

Weekly Current Affairs

(25th January 2021 to 31st January 2021)

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Voters' Day celebrated on January 25

India observes "National Voters' Day" every year on January 25 to encourage more young voters to take part in the political process. The day has been started from January 25, 2011 to mark the Foundation day of Election Commission of India (ECI), which was established on 25th January 1950. 2021 marks the 11th National Voters' Day (NVD). The theme of NVD 2021 is, 'Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed'.

National Tourism Day of India is celebrated on January 25

January 25 is celebrated as National Tourism Day in India. The day was established by the Government of India to promote tourism and raise awareness of the importance of tourism for the country's economy.

India is Celebrating 72nd Republic Day on 26 January 2021

India is observing the 72nd Republic Day on 26 January 2021, with celebrations at the majestic Rajpath in New Delhi. Republic Day marks the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect on 26 January 1950.

International Customs Day is observed on 26 January

The International Customs Day (ICD) is observed on 26 January every year. Objective of International Customs Day is to recognise the role of customs officials and agencies and focus on the working conditions and challenges that customs officers face in their jobs. Theme for 2021 is "Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience". The day was instituted by the World Customs Organization (WCO) to commemorate the day in 1953 when the inaugural session of the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC) was held in Brussels, Belgium.

World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day is observed on January 30

The second World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day (World NTD Day) is being observed on January 30, 2021 to celebrate the achievements made towards control of the world's NTDs. Theme of World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day 2021 is "Face NTDs: End the Neglect".



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World Leprosy Day 2021 is observed on 31 January

World Leprosy Day is observed around the world on the last Sunday of January every year to raise global awareness of this deadly ancient disease and call attention to the fact that it can be prevented, treated and cured. Theme for 2021 is “Beat Leprosy, End Stigma and advocate for Mental Wellbeing”.

STATES IN NEWS

Himachal Pradesh celebrates golden jubilee of Statehood Day on 25 January

The Golden Jubilee celebrations of statehood of Himachal Pradesh was organised with great enthusiasm and fervor across the state on 25 January. The state-level Golden Jubilee function was held at the historic Ridge of Shimla while functions were also organised at all district headquarters to mark this special occasion. BJP President Jagat Prakash Nadda and Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur also graced the occasion.

Uttar Pradesh Government launches ‘Udyam Sarathi App’ for Youths

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the ‘Udyam Sarathi App’ on the occasion of the 71st Foundation Day of the state, on 24 January 2021. The app will enable the youths to get every information related to self-employment and the job industry, across the state. Udyam Sarathi App will comprise a varied range of data regarding business opportunities in different departments and sectors, including the state and Central governments, and anywhere and at any time. It has been launched under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme. The theme of Uttar Pradesh Day 2021 is ‘Respect for self-reliant Uttar Pradesh, women young farmers, development of all’.

Punjab CM lays foundation stone of Jallianwala Bagh Centenary Memorial park

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh laid the foundation stone of the Jallianwala Bagh Centenary Memorial park at Amritsar, dedicated to unsung heroes of the massacre. The Jallianwala Bagh Centenary Memorial Park, to come up over 4,490 square metres at Amrit Anand Park in Ranjit Avenue.

Two-day mega poetry event to be organized to celebrate 72nd Republic Day in Jammu

In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages in collaboration with Radio Mirchi to hold a two-day mega poetry event to celebrate 72nd Republic Day in Jammu on 27th and 28th of January. The country's top Hindi and Urdu poets, Bollywood lyricists and writers will be participating in the event. Event will be organized at Zorawar Singh Auditorium of Jammu University and top dignitaries of J&K are expected to participate in this first-ever national event of its own kind.



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Pralhad Singh Patel inaugurates National Tourism Day in Kargil

Union Tourism Minister Pralhad Singh Patel Inaugurated the National Tourism Day in Kargil of Ladakh Union territory.

Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches 'PANKH Abhiyan' for Girl Child

In Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched a new scheme 'PANKH Abhiyan' on 24 January, to mark the occasion of National Girl Child Day. The scheme has been launched under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme for the empowerment and growth of the girl child. 'PANKH Abhiyan' is a year long programme. The letter in the PANKH scheme stands for:

'P' – protection

'A' – awareness of their rights

'N' – nutrition

'K' – knowledge

'H' – health.

Five-day training organized under ATMA scheme for Jammu and Kashmir farmer

In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, a group of 20 farmers hailing from different districts of Jammu Division was flagged off by Principal Secretary, Navin Kumar Choudhary, for five- day training outside Jammu and Kashmir.

Tamil Nadu CM inaugurates Jayalalithaa Memorial in Chennai

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palanisamy inaugurated Jayalalithaa Memorial at Chennai. The 79 crore worth grand memorial is built on a nine acre land situated on the shores of the Marina Beach. The phoenix shaped memorial has a statue of Jayalalithaa and MGR with an artificial waterfall. The building was completed within a record period of 30 months.

Maharashtra CM inaugurates Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park in Nagpur

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park in Nagpur. The park has been developed by the State Forest Department and Forest Development Corporation. It is spread across an area of 1,914 hectares and includes a wildlife sanctuary, Indian safari, African safari biodiversity park and night safari.

Maharashtra CM launches Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray formally launched the Agriculture Pump Power Connection Policy. The State Government has taken bold steps to make a radical change in the lives of farmers through the policy of agricultural pump power connection. The Chief Minister also



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inaugurated Krishi Urja Abhiyan Policy Web Portal, Solar Energy Land Bank Portal, Maha Krishi Abhiyan App and ACF App prepared by the power discom Mahavitaran.

Uttar Pradesh adjudged best tableau on Republic Day Parade

Uttar Pradesh was adjudged the best tableau among the 32 tableaux that participated in the Republic Day Parade this year. The tableau of Uttar Pradesh was based on the theme Ayodhya: Cultural Heritage of Uttar Pradesh. Tableau of Tripura was adjudged the second best, which depicted promotion of eco-friendly tradition for achieving self-reliance in socio-economic parameters. Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijju gave away awards and prizes to participants.

UP govt to set up India's first leather park in Kanpur

Uttar Pradesh government will establish the first leather park of the country in Kanpur district. The park is expected to provide employment to 50 thousand people directly and more than 1 lakh 50 thousand people indirectly. AIR correspondent reports that additional chief secretary MSME Dr Navneet sehgal said that the project will be established in 268 areas of land in Ramaipur village of Kanpur district and is expected to attract an investment of more than 5850 crores.

Lucknow Metro becomes first metro to use UV rays to sanitise train coaches

The Lucknow Metro has become the first metro in the country to use ultraviolet (UV) rays to sanitise train coaches. The step was taken in the wake of Covid pandemic to provide its passengers a safe and secure journey. UPMRC contacted a firm which makes sanitizing equipments and developed a UV lamp which can sanitize a metro coach in just 30 minutes.

OPTCL and IIT Bhubaneswar sign MoU for power sector development in Odisha

State public sector undertaking Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Limited has signed an MoU with Indian Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar for the establishment of OPTCL Chair in the premier engineering institute.

India's First 'Gender Park' to be inaugurated in Kozhikode, Kerala

The state government of Kerala will launch first of its kind three-storeyed 'Gender Park' in Kozhikode, to promote gender equality and empowerment in the state. The overall cost of establishing the park is around Rs 300 crore. spread over 24 acre land.

Central govt focuses on developing Kargil as a winter tourist destination

Central Government is focused on developing Kargil as a winter tourist destination as well a promoting it as an Adventure sports Hub. This was stated by the Deputy Commissioner and CEO, LAHDC, Kargil Baseer UI Haq Choudhary while flagging off the Arunachal Ladakh friendship Car Rally from Kargil to leh. He said that it is the special focus and intention of the Union government that two Union Minister camped in Kargil for two separate national level events, and now this Friendship Car rally sponsored by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Sports under Fit India Movement shows the Sincerity of the Government.



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NATIONAL NEWS

Govt approves proposal for 'green tax' on old vehicles to contain air pollution

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways approved a proposal to levy 'Green Tax' on old vehicles which are polluting the environment. Scrapping Policy for govt vehicles older than 15 years also approved; to come into effect from April 1, 2022. Transport vehicles older than 8 years could be charged Green Tax at the time of renewal of fitness certificate, at the rate of 10 to 25 % of road tax.

Nitin Gadkari launches several village industry products in New Delhi

Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari has said that MSME's contribution in the growth of the economy can be enhanced by exploring new marketing avenues and export potential. He said, the share of MSMEs in the economy can be augmented from the present 30 percent to 40 percent in the next five years. He added that lakhs of employment could be created by empowering the village industry sector which has the potential of achieving the annual turnover of five lakh crore rupees.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad to launch virtual intelligence tool Tejas

Electronics, Information Technology and Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad will launch a virtual intelligence tool Tejas. This system will help in improving policy decisions and efficiency of government's services along with ensuring delivery of citizen centric services.

Ministry of Finance releases over Rs 12,351 crore to 18 States for providing grants to the Rural Local Bodies

The Department of Expenditure of Ministry of Finance has released an amount of over Rs 12,351 crore to 18 States for providing grants to the Rural Local Bodies. This amount is the 2nd instalment of basic grants released in this financial year. The grant has been released to 18 States which have provided the Utilisation Certificate for the first instalment and on the recommendation of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The grants to Rural Local Bodies are released as per the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission to create community assets and improve financial viability of the Rural Local Bodies.

Textiles Committee of Ministry of Textiles signs MoU with Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan

The Textiles Committee of the Ministry of Textiles has signed a MoU with Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan to boost export of Textile and Apparel to Japanese market. The MoU signing ceremony was held through video conferencing which was presided over by Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani and State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan Yasumasa Nagasaka. The main objective of the MoU is to provide required support to textile's trade and industry for ensuring quality as per the requirement of Japanese buyers.



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India and International Energy Agency members sign framework for Strategic Partnership

The Ministry of Power has said that India and International Energy Agency members signed the framework for Strategic Partnership to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation and enhance global energy security, stability and sustainability. This partnership will lead to an extensive exchange of knowledge and would be a stepping stone towards India becoming a full member of the International Energy Agency (IEA).

India's rank slips to 86th in corruption perception index 2020

India's rank has slipped six places to 86th among 180 countries in a corruption perception index (CPI) in 2020.

India, Japan hold fifth joint meeting of Act East Forum in New Delhi

India and Japan held the fifth joint meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum in New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and Ambassador of Japan to India Suzuki Satoshi. They discussed several ongoing new projects under India-Japan bilateral cooperation and also exchanged views on cooperation in new areas such as healthcare, agro-industries and SMEs, bamboo value chain development, smart city, tourism and people-to-people exchanges.

PM Modi to address World Economic Forum's Davos Dialogue

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the World Economic Forum's Davos Dialogue through video conferencing. More than 400 top industry leaders from across the globe will attend the session, wherein the Prime Minister will be speaking on the Fourth Industrial Revolution - using technology for the good of humanity. The Davos Dialogues agenda marks the launch of the World Economic Forum's Great Reset Initiative in the post COVID world.

Environment Minister releases Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines & National Marine Turtle Action Plan

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Prakash Javadekar has released Marine MegaFauna Stranding Guidelines and the National Marine Turtle Action Plan in New Delhi. The documents contain ways and means to promote inter-sectoral action for conservation. It also suggests improved coordination amongst the government, civil society and all relevant stakeholders on the response to cases of stranding, injury or mortality of marine mammals and also conservation of marine turtles.

Centre approves release of Rs 1,751 cr to Assam, Arunachal, Odisha, Telangana & UP

The High-Level Committee under the Chairmanship of Home Minister Amit Shah approved Additional Central Assistance of over one thousand seven hundred 51 crore rupees under the National Disaster Response Fund, NDRF to five states, which were affected by floods, landslides during South-West Monsoon-2020 and hailstorm during Rabi 2019-20.



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Government Approves 'Startup India Seed Fund Scheme'

The Central Government has approved 'Start-up India Seed Fund Scheme' (SISFS) on January 29, 2021, which aims to provide financial assistance to start-ups for the product trials, market-entry, proof of concept, prototype development and commercialization. Total Corpus of the scheme is Rs 945 crore. Validity of the scheme is Five years (2021-25). The scheme will become operational from April 1, 2021. The scheme will be implemented by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DIIT).

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar Launches 2021 as Indo-French Year of the Environment

The Union Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change Prakash Javadekar launched the Indo-French Year of the Environment, along with Barbara Pompili, the French Minister for Ecological Transition in New Delhi on 28 January 2021. The Indo-French Year of the Environment is the Indo-French partnership on Environment, Biodiversity, Climate Change and other allied areas to be undertaken throughout 2021. The Indo-French Year of the Environment will be implemented over the period 2021-2022. It would be based on five main themes: environmental protection, climate change, biodiversity conservation, sustainable urban development, and the development of renewable energies and energy efficiency.

Govt approves capital projects of additional amount of Rs 179 cr for Telangana

Government has approved capital projects of an additional amount of 179 crore rupees for Telangana. The Finance Ministry said additional projects have been approved in the State as an incentive for undertaking reforms in three out of the four stipulated citizen-centric areas, One Nation One Ration Card, Ease of Doing Business and Urban Local Bodies Reforms. The scheme of Special Assistance to States for capital expenditure was announced by the Finance Minister on 12th October last year as part of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat package.

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu to inaugurate Aadi Mahotsav, a National Tribal Festival

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu will inaugurate Aadi Mahotsav, a National Tribal Festival at Dilli Haat. It will continue till 15th of February. The Tribal Affairs Ministry said, the Aadi Mahotsav - A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Crafts, Cuisine and Commerce is a successful annual initiative that was commenced in 2017. The festival was an attempt to familiarise the people with the rich and diverse craft, culture of the tribal communities across the country, in one place.

India Ranks 7th in Global Climate Risk Index 2021 of Germanwatch; Mozambique Tops

India has been placed among the top 10 most affected countries by climate change, in the Global Climate Risk Index 2021 published by the Bonn-based environmental think tank Germanwatch. India ranked as the seventh worst-hit country in terms of climate change in 2019. The Global Climate Risk Index 2021 is the 16th edition of the annual report.



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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Mongolian Prime Minister Khurelsukh Ukhnaa Resigns

The Prime Minister of Mongolia, Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, has resigned along with his entire government, following protests and public outrage over the government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

U.S. President Joe Biden reverses Trump ban on transgender people in military

U.S. President Joe Biden signed an order reversing a Trump-era Pentagon policy that largely barred transgender individuals from serving in the military. Lloyd Austin, Biden's defense secretary, supports overturning the ban. The Obama administration spent nearly two years studying transgender service before ordering a 2016 policy that allowed those troops to serve openly.

India, World Bank sign 500 million dollar Programme to improve quality of school education in India

The Government of India and the World Bank signed a 500-million US dollar Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Programme (STARS) to improve the quality and governance of school education in six Indian states. These include Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan. Some 250 million students (between the age of six and 17) in 1.5 million schools and over 10 million teachers will benefit from the programme.

Indian American Congressman Ami Bera re-named as Chair of House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee

In the US, veteran Indian-American Congressman Ami Bera has been re-elected as chairman of the House Foreign Subcommittee on Asia, Pacific, Central Asia and Non-proliferation.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Google to spend \$150 mn to create awareness on covid vaccine

Google has decided to spend \$150 million on creating awareness, educating people and ensuring access to vaccines among underserved communities. \$100 million will be provided in ad grants to the CDC Foundation, WHO, and multiple non-profit bodies and \$50 million, to provide vaccine-related content and information to underprivileged communities. Google will also start showing state and regional distribution information on Search so people can know when they are eligible to get vaccines.



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TCS become world's most-valued IT company

Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS) has once again become the world's most-valued information technology company with a market capitalisation of \$169.25 billion. The company surpassed Accenture to hold the top spot once again.

Indian economy estimated to contract by 9.6% in 2020, grow at 7.3% in 2021: UN

India's economy is estimated to contract by 9.6% in 2020, while it is projected to grow at 7.3% in 2021, a report released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

India's GDP to contract 8% in FY21: FICCI Survey

India's gross domestic product (GDP) is likely to contract by 8% in 2020-21, according to a survey by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). Named as FICCI's Economic Outlook Survey, it is based on responses from leading economists representing the industry, banking and financial services sector. The survey was conducted in January.

India's GDP growth to contract by 8% in FY21, says IMF

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) upgraded its GDP projection for India to a contraction of 8% in FY21 from its earlier estimate of 10.3% dip, citing encouraging signs of economic recovery as depicted by high-frequency indicators. The IMF also revised upward its projections for FY22 to 11.5% from 8.8% estimated earlier.

IMF revises growth projection for India to 11.5 per cent in 2021

The IMF projected an 11.5 per cent growth rate for India in 2021. It makes India the only major economy of the world to register double-digit growth this year amidst the coronavirus pandemic. With the latest projections, India regains the tag of the fastest developing economies of the world. The IMF said India's economy is projected to grow by 6.8 per cent in 2022.

Microsoft launches its new Taj Mahal inspired Engineering Hub in NCR

Tech major Microsoft has launched its new India Development Center (IDC) facility in Noida, Uttar Pradesh on 28 January 2021. India Development Center (IDC) NCR is the third development center of Microsoft in India after Bengaluru and Hyderabad. The India Development Center (IDC) workspace architecture is inspired by the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world.

Happiest Minds acquires Pimcore Global Services for \$8.25 mn

Happiest Minds Technologies Ltd will acquire US-based Pimcore Global Services for USD 8.25 million (about ₹60 crore). Houston-based Pimcore Global Services is a digital e-commerce and data management solutions company.



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AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Meghalaya selected for Special Award for Information Technology applications in Elections

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Meghalaya was selected for a Special Award for Information Technology applications in Elections by the Election Commission of India (ECI), in the National Best Electoral Practices Awards-2020. President Ram Nath Kovind virtually conferred the award to Meghalaya CEO F.R. Kharkongor at the National Voters' Day Award function held in New Delhi.

President approves conferment of Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards to 40 persons

The President Ram Nath Kovind has approved the conferment of Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards - 2020 on 40 persons. The awards include Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak to one person, Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak to eight persons and Jeevan Raksha Padak to 31 persons. One award is posthumous. Muhammed Muhsin of Kerala has been awarded with Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak posthumously. [\(Click Here to See List\)](#)

32 Children Awarded Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2021 [\(Click Here to See List\)](#)

The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) for the year 2021 has been conferred to 32 children, hailing from 32 districts of 21 States/UTs. The PMRBP award is given by the Government of India to the children with exceptional abilities and outstanding accomplishments, in the fields of innovation, scholastic, sports, arts & culture, social service and bravery. Distribution of 32 awards based on the respective categories:

- Art & Culture – 7
- Innovation – 9
- Scholastic achievements – 5
- Sports – 7
- Bravery – 3
- Social Service - 1

[Padma Awardees List 2021 - Click Here](#)

Maha Vir Chakra awarded to Galwan valley hero Col Santosh Babu posthumously

Colonel B Santosh Babu, the Commanding Officer of 16 Bihar Regiment, who lost his life during the Galwan Valley clash last year, will be posthumously awarded with Maha Vir Chakra.



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APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

J K Shivan appointed as MD & CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank

Dhanlaxmi Bank has approved the appointment of J K Shivan as the next managing director and CEO of the Bank. However, the appointment of Shivan is subjected to approval from the shareholders of the bank. Headquarter of Dhanlaxmi Bank – Thrissur, Kerala

Ramboll appoints Vidya Basarkod as the Country Director for India

Ramboll, an engineering, architecture and consultancy company, announced the appointment of Vidya Basarkod as the Country Director for India. Basarkod is a civil engineer by profession. She also holds a degree of Masters in Structural Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai. In the year 2016, Basarkod joined Ramboll.

Lt Gen Chandi Prasad Mohanty appointed as new Army Vice-Chief

Lieutenant General Chandi Prasad Mohanty has been appointed as the new Vice-chief of Army staff. He would assume the office on February 1, 2021 from Lt General SK Saini, who is superannuating on 31 January 2021. Lt Gen Mohanty is a June 1982 batch Infantry Officer from the Rajput Regiment and is presently the Southern Army Commander.

Swaminathan Janakiraman and Aswini Kumar Tewari appointed as MDs of State Bank of India

The appointments committee (ACC) of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Swaminathan Janakiraman and Ashwini Kumar Tewari as new Managing Directors (MDs) of State Bank of India (SBI) for a period of three years. Dinesh Kumar Khara is the current Chairman of the bank. The other two MDs of the bank are C.S. Setty and Ashwani Bhatia. SBI is headed by a Chairman and four managing directors.

Kaja Kallas sworn in as first woman Prime Minister of Estonia

Kaja Kallas, the leader of the Reform Party in Estonia has been elected as the new Prime Minister of the country. Kallas is the first female prime minister of the country.

Rama Mohan Rao Amara appointed as the MD and CEO of SBI Card

SBI Cards and Payment Services (SBI Card) appointed Rama Mohan Rao Amara as the new MD and CEO of the company. Rama Mohan Rao Amara's appointment is effective from 30 January for a period of two years subject to all the requisite approvals including that of the shareholders.



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Jay Shah appointed President of Asian Cricket Council

The Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) Secretary Jay Shah appointed as the President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC). Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) chief Nazmul Hussain was the previous chief of the ACC.

R S Sharma appointed as new CEO of Ayushman Bharat Scheme

The National Health Authority (NHA) has appointed RS Sharma as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of country's flagship public health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat, also called Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. He would replace Indu Bhushan, who is serving as the Chief Executive of the Ayushman Scheme since its inception in 2018.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

DRDO conducts successful maiden test launch of Akash-NG missile

DRDO conducted the successful maiden launch of Akash-NG (New Generation) missile from Integrated Test Range off the coast of Odisha. Akash-NG is a new generation surface-to-air missile meant for use by the Indian Air Force with an aim of intercepting high maneuvering low RCS aerial threats.

DEFENCE

BSF launches Operation 'Sard Hawa' at Rajasthan border

The Border Security Force (BSF) has launched "Operation Sard Hawa" on the western international border of Rajasthan. The Operations aims to check the instances of infiltration due to the dense fog cover in the region, and increase security on the border areas in Jaisalmer. The week-long operation was launched on 21 January 2021, and will continue till 27 January 2021, keeping in view Republic Day of India.

Joint Tri-service Exercise AMPHEX – 21 held in Andaman & Nicobar

A large-scale tri-service joint amphibious exercise AMPHEX – 21 was held in Andaman & Nicobar group of islands from 21 – 25 Jan 2021. The exercise involved participation of troops of Army, Navy as well as the Indian Air Force. The joint force executed multi-domain, high intensity offensive and defensive manoeuvres in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. The Ex KAVACH for defence of Andaman & Nicobar Islands was also a part of AMPHEX – 21.



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SPORTS

ITBP wins National Ice Hockey Championship 2021 in Gulmarg

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has won the 10th National Ice Hockey Championship trophy, by defeating team Ladakh with the score line (goals) 5-1. The National Ice Hockey Championship was organised by the Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI), from 16 to 22 January, 2021 at Gulmarg Ice Rink, in Jammu and Kashmir (UT). Eight teams took part in the championship, which took place at an altitude of 8,694 feet where the temperature is below freezing point (Minus 1 degree).

BCCI cancels Ranji Trophy 2020-21 for first time in 87 years

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has decided not to conduct the Ranji Trophy in 2020-21. This will be the first time in 87 years since its inception in 1934-35, that India's premier first-class cricket national championship will not be held in the 2020-21 domestic season. Instead of Ranji Trophy, BCCI has decided to conduct the Vijay Hazare Trophy 50-over tournament and Senior Women's One Day tournament after the completion of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 tournament.

RANKING & INDEX

India ranks 10th in EIU's Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index

India has been ranked 10th among 11 Asia Pacific countries in a newly-launched "Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index" by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). The index aims to measure the progress of each of the 11 countries towards adopting personalised healthcare, enabling the right care to be made available to the right person at the right time. The 11 nations ranked in the index are Australia, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and New Zealand. Singapore has topped the index. Indonesia was the last ranked country at 11th in the index.

OBITUARY

Last surviving member of J&K Constituent Assembly Krishan Dev Sethi passes away

Krishan Dev Sethi, the last surviving member of J&K Constituent Assembly passed away. The 93-year old Sethi was a member of the Constituent Assembly which framed the Constitution of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. He also represented the Nowshera Assembly segment of Jammu and Kashmir.



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1995 Nobel Chemistry Prize Winner Paul Crutzen passed away

The Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul J. Crutzen, has passed away. He was 87. Dr. Crutzen won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995, jointly with Mario J. Molina and F. Sherwood Rowland, for their work in atmospheric chemistry, particularly concerning the formation and decomposition of ozone. He was known for his work on the ozone layer and climate change and for popularizing the term 'Anthropocene' to describe a proposed new era when human actions have a drastic effect on the Earth.

Veteran Bureaucrat, poet and Hyderabad historian Narendra Luther passed away

Noted historian, author, poet and retired bureaucrat Narendra Luther has passed. He was 88. A 1955 batch IAS officer, Luther was closely associated with the history and culture of erstwhile Hyderabad state and its rulers. Luther had served in various positions before retiring as the chief secretary of the undivided Andhra Pradesh in 1991.

Legendary American talk-show host Larry King passed away

The iconic American radio and television host, and paid spokesman, Larry King, has passed away. He was 87. King has quizzed thousands of world leaders, politicians, entertainers, athletes, and everyday people for CNN and other news outlets in a career spanning more than six decades. He rose to fame in 1978 as a radio host of The Larry King Show and then hosted Larry King Live on CNN for about 25 years from 1985 to 2010.

Oscar and Emmy Award winning actress Cloris Leachman passed away

Academy Award winning American actor Cloris Leachman, one of the most decorated actors in American television history, has passed away. She was 94. She won eight Emmy Awards in her storied television career. She also won an Academy Award, a British Academy Film Award, a Golden Globe Award for her film career.

Animals guitarist Hilton Valentine passed away

The Animals guitarist Hilton Valentine, who created one of the most famous riffs in pop music in the 1960s, died at the age of 77. The British band's version of blues standard The House of The Rising Sun topped the UK and US charts in 1964. The Animals' record label ABKCO Music described Valentine as a "pioneering guitar player influencing the sound of rock and roll for decades to come".



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