

Week 1 Current Affairs Update

1st - 7th February 2021

EVENTS

NATIONAL

HEALTHCARE

PULSE POLIO PROGRAMME FOR 2021



Date: 1st February 2021

President of India launched the Pulse Polio Programme for 2021 by administering polio drops to children less than five years old at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Key Points:

- Around 17 crore children of less than 5 years of age will be given polio drops as part of the drive of the Government of India to sustain the polio-free status of the country.
- The strategy of the Pulse Polio Immunization Programme was conceived in December 1993 and it was rolled out from 2nd October 1994 when the first child was immunized against Polio as part of this program.
- The last case of Polio in India was reported in Howrah on 13th January 2011.
- India has been free of Polio for a decade now.

ART & CULTURE

‘AADI MAHOTSAV’



Date: 3rd February 2021

The Vice President of India, Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the 'Aadi Mahotsav' at Dilli Haat, INA, New Delhi.

Key Points:

- It is organised by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED from 1st to 15th Feb 2021.
- The theme for 'Aadi Mahotsav': 'A Celebration of the Spirit of the Tribal Crafts, Culture and Commerce'.
- The 'Aadi Mahotsav' is the National Tribal Festival which promotes tribal arts, crafts, medicines, cuisine etc.
- It also promotes tribal folk dance forms and tribal artists from around 20 Indian states.
- The main motto behind 'Aadi Mahotsav' is to popularize the tribal community's culture, arts and crafts to the people.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

NITI AAYOG'S PROPOSAL FOR LITTLE ANDAMAN



Date: 2nd February 2021

Recently, a plan named the Sustainable Development of Little Andaman Island Vision Document by NITI Aayog for the sustainable and holistic development of the fragile Little Andaman Island has raised alarm among conservationists.

Key Points:

- Earlier in 2020, the Prime Minister declared that the Andaman and Nicobar islands will be developed as a "maritime and startup hub".
- The purpose is to leverage the strategic location and natural features of the island.
- The islands are critical for India's security because of their strategic location in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- Better infrastructure and connectivity will help India enhance its military and naval strength in the islands.
- The government plans to Build a new greenfield coastal city that will be developed as a free trade zone and will compete with Singapore and Hong Kong.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

BHARAT PARV 2021



Date: 2nd February 2021

The annual event Bharat Parv was celebrated from 26th to 31st January, 2021 on a virtual platform created by the Ministry of Tourism.

Key Points:

- On the occasion, the Ministry dedicated three virtual pavilions - Dekho Apna Desh, Statue of Unity & Incredible India.
- Bharat Parv envisages generating patriotic fervor and showcases the rich and varied cultural diversity of the country. This event celebrates the “Essence of India”.
- The Ministry of Tourism organizes Bharat Parv every year since 2016 in front of the ramparts of the Red Fort on the occasion of Republic Day Celebrations from 26th to 31st January.
- Bharat Parv 2021 showcased many pavilions of Central Ministries, State Theme Pavilions, Handicrafts, Folk performances from various states and UTs etc.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

‘HAR GHAR PANI, HAR GHAR SAFAI’ MISSION – PUNJAB



Date: 3rd February 2021

The Chief Minister of Punjab, Captain Amarinder Singh, launched 'Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai' mission.

Key Points:

- The 'Har Ghar Pani, Har Ghar Safai' mission aims to provide the portable water supply to every rural house of the state by March 2022.
- He also inaugurated Mega Surface Water Supply Scheme which covers 85 villages of Moga district of the state, 144 new water supply schemes for 172 villages of the state and 121 arsenic and iron removal plants.
- The funds for the scheme are approved by the World Bank, GOI's Jal Jeevan Mission, NABARD and Gov. of Punjab.
- The scheme will prove beneficial to more than 1.6 lakh residents from 155 villages in Amritsar, Tarn Taran, and Gurdaspur districts of Punjab by replacing groundwater with surface water supply for drinking, besides resolving the problem of arsenic affected habitations.

TRANSPORT

WAGHAI-BILIMORA HERITAGE LINE



Date: 3rd February 2021

The Western Railway has decided to not stop the services of three trains, including the 107-year-old narrow gauge heritage train between Vaghai to Bilimora, in Gujarat permanently.

Key Points:

- Other two narrow gauge trains run between Miyagam, Choranda and Malsar, and Choranda junction and Moti Karal.
- The Ministry of Railways, previously issued a letter to the Western Railway ordering permanent closure of 11 "uneconomic branch lines" and narrow gauge sections of the Western Railway, including three from Gujarat.
- Waghai-Bilimora Train started in 1913, was a remnant of Gaekwad dynasty who ruled the princely state of Baroda. Tribal people from the interior commute by this train regularly. The train covers a distance of 63 kilometres.
- For about 24 years the train was run by a steam engine, which was replaced by a diesel engine in 1937.
- In 1994, the original steam engine was put on the display at Churchgate Heritage Gallery in Mumbai.
- The 63-km Bilimora-Waghai and the 19-km Choranda-Moti Karal routes are among those five routes the Indian Railways had proposed to be preserved as "industrial heritage" in 2018.

TRANSPORTS

METRONEO: INNOVATIVE SYSTEM OF MASS TRANSPORT



Date: 3rd February 2021

By making a sizable budgetary allocation for MetroNeo in the Union Budget, the way has been paved for the innovative system of mass transport, which could soon be replicated across the country.

Key Points:

- To be adopted for the first time in the country in Maharashtra's Nashik, MetroNeo is a comfortable, rapid, energy-efficient, and less noisy transport medium.
- The central government recently urged all state governments to consider using MetroNeo technology in their tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

- The MetroNeo service consists of electric bus coaches – their lengths varying from 18 to 25 meters – with a carrying capacity of 200 to 300 passengers at a time.
- The buses will have rubber tyres and draw power from an overhead electric wire with 600-750 V DC supply, similar to railways or trams.
- The buses will be air-conditioned, with an automatic door closing system, level boarding, comfortable seats, passenger announcement system, and an information system with an electronic display.
- The stations will be similar to other Metro rail stations.

DEFENCE

AERO-INDIA 2021



The Runway to a Billion Opportunities

Date: 3rd February 2021

The Inaugural ceremony for Aero India 2021, is being held at Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru between February 03-05, 2021.

Key Points:

- It is Asia's largest Aerospace and Defence Exhibition.
- Aero India is a biennial air show and aviation exhibition held in Bengaluru, India at the Yelahanka Air Force Station.
- It is organized by the Defence Exhibition Organisation, Ministry of Defence.
- The first edition of the air show was held in 1996.
- Aero India 2021 is the 13th edition of Aero India.
- This year Aero India 2021 has been organized in hybrid mode with a concurrent virtual exhibition to encourage maximum participation.

HISTORY

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF 'CHAURI CHAURA' INCIDENT



Date: 4th February 2021

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the Chauri Chaura Centenary Celebrations at Chauri Chaura, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, on 4th February 2021.

Key Points:

- The day marks 100 years of the 'Chauri Chaura' incident, a landmark event in India's fight for independence.
- The Chauri Chaura incident took place on 4 February 1922 at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of the United Province (modern Uttar Pradesh) in British India.
- In this, a large group of protesters participating in the Non-cooperation movement, clashed with police who opened fire.
- In retaliation the demonstrators attacked and set fire to a police station, killing all of its occupants.
- The incident led to the death of three civilians and 22 policemen.
- Mahatma Gandhi, who was strictly against violence, halted the non-co-operation movement on the national level on 12 February 1922, as a direct result of this incident.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

ASSET RECONSTRUCTION COMPANY



Date: 4th February 2021

In the Budget 2021-22, Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) have been proposed to be set up by state-owned and private sector banks, and there will be no equity contribution from the government.

Key Points:

- The ARC, which will have an Asset Management Company (AMC) to manage and sell bad assets, will look to resolve stressed assets of Rs. 2-2.5 lakh crore that remain unresolved in around 70 large accounts.
- This is being considered as the government's version of a bad bank.
- ARC is a specialized financial institution that buys the Non Performing Assets (NPAs) from banks and financial institutions so that they can clean up their balance sheets.
- This helps banks to concentrate in normal banking activities. Banks rather than going after the defaulters by wasting their time and effort, can sell the bad assets to the ARCs at a mutually agreed value.

ENVIRONMENT

INDIA'S FIRST CENTRE FOR WETLAND CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT (CWCM)



Date: 4th February 2021

Under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, a dedicated centre for Wetland Conservation and Management (CWCM) to be set up in Chennai.

Key Points:

- The centre for CWCM will be established in Chennai's National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM).
- The NCSCM is a research institute under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The CWCM centre will address research demands and will fill up the knowledge gaps with respect to capacity development and advance research programs on wetlands of India.
- It will also work to develop an integrated approach to conserve, manage and wise use of wetlands of India.
- It will assist the GOI to build partnerships with the national and international agencies which work to conserve wetlands.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

JAL JEEVAN MISSION (URBAN)



Date: 4th February 2021

In the Budget 2021-22, Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban) has been announced under the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry to provide universal coverage of water supply to all households through functional taps in all statutory towns.

Key Points:

- Jal Jeevan Mission, a central government initiative under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, aims to ensure access of piped water for every household in India.
- The mission's goal is to provide to all households in rural India safe and adequate water through individual household tap connections by 2024.
- Urban component of the mission is meant to create a people's movement for water, making it everyone's priority.
- There is an estimated gap of 2.68 crore urban household tap connections that the Mission would seek to bridge in all 4,378 statutory towns.
- The Mission would also aim to bridge the gap of 2.64 crore sewer connections in the 500 cities under the existing Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT).
- The mission would include rejuvenation of water bodies to boost the sustainable freshwater supply and the creation of green spaces.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

RASHTRIYA YUVA SASHAKTIKARAN KARYAKRAM



Date: 4th February 2021

Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports informed Lok Sabha about Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram.

Key Points:

- The Scheme Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK) is an ongoing Central Sector Scheme.
- The budget allocation of the scheme RYSK for the year 2020-21 is Rs.486.48 Crores.
- It is an umbrella scheme. The 7 sub-schemes under scheme RYSK are:
 - ★ Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan.
 - ★ National Youth Corps.
 - ★ National Programme for Youth and Adolescent Development.
 - ★ International Cooperation.
 - ★ Youth Hostels.
 - ★ Assistance to Scouting and Guiding Organisations.
 - ★ National Young Leaders Programme.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

KAPILA CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY



Date: 5th February 2021

KAPILA campaign was in the news recently. The Government launched a campaign namely Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness Campaign (KAPILA) for Intellectual Property Literacy and creating patent awareness on 15th October 2020.

Key Points:

- The campaign was launched with the objective of – creating awareness regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs),
- It will enable protection of inventions originating from faculty and students of HEIs, development of Credit Course on IPR, training program on IPR for faculty and students of HEIs and sensitization and development of a vibrant IP filing system.
- So far, a total of 46,556 users have been registered for KAPILA.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

CCTNS Hackathon & Cyber Challenge



Date: 5th February 2021

Recently, the inaugural function of the 2nd CCTNS Hackathon and Cyber Challenge 2020-21 of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) was held in New Delhi.

Key Points:

- This hackathon is in continuation to the Hackathon & Cyber Challenge which concluded in March 2020.
- It aimed to deepen understanding and enhance skills of the law enforcement personnel across all ranks and file, empowering them to adopt smart strategies for effectively addressing the evolving threats.
- Under this, police officials especially those from the cutting edge level, academia, industry, students and others are being invited to help improve existing IT applications as well as help identify new IT applications to improve the CCTNS ecosystem.
- The Mobile App: “Locate Nearest Police Station” was also launched at the function.
- This App will help various users including women commuters, interstate travelers, domestic and foreign tourists etc. especially during any emergency and has the facility to dial 112.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

SWITCH DELHI CAMPAIGN



Date: 6th January 2021

Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal launched the 'Switch Delhi' Campaign.

Key Points:

- The campaign is launched to promote usage of electric vehicles and encourage a community of Delhi to purchase electric vehicles.
- The more usage of electric vehicles will help to reduce air pollution in the capital.
- In this regard, the Delhi Government has set a target of 25% of electric vehicles in the total registration in Delhi by 2024.
- Under this campaign, the CM announced that the Gov. of Delhi will hire only electric vehicles for other purposes in the next 6 weeks.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

UNIFIED PORTAL OF GOBARDHAN



Date: 6th February 2021

Recently, a Unified Portal of Gobardhan has been launched to ensure smooth implementation of Biogas schemes/initiatives and their real time tracking.

Key Points:

- The portal will ensure close coordination with various Departments/Ministries for smooth implementation of Biogas schemes/initiatives and its real time tracking.
- The Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBAR-DHAN) scheme is implemented under the Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin-Phase 2, by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under the Jal Shakti ministry.
- It was launched in 2018 to augment income of farmers by converting biodegradable waste into compressed biogas (CBG).

- The initiative aims at attracting entrepreneurs for establishing community-based CBG plants in rural areas.

ECONOMY

RBI MONETARY POLICY



Date: 6th February 2021

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das in their latest announcements stated to keep policy rates unchanged.

Key Points:

- The following are the policy rates: (a) Policy Repo Rate: 4% (b) Reverse Repo Rate: 3.35% (c) Marginal Standing Facility Rate: 4.25% (d) Bank Rate: 4.25% (e) Cash reserve Ratio: 3% (f) Statutory Liquidity Ratio: 18%
- Also, RBI has projected India's GDP growth rate at 10.5% for FY 2021-22-in the range of 26.2% to 8.3% in the first half and 6% in the third quarter.
- RBI projected Inflation at 5.2% for the fourth quarter of 2020-21, 5.2-5% in the first half of 2021-22 and 4.3% for the third quarter of 2021-22, with the balanced risks.
- Members of Monetary Policy Committee: Dr Michael Debabrata, Dr Mridul K Sagar, Prof. Ashima Goyal, Prof. Jayanth R Verma and Dr. Shashanka Bhide.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

PARIVAR PEHCHAN PATRA AND PRIVACY CONCERNS



Date: 6th February 2021

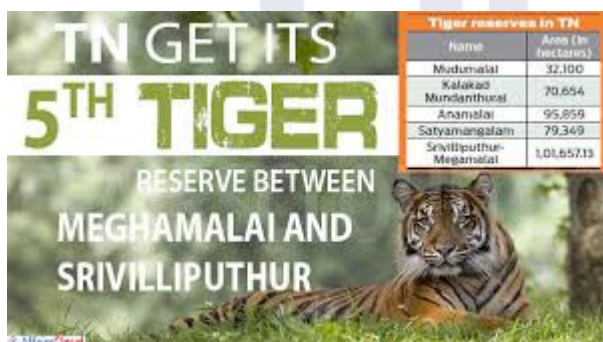
Recently, there has been a privacy concern with respect to Haryana's Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) Scheme.

Key Points:

- Although the enrollment under the PPP is voluntary, but in case a citizen or a family wishes to apply for a service delivered by the Haryana government, the PPP ID would be required, which leaves very little choice before the residents.
- In the absence of privacy laws in India, or any indication of data protection Standard Operating Procedures being followed for this exercise, there is strong possibility of potential abuse of the data collected under the PPP.
- Moreover, a lot of data which is being sought is well above and beyond what is required for the delivery of a particular service.
- Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) Scheme was formally launched in July 2019 to achieve Haryana government's vision for 'paperless' and 'faceless' delivery of schemes, services and benefits offered by the state government.
- Under this, each family is considered a single unit and gets an 8-digit unique identification number, called family ID. Family IDs are also linked to independent schemes like scholarships, subsidies and pensions, so as to ensure consistency and reliability.
- It also enables automatic selection of beneficiaries of various schemes, subsidies and pensions.

ENVIRONMENT

5TH TIGER RESERVE TO BE SETUP IN TAMIL NADU



Date: 7th February 2021

The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has given its approval to set up the 5th Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu.

Key Points:

- The Tiger Reserve of the state will surround the Meghamalai and the Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuaries within it.
- The tiger reserve will help in the protection of wildlife.
- It will also restore the Vaigai river, thus by protecting its origins in the forest area.

POLICIES & SCHEMES

MoE, DEA AND WORLD BANK SIGNED AGREEMENT FOR STARS PROJECT



Date: 1st February 2021

The Ministry of Education (MoE), Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) and World Bank signed the financial support agreement for STARS Project.

Key Points:

- The STARS signifies Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States, which belongs to the Ministry of Education.
- The funds allotted for this project is Rs 5,718 crore.
- World Bank to offer financial support of Rs 3700 crore and the rest of the funds will be raised by the states for the period of 5 years.
- The main motto of the STARS Project is 'Education for All'.
- It will be implemented as a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education.
- The STARS Project is launched for 6 states namely: Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.

ECONOMY

THE DAVOS AGENDA 2021



Date: 1st February 2021

The Davos Agenda 2021, which is the 51st World Economic Forum Meet was held recently.

Key Points:

- The Indian delegation was led by PM Narendra Modi.
- The theme for Davos Agenda: 'The Great Reset'.
- PM Modi addressed the meet by discussing India's work in 4 factors of industry namely Connectivity, Automation, AI/Machine Learning and Real-time data.
- He mentioned that WEF focused on the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution-using technology for the good of humanity'.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

UK VISA SCHEME FOR HONG KONG RESIDENTS



Date: 1st February 2021

Recently, the UK has launched a special visa scheme that will allow the Hong Kong residents a chance to migrate and eventually apply for British citizenship.

Key Points:

- The move came months after China imposed a national security law over Hong Kong enabling it to curb the 2019 pro-democracy like protests in future and also to override the powers of the government in Hong Kong.
- The move is considered the UK's most generous welcoming of foreign workers since the entry of new European Union (EU) citizens in 2004 - when 10 countries were added to the bloc - at a time when the UK was also a member.
- Since July 2020, after the national security law was implemented, the British government has already allowed around 7,000 people from Hong Kong to move to its shores.
- These were allowed permission to migrate not through the visa scheme, but through government action on compassionate grounds.

REPORTS & INDICES

CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX 2020



Date: 2nd February 2021

Corruption Perception Index 2020 has been released. It is prepared by Transparency International.

Key Points:

- Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) is a composite index that draws from 12 surveys to rank nations around the globe.
- It has become a benchmark gauge of perceptions of corruption and is used by analysts and investors.
- It ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, according to experts and business people.
- It uses a scale of zero to 100, where zero is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.
- India slipped six places to 86th position this year. India's score is below the average score of the Asia-Pacific region (31 countries) and global average.
- The list was topped by New Zealand and Denmark (88 each). South Sudan and Somalia were at the bottom of the global ranking, with scores of 12 each.

EDUCATION

ASEAN-INDIA HACKATHON 2021



Date: 2nd February 2021

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Ministry of Education conducted the ASEAN-India Hackathon 2021 from 1st to 3rd February.

Key Points:

- The hackathon will be an enactment of 6 major virtues of civilization namely, Respect, Dialogue, Cooperation, Peace, Prosperity and Innovation.
- The hackathon is an opportunity for the ASEAN nations to tackle the challenges based on two themes namely 'Blue Economy' and 'Education'.
- The ASEAN-India Hackathon aims to achieve economic development through ASEAN nations partnerships in domains like education, science and technology, exchange of leadership works etc.
- It focusses on agriculture, blue economy, tourism, health, environment, water and smart cities.

DEFENCE

NEW START NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL TREATY



Date: 4th February 2021

The United States has extended the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) nuclear arms control treaty with Russia for five years.

Key Points:

- The USA President and his Russian counterpart reportedly discussed it and subsequently, Russian President signed it into law.
- It is a treaty on measures for the further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms.
- It came into force on 5th February, 2011.
- It is a successor to the START framework of 1991 (at the end of the Cold War) that limited both sides to 1,600 strategic delivery vehicles and 6,000 warheads.
- It continues the process of verifiably reducing the USA and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals by limiting both sides to 700 strategic launchers and 1,550 warheads.

ENVIRONMENT

WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2021



Date: 2nd February 2021

World Wetlands Day is observed every year on February 2 globally.

Key Points:

- The day aims to raise awareness about the crucial role played by wetlands for people and our planet.
- The international theme for World Wetlands Day 2021 is 'Wetlands and Water'.
- 2021 marks 50 years of the Convention on Wetlands.
- The day is celebrated to mark the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2, 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea.
- World Wetlands Day was first celebrated in 1997.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INDIA & QATAR HELD 4TH FOREIGN OFFICE CONSULTATIONS



Date: 3rd February 2021

India and Qatar virtually held the 4th session of Foreign Office Consultations.

Key Points:

- The Indian side was represented by Sanjay Bhattacharyya. He is Secretary of Consular, Passport and Visa and OIA in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- Qatar's side was represented by Dr Ahmad Hassen Al-Hammadi. He is Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- They held the discussions about enhancing bilateral cooperation in areas like political, energy, science & tech, health security, food and defence.
- They also agreed to conduct the first Joint Commission meeting between foreign ministries of both nations.

ENVIRONMENT

FISHING CAT CONSERVATION ALLIANCE



Date: 4th February 2021

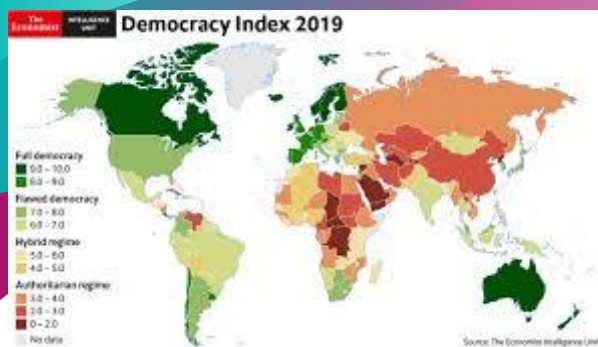
Recently, the Fishing Cat Conservation Alliance started a worldwide campaign to raise awareness for conservation of fishing cats.

Key Points:

- The Fishing Cat Conservation Alliance is a team of conservationists, researchers and enthusiasts working to achieve functioning floodplains and coastal ecosystems that ensure survival of the fishing cat.
- The fishing cats are nocturnal (active at night) and apart from fish also prey on frogs, crustaceans, snakes, birds, and scavenge on carcasses of larger animals.
- They are twice the size of house cats and spend most of their lives in areas of dense vegetation close to water bodies and are excellent swimmers.
- Fishing cats have a patchy distribution along the Eastern Ghats. They abound in estuarine floodplains, tidal mangrove forests and also inland freshwater habitats.
- Apart from Sundarbans in West Bengal and Bangladesh, fishing cats inhabit the Chilika lagoon and surrounding wetlands in Odisha, Coringa and Krishna mangroves in Andhra Pradesh.

REPORTS & INDICES

DEMOCRACY INDEX 2020



Date: 4th February 2021

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) released the 'Democracy Index 2020'.

Key Points:

- As per the index, India is at 53rd rank position with a score of 6.61 among 167 countries.
- The index is topped by Norway with a score of 9.81.
- The second and third rank positions are marked by Iceland and Sweden respectively.
- The last rank position of 167th is marked by North Korea with a score of 1.08.
- The EIU drafted the ranking by considering 5 pillars namely: Electoral Process and Pluralism, Government's Functioning, Political Participation, Political Culture and Civil Liberties.
- The countries were classified into 4 types of regime namely: Full Democracy, Flawed Democracy, Hybrid Regime and Authoritarian Regime
- By EIU, India is classified under the 'Flawed Democracy' Category.

DEFENCE

CHIEF OF AIR STAFF (CAS) CONCLAVE



Date: 5th February 2021

The Chief of Air Staff (CAS) Conclave was hosted by Indian Air Force.

Key Points:

- The conclave was inaugurated by Union Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh at Air Force Station Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- The theme for the CAS Conclave: 'Leveraging Aerospace Power for Security and Stability'.

- The conclave observed the participation of Chiefs of Air Staffs from around 75 countries, where they exchanged their ideas about ongoing aerospace power strategy and technology developments in the aerospace sector.
- Union Defence Minister addressed the conclave by describing the major role of the Air Force in maintaining peace, stability and security of the nation.
- The conclave was held in three sessions where sessions held discussions about 'Disruptive Technologies and Innovations', 'Air Power in the Indo-Pacific Region' and 'Air Power and Aerospace Strategy'.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INDIA- BAHRAIN HELD FIRST JOINT WORKING GROUP MEETING



Date: 6th February 2021

The first Joint Working Group Meeting of India and Bahrain was held virtually to discuss the Renewable Energy sector.

Key Points:

- India was represented by Joint Secretary, Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, Dinesh Dayanand Jagdale and the Ambassador of India to Bahrain Piyush Srivastava.
- Bahrain was represented by President of Sustainable Energy Authority Dr Abdul Hussain Bin Ali Mirza.
- They discussed the significance of renewable energy in meeting climate change goals
- They discussed the initiatives taken to promote renewable energy in their respective nations and assured to jointly explore the opportunities in this sector.
- They assured to enhance cooperation in sharing resources, expertise solutions and capacity building in order to strengthen their partnership in the renewable energy sector.

DEFENCE

INDIAN OCEAN REGION DEFENCE MINISTER'S CONCLAVE



Date: 6th February 2021

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Defence Minister's Conclave was hosted by India on the sidelines of Aero India 2021.

Key Points:

- The Aero India 2021 was held at Bengaluru.
- Theme for IOR Defence Minister's Conclave: 'Enhanced Peace, Security, and Cooperation in the Indian Ocean'.
- Defence Ministers of various Indian Ocean Region Countries participated in the conclave.
- The conclave was held to have discussions at an institutional, economical and cooperative environmental level in order to have peace, stability and prosperity in Indian Ocean Region.
- The conclave observed discussion related to: Sharing of Indian ports with friendly nations, Cooperation in defence industries of various nations, Information sharing to increase maritime domain awareness, Maritime security, Marine Pollution Response Activities, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

ENERGY

DENMARK'S ARTIFICIAL ENERGY ISLAND PROJECT



Date: 5th February 2021

The Danish government approved a plan to build an artificial island in the North Sea as part of its effort to switch to green energy.

Key Points:

- The project is being called the largest construction project to be undertaken in Denmark's history with an estimated cost of DKK 210 billion.
- An energy island is based on a platform that serves as a hub for electricity generation from surrounding offshore wind farms.
- The artificial island will be located about 80 km into the North Sea and the majority of it will be owned by the Danish government.
- Its primary purpose is to provide large-scale offshore wind power.
- The idea is to connect and distribute power between Denmark and neighbouring countries.



disha
Nurturing Ambitions

PEOPLE

NATIONAL

AWARDS & HONOURS

PANDIT BHIMSEN JOSHI



Date: 4th February 2021

Why in news: The year-long Birth Centenary celebrations of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi began on February 4, 2021.

Key Points:

- A two-day event has been organized in Mumbai to commemorate the timeless legacy of the great musical maestro by Rithwik Foundation for Performing Arts.
- The Indian government is organizing different events to pay tributes to the legendary musician.
- In order to mark the commencement of the year-long celebrations of the birth centenary of Pandit Bhimseen Joshi, Films Division is screening his biopic on its website and YouTube channel.
- Pandit Bhimsen Joshi was a vocalist from Karnataka born on February 4, 1922. He belonged to the Kirana Gharana of Hindustani Classical Music.

A.R. RAHMAN



Date: 7th January

Why in news: Awarded the 'Alert Being Icon Award' 2020.

Key Points:

- Music composer AR Rahman and social activist from Saidapet – Hari Krishnan were among the 14 people who were presented the fourth edition of the Alert Being Awards 2020 by the NGO ALERT, for their Good Samaritan work.
- In his video message, Mr Rahman said ALERT had been doing a brilliant job in empowering a common man to save lives.
- Hari Krishnan had been appointed by the Greater Chennai Corporation as a district volunteer head for Covid-19 relief work.
- The Alert Being Icon Award for an organisation was presented to the Biocon Foundation founded by Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw.
- Thirty COVID-19 warriors were honoured with Alert Being Covid Frontline Warrior for their contribution during the pandemic.

AYESHA AZIZ



Date: 5th February 2021

Why in news: Become India's Youngest Female Pilot at 25.

Key Points:

- A 25-year-old Kashmiri woman, Ayesha Aziz, has become the youngest female pilot in the country.
- She became the youngest student pilot to get a license at the age of 15 in 2011.
- In the year 2011, Aziz became the youngest student pilot to get a license at the age of 15 and underwent training to fly a MIG-29 jet at Russia's Sokol airbase the following year.

APPOINTMENTS

ANDY JASSY



Date: 3rd February 2021

Why in news: Appointed as CEO of Amazon, replacing Jeff Bezos.

Key Points:

- Andy Jassy will replace Jeff Bezos as the new chief executive officer (CEO) of Amazon.com.
- Currently, Andy Jassy holds the designation of Chief Executive of Amazon Web Services (AWS).
- Andy joined Amazon in the year 1997 after graduating from Harvard Business School. He has worked as a technical assistant for Bezos in the early 2000s and was instrumental in leading the company's push outside of book sales.
- Jeff Bezos is the founder and CEO of Amazon and has announced a step-down from the post of Amazon's CEO. He will be leading as the Executive Chairman of Amazon's BOD.

APPOINTMENTS

NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA



Date: 7th February 2021

Why in news: Set to become first female Chief of WTO

Key Points:

- Nigerian economist Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has been chosen as the next Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- She would be the first woman as well as the first African nation to lead the organization.
- Okonjo-Iweala, the former finance minister of Nigeria, will succeed Roberto Azevedo, who stepped down in August 2020.



disha

Nurturing Ambitions

ISSUES

NATIONAL

REPORTS & INDICES

AGEING DAMS OF INDIA: UN REPORT



Date: 2nd February 2021

Key Highlights:

- According to a United Nations (UN) report "Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk", over 1,000 large dams in India will be roughly 50 years old in 2025 and such ageing embankments across the world pose a growing threat.
- The report, compiled by Canada-based Institute for Water, Environment and Health, says the world is unlikely to witness another large dam-building revolution as in the mid-20th century, but dams constructed then will inevitably be showing their age.
- The analysis includes dam decommissioning or ageing case studies from the USA, France, Canada, India, Japan, and Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- India is ranked third in the world in terms of building large dams.
- Of the over 5,200 large dams built so far, about 1,100 large dams have already reached 50 years of age and some are older than 120 years.
- The number of such dams will increase to 4,400 by 2050.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

UNIFORM MINIMUM AGE FOR MARRIAGE



Date: 3rd February 2021

Key Highlights:

- Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) decided to examine a plea to transfer to itself cases pending in the Delhi and Rajasthan High Courts to declare a “uniform minimum age” for marriage.
- The Union government has also set up a committee to reconsider the minimum age of marriage for women, which is currently 18.
- A Bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) issued notice to the government on a plea, which was filed to “secure gender justice, gender equality, and dignity of women”.
- The plea sought a direction to the Union government to remove the anomalies in the minimum age of marriage and make it ‘gender-neutral, religion-neutral and uniform for all citizens’.
- Various laws state that the minimum age to get married should be 18 for women and 21 for men.

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

RIGHT TO PRIVACY & LEGITIMATE STATE INTEREST



Date: 6th February 2021

Key Highlights:

- Recently, the Central government has stated that though the right to privacy is held to be a sacred fundamental right, the veil of privacy can be lifted for legitimate State interest.

- The government was responding to a petition seeking permanent halting of the Centre's surveillance projects- Centralized Monitoring System (CMS), Network Traffic Analysis (NETRA) and National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID).
- Petitioner's Arguments are that the government's surveillance projects enable government authorities to intercept, store, analyse and retain telephone and internet communications data in bulk in violation of the fundamental right to privacy.
- These systems allow the government a 360 degree surveillance of all citizens, including judges.
- It sought creation of a permanent and independent oversight authority - judicial or parliamentary - for authorising and reviewing interception and monitoring orders or warrants issued under the Telegraph Act, 1885 and the IT Act, 2000.

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INDIA OUT OF COLOMBO PORT PROJECT



Date: 2nd February 2021

Key Highlights:

- Sri Lanka decided to overturn the tripartite agreement to develop Colombo's East Container Terminal.
- This was due to growing pressure from port union groups which opposed any foreign participation in developing the terminal.
- They threatened a work-to-rule agitation if ECT operations were handed to the Adani group, as proposed.
- There is suspicion that there is a Chinese hand behind this decision & it is curious that despite Sri Lanka's financial difficulties it took this decision upsetting donors.

- India continues to engage Sri Lanka on the ECT issue but it remains silent on Colombo's alternative offer of developing the West Container Terminal.
- Over the past years, Indian government has invested much time and resources in Sri Lanka- new credit line, currency swap agreement, COVID-19 assistance and vaccines.

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

MILITARY COUP IN MYANMAR



Date: 4th February 2021

Key Highlights:

- Recently, the Myanmar military has grabbed power in a coup - the third time in the nation's history since its independence from British rule in 1948.
- A one-year state of emergency has been imposed and democratically elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been detained.
- 'Coups' are generally described as a sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power from a government.
- In the November 2020 parliamentary election, Suu Kyi's party National League for Democracy (NLD) secured the majority of the seats.
- In the Myanmar's Parliament, the military holds 25% of the total seats according to the 2008 military-drafted constitution and several key ministerial positions are also reserved for military appointees.
- When the newly elected Myanmar lawmakers were to hold the first session of Parliament in 2021, the military imposed a state of emergency for one year citing massive voting fraud in the parliamentary elections.



IDIEAS

NATIONAL

SOCIAL

‘GENDER PARK’ – KERALA



Date: 1st February 2021

Key Features:

- The Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan, will be inaugurating ‘Gender Park’ in Kozhikode, Kerala.
- The Government of Kerala is set to launch this three-tower Gender Park in February 2021.
- It is built with funds of Rs 300 crore and it is first of its kind in the nation.
- The Gender Park will be inaugurated during the 2nd International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE-II), which will be held from 11th to 13th Feb 2021.
- Gender Park focuses on gender equality and gender justice.
- It will be the national platform to perform policy analysis, research, advocacy, capacity development, and economic and social initiative.

EDUCATION

YOUNG READERS’ BOAT LIBRARY IN KOLKATA



Date: 2nd February 2021

Key Features:

- The Young Readers' Boat Library was launched by West Bengal Transport Corporation in Kolkata.
- It is launched in partnership with a heritage book store.
- The motto being this unique library is to enjoy reading books while appreciating the beauty of Kolkata.
- The boat library will cruise on the Hooghly river of Kolkata and will offer a 3 hours trip.
- The boat library has Wi-fi facility and will also host other activities like storytelling, dramatised readings, poetry sessions, book launches, music etc.

AGRICULTURE

KRITAGYA: AGRI INDIA HACKATHON



Date: 3rd February 2021

Key Points:

- Union Minister of Agriculture recently informed Lok Sabha about Agri India Hackathon.
- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has started organising KRITAGYA- a National level hackathon in August 2020 to promote innovation in agriculture and allied sectors in the country.
- The advantages of organising Agri-Hackathon are to allow the students along with faculties, innovators for showcasing their innovative approaches & technologies in agriculture and allied sectors.
- ICAR has also put in place an Institutional mechanism through Research Institutes, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), and Agriculture Universities (AUs) to address the problems being faced by the farming sector.

DEFENCE

STARDUST 1.0: THE FIRST ROCKET TO RUN ON BIOFUEL



Date: 1st February 2021

Key Features:

- On January 31, Stardust 1.0 was launched from Loring Commerce Centre in Maine, US, a former military base.
- It became the first commercial space launch powered by biofuel, which is non-toxic for the environment as opposed to traditionally used rocket fuel.
- Stardust 1.0 is a launch vehicle suited for student and budget payloads.
- The rocket is 20 feet tall and has a mass of roughly 250 kg. And can carry a maximum payload mass of 8 kg.
- These rockets will help to launch small satellites called cubesats into space in a way that is relatively cheaper than using traditional rocket fuel and is less toxic for the environment.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SQUARE KILOMETRE ARRAY OBSERVATORY (SKAO) PROJECT



Date: 3rd February 2021

Key Features:

- A global collaboration for the world's largest radio telescope took formal shape with the constitution of an Intergovernmental Council recently.
- The Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO) project spans two continents and involves the participation of 20 countries.
- The SKA is not a single telescope but will be an array of antennas strategically designed and set up in South Africa and Australia.
- It is expected to be ready for carrying out observations towards the end of this decade.
- Its goal is to study the universe and its evolution, the origin and evolution of cosmic magnetism, and dark energy and evolution of galaxies.



disha

Nurturing Ambitions