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WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS



NATIONAL



INTERNATIONAL



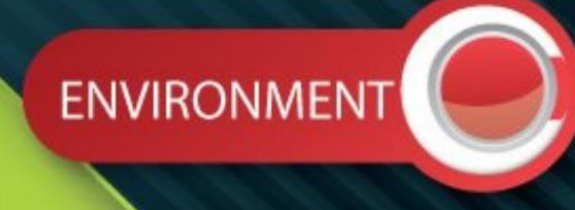
ART & CULTURE



ECONOMICS



SPORTS



ENVIRONMENT



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**INDIA'S NO.1 PORTAL FOR
UPSC STUDENTS**

WEEK- DECEMBER 20 TO 26

Arts and Culture

NFDC:



It refers to the National Film Development Corporation. The NFDC of India is the central agency established in 1975, to encourage high quality Indian cinema. It functions in areas of film financing, production and distribution and under Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India (GOI). It is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Recently, the Cabinet approved the merger of 4 government-run film and media units — the Films Division, the Directorate of Film Festivals, the National Film Archives of India and the autonomous body Children's Film Society under the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) platform.

The film media units are merged under one platform in order to have proper systematic convergence of activities and resources and better coordination, thereby ensuring synergy and efficiency in achieving the mandate of each media unit. This will lead to a reduction in duplication of activities and direct savings to the exchequer.

After the merger, the NFDC will be responsible to fulfill the aspects of production, promotion, and preservation of

the filmic content, under the single management platform.

1. Films Division: It was established in 1948. It is the oldest of the four units,. It was created primarily to produce documentaries and news magazines as publicity for government programmes and to keep a cinematic record of Indian history.

2. National Film Archives of India: It was established in 1964 with the primary objective of acquiring and preserving Indian cinematic heritage.

3. Directorate of Film Festivals: It was set up in 1973 to promote Indian films and cultural exchange.

4. The Children's Film Society: It was founded in 1955 with the specific objective of providing children and young people value-based entertainment through the medium of films.

Amar Singh College:



Amar Singh College is based in Srinagar, Kashmir. The College has recently been recognized with the 'Award of Merit' in the 2020 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

The building of this college is 80 years old and INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art

and Cultural Heritage) chapter in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir had carried out the conservation work at the Amar Singh College. The restoration of the Amar Singh College helped bring back one of the most prominent institutional buildings in Kashmir to its former glory.

INTACH: It is an abbreviation of Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage in Odisha. INTACH is a non-profit charitable organization registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. It was founded on 27 January 1984. Its responsibility is the preservation and restoration of Art, Cultural, architectural heritage of India. It is headquartered in New Delhi. In 2007, the United Nations awarded INTACH a special consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council. The Motto of INTACH is "Dedicated to Conservation". The current Chairman of INTACH is L.K. Gupta.

Defence

HWT:



The full form of HWT is to Hypersonic Wind Tunnel. The Union Minister of Defence, Rajnath Singh recently inaugurated the advanced Hypersonic Wind Tunnel (HWT) test facility of the DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organization) in Hyderabad, Telangana

The state-of-the-art HWT Test facility is pressure vacuum driven enclosed free jet facility having nozzle exit diameter of 1 meter and will simulate Mach No 5 to 12 (Mach represents the multiplication factor to the speed of sound). With this facility India has become the third country in the world, after the US and Russia, to have such a huge facility in size and capability.

The facility has the capability to simulate hypersonic flow over a wide spectrum and will play a major role in the realization of highly complex futuristic aerospace and defence systems.

MoD:



It refers to the Ministry of Defence. It was created in 1776 which is 244 years ago as Military Department by the British East India Company at Kolkata but in 15 August 1947, the Department of Defence became the Ministry of Defence under a cabinet minister. It is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The President of India is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The responsibility for national defence rests with the Cabinet. The function of MoD is to provide policy framework and resources to the armed forces to discharge their responsibility in the context of the defence of the country. The Indian Armed Forces

(including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard under the Ministry of Defence are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. The current Defence Minister is Rajnath Singh.

Recently, the Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh handed over 3 indigenously developed high technology systems to chiefs of the three armed forces - the Indian Army, the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force. These systems were handed over to them at a function held in DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi.

The 3 systems which are the Border Surveillance System (BOSS), ASTRA Mk-I Missile, and Indian Maritime Situational Awareness System (IMSAS) have been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).

Border Surveillance System (BOSS): BOSS is an all-weather electronic surveillance system. It was handed over to Army Chief General M M Naravane. The system has already been deployed in Ladakh against the Chinese troops for day and night surveillance.

It has been designed and developed by Instruments Research & Development Establishment (IRDE), Dehradun and is being produced by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Machlipatnam.

The system facilitates monitoring and surveillance by automatically detecting the intrusions in harsh high-altitude sub-zero temperature areas with remote operation capability.

Astra Mk-1 missile system: It was handed over to Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhaduria. This missile is the first indigenously

developed beyond visual range (BVR) missile that can be launched from Sukhoi-30, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Mig-29 and Mig-29K.

ASTRA weapon system has been developed by Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL) and production by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) Hyderabad.

Indian maritime situational awareness system (IMSAS):

IMSAS was handed to Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh. It is a state-of-the-art high-performance intelligent software system that provides Global Maritime Situational Picture, Marine planning tools and Analytical capabilities to Indian Navy.

The product is jointly conceptualized and developed by Centre for Artificial Intelligence & Robotics (CAIR), Bengaluru and Indian Navy, while it is being produced by BEL, Bengaluru.

Satyendra Garg:



He is a senior IPS officer who has assumed Andaman and Nicobar DGP charge.

He is a 1987-batch IPS officer. He was posted as joint secretary in the Union home ministry. He was heading the North

East division in the home ministry as a joint secretary before being repatriated to his cadre.

Among other top-level reshuffle IPS officer, Ranvir Singh Krishna is named the police chief of Puducherry. He will be replacing 1988-batch IPS officer Balaji Srivastava who will assume charge in Delhi. Srivastav has been transferred to the Delhi Police.

Economics

Green National Highway Corridors:



The World Bank and Government of India (goI) recently signed a \$500 Million(around Rs 3,692 crore) Green National Highways Corridors Project to build safe, green and resilient highways in states of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

The agreement between the Indian government and the World Bank was signed by an additional secretary, Department of economic affairs, CS Mohapatra, and World Bank acting country director of India, Sumila Gulyani.

The project will help reduce GHG emissions in the construction and maintenance of highways.

It will also support the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways in the construction of 783 km of highways by combining safe and green technology designs such as industrial byproducts, local and marginal materials, and other bioengineering solutions.

World Bank: The World Bank is an international financial institution that provides loans and grants to the governments of poorer countries for the purpose of pursuing capital projects. It comprises two institutions which are the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the International Development Association. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., United States. It was founded on July 1944 by John Maynard Keynes and Harry Dexter White. Its main aim is providing financing, advice, and research to developing nations to aid their economic advancement. The bank predominantly acts as an organization that attempts to fight poverty by offering developmental assistance to middle- and low-income countries. The current President of World Bank is David Malpass.

Bharatskills Portal:



The Directorate General of Training (DGT) along with Microsoft and NASSCOM Foundation recently launched a digital

learning programme for around 1.2 lakh students from nearly 3,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in the country.

The digitized e-learning programme can be accessed on the Bharatskills portal, a central repository for skill development programmes.

The joint e-learning programme will provide ITI students with future-ready employability skilling content. The programme aims to enable digitization in education and impact thousands of students, and hopes to reach more students and teachers soon, the skill development and entrepreneurship.

About Bharatskills: The online portal called Bharatskills(<https://bharatskills.gov.in>) was launched by DGT in Oct 2019.

It is a Central Repository for skills providing easy access for the trainees and trainers of the ITI ecosystem, to access updated curriculums and course content of all courses under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS), Question Banks, mock/practice papers, learning videos, etc., hence enabling anytime, anywhere learning outside the classrooms.

The teachers and students can access a centralized, scalable and prosperous support ecosystem through its industrial partners who can now learn the newer IR 4.0 skills to meet the demands of the industry.

DGT: It refers to the Directorate General of Training. DGT is an apex organization for development and coordination at National level for the programmes relating to vocational training including women's Vocational Training. It is headquartered in

Noida, Uttar Pradesh (UP). Its current Chairman is KK Natarajan.

Swachhata Abhiyan:



It is a mobile application launched by the Minister of State at the Ministry of Social Justice Empowerment Krishan Pal Gurjar.

The Minister urged all citizens to download the app, "Swachhata Abhiyan", and through it provide the authorities concerned details of any insanitary latrine or manual scavenger they notice.

This would help in rehabilitating all manual scavengers and replace insanitary latrines with sanitary ones.

Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, mandates survey of insanitary latrines, their demolition and construction of sanitary ones in their place.

Note: The government has been implementing Swachh Bharat Mission for the same purpose. Under the Swachh Bharat Mission, more than nine crore sanitary latrines have been constructed but still insanitary latrines and manual scavengers in some isolated parts of the country exist.

The reported insanitary latrines and manual scavengers will be rehabilitated to provide dignity of life to them.

Environment

GRIHA:



The full form of GRIHA is the "Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment". It is the national rating system of India for any completed building construction. It has been being recognised as India's own green building rating system in India's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Recently, the 12th GRIHA Summit was inaugurated by Vice President of India Venkaiah Naidu virtually. The Summit provides a platform to deliberate on innovative technologies and solutions to help in creating robust mechanisms for developing sustainable and resilient solutions for the benefit of the entire community.

The theme of the Summit was "Rejuvenating Resilient Habitats".

It is the annual flagship event organized by GRIHA Council in association with 'key stakeholders in the construction industry' to discuss and deliberate on the furtherance of Sustainable Habitat Development in India.

GRIHA Council: It is an independent, not-for-profit society jointly setup by The

Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India (GoI) to promote and administer green buildings in India.

Tso Kar Wetland Complex:



India recently added Tso Kar Wetland Complex in Ladakh as its 42nd Ramsar site. It is a second one in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh.

The Tso Kar Basin is a high-altitude wetland complex. It consists of 2 principal waterbodies - Startsapuk Tso, a freshwater lake of about 438 hectares to the south, and Tso Kar itself, a hypersaline lake of 1800 hectares to the north, situated in the Changthang region of Ladakh, India.

It is called Tso Kar, meaning white lake, because of the white salt efflorescence found on the margins due to the evaporation of highly saline water.

The Tso Kar Basin is an A1 Category Important Bird Area (IBA) as per Bird Life International and a key staging site in the Central Asian Flyway. The site is also one of the most important breeding areas of the Black-necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) in India.

This IBA is also the major breeding area for Bar-headed Geese (*Anser indicus*), Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*), Brown-

headed Gull (*Larus brunnicephalus*), Lesser Sand-Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) and many other species.

Tso Moriri or Lake Moriri or "Mountain Lake", is a lake in the Changthang Plateau in Ladakh. It was notified in 2002 under the List of Ramsar Wetland sites under the Ramsar Convention.

The Ramsar Convention: It was signed on 2nd February, 1971. It is one of the oldest inter-governmental accords signed by member countries. Its main objective is to preserve the ecological character of their wetlands of international importance.

It is named after Ramsar, the Iranian city where the treaty was signed. Places chosen for conservation under it are given the tag 'Ramsar site'. The aim of the Ramsar list is to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.

National

Good Governance Day (GGD):



The day is also known as Sushasan Divas in India. This day observed annually on 25th December. It is observed to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna and former-Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Good Governance Day was established in 2014 to honour Prime Minister Vajpayee by fostering awareness among the Indian people of accountability in government. In keeping with this principle, the Good Governance Day has been declared to be a working day for the government.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee: He was an Indian statesman who served as the Prime Minister of India for three times. He served the nation as the 10th Prime Minister. His first term was for only 13 days in 1996, his second term was for a period of 13 months from March 1998 to April 1999 and then a full term from 1999 to 2004. His first entry into parliament was in 1962 through the Rajya Sabha. He was elected to the Lok Sabha seven times. On December 23, 2014, Mr Vajpayee, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (posthumously) were announced as recipients of the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award. He was also noted as a poet and a writer. He passed away on 16th August 2018.

National Consumer Rights Day:



The day is observed every year by India on December 24. It is observed to raise

awareness about the rights of consumers and responsibilities. This is the day when the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 had received the assent of the President.

On this day in 1986, the Consumer Protection Act 1986 received the Presidential assent and thus came into force. The Act aims to provide consumers with effective safeguards against different types of exploitation, such as defective goods, deficiency in services and unfair trade practices.

However, On 6 August 2019, the Indian Parliament passed the landmark Consumer Protection Bill, 2019. The Bill replaced the more than three decades old Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

Upon receiving the assent of President, it has become an act which entails setting up of a Central Consumer Protection Authority, CCPA to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers as a class.

Under the new Act, the CCPA would make interventions to prevent consumer detriment arising from unfair trade practices. The agency can also initiate class action, including enforcing recall, refund and return of products.

The theme for National Consumer Rights Day 2020 is 'The Sustainable Consumer'.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has launched a consumer awareness program named 'Jago Grahak Jago', which means 'Be aware consumer'.

As part of this initiative, the government has used channels to create consumer awareness through print, media advertisements, Video campaigns and audio campaigns for consumer education and Information.

National Farmer's Day:



National Farmer's Day also known as Kisan Diwas is celebrated every year on 23 December in India to remember the role of Indian farmers in the economy.

The day is observed to mark the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh. He brought farmer-friendly policies and worked towards the welfare of the farmers.

Chaudhary Charan Singh: He was the fifth Prime Minister of India and served the country as Prime Minister from 28 July 1979 to 14 January 1980. He entered politics as part of the Independence Movement motivated by Mohandas Gandhi. Historians and people alike frequently refer to him as the 'champion of India's peasants.' He was born on 23 December 1902 and he passed away on 29 May 1987.

India-Vietnam Leaders' Virtual Summit:



The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nguyen

Xuan Phuc recently co-chaired a Virtual Summit via video conferencing.

During the Summit, a 'Joint Vision for Peace, Prosperity and People' document was adopted to guide the future development of the India-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Both leaders also welcomed the signing of a Plan of Action for period 2021-2023 for further implementation of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership to implement the Joint Vision. They agreed to support each other's national development priorities and work together towards the shared objective of a peaceful, stable, secure, free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region.

India and Vietnam also signed 7 agreements during the virtual summit in areas such as renewable energy, nuclear energy, petro-chemicals, defence, scientific research and cancer treatment.

India & Japan:



Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently addressed the 6th edition of the India-Japan SAMVAD conference 2020, via virtual conferencing. The main objective of this Samvad Conference was to discuss the need to build the future of Asia on the positive influence of traditions of non-violence and democracy in Asia.

At the conference, Prime Minister Modi proposed to create a library of traditional Buddhist literature and scriptures in India which would collect digital copies of Buddhist literature from across different parts of the world. The library would then translate these works and make them available for all scholars and monks of Buddhism.

International

International Human Solidarity Day:



International Human Solidarity Day is observed every year on 20th of December globally to celebrate unity in diversity and raise awareness about the importance of solidarity.

Solidarity is identified in the Millennium Declaration as one of the fundamental values of international relations in the 21st Century.

The International Human Solidarity Day history starts from December 2002, when the UN General assembly established the World Solidarity Fund. This fund was set up in February 2003 to fund the United Nations Development Programme, which worked to eradicate poverty. The General Assembly, on 22 December 2005, by resolution 60/209 identified solidarity as one of the fundamental and universal values that should underlie relations

between peoples in the twenty-first century, and in that regard decided to proclaim 20 December of each year International Human Solidarity Day. The day commemorates the establishment of the World Solidarity Fund.

Solidarity: The word solidarity is defined as an awareness of shared interests and objectives that create a psychological sense of unity and ties in a society that bind people together as one.

Singapore:



Singapore, officially the Republic of Singapore, is a sovereign island city-state in maritime Southeast Asia. This sovereign island nation is located just off the southern tip of Peninsular Malaysia in Southeast Asia bordering the Straits of Malacca to the west, the Riau Islands to the south, and the South China Sea to the east. Singapore has no capital. It is an island city state. The currency used here is Singapore dollar. The current Prime minister of Singapore is Lee Hsien Loong.

Recently, the Hawker Culture of street food in Singapore has been inducted by UNESCO in its prestigious 'Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'.

The Hawker Culture is a popular Singaporean style of street dining and

culinary practices in a multicultural urban environment.

The Hawker centres are naturally-ventilated premises with many stalls selling a wide variety from various cultures like Chinese, Malay, Indian, among others at affordably priced food. They are mostly conveniently located at the heart of housing estates, usually with adjoining wet markets. Hawker centres are a unique aspect of Singapore culture and lifestyle. They are known to master a variety of cuisines which they serve at the 'community dining rooms' where people from across all walks of life gather and share their unique experiences.

Hawker: A hawker is a vendor who sells food items and other inexpensive goods.

UNESCO: The full form of UNESCO is United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. UNESCO was founded on 6 November 1945. It is a specialised agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, the sciences, and culture. It is headquartered in Paris, France. The current head of UNESCO is Audrey Azoulay.

Hong Kong:



Hong Kong is officially the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. It is a

metropolitan area and special administrative region of the People's Republic of China on the eastern Pearl River Delta of the South China Sea. The region is bordered by Guangdong province to the north and the South China Sea to the east, south, and west. It is the eight largest trading entity in the world.

Recently, The Senator of United States (US) recently blocked a bill called the Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act. It is a US bill that seeks to give special refugee status, called 'Temporary Protected Status' to Hong Kong citizens in the USA. The Bill would also allow them to reside and work in the country as a part of a federal program for individuals from war-ridden countries and for those seeking refuge from other difficult circumstances like natural disasters.

The legislation seeks to protect the Hong Kongers from 'China's tightening grip'. It tightens the grip by allowing the residents already residing in the US to remain in the country if they feared harassment by the Government and authorities in Hong Kong.

The Bill was blocked because according to the Republican Senator, Ted Cruz, the democrats used the bill to advance their long-standing goals of changing the immigration laws. The Senator also believed that China might exploit US Immigration laws which will ultimately lead to Chinese Spies working in the US in the interest of China.



It refers to the Zoland Territorial Council. The Zomi ethnic group of Manipur has recently renewed its demand for the creation of Zoland Territorial Council (ZTC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, a self-administered zone on the lines of the Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam.

ZOMI: The Zou people or Zomi are an indigenous community living along the frontier of India and Burma. They are a sub-group of the Zo people (Mizo-Kuki-Chin).

In India, they live with and are similar in language and habits to the Paite and the Simte peoples. The Zou are officially recognized as one of the 33 indigenous peoples within the state of Manipur, and are one of the Scheduled tribes.

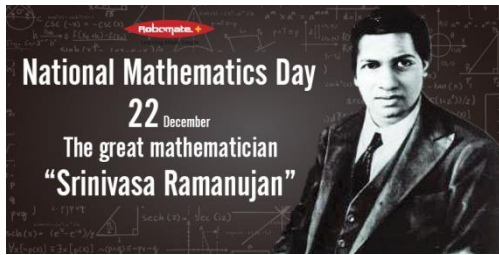
According to the 2001 Census, the Zou/Jou population in Manipur is around 20,000 which is less than 3% of the population. The community is concentrated in Churachandpur and Chandel districts of Manipur.

India Polity

ZTC:

Persons in News

Srinivasa Ramanujan:



Srinivasa Ramanujan FRS born Srinivasa Ramanujan Aiyangar who lived during the British Rule in India was an Indian mathematician whose contributions to the theory of numbers include pioneering discoveries of the properties of the partition function. He had a wealth of ideas that have transformed and reshaped 20th-century mathematics and these ideas still continue to shape mathematics of the 21st century.

Though he had almost no formal training in pure mathematics, he made substantial contributions to mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series, and continued fractions, including solutions to mathematical problems then considered unsolvable. Ramanujan initially developed his own mathematical research in isolation.

He was born on 22 December 1887 and he died on 26th April 1920 at an early age of 32. India celebrates National Mathematics Day every year on 22nd every year to commemorate his birth anniversary.

The day is observed as National Mathematics Day every year since 2012. This year nation celebrated his 133rd birth anniversary of Ramanujan.

History of National Mathematics Day: The day was announced on 26 February 2012 by the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of the Indian mathematical genius Srinivasa Ramanujan (22 Dec 1887- 26 Apr

1920). 2012 was also observed as National Mathematics Year.

Narendra Modi:



Narendra Damodardas Modi (born 17 September 1950) is the 14th and current Prime Minister of India since 2014. He was the Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014 and is the Member of Parliament for Varanasi.

Recently, US President Donald Trump recently conferred America's highest military decoration, 'The Legion of Merit', to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The prestigious Legion of Merit was given to PM Modi for his leadership in elevating strategic partnership of the two countries.

The award was accepted by India's Ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu on behalf of the prime minister from the US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien at the White House on 21 December 2020.

Trump had earlier awarded the Legion of Merit, Degree Chief Commander, to Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of Kuwait on September 18. Before that, the medal was last awarded in 1991.

Legion of Merit: The Legion of Merit, Degree Chief Commander is a military award of the United States. It is a domed

five-pointed American white star plaque of heraldic form and is bordered in purplish-red enamel, with 13 white stars on a blue field emerging from a circle of clouds. Backing the star is a laurel wreath with pierced, crossed arrows pointing outward between each arm of the star and the wreath. The reverse is engraved with the words "United States of America." It is the seventh in the order of precedence of all the United States military awards.

It is given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements, loyalty. The medal is rarely awarded and can only be conferred by the US President. It is usually given to heads of state or heads of government.

It is one of the two United States military decorations that is issued as a neck let. The other is Medal of Honour.

Note: The other Indian winners of Legion of Merit are:

General Satyawant Mallana Srinagesh of Indian Army was awarded with the Legion of Merit in 1955.

The Field Marshal Kodandera Madappa Cariappa was awarded with the Legion of Merit in 1950.

Kodandera Madappa Cariappa: He was the first Indian Commander in Chief of the Indian Army. He is the one of the only two Indian Army officers to hold the Five-star rank of field marshal. The other is Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw.

Army Day, in India is celebrated on 15 January in recognition of Field Marshal Cariappa's taking over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army.

Ratan Tata:



He is an Indian industrialist, philanthropist, and a former chairman of Tata Sons. He was also chairman of Tata Group, from 1990 to 2012, and again, as interim chairman, from October 2016 through February 2017, and continues to head its charitable trusts. Born on 28 December 1937 in Surat he is the recipient of two of the highest civilian awards of India, the Padma Vibhushan (2008) and Padma Bhushan (2000). He is well known for his business ethics and philanthropy.

Recently, the 'ASSOCHAM Foundation Week 2020' which was organized was organised from 15 to 19 December 2020 was addressed by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi via video conferencing. The theme of the programme was 'India's resilience: Atmanirbhar roadmap towards \$5 trillion economies.'

As a part of the celebration PM Modi presented the 'ASSOCHAM Enterprise of the Century Award' to Shri Ratan Tata, on behalf of the TATA Group, for his distinguished contributions to the country. (the full form of ASSCHAM is Associated Chambers of Commerce of India).

In the last 100 years, ASSOCHAM and the entire Tata group has worked very hard to strengthen India's economy and help the common Indian.

Note: Mr. Tata will also be honored with the 'Global Visionary of Sustainable Business and Peace' award by the Indo-Israel Chambers of Commerce on December 21. He will receive the award during the launch of the Federation of Indo-Israel Chamber of Commerce's international chapter in Dubai, for promoting innovation that supports sustainability and peace in the region, including with the Palestinians.

Vineet Agarwal:



He is the Managing Director of logistics major Transport Corporation of India Limited. He has recently taken over as the new President of The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham). He will be replacing Niranjana Hiranandani, Co-Founder and MD, Hiranandani Group of Companies.

Sumant Sinha, Chairman and Managing Director of ReNew Power, is the new Senior Vice-President of Assocham.

Assocham: It refers to the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India. ASSOCHAM is a non-governmental trade association and advocacy group headquartered in New Delhi, India. The organization was founded in 1920. It represents the interests of trade and commerce in India, and acts as an interface between issues and initiatives.

Places in news

Gurugram:



Gurgaon, officially Gurugram, is a city located in the northern Indian state of Haryana. It is the second largest city in the state of Haryana. It is one of the major satellite cities of Delhi and is part of the National Capital Region of India. The city was named after revered teacher Dronacharya of epic Mahabharata. It is believed that Dronacharya was gifted this ancestral village by his disciples, the Pandavas and Kauravas. He gave spiritual instructions to them at this place.

Recently, the Minister of State for Skill Development, Raj Kumar Singh inaugurated India's first Centre of Excellence (CoE) for 'skill development in the power sector' in Gurugram, Haryana.

The CoE has been established in the campus of National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurugram, Haryana.

It has been set up by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India (GoI), in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education and Youth, Government of France and Schneider Electric.

It has high-end modern labs which are designed keeping in mind the future technology, that will further strengthen

India and France's relationship in the energy sector.

The CoE will serve as a platform to focus on creating a pool of highly skilled trainers and assessors for further training to increase employability of candidates in the field of Electricity, Automation and Solar Energy Sectors.

Schneider Electric: Schneider Electric is a French multinational company. It provides energy and automation digital solutions for efficiency and sustainability. It addresses homes, buildings, data centers, infrastructure and industries, by combining energy technologies, real-time automation, software and services. The current Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is Jean-Pascal Tricoire.

Punjab:



Punjab is a state in northern India. It is bounded by the Indian states of Jammu and Kashmir to the north, Himachal Pradesh to the northeast, Haryana to the south and southeast, and Rajasthan to the southwest and by the country of Pakistan to the west. Punjab in its present form came into existence on 1 November 1966. The city of Chandigarh, within the Chandigarh union territory, is the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana. Punjab means "The Land of Five Waters", which are Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas. The current Chief Minister and Governor

of Punjab are Captain Amarinder Singh and V.P.Singh Badnore respectively.

Recently, the Chief Minister of Punjab launched a Mobile Application and web portal called 'PR Insight'. The application seeks to serve as a platform for receiving feedback for people, which in turn will enable Punjab Government remove deficiencies in programmes and schemes implemented by it.

The main objective of PR Insight is to re-orient the existing schemes and programmes of the state government to the people's satisfaction after meticulously monitoring their feedback.

PR Insight application has been developed by the Information & Public Relations Department to provide a single repository & dashboard of all the news articles & social media posts of the State.

As many as 31 leading Newspaper agencies/portals have been integrated online with PR Insight application & portal and all the State Departments' news articles are fetched from these newspaper agencies on real time basis.

The news articles and social media posts will be analyzed using advance analytics and sentiment analysis tools to understand citizen feedback on Government policies and perception of Governance by the citizens.

The app will monitor the citizen's feedback and subsequently ensure responsive and transparent administration in the State.

West Bengal:



West Bengal is a state in eastern India. It lies between the Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal. It borders Bangladesh in the east, and Nepal and Bhutan in the north. It also borders the Indian states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, Sikkim, and Assam. The state capital is Kolkata. It was established on 26 January 1950. The current Chief Minister and Governor of West Bengal are Mamta Banerjee and Jagdeep Dhankhar respectively.

Recently, the Union Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan dedicated West Bengal's first oil and gas reserve, 'Bengal Basin', to the nation.

The Bengal Basin is explored and owned by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). It is the 8th producing basins of India by ONGC.

The others seven are:

1. Krishna-Godavari (KG)
2. Mumbai Offshore
3. Assam Shelf
4. Rajasthan
5. Cauvery
6. Assam-Arakan Fold Belt
7. Cambay

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Limited commenced the production of crude oil from the Asokenagar-1 well, Bengal Basin in 24 Paragana district of the state on 20 December 2020.

Uttar Pradesh:



Uttar Pradesh is a state in northern India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Its Capital city is Lucknow. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Uttar Pradesh are Yogi Adityanath and Anandiben Patel respectively.

Recently, a special campaign named "Varasat" (natural succession) was launched by the Uttar Pradesh (UP) government. This is a first of its kind campaign that has been launched to curb property & land-related disputes in rural areas.

This initiative of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath aims is to put an end the land-related issues in the rural areas and eradicate the exploitation of the villagers over succession rights by land mafias, who generally target disputed properties. The two-month-long special drive will continue till 15th February 2020.

Under the arrangements:

- ❖ The villagers will get both online and offline facilities for registering their 'Varasat'.
- ❖ For the people who have land in the village but are living at some other place, a special counter will be opened at the Tehsil-level where they can apply for the same.

- ❖ People will get proper paper documents for their land property.
- ❖ They can even avail loans from banks.
- ❖ It would be helpful in minimizing disputes and animosity within families and relatives. The people would also get rid of facing law suits that sometimes trail for generations.
- ❖ All the information related to such land will be uploaded on the website of the revenue board based on which the progress of the scheme will be reviewed.

India Policy

E-Sampada:



It is the name of a new Web Portal and Mobile App that has been dedicated to the nation by the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri on Good Governance Day.

E-Sampada provides a single-window for all the services including an allotment for over one lakh government residential accommodations, office space allotment to government organizations in 45 office complexes in 28 cities and booking of 1,176-holiday homerooms.

This new web portal provides online facility to users across India to lodge complaints, submit documents and appear for the virtual hearing. In its endeavor to provide 'One Nation, One System', the erstwhile 4 websites namely - gpra.nic.in, estates.gov.in, eawas.nic.in, holidayhomes.nic.in and two Mobile Apps (m-Awas & m-Ashoka5) of the Directorate of Estates have been integrated into one.

Cabinet:



The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently approved the proposal for revision of the guidelines for obtaining license for providing Direct-To-Home (DTH) broadcasting service in India.

The salient features of the Cabinet's decision as mentioned by Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar are as follows:

- License for the DTH will be issued for a period of 20 years compared to the license for all service providers which was issued for a duration of 10 years, according to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). The period of License may also be renewed by 10 years at a time.
- License fee has been revised from 10% of GR (Gross Revenue) to 8% of

AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue) which will be calculated by deduction of GST from GR.

- License Fee will be collected on quarterly basis in lieu of presently annual basis.
- DTH operators shall be permitted to operate to a maximum of 5 per cent of its total channel carrying capacity as permitted platform.
- The sharing of Infrastructure between DTH operators willing to share DTH platform and transport stream of TV channels, on voluntary basis, will be allowed.
- The cap of 49% FDI in the existing DTH guidelines will be aligned with the extant Government (DPIIT's) policy on FDI as amended from time to time. It will allow 100% foreign direct investment (FDI).

Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules

2020:



The Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and New and Renewable Energy R K Singh recently announced the new 'Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020.

As per these rules, the consumers across the country will have the right to a minimum standard of service for supply of electricity.

The rules provide for penalties for power distribution utilities (discoms) for not maintaining mandated standards of services.

The distribution licensee shall supply 24×7 power to all consumers unless stated otherwise for a specific category, such as an agricultural connection.

The consumer shall have the option to pay bills online or offline. Besides, there would be provision for advance payment of bills.

These rules provide for Rights of consumers and Obligations of Distribution licensees.

The key areas which are covered in the Electricity (Rights of consumers) Rules are as follows:

1. Rights of consumers and Obligations of Distribution licensees
2. Release of new connection and modification in existing connection
3. Metering arrangement
4. Billing and Payment
5. Disconnection and Reconnection
6. Reliability of supply
7. Consumer as Prosumer
8. Standards of Performance of licensee
9. Compensation Mechanism
10. Call Centre for Consumer Services
11. Grievance redressal mechanism

Science and Technology

Naegleria fowleri:



It is a single celled amoeba. It is also called the brain-eating Amoeba. It is usually found in warm fresh water. However, the climatic changes have helped the amoeba to spread even during winter. It multiplies rapidly at forty-six degree Celsius.

The amoeba is usually found in rivers, lakes and causes infection called Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis. It is also called PAM and can be fatal.

Recently, *Naegleria fowleri* has been in news because this amoeba is now rapidly spreading in the US. The news comes after a mysterious disease called Eluru was discovered in the districts of Andhra Pradesh.

PAM: It stands for Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis. The symptoms of PAM start to occur after 24 hours the amoeba entered the human body. The most common early symptom of the infection is head ache. The other symptoms are dizziness, stiff neck, vomiting, fever, nausea, seizures, etc.

The amoeba enters the human body through nose. It reaches the brain from the nose, where it feeds on the brain tissues. The unique fact about the amoeba is that it does not cause harm to the human body if it enters through the mouth. Thus, a person does not get infected by PAM by drinking contaminated water.

The Amoeba enters the human body from inadequately chlorinated swimming pools, contaminated tap water.

FAST:



It refers to the Five Hundred Metre Aperture Spherical Telescope. FAST is the world's largest Radio Telescope. China recently announced that it is opening its Five Hundred Metre Aperture Spherical Telescope to international scientists.

About FAST: The telescope FAST nicknamed Tianyan (Eye of Heaven) was completed in 2016. It was built at a cost 175 million USD. It displaced thousands of villagers. It is located in the Dawodang depression. The Dawodang depression is a natural basin in Guizhou, southwest China.

It is located in a natural sinkhole which was formed due to erosion.

FAST has a fixed 500 m (1,600 ft) diameter dish constructed in a natural depression in the landscape. It is the world's largest filled-aperture radio telescope and the second-largest single-dish aperture, after the sparsely-filled RATAN-600 in Russia.

The telescope has a reflecting surface of 500-metres in diameter of which only a circle of 300 metres diameter can be used at one time.

It has super sensitivity to detect cosmic phenomena.

This includes radio bursts and pulsars as well.

The science objectives of FAST are Pulsar Observations, Large Scale Neutral Hydrogen survey, Detection of Interstellar molecules, Pulsar Timing Arrays, Detecting Interstellar Communication signals and Leading International very long baseline interferometry network.

Sports

Football:



In football, the Star Argentine footballer Lionel Messi has equalled Brazilian legend Pele's record of 643 goals for a single club by scoring for Barcelona against Valencia. Messi achieved the feat in a Spanish league match where both the teams ended in a 2-2 draw recently.

Football legend Pele scored 643 goals in 665 competitive games for Brazilian club Santos between 1956 and 1974 while Messi needed 748 matches from 2005 to 2020 to reach the tally.

Boxing World Cup championship:



Indian pugilists recently bagged 9 medals including 3 golds, 2 silver and 4 bronze at the Cologne Boxing World Cup which ended in Cologne, Germany.

Amit Panghal won gold in men's category while Manisha Moun and Simranjit Kaur won gold in Women's category.

India finished 2nd in the overall Medals List, Germany topped the list with 16 medals. The Cologne Boxing World 2020 was hosted by the European Boxing Confederation (EUBC).

EUBC: It is an acronym for European Boxing Confederation. EUBC was founded in 2009. It is headquartered in Assisi, Italy. The current EUBC President is Franco Falcinelli.

Sports Ministry:



The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is a branch of the Government of India (GoI). It administers Department of youth affairs and Department of Sports in India. The Ministry was set up as the Department of

Sports at the time of organisation of 1982 Asian Games New Delhi. Its name was changed to the Department of Youth Affairs & Sports during celebration of the International Youth Year, 1985. It became a separate Ministry on 27 May 2000. Subsequently, In 2008, the Ministry was bifurcated into Department of Youth Affairs and Department of Sports under two separate Secretaries. The ministry gives the annual National Sports awards in various categories, including the Arjuna Award and Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna awards. The current Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports is Kiren Rijiju (MOS independent charge).

Recently, the Sports Ministry has approved the inclusion of 4 indigenous Games to be a part of Khelo India Youth Games 2021, which is scheduled to be held in Haryana.

The four new games are Thang-Ta, Gatka, Kalaripayattu and Mallakhamba.

These four selected games represent different parts of the country and will get national recognition with the help of the Khelo India Youth Games 2021.

The place of origin of the 4 newly inducted games are as follows:

1. Thang-Ta is a Manipur martial art.
2. Gatka originates from Punjab. It is a traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors, used both as self-defence as well as a sport.
3. Kalaripayattu has its origin from Kerala.
4. Mallakhamba is practised in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.



He is the Formula 1 world champion. He has recently won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2020.

This is the second time that the 35-year-old Hamilton has been crowned Sports Personality of the Year. Prior to this, he won the award in 2014.

The other award winners at Sports Personality 2020 are:

- ❖ Helen Rollason Award: Captain Sir Tom Moore
- ❖ Team of the Year: Liverpool FC
- ❖ Expert Special Panel Award: Marcus Rashford
- ❖ Coach of the Year: Jurgen Klopp (Football)
- ❖ Unsung Hero: Sgt Matt Ratana
- ❖ Captain Tom Young Unsung Hero: Tobias Weller
- ❖ Young Sports Personality of the Year: Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix (British diver)

Lewis Hamilton: