.
- This third phase of the scheme will be managed by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- The third phase of the scheme aims to provide training skills in 600 districts of Indian states (excluding Himachal Pradesh,, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh).
- The training skills will be given to around 8 lakh people and GOI has allotted funds of Rs 948.90 crores.
- To impart the training sessions, around 729 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra and more than 200 ITIs will be developed.

AGRICULTURE

J&K SIGNED MOU WITH NECBDC



Date: 16h January 2021

The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has signed MoU with North East Cane & Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC) to increase the bamboo cultivation and its related businesses in the UT.

Key Points:

- Under this MoU, the NECBDC will offer the technical guidance and support to cultivate the bamboo species in the UT of J&K.
- This partnership will help to develop industries in UT which deal with exports of bamboo products.
- The NECBDC, will also perform research activities related to bamboo cultivation and will look to have overall development of UT in the Bamboo sector.
- The MoU was signed to fulfil the vision led by PM Modi called 'Har Medh Par Ped'.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

‘PRARAMBH’: STARTUP INDIA INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT



Date: 17th January 2021

The Union Minister of Railways, Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food and Public Distribution, Piyush Goyal inaugurated 'Prarambh': Startup India International Summit.

Key Points:

- It was organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The summit was participated by BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) member countries.
- The summit was held to enhance the cooperation among BIMSTEC nations and to provide the platform to the startups in order to work to develop new ideas and inventions.
- The summit focused on multilateral cooperation and provided motivation to the nations to work collaboratively to the uplift startup ecosystem.

TRANSPORT

INDIA'S FIRST INDIGENOUSLY DEVELOPED DRIVERLESS METRO CAR



Date: 17th January 2021

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled India's first indigenously developed Driverless Metro Car at the BEML manufacturing facility in Bengaluru.

Key Points:

- The country's first Driverless Metro Car is manufactured at Bengaluru's manufacturing facility of BEML for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA)'s MRS1 project.
- Total 576 Driverless Metro Cars are to be manufactured for MMRDA and will be supplied in January 2024.
- The Driverless Metro Car has a stainless-steel body, equipped with CCTV surveillance and can carry 2280 passengers in 6 cars Metro train-set. It will be operating on the 25kv AC traction power supply.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NATIONAL INNOVATION PORTAL (NIP)



Date: 18th January 2021

National innovation portal was recently launched by the Ministry of Science & Technology developed by National Innovation Foundation (NIF) – India.

Key Points:

- The National Innovation Portal (NIP) is currently home to about 1.15 lakh innovations scouted from common people of the country, covering Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary and Human Health.
- The innovations cover Energy, mechanical, automobile, electrical, electronics, household, chemical, civil, textiles, etc.
- Innovation Portal is a step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat and an excellent resource for students, entrepreneurs, MSME's, Technology Business Incubators (TBI's) and common people engaged in a variety of occupations.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

DR.HARSH VARDHAN INAUGURATED THE DOPPLER WEATHER RADARS



Date: 17th January 2021

Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated Doppler Weather Radars in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

Key Points:

- The Doppler Weather Radars were inaugurated in Mukteshwar village of Uttarakhand and Kufri hill station in Himachal Pradesh.
- Thus due to this Uttarakhand has got first of its kind Doppler Weather Radar.
- These radars were inaugurated during the 146th Foundation Day of India Meteorological Department (IMD) and are installed under Integrated Himalayan Meteorological Project of the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- The Doppler Weather Radars installed in both the states will improve forecasts for weather conditions especially for Char Dham and Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimages.
- They will offer data of severe weather to the weather forecasters, which will allow IMD to offer welfare and safety services to the community.

TRANSPORT

PM MODI FLAGGED OFF 8 TRAINS WHICH CONNECT THE STATUE OF UNITY



Date: 18th January 2021

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off 8 trains connecting the Statue of Unity in Gujarat via video conference.

Key Points:

- These trains will connect different parts of India to Kevadiya in Gujarat where the Statue of Unity is situated.
- Thus these trains will offer smooth and easier travel connectivity to the Statue of Unity and will promote its importance.
- These trains will connect Kevadiya with: Varanasi, Dadar, Hazrat, Ahmedabad, Nizamuddin, Chennai, Rewa and Pratapnagar.

ENERGY

‘SAKSHAM’ CAMPAIGN



Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav 2021

Date: 18th January 2021

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas launched a ‘SAKSHAM’ Campaign.

Key Points:

- SAKSHAM signifies Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav.
- It is a one-month-long campaign which will create awareness for clean and green energy.
- The SAKSHAM Campaign is organised by the Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA).
- The campaign will highlight adverse effects on health and environment due to the increase in carbon levels and will motivate the community to switch to cleaner fuels.
- Under this campaign, various activities will be held like: Cyclothon, farmer workshops, seminars, painting competitions, CNG vehicle driving contests.

ECONOMY

WE HUB PARTNERED WITH I-HUB



Date: 19th January 2021

India's first state-led incubator which promotes women entrepreneurship, WE Hub (operates under Government of Telangana) has partnered with i-Hub, Government of Gujarat.

Key Points:

- Both WE Hub and i-Hub have collaborated to motivate and support startups in raising capital.
- Both the entities will launch a pre-incubation program for 240 aspiring women entrepreneurs in the EdTech, MedTech and Fintech sectors.
- After the pre-incubation program, around 20 women entrepreneurs will be selected for the final virtual/physical co-incubation program.
- This co-incubation program will offer the startup opportunity to the women entrepreneurs.
- The women participating in this will receive guidance from experts at WE Hub and i-Hub.

POLICY & GOVERNANCE

24TH NATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL (NYF)



Date: 19th January 2021

The 24th edition of the National Youth Festival was held virtually.

Key Points:

- Theme for NYF 2021: Yuvaah: Utsaah Naye Bharat Ka.
- The festival was held to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.
- The festival was attended by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Services Scheme (NSS).
- The NYF 2021 was organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.
- The festival was held in three phases which commenced from 20th Dec 2020.

ECONOMY

TRIFED SIGNED MOU WITH IFFDC



Date: 20th January 2021

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has signed MoU with Indian Farm Forestry Development Co-Operative Ltd (IFFDC).

Key Points:

- They have collaborated to provide livelihood opportunities to the tribal community.
- Both TRIFED and IFFDC will conduct various training programmes for tribal artisans in their respective sectors so that the artisans will develop entrepreneurship and business skills.

- They will jointly implement tribal development efforts and CSR initiatives for the livelihood upliftment of the tribal community.
- Also, the IFFDC will provide assistance support to FPOs. It will offer training to the promoted community organisations of TRIFED.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

STARTUP INDIA SEED FUND



Date: 20th January 2021

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Rs 1000 crore 'Startup India Seed Fund.'

Key Points:

- The 'Startup India Seed Fund' is launched to form new startups and promote existing startups.
- The fund will help to advance the growth prospects of startups.
- This Rs 1000 crore of 'Startup India Seed Fund' will offer initial capital support to every startup.
- This fund will make India a global giant in startups and its services in the next five years.
- This initiative was announced by the Prime Minister at the Prarambh Startup India International Summit.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

PARAKRAM DIWAS



Date: 20th January 2021

The Government of India has decided to celebrate the birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on the 23rd day of January every year as 'PARAKRAM DIWAS'.

Key Points:

- The Government of India has decided to celebrate the 125th Birth Anniversary year of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in a befitting manner at national and international level, beginning from 23rd January 2021.
- A High Level Committee, headed by the Prime Minister has been constituted for deciding the programs, and to supervise and guide the commemoration.
- Objective: To remember Netaji's indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation and to inspire people of the country, especially the youth, to act with fortitude in the face of adversity as Netaji did.

REPORTS & INDICES

2ND INDIA INNOVATION INDEX



Date: 21st January 2021

The 2nd India Innovation Index was launched by NITI Aayog.

Key Points:

- The index describes the efforts taken by the government to transform India into an innovation emerged nation.
- The India Innovation Index analyses performances undertaken for innovation by states and UTs and ranks them accordingly.
- The India Innovation Index 2.0 is topped by Karnataka with a score of 42.50.
- The second and third rank is secured by Maharashtra (score: 38.03) and Tamil Nadu (score: 37.91) respectively.
- The last three rank positions are marked by Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Bihar.
- Among the UTs, Delhi topped the index. Chandigarh is in the second position.
- Among North-Eastern and Hill states, Himachal Pradesh has secured the top position. The second and third position in this category is marked by Uttarakhand and Manipur respectively.

ENERGY

RATLE HYDRO POWER PROJECT



Date: 21st January 2021

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for the investment of Rs.5281.94 crore for 850 MW Ratle Hydro Electric (HE) Project.

Key Points:

- It will be located on river Chenab, in Kishtwar district of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It will be implemented by a new Joint Venture Company (JVC) to be incorporated between National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Ltd (JKSPDC) with equity contributions of 51% and 49% respectively.
- The Ratle Hydro Electric Project shall be commissioned within a span of 60 months.
- The Power generated from the Project will help in providing balancing of Grid and will improve the power supply position.

ENVIRONMENT

FAECAL SLUDGE AND SEPTAGE MANAGEMENT (FSSM)



Date: 22nd January 2021

NITI Aayog released a book on faecal sludge and septage management (FSSM) in urban areas.

Key Points:

- Jointly developed with National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (NFSSM) Alliance, the book presents 27 case studies across 10 states and various service and business models adopted by Indian cities while implementing FSSM initiatives.
- About 60% of urban households rely on onsite sanitation systems, which require dedicated planning for management of waste collected in these systems' containment structures.
- Accordingly, FSSM planning prioritizes human excreta management, a waste stream with a high potential for spreading diseases.

DEFENCE

EXERCISE KAVACH



Date: 22nd January 2021

A large scale Joint Military exercise 'Exercise Kavach' involving assets of Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard is being conducted under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC).

Key Points:

- The exercise involves synergised application of maritime surveillance assets, coordinated air and maritime strikes, air defence, submarine and landing operations.
- Concurrently Joint Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) exercise involving various technical, electronic and human intelligence from three services will be conducted.
- The tri-services exercise aims to fine tune joint war-fighting capabilities and SOPs towards enhancing operational synergy.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) is the only Joint Forces Command of the country.

ECONOMY

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE PORTAL



Date: 23rd January 2021

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry has launched a Regulatory Compliance Portal to minimize Regulatory Compliance Burden for Businesses and Citizens.

Key Points:

- Its objective is to act as a bridge between citizens, industries and the Government in order to minimize burdensome compliances.
- It will also act as a first-of-its-kind central online repository of all Central and State-level compliances.
- All Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs would examine laws/regulations/rules under their purview and implement an Action Plan to rationalize and simplify all the processes and remove burdensome compliances.
- These details would be captured and tracked on the Regulatory Compliance Portal.

DEFENCE

DEMORTH SIGNED MOU WITH DRDO



Date: 22nd January 2021

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) signed MoU with the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) to corporately work to attain sustainable geo-hazard management.

Key Points:

- Under this MoU, both entities will collaboratively work to exchange technical data for sustainable geo-hazard management.
- They will work to monitor and supervise mitigation measures, investigate geohazards and avalanches and accordingly formulate measures to mitigate geo-hazards on national highways.
- This will help to increase safety against the adverse effects of landslides and natural calamities on the national highways of India.
- Under this MoU, expert solutions will be provided by DRDO and accordingly maintenance and development of National Highways will be performed by MoRTH.

DEFENCE

INDIAN ARMY SIGNED MOU WITH SIDM



Date: 23rd January 2021

Indian Army has signed a MoU with Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM).

Key Points:

- The MoU was signed to boost indigenisation and innovation.
- MoU was signed with an aim of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan and to reduce the dependency on foreign manufactured defence equipment and technologies.
- The MoU was signed on the occasion of 25 years of Army-Industry Partnership with CII. The SIDM, which is the company of CII organised the seminar to mark the occasion.
- The seminar was virtually addressed by MM Naravane, Chief of the Army Staff.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INDIA AND JAPAN ENTERS INTO MOU



Date: 16th January 2021

India and Japan have entered into MoU to boost the cooperation in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and to have standardization for 5G Technology.

Key Points:

- Under this MoU, both the nations will collaboratively work in areas like 5G technology, telecom security, submarine optical fibre cable system to islands of India, spectrum management, development for building smart cities, develop a high-altitude platform for broadband in unconnected areas, disaster management and public safety strategies.
- Japan will offer its expertise solution to bring 5G technology in various sectors of India. Currently, Japan is working to develop 5G usage in agriculture, transportation, and disaster management.
- The MoU agreement was signed between India's Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and IT, Ravi Shankar Prasad and Japanese Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Takeda Ryota.

REPORTS & INDICES

FAO FOOD PRICE INDEX



Date: 16th January 2021

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO), World food prices rose for a seventh consecutive month in December, with all the major categories, barring sugar, posting gains last month.

Key Points:

- The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities.
- It consists of the average of five commodity group price indices [cereal, vegetable, dairy, meat and sugar], weighted with the average export shares.
- It averaged 107.5 points in December versus 105.2 in November.
- For the whole of 2020, the benchmark index averaged 97.9 points, a three-year high and a 3.1% increase from 2019.

ENVIRONMENT

CLEAN AND SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ADB AND EIB



Date: 19th January 2021

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) have collaborated to enhance clean and ocean partnership between them in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Key Points:

- They have also partnered to achieve climate goals under the Paris Agreement.
- Both ADB and EIB will jointly work to protect the oceans and support the sustainable blue economy.
- Both the entities will work for initiatives which are held in the Asia-Pacific region to achieve SDG and climate protection goals.
- This partnership will help to expand the ocean projects and technical assistance programs of both ADB and EIB.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

148TH SESSION OF WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD



Date: 19th January 2021

The 148th session of WHO Executive Board was chaired by Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Harsh Vardhan via video conference.

Key Points:

- The WHO Executive Board session was held to discuss the direction and frame agenda to fulfil the health requirement of WHO Member nations.
- WHO has announced the year 2021 as the year of global solidarity and survival.
- During this session, the Union Minister applauded the work of medical professionals, scientists, researchers and essential workers around the world who gave their best in dealing with the pandemic COVID-19.
- He also applauded the emergence of a vaccine against COVID-19.

REPORTS & INDICES

GLOBAL FIREPOWER INDEX 2021



Date: 20th January 2021

The Global Firepower Index 2021 (GFI 2021) was released recently.

Key Points:

- This index ranks the countries as per their military strength.
- To rank the countries, the GFI makes the calculations by considering 50 individual factors.
- India is ranked at 4th position (PwrIndx: 0.1214) among 138 countries. India is having 542 combat aircraft, 17 submarines, 4,730 tanks and 37 attack helicopters.

- The GFI 2021 is topped by the United States (PwrIndx: 0.0721). The United States is having 904 attack helicopters, 11 aircraft carriers, 68 submarines and 40,000 armoured fighting vehicles.
- The second and third position is obtained by Russia and China respectively.

ENERGY

MOU BETWEEN INDIA AND UZBEKISTAN IN SOLAR ENERGY SECTOR



Date: 21st January 2021

The Union Cabinet has approved MoU between India and Uzbekistan in the solar energy sector.

Key Points:

- As per the MoU, both the countries will work collaboratively for the research and project activities of solar energy.
- In this partnership, National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy from India and International Solar Energy Institute from Uzbekistan will play the major roles to conduct solar energy projects.
- Both India and Uzbekistan will jointly work in the areas of Solar Photovoltaic, Storage technologies and Transfer of Technology.
- They will also work to implement a pilot project in the International Solar Alliance member countries.

DEFENCE

1ST VIRTUAL INDIA-EU MARITIME SECURITY DIALOGUE



Date: 22nd January 2021

The 1st virtual maritime security dialogue between India and the European Union (EU) was held recently.

Key Points:

- India was represented by Joint Secretary Sandeep Arya and Director Joanneke Balfort represented European Union External Action Service side.
- The dignitaries held discussions about regional cooperation activities, maritime security and developments of mutual interest.
- Their discussions were with an aim to increase their strategic partnership in order to frame the India-EU Roadmap to 2025.

REPORTS & INDICES

16TH GLOBAL RISKS REPORT 2021



Date: 22nd January 2021

The World Economic Forum has released the 16th Global Risks Report 2021.

Key Points:

- The findings and analysis of the report are based on the Global Risk Perception Survey (GRPS).
- This GRPS was taken over 650 members of the WEF's leadership communities.
- The main motto of the report is to enable better preparation by government and institutional organisations during the time of crisis.
- The report describes that the top 3 risks by likelihood are extreme weather, climate action failures and human environmental damage. This is very likely to happen in the next 10 years. And the top 3 risks by impact are infectious diseases, climate action failures and weapons of mass destruction, these are the amount of impact they are expected to create.
- The report states that pandemic COVID-19 has resulted in a widespread impact on major rankings of 2021 as compared to the Global Risks Report Rankings of 2020. The pandemic has caused loss to lives, hampered economic development, especially of poorest nations. The pandemic has also resulted in amplifying wealth inequalities across the world.

DEFENCE

INDO-FRENCH JOINT EXERCISE DESERT KNIGHT-21



Date: 23rd January 2021

Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force commenced the bilateral Air exercise called Ex Desert Knight-21.

Key Points:

- It is held at Air Force Station of Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- Particularly, this Ex Desert Knight-21 includes fielding of Rafale aircraft from both sides.
- This exercise is an indication of growing interaction between the two premier Air Forces of India and France.
- The Indian side is represented by Mirage 2000, Rafale, Su-30 MKI, IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft, AWACS and AEW&C aircraft.
- France is represented by Rafale, A-400M Tactical Transport aircraft and Airbus A-330 Multi Role tanker transport.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

5TH INDIA – SINGAPORE DEFENCE MINISTERS' DIALOGUE



Date: 23rd January 2021

The 5th Defence Ministers' Dialogue (DMD) between India and Singapore was successfully held recently through a video conference.

Key Points:

- At this 5th DMD, both Ministers witnessed the signing of the Implementing Agreement on Submarine Rescue Support and Cooperation between the two Navies.
- The Ministers further welcomed the implementing agreement on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) cooperation in August 2020 for the two Armed Forces to have closer operational collaboration in response to disasters.
- Recently, the Indian Navy and Singapore Navy successfully conducted the 27th edition of Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) and also participated in the second edition of the Singapore-India-Thailand Maritime Exercise (SITMEX); both held in November 2020.
- Indian Defence Minister reaffirmed ASEAN centrality in the regional security architecture and pledged India's support to all endeavours of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus.

TRADE & COMMERCE

7TH MASCRAGE 2021



Date: 23rd January 2021

The '7th MASCRAGE 2021-Movement against Smuggled and Counterfeit Trade' was inaugurated by Union Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan.

Key Points:

- It was organised by FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy).
- The aim behind the MASCRAGE 2021 is to combat illicit trade activities in the post-pandemic period of COVID-19.
- This event observed the discussions on developing innovative policy solutions to avoid illicit trade and damage to the economy and thus maintain the health and safety of the community worldwide.



PEOPLE

NATIONAL

OBITUARY

D PRAKASH RAO



Date: 16th January 2021

Noted social activist and Padma Shri winner, D Prakash Rao has passed away.

Key Points:

- He was basically a tea seller based in Cuttack, who spent his entire earning to educate slum children, through the school 'Asha O Ashwasana', which he started in 2000.
- He was conferred with the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2019 for his contribution towards boosting the value of education among slum kids in Cuttack. Apart from this, Rao was also a well-known blood donor.
- He was also an avid blood donor having donated blood to the needy many times over during his entire life.

USTAD GHULAM MUSTAFA KHAN



Date: 19th January 2021

Legendary classical musician Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan died at 89.

Key Points:

- Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan (1931 – 2021) was an Indian classical musician in the Hindustani classical music tradition, belonging to the Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana.
- He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1991, followed by Padma Bhushan in 2006 and Padma Vibhushan in 2018.
- In 2003 he was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.

AWARDS & HONOURS

BHAWANA KANTH



Date: 21st January 2021

Why in news: She will become the 1st woman fighter pilot to take part in Republic Day parades 2021.

Key Points:

- Flight lieutenant Bhawana Kanth will become the 1st woman fighter pilot to take part in the Republic Day parade.
- Bhawana Kanth will be a part of the Indian Air Force's tableau in the 2021 Republic Day Parade that will showcase mock-ups of the light combat helicopter, light combat aircraft, and the Sukhoi-30 fighter plane.
- At present, Bhawana is posted in Rajasthan and flies the MiG-21 Bison fighter plane.
- Bhawana is also one of the first women fighter pilots to be inducted into the Indian Air Force in the year 2016.
- She was inducted into IAF in 2016 along with Mohana Singh and Avani Chaturvedi.
- Since then 10 women have been commissioned as fighter pilots in IAF.

APPOINTMENTS

NAZHAT SHAMEEM KHAN



Date: 18th January 2021

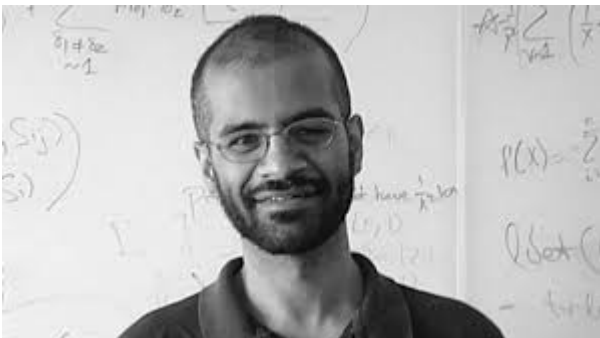
Why in news: Appointed as the president of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Key Points:

- Nazhat Shameem Khan, Fiji's ambassador to Geneva, has been finally appointed as the president of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).
- Nazhat Shameem Khan will lead the council as the president for the year 2021.
- Usually, UNHRC rotates the presidency between the regions and the president is elected through consensus. This was the 1st time in the 15-year history of the council started the year without a president and finally conducted voting.
- Nazhat Shameem Khan was a candidate for the presidency along with Uzbekistan's Ambassador Ulugbek Lapasov and Bahrain's ambassador Yusuf Abdulkarim Bucheeri.

AWARDS & HONOURS

NIKHIL SRIVASTAVA



Date: 22nd January 2021

Why in news: Awarded the coveted 2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize.

Key Points:

- Indian mathematician Nikhil Srivastava has been awarded the coveted 2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize.
- Two other people have also been chosen for the award. The other two winners are- Daniel Alan Spielman from Yale University and Adam Marcus, the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL).
- All three of them have been named as the winners for solving long-standing questions on the Ramanujan graphs and Kadison-Singer problem.
- While solving these questions, all three of them uncovered a new relation between linear algebra, graph theory, and the geometry of polynomials.
- They published a solution to a decade-long problem called the Kadison-Singer problem.



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Nurturing Ambitions

ISSUES

NATIONAL

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF MARRIAGE NOT MANDATORY



Date: 17th January 2020

Key Highlights:

- The Allahabad High Court has ruled that the provision of publication of notice of intended marriage under the Special Marriage Act, 1954, is not mandatory.
- The court said making such publication mandatory “would invade the fundamental rights of liberty and privacy, including within its sphere the freedom to choose for marriage without interference from state and non-state actors, of the persons concerned”.
- While giving notice under Section 5 of the Act, it shall be optional for the parties to the intended marriage to make a request in writing to the marriage officer to publish or not to publish a notice under Section 6 and follow the procedure of objections as prescribed under the Act.
- In case the parties do not make such a request, the officer “shall not publish any such notice or entertain objections to the intended marriage and proceed with the solemnisation of the marriage”.

ENVIRONMENT

UNCHECKED FLOW OF UNTREATED INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENT INCREASES POLLUTION IN GUJARAT RIVERS



Date: 18th January 2021

Key Highlights:

- The unchecked flow of untreated industrial effluent into rivers in Gujarat has led to increasing pollution in the Sabarmati, Mahisagar, Narmada, Vishwamitri and Bhadar.
- According to data from the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), the Sabarmati is among the most polluted rivers in the country.
- Gujarat ranks fourth among the top five States with highly polluted rivers, with as many as 20 rivers in the critically polluted category.
- As per the official parameters, if the chemical oxygen demand (COD), which indicates organic pollutant load, is higher than 250 mg per litre, then it should not be released into the rivers.
- Most of the Gujarat rivers where the effluents are dumped into, the COD level is in the range of 700 to 1000 mg per litre.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CONSTRUCTION OF VILLAGE IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH BY CHINA



Date: 22nd January 2021

Key Highlights:

- Recently, China has said that its construction of a village across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh was “beyond reproach” because it had “never recognised” Arunachal.
- India’s Ministry of External Affairs has also said that it was aware of the construction.
- The village is located a couple of kilometres across the LAC, beyond what India sees as the border separating Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet, on the banks of the Tsari Chu river in Upper Subansiri district in Arunachal.
- The site of the village is close to where China had attacked an Assam Rifles post in 1959, in what is known as the Longju incident.
- It is at least 2 km south of the McMahon Line, which is not recognised by China.

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

RUSSIA’S EXIT FROM THE OPEN SKIES TREATY



Date: 18th January 2021

Key Highlights:

- Russia has announced that it was leaving the Open Skies Treaty (OST).
- In November 2020, USA left the OST after accusing Russia of violating the pact– allegations that Russia denied.
- Moscow has now blamed Washington for its own decision of leaving the treaty.
- Open Skies Treaty is an accord that allows participants to fly unarmed reconnaissance flights over any part of their fellow member states.
- First proposed in 1955 by former US President Dwight Eisenhower as a means to de-escalate tensions during the Cold War. Claiming the initiative would be used for extensive spying, Moscow rejected Eisenhower’s proposal.
- However, the landmark treaty was eventually signed in 1992 between NATO members and former Warsaw Pact countries following the demise of USSR.

GEOGRAPHY

VOLCANIC ERUPTION AT MOUNT SEMERU



Date: 22nd January 2021

Key Highlights:

- Indonesia's Mount Semeru has erupted, pouring ash an estimated 5.6km (3.4 miles) into the sky above Java, the country's most densely populated island.
- Semeru – also known as “The Great Mountain” – is the highest volcano in Java and one of the most active.
- It is located in the subduction zone, where the Indo-Australian plate subducts under the Eurasia plate.
- It is also one of Indonesia's most popular tourist hiking destinations.
- The volcano previously erupted in December, when about 550 people were evacuated.



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IDIEAS

NATIONAL

DEFENCE

SWITCH UAV



Date: 17th January 2021

- The Indian Army has signed a \$20-million contract with ideaForge to procure undisclosed quantities of a high-altitude variant of SWITCH UAV.
- ideaForge is a player in unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology.
- SWITCH UAV is an indigenous system built to cater to the most demanding surveillance operations of the Indian forces.
- This fixed-wing vertical take-off and landing UAV can be deployed at high altitudes and under harsh environments for day and night surveillance.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

'ONE SCHOOL ONE IAS' SCHEME – KERALA



Date: 18th January 2021

Key Features:

- Kerala's Governor Arif Mohammad Khan launched 'One School One IAS' Scheme.
- The scheme is launched under the Vedhik Erudite Foundation Scholarship Programme.
- The scheme aims to provide free coaching classes for civil services and other competitive examinations to 10,000 meritorious who are not financially stable across the state.

DEFENCE

MOTOR BIKE AMBULANCE 'RAKSHITA'



Date: 20th January 2021

Key Features:

- DRDO hands over MotorBike Ambulance 'Rakshita' to CRPF.
- It is a bike-based casualty transport emergency vehicle.
- Rakshita is fitted with a customized reclining Casualty Evacuation Seat (CES), which can be fitted in and taken out as per requirement.
- The bike ambulance will help in overcoming the problems faced by Indian security forces and emergency healthcare providers.
- It will provide life-saving aid for evacuation of injured patients from low intensity conflict areas.
- This bike ambulance is useful not only for the paramilitary and military forces but has potential civil applications too.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

QUANTUM COMPUTING APPLICATIONS LAB IN INDIA



Date: 21st January 2021

Key Features:

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has entered into a partnership with Amazon Web Services (AWS).
- They have partnered to establish Quantum Computing Applications Lab in India.
- This Quantum Computing Applications Lab will be the first in the world to support the nation's government missions.
- Under this partnership, AWS will be providing hosting, technical and programmatic support to the researchers.
- The lab will allow researchers, scientists and experts access to Amazon's Bracket cloud-based quantum computing service.
- The Quantum Computing Applications Lab will provide acceleration to quantum computing-based research and development and will also enhance research activities in the quantum computing sector.

DEFENCE

SAAW (SMART ANTI AIRFIELD WEAPON)



Date: 23rd January 2021

Key Features:

- The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) successfully conducted test firing operation of SAAW (Smart Anti Airfield Weapon).
- It was test-fired from Hawk-i aircraft off the Odisha coast.
- The SAAW is developed by Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad of DRDO.
- It is developed under HAL's Hawk-i Program.
- Also, SAAW is the first smart weapon which is fired from an Indian Hawk.
- Basically, SAAW is a long-range precision-guided anti-airfield weapon which is able to engage ground targets with precision up to a range of 100km.



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The logo for 'disha' features the word 'disha' in a large, lowercase, light blue sans-serif font. Below it, the tagline 'Nurturing Ambitions' is written in a smaller, lighter blue sans-serif font. The logo is set against a background of a large, light blue arrow pointing upwards and to the right, and is framed by colorful abstract shapes in shades of yellow, orange, and purple.