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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Canada clears world's 1st plant-based C-19 vaccine

- Canada became the first country in the world that has authorized the use of a plant-based C-19 vaccine. The two-dose vaccine of Medicago Inc. (a biopharma company owned by Mitsubishi Chemical and Philip Morris), can be given to adults who are aged between 18 to 64, but little data is available on the shots received by people aged 65 and above.
- The decision to authorize the vaccine was based on a study conducted on 24,000 adults that showed the efficacy rate of the vaccine is 71% at preventing C-19 – although the tests were conducted before the omicron variant emerged. Covifenz is the name given to this vaccine. Canada agreed to buy 20 million doses of this plant-based vaccine, with an option to purchase 56 million additional doses.

NDB first multilateral agency to open office in Gift City

- New Development Bank (NDB) will become the first multilateral agency to open an office in the Gujarat International Finance Tech City (GIFT). New Development Bank (NDB) has received the approval for the same and will open the office in May 2022 in GIFT City. The Indian office will help identify suitable projects and try to create a pipeline of potential financing for the bank. NDB also expects to partner with the newly launched National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) to support crucial infrastructure projects in India.
- NDB was set up by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) with the objective of mobilizing resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in the BRICS as well as other emerging markets in 2014. It became operational in 2015 and is headquartered in Shanghai, China. All the founding members equally own the bank.

Air Force Pulls Out Of Multilateral Air Exercise In UK Amid Ukraine Crisis

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has decided not to send its aircraft in the multilateral air exercise 'Cobra Warrior-22' in the United Kingdom, due to the deepening crisis in Ukraine, arising out of the Russian military attack in that country. The exercise is scheduled to take place from March 6 to 27, 2022, at Waddington in the United Kingdom. The announcement by the IAF comes just three days after it confirmed its participation in the drills.
- The announcement by the IAF came hours after India abstained from voting on a UN Security Council resolution on the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. India retained the option of reaching out to all relevant sides to find a middle ground and foster dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the crisis.

Russia-Ukraine Border Conflict

- The Russia-Ukraine Border Conflict, have been simmering for more than two months, with diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue showing little sign of progress. Russia has more than 100,000 troops on its border with Ukraine, sparking Western warnings of an imminent invasion. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Secretary-General Jens

Stoltenberg, meanwhile, voiced concerns that Russia continues to build up troop numbers along Ukraine's borders, including in Belarus.

- The Border conflict in Ukraine began with protests in the capital city of Kiev in November 2013 against Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich's decision to reject a deal for greater economic integration with the European Union. After a violent crackdown by state security forces unintentionally drew an even greater number of protesters and escalated the conflict, President Yanukovich fled the country in February 2014.
- In March 2014, Russian troops took control of Ukraine's Crimean region, before formally annexing the peninsula after Crimeans voted to join the Russian Federation in a disputed local referendum. Russian President Vladimir Putin cited the need to protect the rights of Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Crimea and southeast Ukraine. The Border conflict heightened ethnic divisions, and two months later pro-Russian separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine held a referendum to declare independence from Ukraine.

Israeli Defense Forces Successfully Test Naval Version Of Iron Dome Missile Defense System

- Israel successfully tested a new naval air defence system "C-Dome," to be used on the Israeli Navy's Sa'ar 6-class corvettes. C-Dome is the naval version of the Iron Dome, an all-weather air defence system of Israel to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and missiles, from the Gaza Strip. The successful test further strengthens the missile defence systems of the Israeli Navy to safeguard the maritime assets of the State of Israel.
- The systems that we are developing as part of Israel's multi-tier missile defence array enable us to operate against Iranian proxies in the region and defend against their weapon systems, which are constantly being upgraded. The C-Dome is to become part of Israel's multilayer missile defence system — which includes weapons capable of intercepting everything from long-range missiles to short-range rockets.

Russia wants to 'turn Ukraine into a broken country'

- Russian President, Vladimir Putin has recognised the independence of separatist regions in eastern Ukraine – Donetsk and Luhansk. Putin's announcement paved the way for Russia to openly send troops and weapons to the long-running conflict pitting Ukrainian forces against Moscow-backed rebels. Russian-backed rebels have been fighting Ukrainian troops in Donetsk and Luhansk since 2014, with regular violence despite a ceasefire agreement.
- Putin signed decrees recognizing the Donetsk and Luhansk regions' independence, eight years after fighting erupted between Russia-backed separatists and Ukrainian forces, and called on lawmakers to approve measures paving the way for military support.

India, Oman begin 'Eastern Bridge-VI' air force exercise

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) and Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) have organised a bilateral air exercise named Eastern Bridge-VI from February 21 to 25, 2022 at Air Force Station Jodhpur in Rajasthan. Eastern Bridge-VI is the sixth edition of the exercise. The exercise will provide an opportunity to enhance operational capability and interoperability between the two Air Forces.

- Participation of IAF and RAFO in this exercise will promote professional interaction, exchange of experiences and enhancement of operational knowledge, besides strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. Various senior dignitaries are planning to visit Air Force Station Jodhpur during this exercise.

UK's researchers found 180-Million-Year-Old Fossil of 'Sea Dragon'

- United Kingdom researchers have found colossal 180-million-year-old fossilised remains of an Ichthyosaur, popularly known as a 'sea dragon'. The researchers show one of the most significant discoveries in the region as the fossil is the biggest and most complete skeleton of its kind found in the United Kingdom. Ichthyosaurs resembled dolphins in body shape and became extinct around 90 million years ago, after first appearing 250 million years ago.
- Joe Davis of the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust discovered it during the routine draining of a lagoon island at the Rutland Water reservoir in February 2021. The first ichthyosaurs, which are called sea dragons because they tend to have very large teeth and eyes, were discovered by the fossil hunter and palaeontologist Mary Anning in the early 19th century. The specimen is currently being treated by a specialist paleontological conservator, a process that will take 12-18 months.

Mali conflict: Macron announces troops to leave after nine years

- French president, Emmanuel Macron has announced that France and its European partners will start the military withdrawal from Mali after more than nine years fighting a jihadist insurgency. France first deployed troops against jihadists in Mali in 2013 under the Socialist president François Hollande. The decision has been taken due to a breakdown in France's relations with the ruling junta government in the country. The heart of this military operation will be shifted from Mali to Niger.
- In recent years, jihadists have taken over swaths of territory in the former French colony, exploiting political turmoil, poverty and the weakness of local authorities. Critics of French strategy in Mali have long accused policymakers in Paris of focusing on the military force at the expense of politics. The withdrawal applies to 2,400 French troops in Mali and a smaller European force of several hundred, which was created in 2020 to reduce the burden on French forces.

Nepal to become first country to deploy India's UPI platform

- Nepal will be the first country to adopt India's UPI system, which will play a pivotal role in transforming the digital economy of the neighbouring country, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL), the international arm of NPCI, has joined hands with Gateway Payments Service (GPS) & Manam Infotech to provide the services. GPS is the authorized payment system operator in Nepal. Manam Infotech will deploy Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in Nepal.
- The collaboration will serve the larger digital public good in Nepal and bolster interoperable real-time person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions in the neighbouring country. Nepal shall be the first country outside of India to adopt UPI as the

payments platform driving the digitalization of cash transactions and furthering the vision and objectives of the Nepal Government and Nepal Rastra Bank as the Central bank.

Bangladesh, US air forces to conduct joint exercise in Dhaka, Sylhet

- The air forces of Bangladesh and the United States will conduct a joint tactical airlift exercise 'Cope South 22'. The six days exercise has been sponsored by Pacific Air Forces (PACAF). The bilateral exercise will be held at Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) Kurmitola Cantonment, Dhaka; and Operating Location-Alpha, Sylhet, Bangladesh.
- The goals of the Pacific Air Forces-sponsored bilateral tactical airlift exercise include improving interoperability with the Bangladesh Air Force and supporting the armed forces of Bangladesh's long-term modernisation efforts in order to maintain regional stability. The goal of the exercise is bolstering bilateral ties between the two countries through tactical airlift sorties and subject-matter expert exchanges.

WHO Launches Quit Tobacco App. Here Is How The First-Of-Its-Kind Initiative Works

- World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Region (SEAR) has launched a 'Quit Tobacco App'. This application helps people to give up the use of tobacco in all forms, including smokeless and other newer products. The App was launched by Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO-SEAR, during WHO's year-long 'Commit to quit' campaign, is the latest tobacco control initiative by the WHO South-East Asia Region.
- The app, the first such by WHO, and the first that targets all forms of tobacco, helps users to identify the triggers, set their targets, manage cravings, and stay focused to quit tobacco. Tobacco is the world's leading cause of preventable death and kills nearly 8 million persons every year. It claims 1.6 million lives in the WHO South-East Asia Region which is amongst the largest producers and consumers of tobacco products.

German President Steinmeier reelected for second term

- German President, Frank-Walter Steinmeier has been re-elected for a second term of five years by a special parliamentary assembly. This is also the final term for Steinmeier, which he won with 71% of the vote. The special assembly was made up of the members of parliament of the lower house and representatives of Germany's 16 states. Steinmeier was first elected as the president on February 12, 2017, with 74% of the vote.
- Before first becoming president in 2017, Steinmeier, 66, served two stints as Chancellor Angela Merkel's foreign minister and earlier was chief of staff to Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. Germany's president has little executive power but is considered an important moral authority. After a messy parliamentary election result in 2017, Steinmeier helped prod politicians to form a new coalition government rather than holding out for a new vote.

Instagram announces 'Take a Break' feature to encourage breaks from social media

- Instagram has announced the launch of 'Take a Break' in all countries, including India, to empower people to make informed decisions about the way they are spending their time. This feature will be promoted in India through a campaign, in partnership with 'We The

Young', called 'Break Zaroori Hai'. 'Take a Break' was first launched in the US, UK, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, and it is now available for everyone globally.

- 'Take a Break' is a feature that will show up for people, as they have been scrolling for a certain amount of time. They will be asked to take a break from Instagram and suggest that they set reminders to take more breaks in the future.
- They will also be shown expert-backed tips to help them reflect and reset. To make sure that young people are aware of this feature, they will be shown notifications suggesting they turn these reminders on.
- The 'Take a Break' reminders build on Instagram's existing time management tools including Daily Limit, which lets people know when they've reached the total amount of time they want to spend on Instagram each day, and offers the ability to mute notifications from Instagram.

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg to lead Norway central bank

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) chief, Jens Stoltenberg will take over as Norway's central bank Governor at the end of the year. The appointment comes amid escalating tensions between the West and Russia. Western nations fear Moscow has plans to invade Ukraine, which aspires to join the NATO alliance.
- But Mr Stoltenberg, a 62-year-old trained economist, insisted that he would stay on as NATO Secretary-General until the end of his term in October. Norway's central bank determines monetary policy but also manages the country's enormous sovereign wealth fund, the biggest in the world.

Winter Olympics host China welcomes Year of Tiger with quiet celebrations amid COVID-19 outbreaks

- China is celebrating the Spring Festival, it's the most important annual festival as it entered the Lunar new "Year of the Tiger". Last year was celebrated as the Lunar Year of the Ox. According to the Chinese Zodiac calendar, the Year of the Ox has ended and the Year of the Tiger has begun from February 1, 2022, and will end on January 21, 2023.
- In Chinese culture, the tiger symbolizes bravery, vigor and strength and it is believed that it can lift people from adversity and usher in final auspiciousness and peace. Each year is named after one of 12 signs of the Chinese zodiac in a repeating cycle. This year, Spring Festival celebrations coincide with the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Australia to rename islands to Honor Queen Elizabeth on platinum jubilee

- Australia will rename Aspen Island in Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin as part of June 2022 national and community events to celebrate 70th anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth II to the British throne, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Saturday.
- "Seventy years of service is a truly immense achievement, and we are proud to join with other Commonwealth nations to celebrate this milestone... Aspen Island in Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin, the home of the National Carillon, will be renamed Queen Elizabeth II.

- According to Morrison, celebrations will include opening of new Queen Elizabeth Water Gardens, the lighting of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacon in Canberra, the release of commemorative stamps and coins, as well as illuminating monuments all around Australia

Chinese Ministry Launches Five-Year Plan to Become Global Robotics Hub

- China has announced a five-year roadmap to achieve its goal of becoming a global robotics innovation hub by the year 2025. China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology revealed operating income from the country's robotics industry is expected to grow by around 20% per year between 2021 and 2025. From 2016 to 2020, the sector expanded at an average growth rate of 15%. Last year, operating income surpassed 100 billion yuan (\$15.69 billion) for the first time.
- To achieve its goal by 2025 of becoming a worldwide robotics innovation centre, China has proposed a strategy concentrating on improvements to essential components such as servo motors and control panels. As per the 2021 World Robot Report, South Korea,

Honduras: Xiomara Castro sworn in as first female president

- In Honduras, the Freedom and Refoundation Party (Libre) member Xiomara Castro has been sworn in as the first female President of the country. The 62-year-old Castro replaces President Juan Orlando Hernández, as 56th President of Honduras. Hernández has held the position for eight years from 27 January 2014 to 27 January 2022. Castro announced part of her cabinet Thursday, with her son Hector Zelaya as private secretary and Jose Manuel Zelaya — her husband's nephew — as defence minister.
- The oath was sworn before Judge Karla Romero, flanked by Castro's choice of Congress president, Luis Redondo, who draped the presidential sash over his new boss before a crowd of some 29,000. The guests included US Vice President Kamala Harris, King Felipe VI of Spain and Taiwan Vice President William Lai.

NATIONAL NEWS

C-19 Reports via ICMR approved Laboratories 2022

- C-19 tests should only be done at ICMR-approved laboratories, as cyber fraudsters are exploiting the pandemic by impersonating workers of lesser-known labs and issuing false reports.
- The ICMR has released the list of the laboratories that are approved for the testing procedure. You can find the details of the ICMR approved laboratories here [ICMR approved laboratories](#).
- As many residents are opting for private labs for various C-19-related tests due to excessive traffic at civic and state-run hospitals.
- Many of them use their mobile phones, laptops, and computers to make appointments at neighbouring private labs online, allowing cyber thieves to take advantage of them.

Delhi Cabinet approves e-waste eco park

- The Delhi Cabinet has approved setting up India's first of its kind electronic-waste eco-park. It has also agreed to devise 'Delhi Film Policy 2022', as a thrust to promote tourism. The electronic waste eco-friendly park is to be built on 20 acres of land in Delhi. Nearly, 2 lakh tonnes of e-waste are thrown by Delhi every year. This eco-park will recycle, refurbish and dismantle e-waste in a scientific and safe way.
- This eco-park will act as an Integrated Facility, by engaging in dismantling, segregating, refurbishing, material-wise storage, testing and plastic recycling. It will also have precious metal extraction facilities, especially from Printed Circuit Boards (PCBs) through high-end technologies.
- The Delhi Film Policy 2022 is to promote tourism in Delhi, making the National Capital- a Brand. It will also make it a hub for modern film-making, meeting European Standards.
- The government is to create an 'e-Film Clearance Portal' and provide aid of Rs 3 crores for film production. It has also decided to incentivize hiring locals in the cinema industry.

27th Chief of the Army Staff: M M Naravane will retire shortly

- In April, 2022, General Manoj Mukund Naravane will be retiring from the post of 27th chief of the Indian Army. General M M Naravane will be leaving behind a strong legacy that would be clear only with time. He worked as an Army Chief without any showoff or publicity, even though he was directly responsible for many important strategic decisions and tactics that will be changing the shape of the Army's outlook in the coming years.
- General MM Naravane (PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM, ADC) has done his schooling from Pune's Jnana Prabodhini Prashala. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA) and the Indian Military Academy (IMA). Gen. Naravane was commissioned in the Sikh Light Infantry Regiment in June 1980. He is also an alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and Higher Command Course. He has a Master's Degree in Defence Studies, M.Phil Degree in Defence and Management Studies, and is at present pursuing his Doctorate.

Mansukh Mandaviya launches ICMR/DHR Policy on Biomedical

- For medical professionals, scientists, and technicians in medical, dental, and paramedical institutes, the Union health ministry has launched the ICMR/ DHR Policy on Biomedical Innovation and Entrepreneurship. By promoting the Government of India's Make-in-India, Start-Up-India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives, it would assure multidisciplinary collaboration, promote start-up culture, and establish an innovation-led ecosystem at medical institutes across the country."
- "This Policy will ensure multi-disciplinary collaboration, promote start-up culture, and develop an innovation led ecosystem at Medical Institutes across the country by promoting Make-in-India, Start-Up-India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives," said Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, speaking at the policy launch. This policy is in line with Prime Minister Harper's motto of "Innovate, Patent, Produce, and Prosper."

Kochi airport to become power-positive with new solar plant from March 6

- The Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) is set to commission a 12 MWp solar power plant on March 6 near Payyannur in Kannur district of Kerala. With the commissioning of the new solar power plant, CIAL will get the status as a power positive airport, from its current status of being a power-neutral airport. In 2015, CIAL became the world's first airport to be fully powered by solar energy.
- The power plant boasts of 12 megawatt capacity on a 35-acre land where CIAL introduced a concept of terrain-based installation where the geographical characteristics of the area are retained and no changes are made in the gradient of the land.

Ministry of Education launches Bhasha Certificate Selfie campaign

- The Ministry of Education has launched a campaign titled 'Bhasha Certificate Selfie'. The aim of this campaign is to promote the Bhasha Sangam mobile app, launched by the Ministry under the aegis of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat to encourage cultural diversity and promote multilingualism. Bhasha Sangam mobile app was launched on October 31, 2021, by Minister of Education and Skill Development Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, to lay emphasis on the promotion of Indian languages.
- The app has been developed by the Ministry of Education and MyGov India and allows users to learn 100+ sentences of daily use in as many as 22 scheduled Indian languages. The 'Bhasha Certificate Selfie' initiative is encouraging people to upload their selfie with the certificate using the hashtag #BhashaCertificateSelfie.

'Operation Ganga': Evacuating Indians from Ukraine

- The government of India has launched an evacuation mission named Operation Ganga to evacuate Indian nationals from Ukraine due to the Russia-Ukraine tension. Due to the ongoing tension between Ukraine and Russia, Ukraine has been declared as a no-fly zone by the authorities for the safety and security of the nations. Due to this many Indian nationals were left stranded in Ukraine. To help the Indian citizens come back to the country, the government of India decided to conduct a special evacuation mission named Operation Ganga. The government will bring back Indian nationals via flight.

Sri G. Kishan Reddy inaugurates the conference on Indian Temple Architecture titled "DEVAYATANAM"

- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) of Ministry of Culture, Government of India is organizing a two-day international conference 'Devayatanam – An odyssey of Indian temple architecture on 25th – 26th February 2022 at Hampi, Karnataka. The Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER, G Kishan Reddy inaugurates the conference.
- The conference aims to deliberate upon the philosophical, religious, social, economic, technical, scientific, art and architectural aspects of the temple. It also intends to initiate a dialogue on the evolution and development of the various styles of temple architecture such as the Nagara, Vesara, Dravida, Kalinga and others.

Third India-Japan joint exercise 'EX DHARMA GUARDIAN-2022' to be held at Belagavi from Feb 27

- The third edition of the joint military exercise "EX DHARMA GUARDIAN-2022" between India and Japan will be conducted from 27 February to 10 March 2022, at Belagavi (Belgaum), Karnataka. The 15th Battalion the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment of the Indian Army and 30th Infantry Regiment of Japanese Ground Self Defence Forces (JGSDF) are participating in this 12 days long joint exercise.
- The military exercise will focus on operations in Jungle & Semi-Urban/Urban terrains.
- The exercise aims at enhancing the inter-operability and foster mutual understanding between the two Armies.
- Exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN is an annual military training event, being conducted in India since 2018.

Boeing delivers 12th P-8I patrol aircraft to Indian Navy

- The Indian Navy has received the 12th anti-submarine warfare aircraft P-8I from the US-based aerospace company Boeing. This is the fourth of four additional aircraft, for which the contract was signed in 2016. The Ministry of Defence had signed a contract for eight P-8I aircraft in 2009. However, later in 2016, it signed a contract for four additional P-8I aircraft.
- In May 2021, the US State Department approved the proposed sale of six P-8I patrol aircraft and related equipment, a deal estimated to cost 2.42 billion dollars.
- P-8I is a long-range maritime reconnaissance and Anti-Submarine Warfare Aircraft, and a variant of the P-8A Poseidon used by the US Navy. India was the first international customer of Boeing for this aircraft. The Indian Navy inducted the first P-8I aircraft in 2013. The P-8I aircraft is a variant of the P-8A Poseidon aircraft that Boeing developed as a replacement for the US Navy's ageing P-3 fleet.

Central Government launched "Janbhagidari Empowerment" portal in the Union Territory of JK

- The Central Government launched the "Janbhagidari Empowerment" portal in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, in line with the government's digital mission. The portal was hosted on a different server with higher bandwidth, in order to provide easy and ready accessibility to the general public.
- This intervention comes amid concerns related to the slow speed or bandwidth issues related to the portal. This has led to disenchantment among users despite its great value as an information platform. After the movement of this portal on a different server, it has started to open quickly enough, and thus the whole experience of visiting the portal has improved. About 70 thousand people have accessed the portal until now. With the increase in bandwidth, the portal is likely to receive more hits in near future.

SAAF and National Cross Country Athletics Championship to be held in Kohima on March 26

- Nagaland is all set to host the South Asian Athletic Federation (SAAF) cross country championship and 56th National Cross-Country athletics championships from 26th of next month in Kohima. Meanwhile, the official mascot of the South Asian Cross Country Championships and 56th National Cross Country is a joyous happy running 'Hornbill'. The

name of the Mascot is Akimji – a connotation of the word AMBITION derived from Sumi dialect of Naga tribe which exemplifies the ambition of the new generation of Naga youth.

- This event is going to be perhaps Nagaland's biggest sporting event in our 50 plus years of statehood and expressed optimism that the event will propel the image of Nagaland and the state's sporting dream towards national and international platforms. On this occasion, the official team Nagaland kit was also launched.

Union Minister Giriraj Singh launches Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain

- Giriraj Singh, who is the Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, has released the Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain. This data includes the GIS data for more than 8 lakh rural facilities which have been collected and digitised using the GIS platform developed for the PM-GSY scheme. Other than Giriraj Singh, other Union Ministers like Faggan Singh Kulaste and Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti, were also present at the release event.
- An estimate is that more than 6.90 lakh km of roads have been constructed, which connects 1,61,508 habitations with an expenditure of about 2.69 lakh crores of Indian rupees.
- Speed of the construction of rural roads under the PMGSY has seen massive growth during the last few years and the use of new technology has been emphasized which has resulted in a saving of about 5000 crores of Indian rupees.
- The data which has been made available in the public domain can be beneficial to the startups, entrepreneurs, businesses, civil society, academics and other government departments to build products, conduct research, and plan investments for a quicker disaster response.

IAF to participate in multi-nation air exercise 'Ex Cobra Warrior 22' in UK

- Indian Air Force will participate in a multi-nation air exercise named 'Exercise Cobra Warrior 22' at Waddington, in the United Kingdom from March 06 to 27, 2022. IAF Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas will participate in the exercise along with fighter aircraft of the UK and other leading Air Forces. Five Tejas aircraft will fly to the United Kingdom. IAF C-17 aircraft will provide the necessary transport support for induction and de-induction.
- The exercise is aimed at providing operational exposure and sharing best practices amongst the participating Air Forces, thereby enhancing combat capability and forging bonds of friendship. This will be a platform for LCA Tejas to demonstrate its manoeuvrability and operational capability.

Centre organise week-long 'Vigyan Sarvatra Pujyate' Science exhibition at 75 locations across country

- The Government of India has organised a week-long science exhibition titled 'Vigyan Sarvatra Pujyate' from February 22 to 28, 2022, as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav commemoration. It will be conducted simultaneously at 75 locations across the country through a hybrid model. The inaugural programme was held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on the 22nd of February.
- The exhibition will celebrate science and technology (S&T) and display the country's scientific legacy and technology prowess. The exhibition will culminate on February 28,

2022, which coincide with the National Science Day, commemorated in remembrance of Nobel Laureate Sir C.V. Raman's path-breaking discovery of the Raman Effect in 1930.

Lavender designated as brand product of J&K's Doda district, the birthplace of Purple Revolution

- The Union Minister of Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh, chaired the District Development Coordination & Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meetings of several districts in Jammu & Kashmir recently. A key decision taken during the meeting was to designate Lavender as a Doda brand product, to promote lavender under the 'One District, One Product' initiative of the Modi Government.
- Doda district in J&K is the birthplace of India's Purple Revolution or the cultivation of Lavender. Though, Lavender cultivation is practised in almost all the 20 districts of Jammu & Kashmir.
- Purple Revolution (Lavender cultivation) was launched under the Aroma Mission of the Union Ministry of Science & Technology. The AROMA mission is implemented by the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) through its Jammu-based laboratory, the Indian Institute of Integrative Medicines (IIIM).
- The Mission's objective is the cultivation of important medicinal and aromatic plants domestically to empower domestic farmers and support India's aromatic crop-based agro-economy by reducing imports of aromatic oils and increasing homegrown varieties. The Lavender crop is however a native to Europe.

Railway Ministry Shares Glimpse Of India's First-ever Cable-stayed Rail Bridge In J&K

- The Indian Railways has shared new images of the country's first cable-stayed bridge on the Anji river in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district. The under-construction Anji Khad bridge, part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, will connect Katra and Reasi areas through rail links. The bridge will stand at a height of 331 metres above the river bed – higher than the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The total length of the bridge is 473.25 metres and it is supported by 96 cables.
- The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link is deemed to be one of the most difficult projects undertaken in the Indian subcontinent. The bridge has been designed to withstand storms and strong winds. Given the complex geology of the high-altitude region, constructing the bridge is very challenging. The Railways has divided the 272-km rail link into three subsections.

48th Khajuraho Dance Festival begins in Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh Governor, Mangu Bhai Patel has inaugurated the 48th 'Khajuraho Dance Festival-2022' at world-famous tourist destination Khajuraho on the occasion of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. The event will be organized till 26 February. This year a 5-km 'Dil Khel Ke Ghoomo' marathon was also organized under the banner of 'Safe Tourism Project for Women' at the event. It aims to create a sense of security among women in tourist destinations with the slogan 'Hindustan Ke Dil Mein Aap Safe Hain'.
- This dance festival is being organized with the joint effort of Ustad Alauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Akademi Madhya Pradesh Sanskriti Parishad of Culture Department, Madhya

Pradesh Tourism Board, Archaeological Survey of India and District Administration Chhatarpur. It is the topmost festival of the country focusing on Indian classical dance forms, and is well known nationally and internationally.

- Ambassadors and High Commissioners of 8 countries attended the family function to witness the performances of the 48th Khajuraho Dance Festival. These include ambassadors and high commissioners from Korea, Argentina, Vietnam, Brunei, Finland, Malaysia, Thailand and Lao.

India's first Biosafety level-3 mobile lab launched in Nashik

- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Bharati Pravin Pawar has inaugurated India's first Biosafety level-3 containment mobile laboratory in Nashik, Maharashtra. The mobile laboratory will help to investigate newly emerging and re-emerging viral infections, by specially trained scientists from ICMR. The newly launched lab will be able to access remote and forested areas of the country, to investigate outbreaks using samples from humans and animal sources.
- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar inaugurated the laboratory and said that the Biosafety Level-3 mobile laboratory is a significant value addition to the government's efforts to strengthen healthcare infrastructure through the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission.

Himachal Pradesh gets 1st Biodiversity Park at Mandi's Bhulah valley

- Himachal Pradesh gets the first biodiversity park to make its contribution towards the conservation of endangered Himalayan herbs. This park is set to come up at Mandi's Bhulah valley. With the cost of Rs 1 crore, the biodiversity park is set up under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS) by HP's forest department. The aim of the park is to link tourism activities along with extending new opportunities for researchers to conduct in-depth exploration of various medicinal herbs found in the Himalayas that are on the verge of extinction.
- Biological diversity is a precious resource intended for the continued existence of mankind, and hence, conserving biodiversity is concerned with restoring the equilibrium between humans & the atmosphere.

GoI, World Bank Signed USD 115 million loan agreement for REWARD Project

- The Government of India, the State Governments of Karnataka and Odisha and the World Bank have signed a \$115 million (INR 869 crore) Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development (REWARD) Programme. This programme will help national and state institutions adopt improved watershed management practices to help increase farmers' resilience to climate change, promote higher productivity and better incomes.

Delhi Police introduces app for 'Smart Card Arms License', becomes first in country to do so

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah has launched the 'Smart Card Arms License' and 'Shastra App' of the Delhi Police, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Delhi Police. In order

to provide techno-friendly digital services to the citizens of the national capital. According to Delhi Police, the smart card, with inherent security features, is easy to carry and handle. The card will be printed in-house after verification of data of the arms license holders.

- The Delhi Police Licensing Unit has introduced 'Smart Card Arms License', to replace the existing bulky arms license booklet. With this Delhi Police has become the first police force in the country to introduce such a smart card service.
- The Smart Card Arms License is easy to carry with inherent security features. It will be printed in the house after verification of data of arms license holders.

Career Counselling Workshop 'Pramarsh 2022'

- Minister of State for Culture & Parliamentary Affairs, Arjun Ram Meghwal has launched 'Pramarsh 2022', a mega career counselling workshop, for the students of the Bikaner District region in Rajasthan. More than one lakh students from thousands of private & government schools of Bikaner district and mainly from rural areas participated in this workshop. It is the first such incidence in India that more than 1 lakh students participated in Career Counselling in one Workshop.
- The "Pramarsh 2022" workshop is an extension of the effort to bridge the industry-academia gap and impart the knowledge about various choices available to the student, to help them make a more informed decision.
- The Workshop was organised jointly by The National Institute of Career Services (NICS), under the Ministry of Labour & Employment and Bengaluru-based educational start-up Edumilestones, with support from the Directorate of Education, Rajasthan.

Water taxi services between Mumbai and Belapur flagged off

- Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways & AYUSH, Sarbananda Sonowal virtually flagged off the 'Most Awaited' Water Taxi for citizens of Mumbai, Maharashtra. The Water Taxi services will commence from the Domestic Cruise Terminal (DCT) and will also connect nearby locations at Nerul, Belapur, Elephanta island and JNPT. The service promises a comfortable, stress-free journey, is time-saving and promotes eco-friendly transport."
- The Ministry also informed that the newly constructed Belapur jetty, built at a cost of Rs. 8.37 crore was funded in the 50-50 model under the Sagarmala scheme of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. "The new jetty will enable movement of vessels to locations like Bhaucha Dhakka, Mandwa, Elephanta and Karanja.

Caravan tourism kick-starts in Kerala with first park in Vagamon

- Kerala's first Caravan park is all set to come up in Vagamon, a scenic hill station located in the Idukki district. The park, as part of the state governments new Caravan Tourism policy, would be thrown open to travellers. Caravan Tourism was introduced by the state Tourism department as a safe means for holidaying at a time when people are unable to step out or travel due to the outbreak of COVID-19.
- To meet the rising demands and preferences of tourists in the post-pandemic world, Kerala had announced a comprehensive, stakeholder-friendly Caravan Tourism Policy, promising the visitors safe, customized and closest-to-nature travel experience. Under the initiative,

there will be two types of caravans. In one model, two guests shall be accommodated, while the other is for a family of four, department sources said.

India's Largest Career Counselling Project Paramarsh Launched In Bikaner

- Minister of State for Culture & Parliamentary Affairs, Arjun Ram Meghwal has launched 'Paramarsh 2022', a mega career counselling workshop, for the students of the Bikaner District region in Rajasthan. More than one lakh students from thousands of private & government schools of Bikaner district and mainly from rural areas participated in this workshop. It is the first such incidence in India that more than 1 lakh students participated in Career Counselling in one Workshop.
- The "Paramarsh 2022" workshop is an extension of the effort to bridge the industry-academia gap and impart the knowledge about various choices available to the student, to help them make a more informed decision.
- The Workshop was organised jointly by The National Institute of Career Services (NICS), under the Ministry of Labour & Employment and Bengaluru-based educational start-up Edumilestones, with support from the Directorate of Education, Rajasthan.

Kunsnyom Scheme Launched By LAHDC

- Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh has launched Kunsnyoms scheme for differently-abled persons. Kunsnyoms meant Equal for All, Fair for All, aims inclusive and accessible Ladakh. Under the new scheme, Leh Hill council is providing assistive devices, technologies to needy people at 90 per cent subsidy.
- Launching the new scheme, LAHDC Leh Chief Executive Councillor and Chairman, Mr Tashi Gyalson and his executive councillors have handed over 28 tri scooters, battery-run wheelchairs, walking aids and other aids required for the special needs of the individuals. After becoming Union Territory, financially empowered with sufficient allocations of budget, the Hill Councils in Ladakh are utilizing the funds for welfare schemes.

54 apps of Chinese origin banned in India

- The government of India has banned 54 apps of Chinese origin citing security concerns. The apps include Sea Ltd.'s marquee game Free Fire and other apps related to tech firms like Tencent, Alibaba and NetEase. The apps were banned by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology are re-branded versions of apps banned by India in 2020. Free Fire is often compared with PUBG. It is among the world's most popular mobile games.
- Under Section 69A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 provides government power to issue directions for blocking public access of any information through any computer resource. This section allows the government to block websites.

Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry to launch a Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED)

- Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Dr Virendra Kumar has launched a central sector scheme named the Scheme for Economic Empowerment for DNTs, (SEED) at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. The total financial outlay for SEED Scheme is

approximately Rs 200 crore to be spent over a period of 5 years starting Financial Year 2021-22 to 2025-26.

- The objective of SEED is the welfare of De-notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic tribal Communities (DNT/NT/SNT), which are the most neglected, marginalized and economically and socially deprived communities.

Dabur Becomes India's First 'Plastic Waste Neutral' FMCG Company, Recycles 100% Plastic Sold As Product Packaging

- Dabur India has become the first Indian consumer goods company to become completely plastic waste neutral. It has done this by collecting, processing and recycling around 27,000 metric tonnes of post-consumer plastic waste during FY21-22. Dabur has achieved the landmark of surpassing its plastic packaging usage with recycling. Dabur's Plastic Waste Management initiative was launched in 2017-18 as part of the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rule.
- Dabur has also announced the beginning of a new 'Save the Environment' campaign in Himachal Pradesh to raise community awareness about how to manage home plastic waste. They have also been working with school children in towns and villages as part of this commitment, educating them about different forms of garbage and the benefits of sorting them at the source. They have been assisting government schools by providing waste bins, sanitary facilities, and IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) materials.

Jaisalmer Desert Festival , Desert Fair Festival 2022

- The renowned Jaisalmer Desert Festival, also known as Maru Mahotsav of the Golden City started from 13 to 16 February 2022 at Pokaran village in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. It is a four-day-long annual event started with a colorful grand procession followed by Miss Pokaran and Mister Pokran competitions. Regional folk dances such as Kalbelia, Kachhi Ghodi, Gair will be performed.
- Rajasthan Minority Affairs Minister, Shale Mohammad flagged off the event. The festival is celebrated amidst the beautiful dunes of the Thar Desert in the Sam dunes (42 kilometres from Jaisalmer).

Ministry of Tribal Affairs helps rekindle Telangana's State Festival of Medaram Jathara with added vigour

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, has sanctioned Rs. 2.26 Crores for Medaram Jatara 2022 Festival in Telangana. In 2022, the festival is being held from February 16 to 19, 2022. Medaram Jatara is the second-largest fair in India, after the Kumbh Mela. Medaram Jatara is conducted in honour of the Goddesses Sammakka and Saramma. It was declared a State Festival in 1998.
- The four-day tribal festival is celebrated once in two years in the month of "Magha" (February) on the full moon day, in Medaram Village of Mulugu district in Telangana. The festival is organised by the second-largest Tribal Community of Telangana, the Koya tribe, in collaboration with the Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Telangana.

Indian FM Sitharaman launches first colour souvenir coin on 'Panchtantra'

- Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman has launched the first colour souvenir coin on 'Panchtantra' on the occasion of the 17th foundation day of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL). The finance minister in her address stressed on upskilling and acquiring new skills, and up-gradation to meet the technology-driven economy. Further, she emphasized on ramping up the quality of products and to brand SPMCIL as lead producers of currency and other sovereign products.

Governor Manoj Sinha launches QR code-based mechanism for certification, labelling of handmade carpets of J&K

- Jammu and Kashmir lieutenant governor, Manoj Sinha has launched a QR code-based mechanism for certification and labelling of handmade carpets of the union territory. With the QR-based application, which is the first of its kind in the country, customers can check and verify the authenticity and other requisite details of carpets produced in Jammu and Kashmir, read an official statement from the administration. Manoj Sinha also felicitated UT's awardees of Handicrafts & Handloom. J&K Handicrafts are repositories of India's creative traditions that are serving as a cultural expression.
- The Jammu and Kashmir government has introduced Export Incentive Scheme. Under this scheme, the incentive of 10 per cent of the total volume of GI certified Handicrafts and Handloom products exported to any country, with a maximum reimbursement of up to Rs 5 crores, shall be provided to eligible exporters registered with the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom.

Indore's Central Jail gets its own FM radio channel 'Jail Vaani'

- In Madhya Pradesh, the Central Jail of Indore has started its own radio channel 'Jail Vaani-FM 18.77'. Through this radio channel, the jail inmates will get to know about the happening in the world. The radio channel will also provide the jail inmates with information on health and social issues.
- The radio station will act as a medium for prisoners to tell their own stories and also to share their experiences. The aim is to inform jail inmates about what is happening across the world. Jails with such innovative measures adopted for the reform of prisoners will certainly act as correctional institutions.

Centre approves continuation of police modernisation scheme for 5 yrs with Rs 26,275 crore

- The Government has approved the continuation of the Scheme of Modernization of State Police Forces (MPF Scheme) for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26. Total Central financial outlay for five years is Rs. 26,275 crores. The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) since 1969-70.
- The objective of the scheme is to gradually reduce the dependence of the State Governments on the Army and the Central Armed Police Forces to control internal security and law and order situations by equipping the State Police Forces adequately and strengthening their training infrastructure.

- The focus of the scheme is to build cutting edge level police infrastructure by the construction of secure police stations, training centres, police housing (residential), equipping the police stations with the required mobility, modern weaponry, communication equipment and forensic set-up etc.

17th Mumbai International Film Festival to be held from May 29-June 5

- The 17th edition of the Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short Fiction and Animation films (MIFF-2022) is scheduled to take place from 29 May to 4 June, 2022 at the Films Division complex, Mumbai. Those films which were completed between September 1, 2019, and December 31, 2021, are eligible. The best documentary of the festival will receive a Golden Conch and 10 lakh in a cash award. As India is celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, the current edition has instituted a special award for the best short film on the theme India@75.
- The programme is organized by the Films Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting since 1990, with support from the Government of Maharashtra, and focuses on documentary, short fiction and animation films. It is the oldest and largest festival for non-feature films in South Asia.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurates 14.5 km long rail-cum-road-bridge over Ganga river at Munger in Bihar

- The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar jointly inaugurated the 14.5-kilometre long 'Rail-cum-Road-Bridge' in Bihar. The much-awaited bridge is constructed over the River Ganga on NH 333B in Bihar's Munger region. The cost of the 'Rail-cum-Road-Bridge' project is Rs 696 crore. The new bridge will reduce travel time, give a boost to tourism, agriculture as well as generate employment opportunities.
- One of Bihar's major tourist and pilgrimage sites, the city of Munger is well known for its rich ancient history, culture, education and commerce. With the construction of this Rail-cum-Road-Bridge, the distance from Munger to Khagaria will be less than 100 kilometres and also, the distance from Munger to Begusarai will be less than 20 kilometres.

President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates politically significant Durbar Hall at Raj Bhavan

- President of India, Ram Nath Kovind has inaugurated the Durbar Hall at Raj Bhavan, situated at Malabar Hill, Mumbai. While retaining the heritage features of the old court hall, the new hall has been given additional features such as a balcony and a sea view gallery. Durbar Hall has political importance as it has been associated with oath-taking ceremonies of the Governors, chief ministers of the state.
- Earlier, the inauguration of Durbar Hall was scheduled on December 8, 2021, but it was postponed due to the sudden demise of General Bipin Rawat, chief of defence staff in a helicopter crash.

Army holds 1st hackathon to boost cyber warfare

- Indian army has conducted a first-of-its-kind Hackathon named “Sainya Ranakshetram”. The hackathon was conducted in the Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Mhow under the overall guidance of the Shimla-based Army Training Command (ARTRAC), one of the seven commands of the Indian Army.
- The event was conducted from 01 October 2021 to 31 December 2021 under the name of “Sainya Ranakshetram”, in collaboration with the Rashtriya Raksha University.
- The virtual event witnessed the participation of over 15,000 participants and comprised a number of challenges based on Secure Coding, Software Defined Radio exploitation and Cyber Offensive skills. Further, the main highlights of the event included participants competing with each other in cyberspace against simulated threats.
- Additionally, the event also hosted a plethora of training sessions and sessions by experts for the participants. Cyber enthusiasts from across India were the cynosure in the entire event.

Maharashtra’s Health Minister announces “Hope Express” will be launched to prevent cancer

- Maharashtra’s Health Minister, Rajesh Tope has announced that “Hope Express” will be launched in the state to prevent cancer. This is the first such machine in India. He was speaking at the launch of a state-of-the-art Mosaic-3D radiation machine at a private hospital in Kolhapur. The State Health Minister also promised to take initiative to start Hope Express in every district of the state through district planning.
- The State Health Minister also promised to take initiative to start Hope Express in every district of the state through district planning. He also inaugurated the Oncoprime Cancer Center online at the Hattarki Hospital in Gadhinglaj. The centre will benefit patients in rural areas.

NABARD launches JIVA to promote natural

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has launched the ‘JIVA programme’ to promote natural farming under its existing watershed and wadi programmes in 11 states. To effectively implement the principles of agroecology long-term sustainability and transform the pre-existing social and natural capital towards efficient farming.
- JIVA is an agroecology-based programme, an amalgamation of several projects under the watershed programme of NABARD and will be implemented in 11 states covering five agroecological zones, which are in ecologically fragile and rain-fed areas.

IAF to show off ‘Made in India’ Tejas fighter jets at Singapore Air Show 2022

- The 44-member contingents of the Indian Air Force (IAF) has reached the Changi International Airport in Singapore on February 12, 2022, to participate in the ‘Singapore Air Show-2022’, which is scheduled to be held from February 15 to 18, 2022. Singapore Air Show is a biennial event that provides a platform for the Global Aviation Industry to showcase its products.

- The IAF will showcase its indigenous Tejas MK-I ac during the event. It will also interact with counterparts from RSAF (Royal Singapore Air Force) & other participating contingents.
- The Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas will display low-level aerobatics to showcase its superior handling characteristics and manoeuvrability.

SMILE Scheme 2022 for Transgenders & Beggars Rehabilitation

- The Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment, Dr Virendra Kumar has launched the Central Sector scheme titled "SMILE". SMILE stands for Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise. The new umbrella scheme aims to provide welfare measures to the Transgender community and the people engaged in the act of begging. The scheme will give the necessary legal protection, social security and a promise to a secured life to the targeted group. The Ministry has allocated Rs. 365 crore for the scheme for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

Government Approves to continued RYSK Scheme for another 5 years

- The Central Government of India has decided to continue the scheme of "Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK)" for another 5 years from 2021 -22 to 2025-26 with an outlay of Rs. 2,710.65 crore. To develop the personality and leadership qualities of the youth and to engage them in nation-building activities. Beneficiaries of this scheme are the youth in the age group of 15 to 29 years (according to the definition of 'youth' in the National Youth Policy, 2014).

India to assist Sri Lanka launch its model of Aadhaar

- India has agreed to provide a grant to Sri Lanka to implement a 'Unitary Digital Identity framework', apparently modelled on the Aadhaar card. The Rajapaksa government will "prioritise" the implementation of the Framework as a national-level programme. The initiative follows bilateral talks between President Gotabaya Rajapaksa & Prime Minister Narendra Modi in December 2019.
- It is expected to introduce a personal identity verification device based on biometric data, a digital tool that can represent the identities of individuals in cyberspace, and the identification of individual identities that can be accurately verified in digital and physical environments by combining the two devices.
- While India has confirmed support for Sri Lanka's effort to transition to a digital identity system, there is no official information yet on the value of the grant, and whether it would include technological support or training. Queried on the specifics of the agreement, Colombo-based official sources said the terms of the agreement are "being worked out".

Government inks MoU with British Council

- The Government of Telangana and the British Council, an international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural exchange, have signed a 3-year MoU to renew the partnership in education, English and arts. To facilitate research between institutions and assist to expand higher education globally, to offer global opportunities for the youth of Telangana.

- Under the extended 3-year MoU, the British Council has also signed an agreement with the Research and Innovation Circle of Hyderabad (RICH) to work closely to engineer new partnerships between universities, research institutions and centres of excellence in the UK and in Telangana.

Indigenous & Ahead of Schedule: It Is Saksham

- India's Goa Shipyard Ltd delivered the 5th and final vessel of the 5 Coast Guard Offshore Patrol Vehicle (CGOPV) Project ahead of contractual schedule. The vessel was named ICGS 'Saksham'. The point to be underlined- all 5 vessels have been delivered before time to the Indian Coast Guard. The contract for 5 CGOPVs was signed by GSL with the Ministry of Defence on 26 August 2016.
- All the five CGOPVs will be the most advanced patrol vessels in service with the coast guard. Also, the 2,400 tonnes vessels are fitted with additional features including quick response boats for rescue and anti-piracy and gunnery simulators. The hull is designed to provide fuel efficiency, crew comfort and enhanced sea keeping qualities. With computerised control systems, they are the most advanced patrol vessels in service with the Coast Guard. It has an indigenous content of about 70% and weighs around 2400 tonnes.

Power Minister Launches Powerthon-2022 for Enabling

- Union Minister of Power, R K Singh has launched Powerthon-2022, a hackathon competition to find technology-driven solutions to solve the complex problems in power distribution and to ensure quality and reliable power supply. The competition will bring together qualified mentors with TSPs, innovators, and other participants to create teams for efficient electricity networks. He also encouraged technologists to come forward not only with solutions to existing problems but also with other problem statements and ideas for reliable power supply.
- Technology Solution Providers (TSPs), start-ups, educational institutions, research institutes, equipment manufacturers, state power utilities and other state and central power sector entities, shall be briefed on the current challenges/ problem statements faced across the power distribution sector and invited to showcase their technology-driven solutions to solve the complex problems.
- The hackathon will task participants to find innovative solutions based on advanced emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain and the Internet of Things on nine themes that have been identified after various discussions with 14 discoms across nine states.

Union Minister Shares First Glimpse Of Surat's Bullet Train Station

- The Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project will be India's first bullet train route. While Surat city will get India's first bullet train station. National High-Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL) will be constructing this project that is scheduled to be completed by December 2024. The cost of the project is estimated to be more than Rs 1 lakh crore of which Rs 88,000 crores will be funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Of the

508.17-kilometre Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project, 155.76 km is in Maharashtra, 384.04 km in Gujarat and 4.3 km in Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

UNEP signs MoU with Maharashtra govt for implementing climate change actions

- The United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP) has signed an MoU with the Maharashtra government to support its 'Majhi Vasundhara' campaign. It is an initiative towards sustainable use of energy and environmental development. The literal meaning of 'Majhi Vasundhara' is 'My Earth'. It is an initiative of the Environment and Climate Change Department, Government of Maharashtra.
- 'Majhi Vasundhara' is an initiative of the Government of Maharashtra's Environment and Climate Change Department to empower citizens with knowledge on the impacts of climate change and environmental issues and to encourage them to make a conscious effort towards improvement of the environment. To empower citizens with knowledge on the impacts of climate change and environmental issues and to encourage them to make a conscious effort towards the improvement of the environment.

Gujarat unveils new IT policy to generate 1 lakh direct jobs

- Chief Minister of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel has announced a new IT/ITeS policy for the next five years. This policy will provide financial incentives up to Rs 200 crore to the entities willing to incur capital expenditures. It will also generate employment of about 1 lakh youths. It also seeks to increase IT-ITeS exports from the current Rs 3000 crores annually to 25,000 crores over the next five years. Its operative period will start from the day of notification to 31st March 2027.
- The policy launched at a formal event at a club in GIFT City in Gandhinagar replaces the 2016-2021 policy that had set an ambitious target to increase exports up to USD two billion (Rs 13,000 crore), IT turnover to USD 15 billion (Rs 75,000 crore) and create 10 lakh direct jobs. The policy provides support for both capital (CAPEX) and operational (OPEX) expenditures. "This is a unique model that gives flexibility to industries to plan their expenditures and addresses the viability concerns.

India's first biomass-based hydrogen plant coming up in MP

- India's first commercial-scale biomass-based hydrogen plant will come up at the Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh. Every day this plant will produce one tonne of hydrogen, from 30 tonnes of biomass feedstock. The plant is being put up by a joint venture of Watomo Energies Ltd and Biezel Green Energy with an investment of Rs 24 crore.
- The company owns the technology for a 'thermally accelerated anaerobic digestion (TAD) reactor' that can produce hydrogen, methane and biochar from biomass. Biezel Green will own 50 per cent in the yet-to-be-named joint venture; the other 50 per cent will come from interested farmers.

RPF has launched a nationwide "AAHT operation" to combat human trafficking

- Indian Railway Protection Force has launched a nationwide operation to curb human trafficking. As part of "Operation AAHT", special teams will be deployed on all long-distance

trains/routes with a focus on rescuing victims, particularly women and children, from the clutches of traffickers. The Railways, which operate about 21,000 trains across the country daily, is the most reliable mode of transportation for the traffickers who often moved their victims on long-distance trains.

- The RPF that rescued more than 2,000 women and children between 2017-21 from the clutches of traffickers intensified the crackdown on human trafficking with the increasing number of cases. The National Crime Records Bureau registers about 2,200 cases of Human Trafficking cases on an average each year.

Age-old Kanchoth festival celebrated in J&K's Baderwah

- The ancient festival of Kanchoth is annually celebrated, mainly by the Nag followers, during the Shukla Paksha of Magh month which usually falls in January or February. The festival is celebrated with religious fervour across the Chenab valley region of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).
- The 3-day festival is celebrated by married women who pray for the long life of their husbands. Kanchoth or Gauri Tritya is widely celebrated in hilly kishtwar, Ramban and Doda of Jammu province. The festival is celebrated across Baderwah (also known as mini-Kashmir), Kotli, Mathola, Ghata, Khakhal, Gupt Ganga, Chinnote, Kapra, Bhalra, Bheja, Chinchora and other regions.

PMKSY scheme extended till FY'26 with Rs 4600 crore outlay

- The 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)' has been extended till March 2026 with an allocation of Rs 4,600 crore. The scheme is administered by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries. The scheme aims for the overall growth and development of the food processing sector. In May 2017, the Central Government had launched SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) with an allocation of Rs 6,000 crore. The scheme was renamed as PMKSY in August 2017.
- The scheme will boost the growth of the food processing sector but also help in providing better prices to farmers and creating huge employment opportunities. PMKSY is an umbrella scheme incorporating ongoing schemes of the ministry like Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, Creation /Expansion of Food Processing and Preservation Capacities and Operation Greens.

NITI Aayog, USAID to collaborate in healthcare

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have announced a new partnership under the Sustainable Access to Markets and Resources for Innovative Delivery of Healthcare (SAMRIDH) initiative. It aims to improve access to affordable and quality healthcare for vulnerable populations in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, and rural and tribal regions. It aims to mobilize a capital pool of \$100+ million from the private sector and bilateral organizations. It leverages this fund to offer both grant and debt financing provision to support the expansion of market-based health solutions.

- AIM and SAMRIDH have announced a Call for Proposals for healthcare innovators and entrepreneurs in India. Through this initiative, they will focus on innovations across the healthcare landscape.
- This new partnership announced will enhance SAMRIDH's efforts to reach vulnerable populations, leveraging AIM's expertise in innovation and entrepreneurship.
- The collaboration would focus on innovations across the healthcare landscape with the common goal to mount an effective response to the ongoing third wave of C-19 and build health system preparedness for future infectious disease outbreaks and health emergencies.

India becomes first country to administer DNA-based vaccine

- India has become the first country in the world to administer a DNA vaccine against C-19. The ZyCoV-D which is the World's first plasmid DNA vaccine has been produced by Ahmedabad-based vaccine manufacturer Zydus Cadila and it was administered for the first time in Patna. It is a Painless and Needleless vaccine given at intervals of 28 days and 56 days. It is the second India-made vaccine to get emergency authorization in India after Bharat Biotech's Covaxin.
- The Indian government approved emergency use authorisation for Zydus Cadila's DNA vaccine earlier this year, citing initial results from Phase III clinical trials that showed approximately 66 per cent efficacy for symptomatic cases.

C-19: Bengal starts open-air classroom 'Paray Shikshalaya'

- West Bengal government has launched an open-air classroom programme Paray Shikshalaya (Neighbourhood Schools) for primary and pre-primary students. Under the 'Paray Shikshalaya' project, primary and pre-primary students of government schools will be taught in open spaces. The state government will also provide mid-day meals to the students of 'Paray Shikshalaya'. The para teachers and primary school teachers would be part of this project. They will provide elementary education to children of Class 1-5.

KVIC cancels license of oldest Khadi Institution "Khadi Emporium" Mumbai

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has cancelled the "Khadi Certification" of its oldest Khadi Institution named Mumbai Khadi & Village Industries Association (MKVIA). This MKVIA was running the popular "Khadi Emporium" at Metropolitan Insurance House, Mumbai since 1954. KVIC has cancelled the license of MKVIA as the latter had started selling fake Khadi products, which was against the "zero-tolerance" policy of KVIC against the sale of spurious/non-Khadi products.
- The action came after KVIC found that the said Khadi Emporium at D.N. Road was selling non-Khadi products in the guise of genuine Khadi. During a routine inspection, KVIC officials collected samples from the Emporium that were found to be non-Khadi products.
- KVIC issued a legal notice to MKVIA for flouting the norms of the "Khadi Certificate" and "Khadi Mark Certificate" issued by the Commission. With the cancellation of the registration, Khadi Emporium ceases to be a genuine Khadi Outlet and is no longer permitted to sell Khadi products from the Emporium.

- KVIC is also contemplating legal action against the MKVIA for criminal breach of trust and cheating the public at large by misusing the credibility and popularity of brand Khadi.

Narendra Modi inaugurated 50th Anniversary Celebrations of Hyderabad-based ICRISAT

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) in Patancheru, Hyderabad. During the occasion, PM also inaugurated two research facilities of ICRISAT, which were Climate Change Research Facility on Plant Protection and Rapid Generation Advancement Facility.
- These two facilities are dedicated to the smallholder farmers of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Prime Minister also unveiled a specially designed logo of ICRISAT and launched a commemorative stamp issued on the occasion. Its objective is to conduct agricultural research for rural development, in Asia & sub-Saharan Africa.

Indian diplomats to boycott Beijing Winter Olympics

- The 2022 Winter Olympics has kicked off on February 04, 2022, in Beijing, China and will continue till February 20, 2022. The Opening Ceremony was held at Beijing's National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest. However, India had announced the diplomatic level boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics opening and closing ceremony. This means that no Indian officials will attend the opening and closing ceremony. However, the country has sent one of its athletes, Arif Khan (skier), to attend the event.
- China has picked a Chinese soldier (Qi Fabao) as Olympic torchbearer, who was involved in the Galwan incident on June 15, 2020, which had resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers, including a Colonel.

(A Unit of Divine Group of Institutions)

Republic Day parade: Uttar Pradesh wins best tableau award

- The tableau of Uttar Pradesh has been picked as the best tableau among the 12 States/UTs which participated in the Republic Day parade on January 26, 2022. The theme of the tableau of Uttar Pradesh was 'One District One Product and Kashi Vishwanath Dham'. A total of 12 states and union territories had participated in the Republic Day parade on January 26. The second place went to Karnataka for its tableau based on 'cradle of traditional handicrafts' while the third position went to Meghalaya for its tableau based on 'Meghalaya's 50 years of Statehood and its tribute to women-led cooperative societies & SHGs'.
- Best marching contingent among three Services: Indian Navy
- Best marching contingent among CAPF/other auxiliary forces: Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
- The tableaux of the ministry of education and the ministry of civil aviation have been declared as joint winners in the category of central ministries and departments. The theme of the tableau of the ministry of education and the ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship was 'National Education Policy. The tableau of the ministry of civil aviation was based on the theme 'Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik'.

PM Modi unveils 216-foot tall 'Statue of Equality' in Hyderabad commemorating Sri Ramanujacharya

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated to the nation 216-foot tall 'Statue of Equality' in Hyderabad to commemorate the 11th-century Bhakti saint Ramanujacharya. The statue has been conceptualised by Chinna Jeeyar Swami of Sri Ramanujacharya Ashram. The inauguration of the statue is a part of the 12-day Sri Ramanuja Sahasrabdi Samaroham, the ongoing 1000th birth anniversary celebrations of the Bhakti saint. A 3D presentation on the life and teachings of the saint will also be showcased during the event.
- The statue is made of 'panchaloha', a combination of five metals- gold, silver, copper, brass, and zinc. It is among one of the tallest metallic statues in sitting positions in the world.
- The 216-foot tall 'Statue of Equality' statue is mounted on a 54-foot high base building, called 'Bhadra Vedi'.
- The floors of the building are dedicated to a Vedic digital library and research centre, ancient Indian texts, a theatre, an educational gallery detailing works of Sri Ramanujacharya.

5th Scorpene submarine, 'Vagir', begins maiden sea trials

- The Indian Navy's brand-new submarine, the fifth of the six French-designed Scorpene-class submarines named "Vagir", sailed out on its first sea sortie and will now undergo rigorous trials before it is delivered to the Navy later this year. The submarine-designated "Yard 11879" during its construction by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in collaboration with the Naval Group of France will be named "Vagir" after it is commissioned into service.

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US regains top spot as India's trade partner in 2021

- The United States was India's top trading partner in the calendar year 2021 with a trade of \$112.3 billion. The US is followed by China on second. The value of trade between India and China was \$110.4 billion. In 2020, China was India's top trading partner and the US was in the second rank. In 2019 USA was India's top trading partner and China was on second.

Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram declared as India's first OECM site

- The Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram, Haryana, has been declared as India's first "other effective area-based conservation measures" (OECM) site. This was informed by the Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change on the occasion of World Wetlands Day. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) gives OECM tag to those areas that are not protected but support rich biodiversity. The tag designates the area as a biodiversity hotspot on the international map.
- OECM is a status for a place that has achieved effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity outside protected areas like forests. The park, which once was an abandoned mining pit, was transformed into a lush green forest patch in 10 years. Now, it has about 400 native species of plants.

Andhra Pradesh Social activists builds Gandhi Mandiram and Smruthi Vanam at Srikakulam

- In Andhra Pradesh, a few social activists have built a temple for Mahatma Gandhi (Gandhi Mandiram) and Smruthi Vanam (memorial park) for our great freedom fighters' at the Municipal Park in Srikakulam.
- The statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Gandhi Mandiram along with the statues at Smruthi Vanam were unveiled on the eve of Gandhiji's death anniversary, on January 30, 2022 as a tribute to the Father of Nation and freedom fighters.
- The new initiative will inculcate patriotism among the youths by remembering the sacrifices of freedom fighters.
- The Gandhi temple has been built at an estimated cost of Rs 20 lakh with the help of donors

India's first geopark to be set up in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh

- India's first geological park is being set up at Lamheta village of Jabalpur district in Madhya Pradesh.
- The approval to set up the geopark has been granted by the Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- The estimated cost of setting up the project is Rs 35 crore.

Spituk Gustor Festival observed in Ladakh

- The annual Spituk Gustor Festival was observed in Ladakh on January 30 and 31, 2022, to celebrate the culture and traditional heritage of the Union Territory.
- The term Gustor literally means 'Sacrifice' in the Tibetan language.
- The two-day festival is celebrated by various monasteries of the UT such as Thiksey, Spituk, Korzok and Karsha.
- The Spituk Gustor festival is marked by different kinds of rituals, ceremonies, music & Cham Dance.
- Cham Dance is a colourful mask dance performed by the monks of the Spituk monastery, located in Leh district, in their best robes depicting different deities.

Centre approves 9544 Cr grant to Jharkhand under Jal Jeevan Mission

- 315 water supply schemes of Rs. 9,544 Crore approved under Jal Jeevan Mission for Jharkhand. These schemes will provide tap water supply to about 8 lakh rural households in 4,424 villages of the State.
- On 15th August 2019, at the time of launch of Jal Jeevan Mission, only 3.45 lakh (5.83%) rural homes in Jharkhand had tap water supply. In 28 months, despite C-19 pandemic and lockdown disruptions, the State has provided tap water connection to 6.73 lakh (11.38%) households. As on date, out of 59.23 lakh rural household in the State, 10.18 lakh (17.20%) are getting tap water supply in their homes.

UP's Jhansi Railway Station Gets A New Name, Called Veerangana Laxmibai Station

- Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has announced that the government of UP has renamed the Jhansi Railway Station, in Jhansi, UP as "Veerangana Laxmibai Railway

Station” after Rani Laxmibai. The announcement was made by UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. A notification to this effect has been issued by the UP government and the Railways has started preparations to implement the change. Earlier the Mughalsarai Railway station was renamed as Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya junction and the Faizabad Railway station as Ayodhya Cantt.

Sikkim Governor renamed Jawaharlal Nehru Road as ‘Narendra Modi Marg’

- Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad, has named a new road Narendra Modi Marg. The Governor viewed the road under Kabi Lungchok from Kyongsala, 4th mile. This is an alternative to Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg. The National Monument at National Highway 310 was built by Border Roads Organization. It will be easier for Indian tourists to reach Nathula Border. The stretch, constructed by Border Roads Organisation, has reduced the distance between Gangtok and Tsomgo lake by 15 km.

Union Budget 2022-23 is being presented by Union Finance Minister

- Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman is presenting the Union Budget 2022 for the 4th time in a row. She will be presenting the financial statements and tax proposals for the fiscal year 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023). A Made in India tablet has replaced the traditional ‘Bahi Khata’ as Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman leaves the Finance Ministry’s office to go to the Parliament to present the Budget.
- The Economic Survey 2021-22 was released on 31st January 2022 by the Chief Economic Advisor of India, V Anantha Nageswaran. The government sees the Indian economy growing at 8-8.5 per cent in the financial year 2022-23 (FY23).

Key highlights of the Union Budget 2022-23:

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Budget, said that the country is expected to grow at 9.27 per cent.
- Two parallel tracks for the next 25 years: public investments in infrastructure and a budget that is inclusive and futuristic.
- PM Gati Shakti plans one of the four pillars of growth. 25,000 km of national highways to be built in 2022-23.
- 400 new-generation Vande Bharat trains with higher efficiency and better facilities for passengers will be developed in the next three years. Over 2,000 km of rail network to be brought under the indigenous world-class technology KAWACH, for safety and capacity augmentation.
- 7 focus areas: PM Gati Shakti, Inclusive Development, Productivity Enhancement, Sunrise Opportunities, Energy Transition, Climate Action and Financing of investments.

SPORTS

Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre lifts Second LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship 2022

- The finals of the 15th CEC Cup Men’s Ice Hockey Championship, 2022 were played between the teams of ITBP and Ladakh Scouts at the Ice Hockey Rink which is at NDS Sports Complex in Leh. It was a very competitive game and full effort was put in by both the teams, but

there's only one winner. The Ladakh Scouts won in the end and they lifted the 15th CEC Cup Men's Ice Hockey Championship 2022.

- Ladakh Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur has presented the trophies to the finalists in both men's and women's categories of this edition of LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship. Prizes were presented, and the chief guest praised the players and officials at the end. The tournament was organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports in Leh in collaboration with the Leh-based "Ladakh Winter Sports Club."

RAFAEL NADAL WINS 15TH CONSECUTIVE MATCH IN 2022 TO CLAIM MEXICAN OPEN WIN OVER CAMERON NORRIE

- In tennis, Rafael Nadal (Spain) beat British number one Cameron Norrie 6-4 6-4 to win the singles title of Mexican Open 2022 (also known as Acapulco title). This is the 91st ATP title of his career and the third title of the season. This is the fourth time that Rafael Nadal has won the Mexican Open title, after winning the previous ones in 2005, 2013 and 2020. Men's double title winners are Feliciano Lopez (Spain) and Stefanos Tsitsipas (Greece).

India secures 8 medals at Singapore Weightlifting

- India concluded its campaign at the Singapore Weightlifting International 2022 with eight medals, including six golds and a silver and bronze each. Each of the eight Indian lifters who registered for Singapore International won medals and secured their spots at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, scheduled to be held in July-August. India now has total of 12 weightlifters qualified for the Commonwealth Games 2022 in Birmingham.

India's Sadia Tariq wins gold medal in Moscow Wushu Stars Championship

- Indian Wushu player Sadia Tariq has won a gold medal in the junior tournament at the Moscow Wushu Stars Championship 2022. The 15-year-old Sadia Tariq hails from Srinagar in Jammu & Kashmir. The Wushu Stars Championship is being held in Moscow, Russia from February 22 to 28. From India, 38 players, including 23 junior and 15 senior participated in the championship.
- Earlier in the day, former Sports Minister and Athens Olympics medalist Rajyavardhan Rathore took to social media and laud the gold-winning effort from Sadia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also took to social media to wish the young Wushu champion.

At 16, India's big chess hope scales first peak, beats his own hero and World No 1 Magnus Carlsen

- India's teen chess Grandmaster, Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa has created history as he defeated world number one chess champion, Magnus Carlsen, of Norway in an online chess tournament. The Airthings Masters is the first of the nine events of the 2022 Meltwater Champions Chess Tour, being held from February to November 2022.
- The 16-year-old Pragg achieved the feat in the eighth round of the Airthings Masters, an online rapid chess tournament, in 39 moves with black pieces. Pragg is also only the third Indian grandmaster to win against Magnus Carlsen apart from Viswanathan Anand and Pentala Harikrishna.

Beijing 2022 concludes, passes Winter Olympics to Milano-Cortina 2026

- The closing ceremony of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games was held on February 20, 2022, at National Stadium (known as the Bird's Nest) in Beijing. The 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, China, was held from 4 to 20 February 2022. The Games featured a record 109 events across 15 disciplines in 7 sports. The venues of the Games were distributed across three zones- Beijing, Yanqing and Zhangjiakou. The Presidency of the Games was formally handed over to Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, in Italy, to host the 2026 Winter Olympics.
- Norway has topped the medal table for the second successive Winter Olympics, winning a total of 37 medals, including 16 golds. This is a new record for the most amount of gold medals won at a single Winter Olympics.
- Germany finished second with 27 medals overall, while the host nation China finished third with 15 medals.

70th Senior National Volleyball Championship: Haryana Men's

- Haryana team defeated the Indian Railway 3-0, to win the Men's title in Senior National Volleyball Championship 2021-22. Similarly, in the women's category, the Kerala team defeated the Indian Railway 3-1, to lift the trophy. The 70th Senior National Volleyball (Men & Women) Championship 2021-22 was held at the Biju Patnaik Indoor Stadium, KIIT Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar.
- Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT (Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology) & KISS (Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences) attended the event and handed over the trophies to the winners.

Club World Cup: Champions League holders Chelsea become eighth European winners

- English club, Chelsea has defeated Brazilian club Palmeiras, 2-1, to win the 2021 FIFA Club World Cup final. Chelsea has won the FIFA Club World Cup for the first time. The decisive goal was scored by Kai Havertz with 3 minutes of extra time to go. Kai Havertz' nerveless 117th-minute penalty settled a gruelling Club World Cup final. The final was held at Mohammed bin Zayed Stadium, Abu Dhabi.
- Chelsea completed a full house of major trophies since Roman Abramovich took over the club in 2003: Champions League, Europa League, Super Cup, Premier League, FA Cup, League Cup and Community Shield.
- Chelsea became the third English team to win the Club World Cup after Manchester United and Liverpool.

South Africa's Keegan Petersen, England's Heather Knight ICC Players Of The Month For January

- South Africa's Test sensation Keegan Petersen and England women's team captain Heather Knight were voted ICC Players of the Month for January 2022. In the men's category, South African batter Keegan Petersen was a sensation during the home Test series against India. He ended the series as the highest run-scorer with 276 runs and was named the Player of the Series.
- For the women's award, England skipper Knight beat off competition from Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu and West Indies star Deandra Dottin to be named ICC Player of the

Month for January 2022. Knight captained England in the one-off Ashes Test against Australia in Canberra and finished as the highest run-getter.

ESPNCricinfo awards 2021: Rishabh Pant wins 'Test Batting Award', Kane Williamson is 'Captain of Year'

- In the 15th Edition of ESPNCricinfo Awards, India's wicketkeeper-batsman, Rishabh Pant wins the 'Test Batting' award by scoring 89 not out, helped India to win the Border Gavaskar Trophy 2021 by (2-1) and shattered Australia's unbeaten record at Gabba after 32 years. Rishabh Pant was the top scorer of the series for the Indian team, scoring (274 runs).
- New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson was adjudged 'Captain of the Year'.
- The Test bowling award went to Kyle Jamieson (New Zealand) for his 5 wickets leaving just 31 runs, which helped New Zealand in becoming the first World Test champions (2019-2021).
- England fast bowler Ollie Robinson was named Debutant of the Year.
- Saqib Mahmood's 4 for 42 in a nine-wicket win over Pakistan got him the top ODI bowling prize.
- Jos Buttler won the T20I batting award.
- The ODI batting and T20I bowling awards went to Pakistan. Fakhar Zaman won the top batting prize. Shaheen Afridi won the T20I bowling award for his annihilation of India in the 10-wicket win for Pakistan at the T20 World Cup.

Gujarat Titans unveiled as name for new Ahmedabad franchise

- Gujarat Titans is the official name of the new Ahmedabad franchise owned by CVC Capital as Hardik Pandya is all set to lead the franchise in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022. The naming of the Ahmedabad franchise comes days after Lucknow, owned by RPSG Group, announced its official name as Lucknow Super Giants. The Lucknow team will be led by KL Rahul.
- Debuting in the 15th season of the IPL, the Gujarat Titans will pay tribute to the state's rich cricketing legacy, which has seen it produce countless Indian international cricket legends over the years.
- The franchise is inspired by the opportunity to represent and build on this deep cricketing heritage, as well as build on its future success on the pitch.
- Gujarat Titans drafted in Hardik Pandya as their captain for Rs 15 crore and Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan for Rs 15 crore. They also got young India opener, Shubman Gill, for Rs 8 crore.

AFCON 2022: Senegal beat Egypt in penalty shoot-out to win maiden title

- Senegal has defeated Egypt in the Africa Cup of Nations championship winning the continental championship for the first time on penalty kicks at Olembe Stadium in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Sadio Mane scored the winning spot-kick as Senegal claimed a first-ever Africa Cup of Nations title with a 4-2 penalty shootout victory over seven-time winners Egypt. The final had ended 0-0 after extra time.

- Senegal had lost two finals previously, including at the last African Cup in Egypt in 2019, when Mané was left inconsolable. This time he delivered the winning moment.

AFC Asian Cup: China makes stunning revival to beat S. Korea, wins 9th title

- China PR (People's Republic) defeated South Korea (Korea Republic), 3-2, to win the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 final title at the D.Y. Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai. This is the record-extending 9th AFC Women's Asian Cup title won by China. India is hosting the 20th edition of the football AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 from January 20, 2022, to February 06, 2022. China now qualifying for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup to be held in Australia and New Zealand.

Suranga Lakmal Signs Two-Year Deal With Derbyshire After Announcing Retirement From International Cricket

- Veteran Sri Lankan fast bowler Suranga Lakmal has announced to retire from international cricket, after Sri Lanka's upcoming tour of India. The 34-year-old right-arm fast bowler and right-handed batsman aim to join the English county club Derbyshire after retirement. The Derbyshire County Cricket Club has signed up Lakmal on a two-year contract. Lakmal has represented Sri Lanka in 165 international matches across formats, in his international career spanning over 12 years.

International Olympic Committee approves three urban sports for 2028 Los Angeles Olympics

- International Olympic Committee (IOC) has approved a proposal to include Surfing, Skateboarding and Sport Climbing for the 2028 Summer Olympics Games that will be organized in Los Angeles, United States. The 2028 Summer Olympics are officially known as the Games of the XXXIV Olympiad, or Los Angeles 2028 is a forthcoming event scheduled to take place from July 21 – August 6, 2028, in Los Angeles, California, US.
- The 2024 Summer Olympics Games will be organized in Paris, France. With this Paris becomes only the second city to host 3 Summer Olympic games. Surfing, Skateboarding and Sport Climbing had made their Olympic debut in Tokyo Olympics 2021 and will also be included in the "additional" list for Paris in 2024. Boxing, weightlifting and modern pentathlon also have the chance to be included in upcoming Olympics games.

Foundation stone for World's third-largest cricket stadium laid in Jaipur

- Rajasthan Chief Minister, Ashok Gehlot and BCCI President Sourav Ganguly laid the foundation stone of the world's third-largest cricket stadium in Jaipur. The International Cricket Stadium in Jaipur will be the second-largest cricket stadium in India and the third-largest in the world. The new international stadium will be built by the Rajasthan Cricket Academy (RCA) on the Jaipur-Delhi bypass, over 100 acres of land in Jaipur. The stadium will have a seating capacity of 75,000 spectators.
- Currently, Narendra Modi Stadium (former Motera Stadium) in Ahmedabad is the world's largest stadium with a capacity of 132,000 spectators.
- The second-largest stadium is Australia's Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) which has a capacity of 1,00,024 spectators.

U19 World Cup 2022 Final: India Beat England In Final To Win 5th Title

- India defeated England by four wickets to clinch a record-extending fifth title at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Antigua. India added the fifth title to their collection, having previously won the trophy in 2000, 2008, 2012, 2018. Yash Dhull becomes the fifth Indian captain to win the title after Mohammad Kaif, Virat Kohli, Unmukt Chand and Prithvi Shaw. Earlier, England opted to bat after winning the toss but they were shot out by India for 189 in 44.5 overs. India chases down the target of 190 with 2.2 overs to spare.
- India's Raj Angad Bawa was announced Player of the Match of the ICC Under19 World Cup 2022 Final between India and England. The Indian all-rounder picked 5/31, the best bowling figures for any final in the history of the championship and also scored crucial 35 runs with the bat to help his team in its 4 wicket win.
- South Africa's Dewald Brevis who broke all records to score 506 runs in only six innings, the most for any batter in any Under19 World Cup ever, was named Player of the Series for his record-breaking showing.

New Zealand's All rounder cricketer Daryl Mitchell named the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award 2021 • New Zealand cricketer, Daryl Mitchell has been named the winner of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Spirit of Cricket Award 2021. This award is given to him for his gesture of refusing to take a single in the high-pressure 2021 ICC Men's T20 World Cup Semi-Finals against England as he felt he had "obstructed" the way of bowler Adil Rashid at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi. He has become the 4th New Zealand player to win the award after Daniel Vettori, Brendon McCullum and Kane Williamson.

- The ICC Spirit of Cricket Award is annually awarded by the ICC to recognise the player most notable for "upholding the 'Spirit of the Game'".

Neeraj Chopra nominated for Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award 2022

- Tokyo Olympics gold medallist, Neeraj Chopra has been nominated for the prestigious 2022 Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year Award. The other 5 nominees are Daniil Medvedev (Australian Open runner-up), Emma Raducanu (British tennis star), Pedri (Barcelona and Spain footballer), Yulimar Rojas (Venezuelan athlete) and Ariarne Titmus (Australian swimmer). The winners will be revealed in April following a vote by the Laureus World Sports Academy, made up of 71 sporting greats.

Chennai Super Kings Becomes India's First Unicorn Sports Enterprise; Surpasses Market Cap of Parent Entity

- Chennai Super Kings (CSK), has become the country's first sports Unicorn with its market cap having touched a high of Rs 7,600 crores and its share in the grey market trading in the Rs 210-225 price band. The Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led CSK, which won its fourth IPL title in Dubai last year, now has a market cap more than its parent entity, India Cements. India Cements' market cap stood at Rs 6,869 crores.

- Two key reasons which have led CSK's market cap to go past its parent entity are the team winning its fourth IPL title in Dubai, and two new franchises being added to the upcoming season at record prices.

PR Sreejesh becomes first Indian man to win World Games Athlete of the Year Award

- Indian men's hockey player PR Sreejesh has won the World Games Athlete of the Year award for 2021. He is the second Indian after Rani Rampal to win this award. In 2020, Indian women's hockey captain Rani Rampal became the first Indian to win the honour for her performances in 2019.
- A total of 24 athletes from 17 countries were nominated for the annual awards based on individual or team performance. Alberto Ginés López of Spain and wushu player Michele Giordano of Italy are the runner-ups. In the FIH Stars Awards in October, Sreejesh was named the goalkeeper of the year for 2021.

Argentina won 6th Pan Am Women Cup Hockey Championship, beat Chile 4-2

- Argentina defeated Chile, 4-2 to win its 6th women's field hockey championship title at the 2022 Women's Pan American Cup. The Women's Pan American Cup is the quadrennial international championship of the Americas organized by the Pan American Hockey Federation.
- The 2022 Women's Pan Am Cup was the sixth edition of the championship. It was held from January 19 to 29, 2022 in Santiago, Chile. With this win both Argentina and Chile have sealed automatic qualification spots at the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup, Spain and Netherlands 2022.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

C-19 Vaccine: Corbevax gets DCGI nod for emergency use in 12-18 year olds

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved the Corona Vaccine Biologicals E Ltd's Corbevax for children in the age group of 12 to 18 years. Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical company Biological E Ltd said its coronavirus vaccine Corbevax, is also India's third homegrown vaccine. Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is being given to children aged 15 to 18 years from January 3.
- Corbevax is called a protein subunit and currently, we have an example of the hepatitis B vaccine which is also similarly a protein subunit vaccine. Corbevax and the other vaccine in India, we have Covovax from Serum Institute.

Vedanta-Foxconn JV to manufacture semiconductors in India

- The Indian mining major Vedanta has tied up with Taiwanese electronics manufacturing company, Hon Hai Technology Group (better known as Foxconn) to form a joint venture (JV) for manufacturing semiconductors in India. Anil Agarwal, the non-executive Chairman of Vedanta, will be the Chairman of the JV company.
- This is the first JV in the electronics manufacturing sector after the government announced a Rs 76,000 crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for semiconductor and display