

THE CLATPOST: PRINT

Part of the Most Awesome and Consistently Successful Study Material and Test Series Module, spanning across both Physical and Online Programs in the entire Country. While most of the world fumbled and faltered, 2020 has been another inspiring Success story both for us and those who chose to trust us. As a result LE was able to engineer Clean-Sweep-Landslide figures of a handsome 35 Selections under 100 ranks, and a whopping 180 selections under 500 ranks in CLAT 2020. With AILET being no different, a total of 30 LETians found their way into NLUD in 2020. Read on!

FEBRUARY 2021



CURRENT AFFAIRS PRACTICE SHEETS (CAPS)

(Passage Q.1-Q.5): Government Think Tank, [1] is proposing to construct a mega financial-tourist complex on the Little Andaman Island (d) The plan is to turn the island into a free trade zone that could compete with Singapore and [2].

Environmentalists raise concerns that the plan threatens an already-fragile ecosystem and will lead to habitat loss for the vulnerable [3] tribe and rare wildlife.

The Action Plan

The document presented by [1] entails a plan to build a greenfield coastal city and free trade zones in the Little Andaman area (a)

The document also entails plans to harness scuba diving spots, develop 'world-class' infrastructure including hotels and resorts along with identifying spaces for 'focused development'.

A plan to develop the transportation sector through an airport, the expansion of the island's jetty, and a [4] greenfield ring highway have also been made.

While [1] document lists out an expansive developmental project, it fails to explain the necessary steps that are required to achieve it. The development plans also stand a chance of going against a few Supreme Court notifications.

As per the document, the government proposes de-reserving 32% of the forest cover reducing the share reserved for the tribal population to 31%. However, out of 95 percent of the forest cover on the island, about 450 sq km is protected under the [3] Tribal Conserve and 640 sq km is reserved under the [5].

The document does not address the presence of indigenous tribes or their relocation should the project start. In terms of relocation strategies or protection schemes, the document simply states out that sufficient steps will be taken. However, no details have been disclosed (d)

Source: <https://in.news.yahoo.com/niti-aayog-urbanize-little-andaman-162717419.html>

1. The mega financial-tourist complex on the Little Andaman Island is proposed by [1] which is –
 - (a) NITI ayog
 - (b) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
 - (c) National development council
 - (d) Ministry of Home Affairs

2. The plan is to turn the island into a free trade zone that could compete with Singapore and which country – [2]?
 - (a) Japan
 - (b) Thailand
 - (c) Hong Kong
 - (d) South Korea
3. Which tribe is vulnerable due to this plan?
 - (a) Jawara
 - (b) Onge
 - (c) Sentinelese
 - (d) Shompen
4. Fill in the blank. Refer point [4]
 - (a) 75 km
 - (b) 50 km
 - (c) 100 km
 - (d) 200km
5. Fill in the blank. Refer point [5]
 - (a) The Indian Forest Act, 1927
 - (b) The Indian Forest Act, 1930
 - (c) The Indian Forest Act, 1932
 - (d) The Indian Forest Act, 1929

(Passage Q.6-Q.10): After an estimated [1] per cent contraction in 2020-21, the Finance Ministry's Economic Survey projects that India's real GDP would record a growth of 11 per cent in 2021-22. The nominal GDP growth has been estimated at 15.4 per cent, implying an assumption of 4.4 per cent inflation during the year.

One of the factors is the low base while calculating the year-on-year inflation rate, given the contraction this fiscal. The Survey noted that the "conservative estimates" of growth in FY22 "reflect upside potential that can manifest due to the continued normalisation in economic activities as the rollout of Covid-19 vaccines gathers traction". This will further be supported by a supply-side push from reforms and easing of regulations, push to infrastructural investments, boost to manufacturing sector through the Productivity Linked Incentive Schemes, recovery of pent-up demand for the services sector, increase in discretionary consumption subsequent to the roll-out of the vaccine and pick up in credit given adequate liquidity and low-interest rates, the survey noted

What is significant is that this path would entail a growth in real GDP by 2.4 per cent over the absolute level of 2019-20 – implying that the economy would take two years to reach and go past the pre-pandemic level.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/economic-survey-2021-growth-projection-7166527/>

6. What is the foundational theme of the survey is?
 - (a) Saving Lives and Livelihoods
 - (b) Saving Lives and Leverage livelihood
 - (c) Saving Lives
 - (d) Saving Livelihoods
7. The first economic survey was presented in which year?
 - (a) 1950-1951
 - (b) 1951-1952
 - (c) 1952-1953
 - (d) 1953-1954
8. India adopted a unique four-pillar strategy which one from the below is not a part of it?
 - (a) Containment
 - (b) Short term reforms
 - (c) Fiscal
 - (d) Financial
9. Fill in the blank. Refer point [1].
 - (a) 10
 - (b) 9

- (c) 12
 - (d) 11
10. What shaped resilient recovery is underway for the Indian economy, according to the Economic Survey for the year 2020-21.
- (a) Z
 - (b) U
 - (c) V
 - (d) B

(Passage Q.11-Q.15): By [1], most people on Earth will live downstream of tens of thousands of large dams built in the 20th century, many of them including India's already operating at or beyond their design life, putting lives and property at risk, a UN University (UNU) analysis revealed

Besides India, the analysis also includes dam decommissioning or ageing case studies from the US, France, Canada, Japan, and Zambia and [2].

The report, "[3]", by UNU's [4]-based Institute for Water, Environment and Health, released on Friday said most of the 58,700 large dams worldwide were constructed between 1930 and 1970 with a design life of 50 to 100 years, adding that at 50 years, a large concrete dam "would most probably begin to express signs of ageing".

Ageing signs include increasing cases of dam failures, progressively increasing costs of dam repair and maintenance, increasing reservoir sedimentation, and loss of a dam's functionality and effectiveness, "strongly interconnected" manifestations, the paper says.

The report says dams that are well designed, constructed and maintained can "easily" reach 100 years of service but predicts an increase in "decommissioning", a phenomenon gaining pace in the US and Europe, as economic and practical limitations prevent ageing dams from being upgraded or if their original use is now obsolete.

Source: [https://www.nationalheraldindi\(a\)com/environment/ageing-unsafe-dams-growing-threat-in-india-too-unreport](https://www.nationalheraldindi(a)com/environment/ageing-unsafe-dams-growing-threat-in-india-too-unreport)

11. Fill in the blank. Refer point [1].
- (a) 2040
 - (b) 2050
 - (c) 2060
 - (d) 2030
12. Fill in the blank. Which is the missing country? Refer point [2].
- (a) New Zealand
 - (b) Thailand
 - (c) South Korea
 - (d) Zimbabwe
13. What is title of the report – [3]?
- (a) Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk
 - (b) Ageing dam infrastructure: An emerging global risk
 - (c) Ageing water infrastructure. Global risks
 - (d) Ageing dam infrastructure. What to do?
14. Which of the following has been redacted by [4]?
- (a) American
 - (b) Japanese
 - (c) Canadian
 - (d) Indian
15. Which is the oldest operational dam in the world – [5]?
- (a) Lake Homs Dam
 - (b) Tarbela dam
 - (c) Fort peck dam
 - (d) Oahe dam

(Passage Q.16-Q.20): At a press conference last week, the first by Myanmar's junta since General Min Aung Hlaing grabbed power on February 1 and declared a [1] -long "emergency" after alleging electoral fraud, a spokesman claimed that 40m of the country's 54m people supported the coup.

“Our objective is to hold an election and hand power to the winning party,” Brigadier General Zaw Min Tun said at the event, which was sparsely attended as many reporters chose to boycott the new regime.

In the days since then, people across Myanmar furious at the generals’ nullification of recent election results and arrest of [2], their popular leader, have taken to the streets in huge numbers to prove him wrong.

On Monday, crowds of government employees, workers, tradespeople and others that local media said exceeded 1m nationwide joined a self-described “five twos revolution”, meant to mark the date 22/2/2021 and to echo the 8888 uprising against the former military regime of Ne Win that ruled what was then Burm(a) Crowds carrying placards saying “Free our leader” or “We don’t accept military coup” gathered across Myanmar, from Myitkyina in northern Kachin state to the military-built capital Naypyidaw in the centre and Dawei in the south.

The display of people’s power was the biggest yet by a civil disobedience movement that has proved tenacious in the face of everything from internet blackouts to night-time arrests and security forces’ firing of live rounds, which killed a woman last week and a man and a teenage boy in Mandalay on Saturday.

Source: <https://www.ft.com/content/6bb8c06b-7d54-43df-819f-4e5eb9eaa52f>

16. For how long emergency is declared in Myanmar-[1]?
 - (a) 6 months
 - (b) 2 year
 - (c) 18 months
 - (d) 1 year

17. Fill in the blank – [2]
 - (a) Aung San Suu Kyi
 - (b) Myint swe
 - (c) Than swe
 - (d) San kyis aris

18. What is the capital of Myanmar?
 - (a) Naypyidaw
 - (b) Manila
 - (c) Kuala Lumpur
 - (d) Jakarta

19. Myanmar military has grabbed power in a coup how many times since independence?
 - (a) 2
 - (b) 3
 - (c) 4
 - (d) 5

20. What is the main religion in Myanmar?
 - (a) Judaism
 - (b) Buddhism
 - (c) Islam
 - (d) Hinduism

(Passage Q.21-Q.25): The Union Budget 2021-22 announced Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban) to bring safe water to [1] crore households through tap connection. This in line with the Centre’s rural water supply project launched in [2]. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an outlay of Rs 50,011 crore for this scheme, about 4.5 times the revised budget for 2020-2021.

The mission is the country’s 12th attempt to connect every household with tap water. This time the target year is [3]. India has failed miserably to fulfil its past promises around this objective.

Jal Jeevan Mission (Rural), for instance, has been able to cover only around 34 per cent of the targeted households (65.5 million) in rural India, according to the latest data from the Union Ministry of [4]

After the Centre’s flagship Swachh Bharat Mission for building toilets in every household in India’s villages was declared a success by October 2019, the supply of household tap water stands as a big promise and necessity in rural India(a)

But simply rolling out an ambitious mission does not ensure sustainable supply of household drinking water in rural India which has been haunted by the ‘slippage’ problem. It means villages or habitations covered with safe drinking water facilities slip back to ‘not-covered’ status due to reasons that include drying up of water source or collapse of facilities due to non-maintenances.

According to the CAG report, which analysed the state of rural water supply between 2012 and 2017, 4.76 lakh habitations had slipped from 'fully covered' to 'partially covered'.

The phenomenon was high in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Hence, projects focusing on the recharge the source of water, which in most cases is groundwater, should be also planne(d)

The improvement of institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the groundwater policies should be highlighte(d) There is a need to involve communities, especially the women, to play a key role from planning to implementation.

Source: <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/water/jal-jeevan-mission-urban-launched-in-union-budget-2021-22-75294>

21. Fill in the blank – [1]
 - (a) 3 crore
 - (b) 2.67 crore
 - (c) 2.86 crore
 - (d) 2.92 crore

22. Centre's rural water supply project was launched in which year – [2]?
 - (a) 2019
 - (b) 2018
 - (c) 2017
 - (d) 2016

23. What is the time target for this year – [3]?
 - (a) 2022
 - (b) 2023
 - (c) 2024
 - (d) 2025

24. Fill in the blank – [4]
 - (a) Jal shakti
 - (b) Jal vikas
 - (c) Jal saksham
 - (d) Jal dev

25. The water supply to all households through functional taps in all statutory towns in accordance with which Sustainable Development Goal?
 - (a) SDG-6
 - (b) SDG-5
 - (c) SDG-7
 - (d) SDG-8

(Passage Q.26-Q.30): On Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Chauri Chaura Centenary Celebrations by video link, and will release a postage stamp to mark the centenary of the event. The UP government has planned a year of celebrations through February 4, 2022 in all 75 districts of the state.

Chauri Chaura — whose name derives from that of two villages — is a town in Gorakhpur district, about halfway between Gorakhpur and [1]. It has a small railway station, which initially put Chauri Chaura on the map. The town was the scene of a violent incident with far-reaching consequences during the freedom struggle a century ago.

The Incident

On February 4, 1922, a large crowd of peasants set on fire the police station in Chauri Chaura, killing [2] policemen. According to Shahid Amin's Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992, the best known historical reconstruction of the incident and its aftermath, this is what happened:

On August 1, [3], Gandhi had launched the Non-Cooperation (Asahayog) Movement against the government, which involved a boycott of foreign goods, especially machine-made cloth, and legal, educational and administrative institutions, "refusing to assist a ruler who misrules". As the movement gathered momentum over the next year and a half, large numbers of volunteers became active across the country.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/chaori-chaura-incident-freedom-struggle-7173592/>

26. What is the name of the other village based on which chauri chaura name was derived – [1]?
 - (a) Deoria

- (b) Khushinagar
 - (c) Maharajganj
 - (d) jalaun
27. How many policemen were killed in the Chauri Chaura incident – [2]?
- (a) 30
 - (b) 28
 - (c) 22
 - (d) 26
28. Non –cooperation movement was launched in which year – [3]?
- (a) 1922
 - (b) 1923
 - (c) 1930
 - (d) 1920
29. Who was the viceroy of British India during Non-Cooperation Movement?
- (a) Lord Reading
 - (b) Lord Wavell
 - (c) Lord Mountbatten
 - (d) Lord Willingdon
30. In which year Mahatma Gandhi finally left South Africa after more than 20 years, and arrived in India?
- (a) 1911
 - (b) 1913
 - (c) 1912
 - (d) 1915

(Passage Q.31-Q.35): The first phase of Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0 started in Rajasthan from Monday to administer vaccines to [2] and children up to [1] years.

According to a Health Department spokesperson, the campaign will run for 15 days in two phases as directed by the Centre. Vaccines will be provided free of cost to children and pregnant women who are deprived of regular vaccinations.

Medical and Health Minister [4] started the special vaccination campaign on Monday at a state-level function at the New Bapu Nagar Community Building in Bhilwar(a)

Former Seeds Corporation chairperson Dharmendra Rathore and former minister Hari Sharma were also present and released two posters related to the campaign.

In the first phase of the campaign, 24 districts of the state have been included and a total of [3] vaccination sessions will be organised in these districts.

Medical and Health Secretary Siddharth Mahajan said a target had been set to protect children and [2] by administering vaccines

He said children and pregnant women who were deprived of vaccination due to the coronavirus pandemic will also be provided necessary vaccines.

Source: [https://www.business-standar\(d\)com/article/current-affairs/mission-indradhanush-3-0-starts-in-raj-3-963-sessions-to-be-organised-121022200349_1.html](https://www.business-standar(d)com/article/current-affairs/mission-indradhanush-3-0-starts-in-raj-3-963-sessions-to-be-organised-121022200349_1.html)

31. Children of what age will be administered the vaccines – [1]?
- (a) One
 - (b) Two
 - (c) Three
 - (d) four
32. Indradhanush 3.0 is for children and [2]. What is [2]?
- (a) Women
 - (b) Pregnant women
 - (c) Poor women
 - (d) Young women
33. Fill in the blank [3].
- (a) 3963

- (b) 4000
- (c) 3888
- (d) 5000

34. Who is the medical and health minister of Rajasthan – [4]?

- (a) Raghu Sharma
- (b) Arjun verma
- (c) Rajeev Sharma
- (d) Mukesh verma

35. The first vaccine was made for?

- (a) Ebola
- (b) Small pox
- (c) Cholera
- (d) polio

(Passage Q.36-Q.40): The southern state of [1] will get its first human milk bank on Friday. The state-of-the-art facility will be inaugurated by health minister K.K. Shailaja at state-owned [5] hospital in Kochi.

The facility will provide breast milk to newborn babies who are deprived of it because of various issues, including the sickness of their mothers.

According to the state government, 3,600 babies are born in the general hospital a year and out of those, 600 to 1,000 sick babies are admitted into the (NICU).

"The breast milk from the bank will reduce the risk of infections and boost the immunity of the newborn babies," Dr Paul P G of Global told news agency PTI.

The hospital authorities said that all safety protocols and procedures for collecting, preserving and providing the breast milk to needy children will be ensured as per government guidelines. The collected milk can be stored up to 6 months safely in the bank, if needed, before it is given to an infant, they said. In the beginning, the milk will be provided free of cost to only the babies admitted in NICU of the hospital. Later on, a network of hospitals for multiple collection and safe distribution points will be planned.

The donors will be the mothers from the hospital who have delivered babies there and will have all their health statistics available at the hospital. It is being set up in partnership with [2] of Cochin Global.

A similar milk bank - the Northeast's first - opened at [3] Satribari Christian Hospital in December last year.

It was the 15th milk bank in the entire country.

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/kerala-to-gets-its-first-human-milk-bank-on-Friday-101612410514211.html#:~:text=The%20southern%20state%20of%20Kerala,Ernakulam%20general%20hospital%20in%20Kochi.>

36. In which state the milk bank is being opened – [1]?

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) Kerala
- (c) Karnataka
- (d) Tamil nadu

37. It is being set up in partnership with [2]. What is [2]?

- (a) Kiwanis
- (b) Shriners
- (c) Rotary club
- (d) Royal club

38. Fill in the blank – [3].

- (a) Assam
- (b) Nagaland
- (c) Meghalaya
- (d) Arunachal Pradesh

39. What does NICU stands for?

- (a) Neo intensive care unit
- (b) Neonate intensive care unit
- (c) Neonative intensive care unit
- (d) Neonatal intensive care unit

40. Where it is being opened [5]. What is [5]?
- (a) Silverline
 - (b) Lisie
 - (c) City hospital
 - (d) Ernakulam general

(Passage Q.41-Q.45): Indian Naval ship [1] arrived at Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates on Friday. The vessel will participate in the NAVDEX 2021 and IDEX 2021 scheduled to take place from February 20 to February 25.

The second ship of the indigenously built [2] Class Missile Vessels, INS [1] was commissioned in the Indian Navy on December 18, 2002. In addition to a 76.2 mm medium-range gun, INS is also equipped with chaff launchers and long-range surface-to-surface missiles.

The Ministry of Defence said the participation of INS in NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21 highlights the strong bilateral relationship shared by India and the UAE. One of the world's most prominent annual naval defence and maritime security exhibitions, NAVDEX is held alongside IDEX.

India and the UAE had in 2017 upgraded bilateral relations to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership'. This was done during the visit of [5], the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi to India as the Republic Day chief guest.

Defence ties between the two nations were further strengthened in March 2018 as a result of joint-naval exercise [3]. The second edition of this bilateral naval exercise is likely to be conducted later this year.

According to the Ministry of Defence, Indian Navy ships have been making regular port calls at UAE for promoting maritime cooperation. In fact, indigenously built guided-missile destroyer INS Mysore will also be making a port call at Abu Dhabi from February 19 to February 21.

Source: <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/indian-naval-ship-ins-pralaya-arrives-in-uae-to-take-part-in-navdex-index-2021-1771098-2021-02-19>

41. Fill in the blank [1]
- (a) Parag
 - (b) Pragya
 - (c) Pralaya
 - (d) parnav
42. It is the second ship of the indigenously built of which class [2]?
- (a) Prabal
 - (b) Pranav
 - (c) Prakrit
 - (d) Purna
43. By which joint exercise [3] in 2018 the ties were strengthen between the two nations?
- (a) Gulf Star-1
 - (b) Nevis Star-1
 - (c) Saint Kittis Star-1
 - (d) Arabian Star-1
44. What does IDEX stands for?
- (a) International Defence Conference group
 - (b) International General Defence Conference
 - (c) International Conference
 - (d) International Defence Conference
45. Who is the current crown prince of Abu Dhabi – [5]?
- (a) Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
 - (b) Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
 - (c) Mansour bin Zayed bin Sultan bin
 - (d) Hamdan bin Zayed bin Sultan

(Passage Q.46-Q.50): The CWCM has been set up with the objective "to address specific research needs and knowledge gaps" in conservation and management of wetlands in the country, Union Minister Babul Supriyo said on Tuesday.

India, on the occasion of Wetland Conservation Day on Tuesday, set up its first dedicated centre for conservation of wetlands, which occupy around [3] per cent of the country's landmass. Named (CWCM), the specialised institution

is a part of the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).

Speaking at the launch, Union Minister Babul Supriyo said: "The dedicated Centre (CWCM) which is launched today would address specific research needs and knowledge gaps and will aid in the application of integrated approaches for conservation, management and wise use of the wetlands."

The wetland conservation centre would assist the national and regional governments in designing and implementing policy and regulatory frameworks, management planning and targeted research for conservation of wetlands in the country. It would act as a knowledge hub for wetland researchers, policymakers, managers and users.

Wetlands are one of the most important freshwater sources. They also provide various ecological services. India is extremely rich in terms of wetland diversity and is one of the few countries in the world to have a wetland inventory system, wherein remote sensing techniques have been used to map the wetlands. There are 42 sites in the country that have been designated as Wetlands of International Importance or Ramsar sites. The CWCM will help in building with relevant national and international agencies for the conservation and management of wetlands.

Source: <https://www.timesnownews.com/chennai/article/india-sets-up-its-first-wetland-conservation-centre-in-chennai/715371>

46. What does CWCM stands for?
 (a) Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management
 (b) Centre for Wetland Conserve and Management
 (c) Centre for Wetland Conservation centre and Management group
 (d) Centre for Wetland Centre and Management
47. When is World Wetland Day celebrated?
 (a) 10th February
 (b) 2nd February
 (c) 8th February
 (d) 18th February
48. Fill in the blank [3]
 (a) 5
 (b) 2.8
 (c) 4.6
 (d) 3.5
49. The year 2021 also commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Convention on Wetlands signed on 2nd February 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar. The theme for 2021 is?
 (a) Wetlands and Water
 (b) Wetlands and climate change
 (c) Wetlands and sustainability
 (d) Wetlands for future
50. India has added _____ in Ladakh as its 42nd Ramsar site?
 (a) Ashtamudi
 (b) Tso Kar Basin
 (c) Hanle chuschul
 (d) Rungdum

(Passage Q.51-Q.55): In view of Kabul's rising population rates, increasingly frequent drought conditions and the existential threat of climate change, President , reportedly, resolved to address the water scarcity problem facing the country as a national priority India's hydrodiplomacy has political implications especially for Afghanistan's neighbour, Pakistan According to some Pakistani media reports, the construction of the [1] dam, in conjunction with 12 others planned along the Kabul river, may reduce water flow into Pakistan by as much as 16 to 17 per cent Prime Minister Narendra Modi will engage with Afghan President [2] at a virtual summit today, where the two are expected to put pen to paper over the long-awaited dam, to be constructed on the [3] river basin, one of the five river basins in Afghanistan.

In mid-December, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, speaking at the Geneva Donors Conference, announced that India and Afghanistan had reached an agreement over a project that President has turned into a priority given Afghanistan's persistent water shortages.

2018 saw Afghanistan experience a 60 per cent drop in rain and snowfall raising serious consequences over food production and security. In view of Kabul's rising population rates, increasingly frequent drought conditions and the

existential threat of climate change, President , reportedly, resolved to address the water scarcity problem facing the country as a national priority.

President decision arrived on the heels of a 2017 study conducted by Afghan, French and German universities that stressed the dire need for improved water infrastructure and management in the country. Borne out of President's initiative, was the Dam, partially funded by India, which is expected to hold 146 million cubic metres of potable waters catering to roughly two million of the city's residents. The dam will also, reportedly, enable irrigation of 4,000 hectares of land and provide drinking water to a developing city lying on the outskirts of Kabul as well

Source: <https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/pm-modi-afghan-pres-to-ink-kabul-dam-agreement-today-why-the-shahtoot-dam-project-worries-pakistan/717933>

51. Fill in the blank – [1]
 - (a) Shahtoot
 - (b) Shaurya
 - (c) Shukar
 - (d) Shukran

52. Who is the president of the Afghanistan – [2]?
 - (a) Hamid karzai
 - (b) Ashraf Ghani
 - (c) Rula ghani
 - (d) Abdul Rashid

53. The dam is to be constructed on which river basin – [3]?
 - (a) Indus
 - (b) Jhelum
 - (c) Kunnar
 - (d) Kabul

54. The project is a part of the _____ between India and Afghanistan.
 - (a) New Development Partnership
 - (b) Afghan- India Partnership
 - (c) Afghan- India friendship
 - (d) Development project

55. This dam is the second major dam being built by India in Afghanistan, after the India- Afghanistan which dam?
 - (a) Kajaki
 - (b) Dahla
 - (c) Grishk
 - (d) Afghan-India Friendship Dam

(Passage Q.56-Q.60): A glacier break is suspected to have caused the flash floods in Uttarakhand's [1] on Sunday. Last October, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), which is headed by [2], had issued detailed guidelines on how to reduce and deal with disasters caused by what is scientifically called (GLOFs).

When glaciers melt, the water in glacial lakes accumulates behind loose, natural "glacial/moraine dams" made of ice, sand, pebbles and ice residue. A GLOF refers to the flooding that occurs when the water dammed by a glacier or a moraine is released suddenly.

Unlike earthen dams, the weak structure of the moraine dam leads to the abrupt failure of the dam on top of the glacial lake, which holds large volume of water. A failure of the dam has the potential of releasing millions of cubic metres of water in a short period, causing catastrophic flooding downstream. Peak flows as high as 15,000 cubic metre per second have been recorded in such events. According to NDMA, glacial retreat due to climate change occurring in most parts of the Hindu Kush Himalaya has given rise to the formation of numerous new glacial lakes, which are the major cause of GLOFs. Since glaciers in the Himalayas are in a retreating phase, glacial lakes are growing and pose a potentially large risk to downstream infrastructure and life.

An "Inventory and Monitoring of Glacial Lakes / Water Bodies in the Himalayan Region of Indian River Basins", sponsored by Climate Change Directorate, [4], and done by National Remote Sensing Centre during 2011-15, found that there are 352, 283 and 1,393 glacial lakes and water bodies in the Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra basins respectively.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/uttarakhand-glacier-flash-flood-rishiganga-death-toll-7180258/>

56. In which district of Uttarakhand [1] glacier outburst happened?

- (a) Chamoli
 - (b) Haridwar
 - (c) Auli
 - (d) Rudrapur
57. Fill in the blank – [2]
- (a) President
 - (b) PM
 - (c) Defense minister
 - (d) Army officer
58. What does GLOF stands for?
- (a) glacial lake organized flood
 - (b) glacier lower outbreak flood
 - (c) glacial lake outburst flood
 - (d) glacial lake outbreak flood
59. Fill in the blank
- (a) Niti ayog
 - (b) Ministry of home affairs
 - (c) NDPF fund
 - (d) Central water commission
60. National Disaster Management Authority was founded in which year [5]?
- (a) 2005
 - (b) 2002
 - (c) 2008
 - (d) 2009

(Passage Q.61-Q.65): With the project set to start power production in [1], it will be a global effort to bring it into production. The aim is to harness solar and wind power to reduce reliance on fossil fuels for energy. [2] has decided to build the world's first artificial island with the aim to provide clean energy. The island will be located in the [3] (located between England and Scotland). The Scandinavian country is the biggest source for oil in all of Europe but they have promised to stop production of fossil fuels in the next three decades.

The unnamed project will be the biggest of its kind in history. At a cost of over \$33 billion or €28 Billion, it will be over 23 acres in size (nearly 4 times the size of the [5]). It is being touted as the "cornerstone of green transition" for CO2 emissions in the coming decades. The power will be generated using wind power farms and at full capacity, it is expected to be able to power 3 million European houses.

The energy will also be diverted to help shipping, aviation as well as other heavy transport sectors. The Sea provides a tremendous opportunity for wind power to be harnessed with winds of up to 7.8 metres per second or about 28 kmph being recorded. The island which will be about 80 kilometres off the coast of [2] western coast may be capable of producing 180 gigawatts of power. That will enable them to shut down all coal-powered power plants in Europe without hampering demand or compromising in any way of vital services. The initiative will be an international effort and will make the country carbon neutral by [4]. If all goes according to plan, the island will be fully operational by [1].

Source: <https://www.timesnownews.com/international/article/denmark-is-creating-the-world-s-first-energy-production-island/719180>

61. The island will be fully operational by [1]. What is [1]?
- (a) 2033
 - (b) 2044
 - (c) 2030
 - (d) 2035
62. fill in the blank [2]
- (a) Belgium
 - (b) Netherlands
 - (c) Denmark
 - (d) Norway

63. The island will be located on which water body [3]?
- (a) Wadden sea
 - (b) Elbe
 - (c) River thames
 - (d) North sea
64. The initiative will be an international effort and will make the country carbon neutral by [4]. What is [4]?
- (a) 2040
 - (b) 2050
 - (c) 2090
 - (d) 2070
65. Fill in the blank – [5]
- (a) Indian parliament building
 - (b) Rashtrapati bhavan
 - (c) Red fort
 - (d) Lotus temple

(Passage Q.66-Q.70): Sandes, which is the Indian government's instant messaging app, is now accessible to everyone. Previously, it was only available for government officials. The app, which has been launched by the [1], gives a boost to PM Narendra Modi's [2] and Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) initiative.

This is an end-to-end encrypted messaging app, which is aimed as an alternative to [3]. If you are still trying out different messaging apps and wondering if Sandes is worth a shot, then read on to get answers to your questions.

Sandes is free to use and there are no ads in the app. Do note that when you download it, the app's name is displayed as GIMS. But, the government is calling it as Sandes, which basically means message in Hindi.

Sandes has an interface similar to [4] and you will find most of the its features in this app. We will get to this in a bit, let's first walk you through the notable differences between both the messaging apps.

One of the major differences is Sandes offers an option to sign up using the email id and not just with mobile phone number. However, this is currently restricted to government officials only. Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/social/sandes-app-whatsapp-features-privacy-user-data-how-to-download-setup-backup-chats-7194188/>

66. The app is launched by [1]?
- (a) NIC
 - (b) MIC
 - (c) LIC
 - (d) MNC
67. Fill in the blank [2].
- (a) Bharatmala
 - (b) Ditigal India
 - (c) Jawaharlal mission
 - (d) Smart mission vision
68. The app is aimed to be alternative of which app [3]?
- (a) Telegram
 - (b) Facebook messenger
 - (c) WhatsApp
 - (d) Instagram
69. What does GIMS stands for [4]. What is [4]?
- (a) Government Messaging System
 - (b) Government message System
 - (c) Government Instant text message System
 - (d) Government Instant Messaging System
70. The first version of the App was released in which year?
- (a) 2020
 - (b) 2019
 - (c) 2018

(d) 2017

(Passage Q.71-Q.75): On January 31, Stardust 1.0 was launched from [1] in Maine, US, a former military base, becoming the first commercial space launch powered by [2], which is non-toxic for the environment as opposed to traditionally used rocket fuels.

Sunday's launch marks another historic first for Maine since Stardust 1.0 has become the first commercial rocket launch for the state located in northeastern US.

So, what is Stardust 1.0?

Stardust 1.0 is a launch vehicle suited for student and budget payloads. The rocket is [3] feet tall and has a mass of roughly 250 kg. The rocket can carry a maximum payload mass of 8 kg and during its first launch carried three payloads. According to a report in Politico, the payloads included a cubesat prototype built by highschool students, a metal alloy designed to lessen vibrations, which is developed by Kellogg's Research Labs and a cubesat from software company Rocket Insights.

The rocket is manufactured by [5], an aerospace company based in Maine that is developing rockets that are powered by bio-derived fuels. Stardust 1.0 is being developed by the company since [4] when the company was founded by its CEO Sascha Deri.

These rockets will help to launch small satellites called cubesats into space in a way that is relatively cheaper than using traditional rocket fuel and is less toxic for the environment. Other rockets being developed by the company include Stardust Gen. 2, Starless Rouge and Red Dwarf, which is a low-Earth orbit (LEO) vehicle and is designed to fly a maximum payload of 30 kg.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-what-is-stardust-1-0-the-first-rocket-to-run-on-biofuel-7170230/>

71. Stardust 1.0 was launched from [1]. What is [1]?
- (a) Loring commerce centre
 - (b) Detroit commerce centre
 - (c) Michigan commerce centre
 - (d) Southern commerce centre
72. Fill in the blank [2]
- (a) Propane
 - (b) Hydrogen
 - (c) Methane
 - (d) biofuel
73. The rocket is [3] feet tall and has a mass of roughly 250 kg. What is [3]?
- (a) 40
 - (b) 22
 - (c) 20
 - (d) 19
74. Stardust 1.0 is being developed by the company since [4]. What is [4]?
- (a) 2015
 - (b) 2014
 - (c) 2016
 - (d) 2017
75. The rocket is manufactured by which aerospace company [5]?
- (a) blushift
 - (b) Brewing
 - (c) Flight deck
 - (d) blueshift

(Passage Q.76-Q.80): This was the [3] such meeting since the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or Quad was upgraded to the ministerial level in. It was held less than five months after the last meeting in [1] in October, signalling the new US government's commitment to the Quad as a key formation.

Against the backdrop of continuing concerns over China's actions across the region, the first ministerial meeting of the Quad since the Biden administration assumed office reiterated the group's commitment to a rules-based world order underpinned by respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty.

At the virtual meeting on Thursday, external affairs minister [5], Australian foreign minister Marise Payne, Japan's foreign minister Toshimitsu Motegi and US secretary of state Antony Blinken agreed that changes underway around the world made a "strong case for their countries working closely together", the external affairs ministry said in a statement.

The ministers also discussed countering disinformation, counter-terrorism, maritime security, and the "priority of strengthening democratic resilience in the broader region", according to a readout from the US state department.

This was such meeting since the Quad was upgraded to the ministerial level in September [2]. It was held less than five months after the last meeting in October, signalling the new US administration's commitment to the Quad as a key formation in the Indo-Pacific

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/quad-meet-stresses-on-rules-based-world-order-respect-for-territorial-integrity-101613666990384.html>

76. Where was the last meeting of quad [1]?
- (a) New delhi
 - (b) Tokyo
 - (c) New York
 - (d) Melbourne
77. Fill in the blank [2]
- (a) 2020
 - (b) 2018
 - (c) 2019
 - (d) 2017
78. It was [3] time meet of qua(d) What is [3]?
- (a) Third
 - (b) Second
 - (c) Fourth
 - (d) fifth
79. The forum was first initiated as a dialogue in August 2007 by?
- (a) John howard
 - (b) Shinzo abe
 - (c) Dick cheney
 - (d) Narendra modi
80. Who is the external affairs minister of India – [5]?
- (a) Ravi prakash
 - (b) Ajit doval
 - (c) Kyoko jaishankar
 - (d) Subrahmanyam Jaishankar

(Passage Q.81-Q.85): India's rank has slipped six places to [1] among 180 countries in a corruption perception index (CPI) in 2020. For 2020, [4] corruption perception index was released on Thursday.

The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale of 0 to (82), where 0 is highly corrupt and [2] is very clean.

India's rank is [1] out of 180 nations with a score of 40. "India was ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in 2019. The CPI score for India is constant this year as well as the previous year's score," the index sai(d)

India is still very low on corruption Index, the report said, noting that experts feel the CPI does not reflect the actual corruption level in any country. The integrity score determines the corruption situation of a country.

This year, [3] and New Zealand were ranked at first position with scores of 88. Somalia and South Sudan were ranked lowest at 179th position with scores of 12.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/indias-rank-slips-to-86th-in-corruption-perception-index-2020-7165607/>

81. What is the rank of India in corruption perception index – [1]?
- (a) 86th
 - (b) 88th
 - (c) 87th
 - (d) 85th

82. What score is considered highly clean – [2]?
- (a) 1000
 - (b) 150
 - (c) 100
 - (d) 120
83. Which country ranked first in the index – [3]?
- (a) Scotland
 - (b) Norway
 - (c) Netherlands
 - (d) Denmark
84. Which institute released the index – [4]?
- (a) Amnesty international
 - (b) Greenpeace
 - (c) Freedom house
 - (d) Transparency International
85. What is the capital of Denmark?
- (a) Copenhagen
 - (b) Helsinki
 - (c) Stockholm
 - (d) Nukk

(Passage Q.86-Q.90): The hoopla over the approval accorded by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in imminently procuring 118 indigenously developed Mk-1A Arjun main battle tanks (MBTs) for the Indian Army for Rs [1] crore, appears misplaced, considering the operational and logistical handicaps encasing this overweight platform.

Official sources said the MoD is poised to finalise a contract with the [2] for its Heavy Vehicles Factory (HVF) at Avadi, near Chennai, to series build 118 upgraded Mk-1A variants. Thereafter, five MBTs would be delivered to the army 30 months later, followed by 30 MK-1As each year, till the remaining 113 platforms are handed over to complete two armoured regiments by 2025-26.

But senior Indian Army armoured corps officers told The Wire that deploying the 68.25 tonne Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)-developed Mk-1A MBT – amongst the world’s heaviest – would remain limited largely to Rajasthan’s desert region. They maintain that the MBT’s bulk and weight excluded positioning it in Punjab or adjoining areas, as its cross-country mobility was restricted by the sizeable nominal ground pressure (NGP) it exerts.

The NGP pertains to pressure exerted on the ground by the MBT during movement, and remains an operational measure of its relative un-deploy-ability in this critical region where the Indian Army has fought decisive tank battles with the Pakistan Army in 1965 and 1971, which are still analysed by militaries around the world. At 62.5 tonnes, the basic Arjun Mk1 version – of which 124 are currently in the army service – too suffers from a similar weight handicap.

Besides, the majority of bridges across Punjab were built to withstand loads averaging 50 tonnes, some 18 and 12 tonnes less than what the Mk-1As and MK1s weigh. And though the Mk-1A variant has been fitted with wider tracks, with an NPG of 0.85kg/cm sq so as to evenly distribute its weight, it still remains a problem with regard to easily traversing the area, army sources said.

Source: <https://thewire.in/government/defence-arjun-mk-1a-main-battle-tanks-indian-army>

86. Fill in the blank – [1]
- (a) 8350
 - (b) 8000
 - (c) 8855
 - (d) 8090
87. MoD is poised to finalise a contract with the [2]for its Heavy Vehicles Factory (HVF). What is [2]?
- (a) Bharat dynamics
 - (b) Ordnance factory board
 - (c) BEML limited
 - (d) Bharat electronics

88. Arjun Main Battle Tank project was initiated by DRDO in?
(a) 1970
(b) 1966
(c) 1972
(d) 1954
89. In which year DRDO was founded?
(a) 1950
(b) 1958
(c) 1952
(d) 1960
90. Main Battle Tank, indigenously designed, developed and manufactured by CVRDE and DRDO along with 15 academic institutions, eight labs and several MSMEs. What does CVRDE stands for?
(a) Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment
(b) Counter Vehicles Research and Development institution
(c) Combat Vehicles Research and Development institution
(d) Counter Vehicles Research and Development

(Passage Q.91-Q.95): The Union ministry for housing and urban affairs has shortlisted a total of [1] cities for the 'Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge' a programme under the government's flagship Smart Cities Mission. The programme is conducted in collaboration with the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) with [2] as technical partner. The programme is a [3]-year initiative which looks to support early childhood-friendly neighbourhoods under the Smart Cities Mission. Among the shortlisted cities include Agartala, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Dharamsala, Erode, Hubballi-Dharwad, Hyderabad, Indore, Jabalpur, Kakinada, Kochi, Kohima, Kota, Nagpur, Rajkot, Ranchi, Rohtak, Rourkela, Salem, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruppur, Ujjain, Vadodara and Warangal.

The project received applications proposing neighbourhood-level pilot projects in public space, mobility and access to services to enhance the physical and psychological health of young children and their caregivers from 63 cities across Indi(a)

"By engaging cities to shape healthier urban environments for early childhood, the challenge has refocused attention on the importance of neighbourhood-level interventions. This approach is well-aligned with the strategy of the Smart Cities Mission to promote inclusive, people-oriented development in compact, local areas towards scaling city-wide solutions that enhance our citizens' quality of life," Kunal Kumar, Joint Secretary and Mission Director, Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, sai(d)

Earlier over 100 cities were engaged through remote or in-person discussions and online capacity-building workshops under the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge during the three-month application period

Source: <https://government.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/smart-infra/centre-selects-25-smart-cities-for-nurturing-neighbourhoods-challenge/81111994>

91. How many cities are shortlisted for the challenge – [1]?
(a) 25
(b) 30
(c) 50
(d) 100
92. Fill in the blank [2]
(a) ARI India
(b) WRI India
(c) MRI India
(d) VRI India
93. The programme is initiative for how many years [3]?
(a) 2
(b) 4
(c) 3
(d) 5
94. The challenge was launched in?
(a) November 2018
(b) October 2019

- (c) September 2020
- (d) November 2020

95. Smart city mission is being financed by?
- (a) November 2018
 - (b) October 2019
 - (c) September 2020
 - (d) November 2020

(Passage Q.96-Q.100): A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launched a new batch of [1] Starlink internet satellites into orbit late Monday (Fe(b) 15), but failed to stick its landing on a floating platform at se(a)

The two-stage Falcon 9 booster, topped with the broadband spacecraft, lifted off from Space Launch Complex 40 here at [2] at 10:59 p.m. EST (0359 GMT on Fe(b) 16). Approximately nine minutes later, the rocket's first stage returned to Earth to attempt its sixth landing on SpaceX's drone ship "Of Course I Still Love You" in the Atlantic Ocean," but missed its target.

"It does look like we did not land our booster on Of Course I Still Love You tonight," SpaceX manufacturing engineer Jessica Anderson said during live launch commentary. "It is unfortunate that we did not recover this booster but our second stage is still on a nominal trajectory."

SpaceX prefers to recover its Falcon 9 rocket stages for reuse, but the company has also said repeatedly that delivering a flight's payload to orbit is always the primary mission.

One of SpaceX's frequent fliers powered this latest Starlink mission into orbit. The booster, dubbed B1059, previously ferried two different SpaceX Dragon cargo resupply missions to the International Space Station — CRS-19 in De(c) 2019 and CRS-20 in March of 2020 — a Starlink mission last June, an Earth-observing satellite for Argentina (SAOCOM-1B in August 2020), and a spy satellite for the U.S government as part of the NROL-108 mission in December.

Tonight's launch was the first of two planned Starlink liftoffs within a week; another 60 satellites are scheduled to take flight early as Wednesday (Fe(b) 17) on a different Falcon 9. The quick succession is due to the fact that SpaceX recently had to shuffle around its planned Starlink missions as both weather and hardware-related issues presented a bit of a challenge.

Source: <https://www.space.com/spacex-launches-60-starlink-satellites-rocket-landing-feb-15-2021>

96. Fill in the blank – [1]
- (a) 60
 - (b) 70
 - (c) 80
 - (d) 100

97. Fill in the blank – [2]
- (a) Cape Canaveral Space Force Station
 - (b) Kennedy space centre
 - (c) Space complex 40
 - (d) CCAFS

98. SpaceX announced the satellite Internet constellation in which year?
- (a) 2015
 - (b) 2016
 - (c) 2017
 - (d) 2018

99. Who is the founder of spaceX?
- (a) Elon Musk
 - (b) Justine Musk
 - (c) Grimes
 - (d) Errol Musk

100. It is likely to face a tough fight with which company that announced an over \$10 billion (roughly Rs. 74,487 crores) investment in a satellite broadband plan in late July?
- (a) Amazon
 - (b) Flipkart
 - (c) Facebook

(d) eBay

(Passage Q.101-Q.105): India will appeal against the arbitration award issued to Cairn Energy by the international tribunal on the grounds of contesting its sovereign right to tax, while strongly contesting other cases filed by Cairn in other international courts, sources said. The appeal against the award is likely to be in the government in the Netherlands, while India will contest its right to tax in the case filed by Cairn in a US court to implement the award. "Cairn conducted transactions through tax havens to avoid taxes," government sources said. The UK based oil major reorganised its assets in India back in 2007 before a public listing. Cairn Energy's top executives led by chief executive met the finance secretary on Thursday to discuss the way ahead for the \$1.2 billion arbitration award that the UK company won against India in a retrospective tax case. "The government welcomes Cairn's move to reach out for a resolution but any dispute resolution to be sought by Cairn will have to be within already existing laws," one of the sources said. While both sides did not reveal the details of discussions, industry watchers and taxation experts said that resolution of the ongoing dispute was the best way forward for India since the government is trying to project the country with greater ease of doing business and as a destination for foreign investment. Some added that among existing laws, a settlement could be derived through the Vivaad Se Vishwas scheme where Cairn may need to pay only 50% of the disputed amount.

101. Apart from the issue of tax, the dispute between Crain and the Indian Government includes which of the following?
- Fees and tolls
 - Investment
 - Country
 - Illegal activity
102. Where is the headquarter of Permanent Court of Arbitration?
- The Hague
 - New York
 - Geneva
 - Washington
103. What is direct tax Vivad SE Vishwas scheme?
- Provides for settlement of disputed fees in relation to an assessment or reassessment order.
 - The scheme cannot be availed in a case where proceedings are pending before Income Tax Settlement Commission (ITSC)
- Only i
 - Only ii
 - Both i and ii
 - None of above
104. Consider the following with respect to the dispute between Crain Energy and Indian Government:
- Three months before Crain energy, India lost arbitration to Vodafone Plc over the retrospective tax legislation amendment.
 - In 2012, Indian government's budget retrospectively amended the tax code, giving itself the power to go after mergers and acquisitions (M&A) deals all the way back to 1962.
 - Cairn Tax Issue was not just a tax-related issue but an investment-related dispute, and therefore the issue comes under its jurisdiction.
- Which of the above is/are correct?
- I and II only
 - II and III only
 - I and III only
 - All of the above.
105. The Permanent Court of Arbitration is based on which of the following convention?
- Geneva Convention
 - Montreal Convention
 - Hague Convention
 - Brussels Convention

(Passage Q.106-Q.110): Israel and the United States have begun developing the Arrow-4 missile defense system that includes next-generation interceptors and will replace the Arrow-2 over the next decades, according to a statement from Israel's Defense Ministry.

“The Arrow weapon system, which was one of the first in the world to intercept ballistic missiles, will be upgraded with a significant capability. The interceptor will be the most advanced of its kind in the world and will provide a new layer of defense to the State of Israel and its citizens,” said Jacob Galifat, general manager IAI’s MLM Division.

The MLM Division is the principal contractor for the Arrow weapon system and is a design, development and system engineering organization, according to IAI, which is the prime contractor for Arrow-4’s development. The system will be designed to prepare Israel for the future battlefield and ever-evolving threats in the Middle East and around the world, Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz said Thursday.

The system is also expected to counter threats both inside and beyond the atmosphere, making it endoatmospheric and exoatmospheric(c)

106. Who is the father of “the Arrow anti-ballistic missile”?
 - (a) Herodotus
 - (b) Dov Raviv
 - (c) Otto Hahn
 - (d) Ernest Rutherford

107. The first launch of the Arrow interceptor took place in which of the following year?
 - (a) 1989
 - (b) 1940
 - (c) 1990
 - (d) 2000

108. Which of the following is the manufacturer of the Arrow missile?
 - (a) Israel Aerospace Industries
 - (b) America Defence Firm
 - (c) Raytheon and Lockheed Martin’s THAAD
 - (d) Lockheed Martin and Boeing

109. The Arrow-4 and are meant to replace the existing MIM-104 Patriot batteries in service.
 - (a) Iron Dome
 - (b) David’s Sling
 - (c) Barak-8
 - (d) Iron Beam

110. Israel used the Arrow 2 missile against which of the following countries?
 - (a) Taliban
 - (b) Iraq
 - (c) Syria
 - (d) Iran

(Passage Q.111-Q.115): The United States’ short sojourn outside the Paris climate agreement is over. The U.S. formally re-enters the international pact today, a move that thrusts the Biden administration into a race to craft new emissions pledges that could help shape global ambitions on climate change. White House officials are under pressure to identify a 2030 carbon goal within two months, when President Biden will host an international climate summit. Altogether the U.S. spent 107 days outside the Paris Agreement, after former President Trump completed the three-year withdrawal process one day after the November election. But while the U.S. is party once again to the first global climate deal, its membership lacks a necessary ingredient—a so-called nationally determined contribution representing the U.S. commitment to the agreement’s goals of limiting warming to levels scientists say will avoid the worst climate outcomes. Biden has set a deadline of April 22 to complete the pledge for 2030 emissions cuts ahead of his Earth Day summit. The event is meant to reintroduce the U.S. as a world leader on climate change and raise global ambition ahead of climate talks in [1], Scotland, in November. Experts on U.S. climate diplomacy say the administration has been laying the groundwork for its new emissions pledge since the fall. It’s expected to draw on research from non-federal analysts and think tanks that continued work on the issue during the Trump years, when U.S. climate progress carried on in cities, states and boardrooms while it languished in Washington. Two of the most visible groups that formed in those years—We Are Still In, a coalition of states, cities and businesses, and America’s Pledge on Climate Change, which tracked their progress—merged today under a new name: [2].

111. The Investor Agenda is helping the global community to tackle the climate change. Which is/ are the focus area that the Investor Agenda provides to investors?

- (a) Corporate Engagement
 - (b) Suppression
 - (c) Banks
 - (d) Stock Market
112. What is/are the reasons given by Trump from the withdrawal from the Paris Agreement?
- (a) The Paris Agreement was costly and ineffective.
 - (b) The agreement wasted taxpayer money.
 - (c) Withdrawal is good for American energy competitiveness.
 - (d) All of above.
113. What would replace [1] in above passage?
- (a) Glasgow
 - (b) Hamilton
 - (c) Dundee
 - (d) Perth
114. The White House national climate advisor is a position within the White House Office, established by President Joe Biden on January 20, 2021. Who became the first national climate advisor?
- (a) Christine Todd Whitman
 - (b) Andrew Wheeler
 - (c) Gina McCarthy
 - (d) John Curtin
115. What would replace [2] in above passage?
- (a) US Is In – Paris Agreement
 - (b) Will Always Support
 - (c) America Is All In
 - (d) America Ally
- (Passage Q.116-Q.120):** Saudi Ministry of Defence made an announcement allowing women of the kingdom to join military and armed forces. Saudi women can join Saudi Arabian Army, Royal Saudi Air Defence, Royal Saudi Navy, Royal Saudi Strategic Missile Force, and Armed Forces Medical Services, Gulf News reported. The move comes under Crown Prince [1], introducing reforms that allow Saudi women to advance in various fields. With this initiative, Saudi women will be increasingly seen doing jobs that were previously limited to men, such as waiting tables in restaurants, being cashiers in shopping malls among others. Arab world's largest economy first announced allowing women into the military in 2019, the same year when the Saudi kingdom said it would allow women to leave the country without permission from a male relative. The Saudi Ministry of Defence announced that men and women in the kingdom can now apply for positions in the military through their unified admission portal. According to the ministry, Saudi women would be recruited as soldiers, lance corporals, corporals, sergeants, and staff sergeants.
116. What would replace [1] in above passage?
- (a) Muhammad bin Nayef
 - (b) Abdullah
 - (c) Mohammad bin Salman
 - (d) Nayef bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
117. How many women have been appointed as public notaries in 2020?
- (a) 80
 - (b) 70
 - (c) 100
 - (d) 90
118. Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince has overseen a series of social and economic reforms known as
- (a) 'Saudi Vision 2020'
 - (b) 'Saudi Vision 2010'
 - (c) 'Saudi Vision 2050'
 - (d) 'Saudi Vision 2030'
119. What is the age required for women to join military?

- (a) Between the age of 18 and 40
- (b) Between the age of 20 and 40
- (c) Between the age of 21 and 40
- (d) Between the age of 25 and 40

120. Consider the following statement.

- i. Opened applications for women to enlist in the military as the kingdom continues to enact reforms granting females more access to a wide range of previously forbidden careers.
- ii. Saudi Arabia was the only country in the world that did not allow women to drive.

Which of the above statements is/are correct.

- (a) only i
- (b) only ii
- (c) Both i and ii
- (d) None of above

(Passage Q.121-Q.125): Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar inaugurated the [1] at Lakshadweep. He said that Lakshadweep will undergo a comprehensive development, without compromising its commitment to nature. He reached Kavaratti in Lakshadweep today morning on a four-day official visit.

He attended high level meetings with Secretaries of various departments in Lakshadweep administration. Tomorrow and day after tomorrow he will take part in various official programmes at Suheli, Kadmat and Bangaram islands. He will also evaluate the major innovative initiatives of the Union Territory's Forest and Environment Department. He will leave for Delhi on Monday. The Union Minister assured that the comprehensive development of the country will be realised by ensuring nature's security as desired by the people.

121. What would replace [1] in the above passage?

- (a) Indra Paryavaran Bhavan
- (b) Atal Paryavaran Bhavan
- (c) Gandhi Paryavaran Bhavan
- (d) Subhas Paryavaran Bhavan

122. Which island is also known as Cardamom Island?

- (a) Andrott Island
- (b) Bangaram Island
- (c) Kadmat Island
- (d) Suheli Island

123. Which of the following is India's first on-site net-zero building?

- (a) Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
- (b) Gandhi Paryavaran Bhawan
- (c) Nehru Paryavaran Bhawan
- (d) Rajiv Paryavaran Bhawan

124. Consider the following statements.

- i. Lakshadweep is a group of islands, located 200 to 440 km off the south-eastern coast of India(a)
- ii. The projects are expected to ensure more growth and create more employment opportunities in the islands(d)

Which of the above statements is/are correct.

- (a) Only i
- (b) Only ii.
- (c) Both i and ii
- (d) None of above

125. Environmental permits have been issued for different tourism projects as part of scheme in the three islands mentioned in the above passage.

- (a) Niti Aayog's
- (b) Aatmanirbhar
- (c) Stand Up India
- (d) Integrated Processing Development

(Passage Q.126-Q.130): US space agency NASA released a first of its kind video of the Perseverance rover landing on the surface of the planet Mars. This is the first time the landing of a rover on another planet was captured on video. The Perseverance rover touched down on the planet on 18 February with the help of a powered sky crane and both the rover and the crane were fitted with cameras that captured the rover's descent on to the sandy surface. The rover is also equipped with two microphones. While the microphone that was supposed to capture sounds of the landing did not collect "usable data" during the process, it recorded and sent audio back after a successful landing. The agency also released the mission's first panorama of the rover's landing location, taken by the two Navigation Cameras located on its body. The media were released in a press conference held just after midnight (Tuesday morning IST). The video starts 11 km above the surface of the planet, about 230 seconds after the spacecraft entered the Martian atmosphere at over 20,000 kph. The beginning of the video is black because the camera lens is covered but in a second, the parachute to slow down the spacecraft is deployed, going from a compressed 46cm x 66cm cylinder to its full 21.5 metre canopy. The video then shows the heat shield being separated after the descending rover has slowed down.

126. Which camera is used in perseverance Rover?
(a) Mastcam-Z
(b) Wide Field Sensor
(c) Linear Imaging Self-Scanning sensor
(d) Panchromatic camera
127. Consider the following statement.
i. Like Earth, Mars has distinct seasons, but they last longer than seasons on Earth since Mars takes longer to orbit the Sun.
ii. The Soviet Union in 1971 became the first country to carry out a Mars landing, Mars.
Which of the above statements is/are correct.
(a) Only i
(b) Only ii.
(c) Both i and ii
(d) None of above
128. India's Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) or Mangalyaan was launched by Indian Space Research Organisation in November 2013. The MOM was launched onboard which of the following?
(a) PSLV-C22/IRNSS-1A
(b) PSLV-C25
(c) GSLV-D5/GSAT-14
(d) Ariane-5 VA-214
129. What is/are the objective of NASA's Mars 2020 Mission?
(a) To better understand the geology of Mars
(b) Assess ancient habitability.
(c) Demonstrate technology for future robotic and human exploration.
(d) All of above
130. Consider the following about the perseverance Rover?
i. Perseverance is the most advanced astrobiology laboratory that has been ever sent another planet.
ii. The most challenging part of the robotic vehicle was its self-guided descent and landing during a complex series of maneuver. It was called as 'seven minutes of terror' by NAS(a)
Which of the above is/are correct?
(a) Only i
(b) Only ii
(c) Both I and ii
(d) Neither i nor ii

(Passage Q.131-Q.135): The International Solar Alliance (ISA) plans to launch the World Solar Bank (WSB) at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November, a top ISA official said, a development that will support India's attempt to secure leadership in the climate arena. (a) The ISA is the first treaty-based international government organization headquartered in India. (a) The development assumes significance, given that green finance will be among priority themes at the climate meet called COP-26, which comes in the backdrop of US re-joining the Paris climate accord. (d) The ISA was co-founded by India at the 2015 climate change conference in Paris. "We are

trying to launch a Green Grid Initiative (GGI), a Sun Charter, and the World Solar Bank at COP-26 at Glasgow so that COP-26 becomes as important and as far-reaching as COP-21 in the past," ISA director general [1] sai(d)

131. In which city of India, is the headquarter of The International Solar Alliance?
(a) Mumbai
(b) Kolkata
(c) Gurugram
(d) Chennai
132. What is the name of nodal agency that is implemented by the global electricity grid plan of India?
(a) Sun for All
(b) Green Grid
(c) Save Electricity Save World
(d) One Sun One World One Grid
133. Consider the following statement about the ISA:
i. Plan was launched with the objective of transferring the biogas power generated in one region to feed the electricity demands of another region
ii. The WSB launched because many member countries of the ISA face the challenge of raising finances on their own.
Which of the above statements is/are correct.
(a) Only i
(b) Only ii.
(c) Both i and ii
(d) None of above
134. Which is the latest country to join international solar alliance?
(a) Paraguay
(b) Nicaragua
(c) Suriname
(d) Mauritania
135. What would replace [1] in above passage?
(a) Upendra Tripathy
(b) Subhash Chandra Khuntia
(c) Ajay Mathur
(d) N. K. Singh

(Passage Q.136-Q.140): Facebook said late Monday it will restore the ability of Australian users to share links to news articles following a new deal with the local government. The agreement, which gives Facebook and the Australian government two more months to negotiate a long-term agreement, ends a nearly weeklong period during which Facebook users in Australia could not access or share news stories on the platform. Facebook had restricted news-sharing in response to impending legislation that would have required it to let an independent arbiter determine how much compensation it had to give to publishers for linking to their stories. Users could not share links or access news stories from Australian or global outlets. The new deal includes amendments that give Facebook greater control over how it compensates publishers. "Going forward, the government has clarified we will retain the ability to decide if news appears on Facebook so that we won't automatically be subject to a forced negotiation," Campbell Brown, Facebook's head of news partnerships, said in a statement. "The current arrangements allow greater flexibility for digital platforms and now encourages publishers to reach commercial agreements rather than racing to arbitration," Facebook spokesperson Adam Isserlis told NBC News. "Arbitration is a true last resort."

136. Consider the following statement.
i. Digital platforms piggyback on its content without sharing the associated costs.
ii. The proposed rules under the Australian law would expose the Internet companies to "unmanageable levels of financial and operational risk".
Which of the above statements is/are correct.
(a) Only i
(b) Only ii.
(c) Both i and ii

- (d) None of above
137. Which is the largest online news consuming nation?
(a) China
(b) India
(c) Australia
(d) Iceland
138. Which of the following Australian law was Amended in order to make the Facebook pay for the News content?
(a) The News Media Bargaining Code
(b) The Media Regulation Code
(c) The Online Media and News Regulation Code
(d) The Code for the Payment of Due Act.
139. After the passing of the law, Facebook has revealed a deal with which of the following News publishing companies?
(a) Seven
(b) Rupert Murdoch's News Corp
(c) Seven West Media
(d) All of the above.
140. What is/are the reasons given by Facebook to block news content in Australia?
(a) Facebook has initiated this move to oppose the legislation stating that the proposed law fundamentally misunderstands the relationship between Facebook and publishers who use the platform to share news content.
(b) The Legislation proposes to charge only Facebook and not the other online news distributors.
(c) Both A and B
(d) None of Above.

(Passage Q.141-Q.145): The PM would also lay the foundation stones of one bridge and perform ground-breaking ceremony (bhumi puja) of another in Assam on Thursday via video conferencing. Prime Minister Narendra Modi would launch the Mahabahu-Brahmaputra initiative and lay foundation stones of one bridge and perform ground-breaking ceremony (bhumi puja) of another in Assam on Thursday via video conferencing. "Tomorrow, 18th of February is a landmark day for Assam's development journey. The Mahabahu-Brahmaputra initiative will be launched. The foundation stone of 2 bridges will also be laid," the PM had tweeted on Wednesday. According to a PIB release, the launch of Mahabahu-Brahmaputra, will be marked by the inauguration of the Ro-Pax vessel operations between Neamati-Majuli Island, North Guwahati-South Guwahati and Dhubri-Hatsingimari. Foundation stone of Inland Water Transport Terminal at Jogighopa and various tourist jetties on Brahmaputra and launch of digital solutions for Ease-of-Doing-Business will also be a part of the initiative. "The programme is aimed at providing seamless connectivity to of India and includes various development activities for the people living around River Brahmaputra and River Barak," said the release.

141. The name of the project 'Mahabahu Brahmaputra, the words seem to have been inspired by the song by the same name that was sung by noted Assamese singer. What is the name of singer?
(a) Jayanta Hazarika
(b) Zubeen Garg
(c) Bhupen Hazarika
(d) Parveen Sultana
142. Consider the following:
i. Large-scale industries of the region will derive logistical benefits to grow faster.
ii. Ro-Pax services will help in reducing the travel time.
iii. Will provide seamless connectivity to the Western parts of India
iv. Will enhance various development activities for the people living around River Brahmaputra and River Barak.
On the basis of the following codes, which of the above is/are correct:
(a) Option i, and iii
(b) Option ii and iv
(c) Option i, ii and iii
(d) Option i, ii, iii and iv

143. The Dhubri-Phulbari bridge will reduce the distance of 205km tokm.
(a) 14 km
(b) 19 km
(c) 20 km
(d) 24 km

144. Name of the bridge that will connect Neematighat and Kamalabari.
(a) The Rongram bridge
(b) The Dhubri-Phulbari bridge
(c) The Jogighopa bridge
(d) The Majuli bridge

145. Which company get the contract to build India's longest river bridge?
(a) Hindustan Construction Co. Lt(d)
(b) L&T Construction
(c) SCC Infrastructure Pvt. Lt(d)
(d) Indian Structural Consultancy (ISC)

(Passage Q.146-Q.150): [1] has invited suggestions on the Draft Blue Economy Policy for India. The Draft Blue Economy Policy document outlines the vision and strategy that can be adopted by the government to utilize the oceanic resources available in the country. The policy document aims to enhance contribution of the blue economy to India's GDP, improve lives of coastal communities, preserve marine biodiversity and maintain national security of marine areas and resources. Stakeholders including industry, NGOs, academia, and citizens can submit inputs and ideas by 27th of this month.

The policy document has been disseminated for public consultation on several outreach platforms, including websites and social media handles of the [1] and its institutes. Stakeholders have been invited to submit inputs and ideas by February 27, it said in a statement.

146. The draft policy document has recognized some thematic areas. Which one from the following is/are such areas
(a) National accounting framework for the blue economy and ocean governance
(b) Manufacturing, emerging industries, trade, technology, services, and skill development
(c) Marine fisheries, aquaculture, and fish processing
(d) All of above

147. India has an umbrella scheme by the name ofwhich aims at regulated use of oceans, marine resources for sustainable development.
(a) M-SMART
(b) O-SMART
(c) U-SMART
(d) I-SMART

148. Who introduced the concept of Blue Economy in the world?
(a) Gunter Pauli
(b) Abhijeet Banerjee
(c) Amartya Sen
(d) Nasim Nicholas Taleb

149. What would replace [1] in the above passage?
(a) Ministry of Planning
(b) Ministry of Earth Science
(c) Ministry of Shipping
(d) Ministry of Tourism

150. India has collaborated on Integrated Ocean Management and Research, 2020 with which of the following countries?
(a) America
(b) Norway
(c) Sweden
(d) Russia

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

CURRENT AFFAIRS PRACTICE SHEETS (CAPS)

1. (a) a plan named the Sustainable Development of Little Andaman Island Vision Document by NITI Aayog for the sustainable and holistic development of the 680 sq km, fragile Little Andaman Island in the Andaman and Nicobar island group has raised alarm among conservationists.
Earlier in 2020, the Prime Minister declared that the Andaman and Nicobar islands will be developed as a "maritime and startup hub".
2. (c) It would turn the island into a free trade zone and that could compete with Singapore and Hong Kong. The planned urban development would span 240 sq km. Zone 1 would be the financial district and medi-city; zone 2 would have leisure destinations, a film city, a residential district, and tourism attractions; and zone 3 would be a nature zone comprising an exclusive forest resort, nature healing district and a retreat. The proposal also includes plans for 'underwater' resorts, casinos, golf courses, convention centers, nature cure institutes, and an international airport capable of handling all types of aircraft. A 100 km ring road will be constructed parallel to the coastline from east to west and will be supplemented with a mass rapid transit network.
3. (b) In the 18th century the Onge, or Madhumitha, were distributed across Little Andaman Island and the nearby islands, with some territory and camps established on Rutland Island and the southern tip of South Andaman Island. After they encountered British colonial officers, friendly relations were established with the British Empire in the 1800s through Lieutenant Archibald Blair. British naval officer M. V. Portman described them as the "mildest, most timid, and inoffensive" group of Andamanese people he had encountered. By the end of the 19th century they sometimes visited the South and North Brother Islands to catch sea turtles; at the time, those islands seemed to be the boundary between their territory and the range of the Great Andamanese people further north. Today, the surviving members are confined to two reserve camps on Little Andaman, Dugong Creek in the northeast, and South Bay.
4. (c) A 100 km greenfield ring road will be constructed parallel to the coastline from east to west and will be supplemented with a mass rapid transit network with stations at regular intervals.
The new greenfield coastal city would be built along three development anchors and zones:
Zone 1:
spread over 102 sq km along the east coast of Little Andaman
will be the financial district and medi city and will include an aerocity, and a tourism and hospital district.
Zone 2:
Will be the leisure zone constructed by razing 85 sq km of pristine forest
will have a film city, a residential district and a tourism SEZ.
Zone 3:
will be a nature zone on 52 sq km of pristine forest
5. (a) further categorised into three districts: an exclusive forest resort, a nature healing district and a nature retreat, all on the western coast.
The Indian Forest Act, 1927 was largely based on previous Indian Forest Acts implemented under the British. The most famous one was the Indian Forest Act of 1878. Both the 1878 act and the 1927 act sought to consolidate and reserve the areas having forest cover, or significant wildlife, to regulate movement and transit of forest produce, and duty leviable on timber and other forest produce. It also defines the procedure to be followed for declaring an area to be a Reserved Forest, a Protected Forest or a Village Forest. It defines what is a forest offence, what are the acts prohibited inside a Reserved Forest, and penalties leviable on violation of the provisions of the Act.
6. (a) the Union Minister of Finance presented the Economic Survey that details the state of the economy ahead of the government's budget for the fiscal year beginning 1st April, 2021.
The foundational theme of the survey is "Saving Lives and Livelihoods".
7. (a) The Economic Survey of India is an annual document released by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
It contains the most authoritative and updated source of data on India's economy.
It is a report that the government presents on the state of the economy in the past one year, the key challenges it anticipates, and their possible solutions.
The Economic Survey document is prepared by the Economics Division of the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) under the guidance of the Chief Economic Advisor.
It is usually presented a day before the Union Budget is presented in the Parliament.
The first Economic Survey in India was presented in the year 1950-51. Up to 1964, it was presented along with the Union Budget. From 1964 onwards, it has been delinked from the Budget.
8. (b) India adopted a unique four-pillar strategy of containment, fiscal, financial, and long-term structural reforms.
Calibrated fiscal and monetary support was provided given the evolving economic situation.
A favorable monetary policy ensured abundant liquidity and immediate relief to debtors via temporary moratoria, while facilitating monetary policy transmission.
Cushioning the vulnerable in the lockdown and boosting consumption and investment while unlocking, mindful of fiscal repercussions and entailing debt sustainability.
9. (d) India's real GDP to record a growth of 11% in 2021-22 and nominal GDP by 15.4% - the highest since independence.
These projections are in line with International Monetary Fund estimates.
India's GDP is estimated to contract by 7.7% in the Financial Year (FY) 2020-21, composed of a sharp

- 15.7% decline in the first half and a modest 0.1% fall in the second half.
Sector-wise, agriculture has remained the silver lining while contact-based services, manufacturing, construction were hit hardest, and have been recovering steadily.
The external sector provided an effective cushion to growth with India recording a Current Account Surplus of 3.1% of GDP in the first half of FY 2020-21.
10. (c) Starting July 2020, a resilient V-shaped recovery is underway.
V-shaped recovery is a type of economic recession and recovery that resembles a "V" shape in charting.
Specifically, a V-shaped recovery represents the shape of a chart of economic measures economists create when examining recessions and recoveries.
A V-shaped recovery is characterized by a quick and sustained recovery in measures of economic performance after a sharp economic decline.
11. (b) India is ranked third in the world in terms of building large dams.
Of the over 5,200 large dams built so far, about 1,100 large dams have already reached 50 years of age and some are older than 120 years.
The number of such dams will increase to 4,400 by 2050.
This means that 80% of the nation's large dams face the prospect of becoming obsolete as they will be 50 years to over 150 years old(d)
12. (d) The report, compiled by Canada-based Institute for Water, Environment and Health, says the world is unlikely to witness another large dam-building revolution as in the mid-20th century, but dams constructed then will inevitably be showing their age.
The analysis includes dam decommissioning or ageing case studies from the USA, France, Canada, India, Japan, and Zambia and Zimbabwe.
13. (a) The Report provides an overview of the current state of knowledge on the ageing of large dams—an emerging global development issue as tens of thousands of existing large dams have reached or exceeded an "alert" age threshold of 50 years, and many others will soon approach 100 years. These aged structures incur rapidly rising maintenance needs and costs while simultaneously declining their effectiveness and posing potential threats to human safety and the environment.
14. (c) The United Nations University is the academic and research arm of the United Nations. Headquartered in Shibuya, Tokyo, Japan, with diplomatic status as a U.N. institution, its mission is to help resolve global issues related to human development and welfare through collaborative research and education.
15. (a) The Quatinah Barrage or Lake Homs Dam, located in Syria, is the oldest operational dam in the world(d)
The dam was constructed during the reign of the Egyptian Pharaoh Sethi between 1319-1304 BC, and was expanded during the Roman period and between 1934 and 1938.
The masonry gravity dam impounds the Orontes River and creates Lake Homs, supplying water for the city of Homs through canals.
It is two kilometres long, seven metres high and has a base width of 20m. The volume of Lake Homs currently stands at 200 million cubic metres.
16. (d) the Myanmar military has grabbed power in a coup - the third time in the nation's history since its independence from British rule in 1948.
A one-year state of emergency has been imposed and democratically elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been detainee(d)
'Coup' is generally described as a sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power from a government.
17. (a) Aung San Suu Kyi is a Burmese politician, diplomat, author, and a 1991 Nobel Peace Prize laureate who served as State Counsellor of Myanmar and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2016 to 2021. She has served as the president of the National League for Democracy (NLD) since 2011, having been the General Secretary from 1988 to 2011. She played a vital role in Myanmar's transition from military junta to partial democracy in the 2010s.
18. (a) Myanmar is a country in Southeast Asia(a) Myanmar is bordered by Bangladesh and India to its northwest, China to its northeast, Laos and Thailand to its east and southeast, and the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal to its south and southwest. Myanmar is the largest country in Mainland Southeast Asia and the 10th largest in Asia by area(a) As of 2017, the population was about 54 million. Its capital city is Naypyidaw, and its largest city is Yangon (Rangoon).
19. (b) The 2021 Myanmar coup d'état began on the morning of 1 February 2021 when democratically elected members of Myanmar's ruling party, the National League for Democracy, were deposed by the Tatmadaw—Myanmar's military—which vested power in a stratocracy. The Tatmadaw proclaimed a year-long state of emergency and declared power had been vested in Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Min Aung Hlaing. It declared the results of the November 2020 general election invalid and stated its intent to hold a new election at the end of the state of emergency
20. (b) A large majority of the population practices Buddhism; estimates range from 80% to 89%. According to 2014 Myanmar Census, 87.9% of the population identifies as Buddhists. Theravāda Buddhism is the most widespread(d) There are some 500,000 Buddhist monks and 75,000 nuns in this country of 54 million. Other religions are practised largely without obstruction, with the notable exception of some religious minorities such as the Rohingya people, who have continued to have their citizenship status denied and treated as illegal immigrants instead, and Christians in Chin State.
21. (b) Objectives of Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban):
Securing tap and sewer connections:
To bridge the estimated gap of 2.68 crore urban household functional water tap connections.
To provide 2.64 crore sewer connections/septage in 500 AMRUT cities.
Rejuvenation of water bodies:
To augment sustainable fresh water supply and create green spaces and sponge cities to reduce floods and enhance amenity value through an Urban Aquifer Management plan.

- Sponge city is a city that has the capacity to mainstream urban water management into the urban planning policies and designs.
22. (a) Rural Water Supply Programme is taken up under two programmes namely:-
Central Sector National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) earlier known as Accelerated Rural Water Supply Program (ARWSP)
State Sector Rural Water Supply Programme. Earlier it was named as Minimum Needs Programme (MNP)
National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) /Accelerated rural water Supply Program (ARWSP)
 23. (c) In the Budget 2021-22, Jal Jeevan Mission (Urban) has been announced under the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry to provide universal coverage of water supply to all households through functional taps in all statutory towns in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal- 6.
It complements the Jal Jeevan Mission (Rural) which envisages supply of 55 litres of water per person per day to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024.
 24. (a) Ministry of Jal Shakti is a ministry under Government of India which was formed in May 2019 under the second Modi ministry. This was formed by merging of two ministries; Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
 25. (a) Sustainable Development Goal 6 is about "clean water and sanitation for all". It is one of 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, the official wording is: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
 26. (a) The Chauri Chaura incident took place on 4 February 1922 at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of the United Province (modern Uttar Pradesh) in British India, when a large group of protesters participating in the Non-cooperation movement, clashed with police who opened fire. In retaliation the demonstrators attacked and set fire to a police station, killing all of its occupants.
 27. (c) The incident led to the death of three civilians and 22 policemen. The severely rattled establishment of the Raj prosecuted the accused aggressively. Raids and repression followed immediately, lists of volunteers were compiled, and large numbers of suspects were rounded up. A sessions court quickly sentenced as many as 172 of the 225 accused to death. Ultimately, 19 of those convicted were sent to the gallows.
 28. (d) The Non-cooperation movement was launched on 4 September 1920 by Mahatma Gandhi with the aim of self-governance and obtaining full independence as the Indian National Congress withdrew its support for British reforms following the Rowlatt Act of 21 March 1919, and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 13 April 1919.
 29. (a) Non-cooperation movement was a movement organized by Mohandas Gandhi, to induce the British government of India to grant self-government, or swaraj, to Indi(a) Another objective was the restoration of the old status of the Caliph. Lord Reading was the Viceroy during which the Non-cooperation Movement had reached climax and was abruptly withdrawn in 1922.
 30. (d) Gandhi finally left South Africa after more than 20 years, and arrived in India in January 1915, having been delayed by the outbreak of war in Europe. Gandhi and Kasturba looked for a place to settle their "Phoenix family". They had reached India before him and were staying at Santiniketan. Gopal Krishna Gokhale promised to cover all the expenses for a new ashram, and Gandhi felt great relief that he'd not only be freed of the stress of fund raising but would also have a guide.
 31. (b) This Mission was launched in December 2014 with the aim of fully immunizing unvaccinated or partially vaccinated children under UIP.
The scheme targets children aged under 2 years and pregnant women for immunization.
The mission incorporated immunization programme against 12 Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (VPD) namely, Whooping cough, diphtheria, polio, tetanus, meningitis, tuberculosis, hepatitis B, pneumonia, Haemophilus influenzae type B infections, rotavirus vaccine, Japanese encephalitis (JE), measles-rubella (MR) and pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV).
The rate of immunization coverage under the initiative has increased to 6.7% per year through the first two phases of 'Mission Indradhanush'.
 32. (b) The IMI 3.0 initiative was launched by central government in order to provide immunization to the pregnant women and children free of cost in Indi(a)
The scheme will strengthen and re-energize immunization programme.
It will help in achieve full immunization coverage for children and pregnant women rapidly.
This mission also aims to reach the unreached population. It will reach to them with all the available vaccines under the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP).
 33. (a) 24 districts of the state have been included and a total of 3,963 vaccination sessions will be organised in these districts. Medical and Health Secretary Siddharth Mahajan said a target had been set to protect 23,980 children and 6,268 pregnant women by administering vaccines. He said children and pregnant women who were deprived of vaccination due to the coronavirus pandemic will also be provided with necessary vaccines.
 34. (a) Dr. Raghu Sharma is an Indian politician and current Cabinet Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Rajasthan and Member of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly from Kekri constituency Ajmer district. He was a member of parliament from Ajmer constituency in elected from by-election, 2018 as INC candidate.
 35. (b) The practice of immunisation dates back hundreds of years. Buddhist monks drank snake venom to confer immunity to snake bite and variolation (smearing of a skin tear with cowpox to confer immunity to smallpox) was practiced in 17th century Chin(a) Edward Jenner is considered the founder of vaccinology in the West in 1796, after he inoculated a 13 year-old-boy with vaccinia virus (cowpox), and demonstrated immunity to smallpox. In 1798, the first smallpox vaccine was developed Over the

- 18th and 19th centuries, systematic implementation of mass smallpox immunisation culminated in its global eradication in 1979
36. (b) This is a state-of-art facility that will be opened at the Ernakulam general hospital by the Health Minister of Kerala, KK Shailaj(a)
The milk bank is being set up with the support of the Rotary Club of Cochin Global.
The milk bank will ensure the availability of the breast milk for new-born babies who are not breastfed by their own mothers who are sick or deceased or due to insufficient production of breast milk
37. (c) RCG was founded in the year 2008 by the initiative of Rtn.George Mathew, a Rotarian. He was moved and inspired by a Meet organized in that year in Cochin for the Visually Impaired and determined to make a venture for their upliftment.
38. (a) Guwahati's Satribari Christian Hospital has set up Northeast India's first human milk bank. It is widely known that breast milk is best for newborns and no other milk can substitute it. This is because it brings down the neonatal mortality rate. Pediatric and Neonatal Care Specialist
39. (d) A neonatal intensive care unit, also known as an intensive care nursery, is an intensive care unit specializing in the care of ill or premature newborn infants. Neonatal refers to the first 28 days of life. Neonatal care, as known as specialized nurseries or intensive care, has been around since the 1960s.
40. (d) General Hospital, Ernakulam is a state owned hospital in Kochi, Indi(a) It is managed as part of the public health system of the government of Kerala(a) It was founded by the King of the Kochi princely state in 1845 and was handed over to the government of Kerala following independence of India and the following state restructuring. Like any other hospital part of the public health system in India the Ernakulam General Hospital too is funded solely by the state government, and all the services are highly subsidise(d)
41. (c) INS Pralaya, a ship of the indigenously built Prabal Class Missile Vessels, was commissioned in the Indian Navy in 2002.
The ship, built indigenously at Goa Shipyard Limited, bears testimony to capabilities of the Indian shipbuilding industry and is a versatile platform capable of performing a wide variety of surface warfare missions.
42. (a) Indian Naval Ship Prabal, the first ship of the Prabal Class Missile Vessels, was commissioned into the on 11 April 2002. The ship has a displacement of 560 tonnes, a length of 56 metres and a beam of 10 metres and is capable of speed in excess of 35 knots. The ship is fitted with an array of weapons and sensors that include a 76.2 mm medium range gun, 30 mm close range guns, chaff launchers and long range surface to surface missiles. This enables the ship to perform a wide variety of roles including sea control, coastal patrol, coastal security and surface warfare. The meaning of the name 'Prabal' is one who is strong.
43. (a) Defence relations between India and UAE have been steadily growing since the upgradation of bilateral relations to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' in 2017.
- Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi (capital of UAE), was a Chief Guest at India's Republic Day celebrations in 2017. Towards enhancing interactions between the two navies, the inaugural edition of Indian & UAE Navy bilateral exercise GULF STAR-1 was conducted in March 2018. The next edition of the exercise is likely to be conducted in 2021.
44. (d) IDEX and NAVDEX, and the International Defence Conference are organised by the Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC), in cooperation with the Ministry of Defense and the General Command of the UAE Armed Forces. IDEX/NAVDEX takes place biennially. The exhibitions showcase the latest technologies and innovation in the global defence sector, support the growth of UAE's defence industry, and forge new relationships between major international companies. IDEX is the only international defence exhibition and conference in the MENA region demonstrating the latest technology across land, sea and air sectors of defence.
45. (a) Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan born 11 March 1961), colloquially known by his initials as MBZ, is the Crown Prince of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Unit ed Arab Emirates Armed Forces and the de facto ruler of Abu Dhabi.
46. (a) Significance of Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management (CWCM):
The dedicated Centre would address specific research needs and knowledge gaps and will aid in the application of integrated approaches for conservation, management and wise use of the wetlands.
It will help in building partnerships and networks with relevant national and international agencies. It would serve as a knowledge hub and enable exchange between State/ UT Wetland Authorities, wetland users, managers, researchers, policy-makers and practitioners.
It would also assist the national and State/UT Governments in the design and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks, management planning, monitoring and targeted research for wetlands conservation.
47. (b) World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on the 2nd of February.
The year 2021 also commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Convention on Wetlands signed on 2nd February 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar. The theme for 2021 is 'Wetlands and Water'. It was first celebrated in 1997.
48. (c) India has nearly 4.6% of its land as wetlands, covering an area of 15.26 million hectares and has 42 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)
Wetlands declared as Ramsar sites are protected under strict guidelines of the convention. There are currently over 2,300 Ramsar Sites around the world(d)
49. (a) The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

- The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975. Since then, almost 90% of UN member states, from all the world's geographic regions, have acceded to become "Contracting Parties".
50. (b) The Tso Kar Basin is a high-altitude wetland complex, consisting of two principal waterbodies: Startsapuk Tso, a freshwater lake of about 438 hectares to the south, Tso Kar itself, a hypersaline lake of 1800 hectares to the north, situated in the Changthang region of Ladakh. It is called Tso Kar, meaning white lake, because of the white salt efflorescence found on the margins due to the evaporation of highly saline water.
51. (a) The MoU was signed by Union External Affairs Minister Dr. Jaishankar and Foreign Minister Mr. Hanif Atmar, in the presence of PM Modi and the Afghan President.
•The Shahtoot dam is proposed to be constructed on the Kabul river basin, which is one of the five river basins of Afghanistan.
•Shahtoot Dam will provide clean drinking water to two million citizens of Kabul and will also be used to provide irrigation water to nearby areas, rehabilitate the existing irrigation and drainage network, aid in flood protection and management efforts in the area, and also provide electricity to the region.
52. (b) The president of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is the head of state and head of government of Afghanistan. The incumbent office holder is Ashraf Ghani.
Before the office of the president of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was created in 2004, Afghanistan has been an Islamic republic between 1973 and 1992 and from 2001 onwards. Before 1973, it was a monarchy. Between 1992 and 2001, during the civil war, the country was recognized as the Islamic State of Afghanistan, and later the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.
53. (d) The Kabul River Basin has a drainage area of about 54,000 km², which is only about 12 % of the land area of Afghanistan but about 26% of the annual flow of the country. It flows along or through borders of 11 provinces with a population of >7 M people. The Kabul River discharge water volume generally ranges 33 – 460 m³/second but in recent drought years has run dry in Kabul City.
54. (a) India and Afghanistan Monday agreed to enhance cooperation under the New Development Partnership as part of which New Delhi had announced taking up 116 "high impact community developmental projects" in the war-torn country. The decision to scale up cooperation and collaborate on infrastructure and high impact community development projects was taken at the third meeting of the Joint Working Group on Political and Security Cooperation between India and Afghanistan in Kabul
55. (d) Afghan-India Friendship Dam (AIFD), formerly Salma Dam, is a hydroelectric and irrigation dam project located on the Hari River in Chishti Sharif District of Herat Province in western Afghanistan. Since this project is funded and constructed by the Government of India as a part of the Indian aid project, the Afghan cabinet renamed the Salma Dam to the Afghan-India Friendship Dam in a gesture of gratitude to strengthen relations between the two countries
56. (a) A Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) is suspected to have caused the flash floods in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. In October 2020, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) had issued detailed guidelines on how to reduce and deal with disasters caused by GLOFs/Glacial Bursts. The NDMA guidelines suggest that risk reduction can be done by identifying and mapping potentially dangerous lakes, taking structural measures to prevent their sudden breach, and establishing mechanisms to save lives and property in times of a breach.
57. (b) The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister of India, is the apex body for Disaster Management in India. Setting up of NDMA and the creation of an enabling environment for institutional mechanisms at the State and District levels is mandated by the Disaster Management Act, 2005
58. (c) A glacial lake outburst flood is a type of outburst flood caused by the failure of a dam containing a glacial lake. An event similar to a GLOF, where a body of water contained by a glacier melts or overflows the glacier, is called a jökulhlaup. The dam can consist of glacier ice or a terminal moraine
59. (d) According to recent studies, there has been a rapid increase in the number of glacial lakes due to a retreat in the glaciers caused by warming temperatures (due to global warming), and their potential to cause large scale flooding and destruction. The Kedarnath tragedy in 2013, for example, had involved a breach in a large glacial lake. According to a study sponsored by the Central Water Commission (CWC), conducted during 2011-15, there are 352, 283 and 1,393 glacial lakes and water bodies in the Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra basins respectively
60. (a) National Disaster Management Authority, abbreviated as NDMA, is an apex Body of Government of India, with a mandate to lay down policies for disaster management. The phrase disaster management is to be understood as a continuous and integrated process of planning, organising, coordinating and implementing measures, which are necessary or expedient for prevention of danger or threat of any disaster mitigation or reduction of risk of any disaster or severity of its consequences, capacity building, preparedness to deal with any disaster, prompt response, assessing the severity or magnitude of effects of any disaster, evacuation, rescue, relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction'. NDMA was established through the Disaster Management Act enacted by the Government of India on 23 December 2005.
61. (a) The artificial island, to be located 80 kilometres off Denmark's west coast, and its surrounding wind turbines will have an initial capacity of 3 gigawatts, cost around 210 billion Danish crowns (\$33.87 billion), and be operational around 2033. Denmark also has plans for an energy island in the Baltic Sea(a)

62. (c) The Government of Denmark has approved a project to build the world's first energy island, in the North Sea that will produce and store enough green energy to meet the electricity needs of three million households in European countries. The hub will strengthen the integration of Europe's power grids and increase renewable electricity production necessary for a climate-neutral Europe.
63. (d) The North Sea is a sea of the Atlantic Ocean located between Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. An epeiric sea on the European continental shelf, it connects to the ocean through the English Channel in the south and the Norwegian Sea in the north.
64. (b) the abundance of offshore wind energy can be used to produce climate-friendly fuels for shipping, aviation, heavy industries, or heavy-duty vehicles. The two hubs initial capacity will be 5 GW triple the current installed offshore capacity in Denmark. Later they will be expanded to provide a capacity of 12 GW in total.
The deal also established a final phase-out date of fossil extraction by 2050 and laid out plans for a just transition of impacted workers.
Denmark is currently the largest oil producer in the EU, and it is the biggest producer worldwide to establish a final phase-out date so far.
65. (a) The Sansad Bhavan (transl. Parliament building) is the seat of the Parliament of India (a) At a distance of 750 meters from Rashtrapati Bhavan, it is located along Sansad Marg which crosses the Central Vista and is surrounded by the India Gate, war memorial, prime minister's office and residence, ministerial buildings and other administrative units of Indian government. It houses the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha which represent lower and upper houses respectively in India's bicameral parliament.
66. (a) The National Informatics Centre (NIC) has launched an instant messaging platform called Sandes on the lines of WhatsApp.
NIC is under the aegis of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. It provides network backbone and e-Governance support to the Central Government, State Governments and UT Administrations.
67. (b) Digital India is a campaign launched by the Government of India in order to ensure the Government's services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity or making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology.
68. (c) WhatsApp Messenger, or simply WhatsApp, is an American freeware, cross-platform centralized messaging and voice-over-IP service owned by Facebook, Inc. It allows users to send text messages and voice messages, make voice and video calls, and share images, documents, user locations, and other content.
69. (d) It is a Government Instant Messaging System (GIMS) that can be used for official or casual use by any Government employee or public user having a valid Mobile No./Email ID
Features:
It offers features such as group making, broadcast message, message forwarding and emojis.
- Although there is no option to transfer the chat history between two platforms, the chats on GIMS can be backed up to a users' email.
The user will have to re-register as a new user in case they wish to change their registered Email ID or phone number on the App.
It allows a user to mark a message as confidential, which will allow the recipient to be made aware the message should not be shared with others.
70. (a) The first version of the App was released in August 2020 by NI(c) The App was said to be used by the employees of both central and state Government. It was initially launched for Android users but now can also be used by iOS users.
Recently after the notice issued by the Government to WhatsApp, they have agreed to postpone the implementation of the new privacy policy to May 14 instead of February 5, 2021.
71. (a) The Loring Commerce Centre is an industrial and aviation park in northeastern Maine, located in Aroostook County near Limestone. Developed from the former Loring Air Force Base which closed in 1994, it is home to over 20 employers with more than 1,300 employees. The center consists of over 3,800 acres (15 km²) of fully serviced commercial, industrial, and aviation development sites in addition to numerous existing modern and practical buildings in a spacious, campus-like setting. The former airfield is operated as Loring International Airport.
72. (d) Biofuel is fuel that is produced through contemporary processes from biomass, rather than by the very slow geological processes involved in the formation of fossil fuels, such as oil. Since biomass technically can be used as a fuel directly, some people use the terms biomass and biofuel interchangeably.
73. (c) It became the first commercial space launch powered by biofuel, which is non-toxic for the environment as opposed to traditionally used rocket fuel.
Stardust 1.0 is a launch vehicle suited for student and budget payloads.
The rocket is 20 feet tall and has a mass of roughly 250 kg.
The rocket can carry a maximum payload mass of 8 kg.
These rockets will help to launch small satellites called cubesats into space in a way that is relatively cheaper than using traditional rocket fuel and is less toxic for the environment.
74. (b) The startup was founded in the year 2014 and has received grants from the Maine Technology Institute and NASA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program as it embarks on a quest to become the 'Uber for space.'
75. (a) bluShift Aerospace is an employee-owned American aerospace firm based in Brunswick, Maine. Targeting the growing small sat and cube sat launch markets, bluShift is developing suborbital sounding rockets and small-lift orbital rockets which will be launched from a proposed new spaceport in Maine
76. (b) This meeting will be a continuation of the views which were exchanged in the last QUAD meeting which was held in Tokyo on October 6, 2020. The

- first meeting of QUAD took place in New York in 2019.
77. (c) In September 2019, ministers in charge of diplomacy from the four member countries were in New York City. They held the first ministerial meeting of the reformed Quad, and discussed about collective efforts to advance a free, open, prosperous, and inclusive Indo-Pacific(c)
78. (a) The Quad or Quadrilateral Security Dialogue will hold its 3rd ministerial meeting on February 18, 2021, to interchange the views on global and regional issues. The meeting will particularly focus on the practical areas of cooperation for maintaining an open, free, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
79. (b) It is an informal strategic forum between Japan, Australia, India, and the United States of America(a) The forum is maintained by the information exchanges, semi-regular summits, and military drills between the countries.
The forum was first initiated as a dialogue in August 2007 by the then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe with the support of then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of Australia John Howard, and the Vice-President of US Dick Cheney.
80. (d) The Ministry of External Affairs of India, also known as the Foreign Ministry, is the government agency responsible for the conduct of foreign relations of India(a) The Ministry comes under the Government of India and is responsible for India's representation in the United Nations.
81. (a) In 2020, India's score is 40 (41 in 2019). India experienced slow progress in anti-corruption efforts, with several government commitments to reform not yet materialising effectively. India's rank has slipped six places to 86th among 180 countries in Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released by Transparency International.
India was ranked 80th out of 180 countries in 2019.
82. (c) It uses a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).
CPI 2020 paints a grim picture of the state of corruption worldwide. While most countries have made little to no progress in tackling corruption in nearly a decade, more than two-thirds of countries score below 50, with an average score of just 43. Moreover, corruption not only undermines the global health response to Cover-19 but contributes to a continuing crisis of democracy.
83. (d) The top countries on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) are Denmark and New Zealand, with scores of 88, followed by Finland, Singapore, Sweden and Switzerland, with scores of 85 each.
Poor Performers:
South Sudan and Somalia are the bottom Countries with scores of 12 each, followed by Syria (14), Yemen (15) and Venezuela (15).
84. (d) Transparency International e.V. is a German non-governmental organization founded in 1993. Based in Berlin, its nonprofit purpose is to take action to combat global corruption with civil societal anti-corruption measures and to prevent criminal activities arising from corruption
85. (a) Denmark is a Scandinavian country comprising the Jutland Peninsula and numerous islands. It's linked to nearby Sweden via the Öresund bridge. Copenhagen, its capital, is home to royal palaces and colorful Nyhavn harbor, plus the Tivoli amusement park and the iconic "Little Mermaid" statue.
86. (a) The hoopla over the approval accorded by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in imminently procuring 118 indigenously developed Mk-1A Arjun main battle tanks (MBTs) for the Indian Army for Rs 8,350. The Arjun MBT is equipped with an indigenously developed 120mm main rifled gun with Fin Stabilised Armour-Piercing Discarding Sabot (FSAPDS) ammunition.
FSAPDS is capable of destroying all known tank armour up to direct shooting range.
It also has a computer-controlled integrated fire control system with stabilised sighting that works in all lighting conditions.
The secondary weapons include a coaxial 7.62-mm machine gun for anti-personnel and a 12.7-mm machine gun for anti-aircraft and ground targets.
87. (b) Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) consisting of the Indian Ordnance Factories is a Government agency under the control of department of defence production (DDP) Ministry of Defence (MoD), Government of India(a) It is engaged in research, development, production, testing, marketing and logistics of a product range in the areas of air, land and sea systems. OFB comprises forty-one ordnance factories, nine training institutes, three regional marketing centres and four regional controllerates of safety, which are spread all across the country
88. (c) The Arjun MBT Project was initiated by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in 1972 with the Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE) as its lead laboratory.
Objective: To create a "state-of-the-art tank with superior fire power, high mobility, and excellent protection".
89. (b) DRDO works to establish a world class science and technology base for India and provides India's Defence Services decisive edge by equipping them with internationally competitive systems and solutions.
DRDO was established in 1958 after combining Technical Development Establishment (TDEs) of the Indian Army and the Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO).
DRDO works under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence, Government of India(a)
90. (a) Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment is a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation. Located in Avadi, in Chennai, India(a) It is the main DRDO lab involved in the development of Armoured fighting vehicles, Tanks, Automotive electronics and many other.
91. (a) The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has announced the names of the 25 cities selected for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge under the Smart Cities Mission. Objective: To promote cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of Smart Solutions.
Focus: On sustainable and inclusive development and to look at compact areas, create a replicable

- model which will act like a lighthouse to other aspiring cities.
92. (b) WRI India is a research organization that turns big ideas into action at the nexus of environment, economic opportunity and human well-being. WRI India, an independent charity legally registered as the India Resources Trust, provides objective information and practical proposals to foster environmentally sound and socially equitable development. Our work focuses on building sustainable and liveable cities and working towards a low carbon economy.
93. (c) It is a 3-year initiative that aims to work with Indian cities and their partners to pilot and scale ways to improve public space, mobility, neighborhood planning, access to early childhood services and amenities, and data management across city agencies.
94. (d) About the Challenge:
Launch: November 2020.
Features:
It aims to propagate an early childhood centric approach among Indian cities.
Partner Organisations:
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) and World Resources Institute (WRI) Indi(a)
Support to Selected Cities:
Selected cities based on their proposal, readiness, and commitment - will receive technical support and capacity-building to develop, pilot and scale solutions that enhance the quality of life of young children.
95. (a) It is an innovative initiative under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people by enabling local development and harnessing technology as a means to create smart outcomes for citizens.
Coverage and Duration: The Mission covered 100 cities for the duration of five years starting from the financial year (FY) 2015-16 to 2019-20.
Financing: It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
96. (a) The SpaceX, the world's leading private company in space technology, last time spray of 60 satellites into orbit. Following the week's launch, the company has now deployed 122 satellites in orbit with a target of 12000 in all. SpaceX announced the satellite Internet constellation in January 2015, and launched two test satellites in February 2018. The Starlink network, as the project is called, is one of several ongoing efforts to start beaming data signals from space, and also the most ambitious. This launch is the first operational batch of what is intended to eventually evolve into a constellation of nearly 12,000 satellites. They are aimed at providing low-cost and reliable space-based Internet services to the worl(d)
97. (a) Cape Canaveral Space Force Station (CCSFS) is an installation of the United States Space Force's 45th Space Wing, located on Cape Canaveral in Brevard County, Florid(a)
Headquartered at the nearby Patrick Space Force Base, the station is the primary launch site for the Space Force's Eastern Range with three launch pads currently active (Space Launch Complexes 37B, 40, and 41). The facility is south-southeast of NASA's Kennedy Space Center on adjacent Merritt Island, with the two linked by bridges and causeways.
98. (a) The Starlink network, as the project is called, is one of several ongoing efforts to start beaming data signals from space, and also the most ambitious. SpaceX announced the satellite Internet constellation in January 2015, and launched two test satellites in February 2018. Following last week's launch, the company has now deployed 122 satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). The LEO extends up to 2,000 km above the Earth's surface. Starlink aims to start space-based Internet service in the northern United States and Canada in 2020, and expand to cover the whole world by 2021.
99. (a) Space Exploration Technologies Corp. is an American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation services company headquartered in Hawthorne, Californi(a) It was founded in 2002 by Elon Musk with the goal of reducing space transportation costs to enable the colonization of Mars.
100. (a) Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos' Amazon are sparring in front of the FCC over Starlink and Project Kuiper, the respective satellite internet projects of their companies. Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos' Amazon are sparring in front of the FCC over Starlink and Project Kuiper, the respective satellite internet projects of their companies.
101. (b) In its judgment, the PCA said the issue was not just a tax-related issue but an investment-related dispute, and therefore the issue comes under its jurisdiction.
102. (a) Permanent Court of Arbitration was established in 1899 and is headquartered in The Hague, Netherlands.
103. (c) Vivad Se Vishwas' scheme provides for settlement of disputed tax, disputed interest, disputed penalty or disputed fees in relation to an assessment or reassessment order on payment of 100 per cent of the disputed tax and 25 per cent of the disputed penalty or interest or fee. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said the scheme cannot be availed in a case where proceedings are pending before Income Tax Settlement Commission (ITSC) or where writ has been filed against the order of ITS(c)
104. (d) All of the above options are correct w.r.t the dispute between Crain Energy and Indian Government.
105. (c) The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) is based on the two Conventions for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes of 29 July 1899 ('Hague Convention I [1899]') and 18 October 1907 ('Hague Convention I [1907]') adopted by the Hague Peace Conferences (1899 and 1907).
106. (d) According to Dov Raviv, a senior developer dubbed "the father of the Arrow anti-ballistic missile", a single Arrow interceptor has a 90 percent probability of destroying a target missile at the highest altitude possible.
107. (c) The first launch of the Arrow interceptor took place on August 9, 1990, designed to test the missile's control and guidance systems.
108. (a) "The Arrow weapon system, which was one of the first in the world to intercept ballistic missiles, will be upgraded with a significant capability, produced by

- Israel Aerospace Industries, in the form of the Arrow-4 interceptor.
109. (b) The Arrow-4 and David's Sling are meant to replace the existing MIM-104 Patriot batteries in service
110. (c) Israel used Arrow 2 missile against Syria(a) War - March 2017 Israel-Syria incident.
111. (a) The Investor Agenda has been developed for the global investor community to accelerate and scale up the actions that are critical to tackling climate change and achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. The Investor Agenda provides investors with a set of actions that they can take in four key focus areas: Investment, Corporate Engagement, Investor Disclosure and Policy Advocacy.
112. (d) All the options state the reasons given by Trump to withdraw from the Agreement.
113. (a) The event is meant to reintroduce the U.S. as a world leader on climate change and raise global ambition ahead of climate talks in Glasgow, Scotland, in November.
114. (c) On December 14, 2020, it was announced that Gina McCarthy, the former administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under President Barack Obama, would serve as the first national climate advisor.
115. (c) Two of the most visible groups that formed in those years—We Are Still In, a coalition of states, cities and businesses, and America's Pledge on Climate Change, which tracked their progress—merged today under a new name: America Is All In.
116. (c) Mohammed bin Salman bin is the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabi(a) He is currently serving as the country's deputy prime minister.
117. (c) The Saudi Arabian Minister of Justice had appointed 100 women as public notaries in 2020.
118. (d) vSaudi Arabia's Crown Prince has overseen a series of social and economic reforms known as 'Saudi Vision 2030'.
119. (c) Applicants must be between the age of 21 and 40 to be eligible for the military.
120. (a) Women's rights activists who have pushed for gender equality in Saudi Arabia celebrated a long-awaited victory on 26 September 2017 with the announcement that a royal decree had been issued lifting the country's controversial ban on women driving.
121. (b) Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar inaugurated the Atal Paryavaran Bhavan at Lakshadweep.
122. (c) Kadmat Island, also known as Cardamom Island, is a coral island belonging to the Amindivi subgroup of islands of the Lakshadweep archipelago in Indi(a)
123. (a) Indira Paryavaran Bhawan is India's first on-site net-zero building located in New Delhi, Indi(a) The building houses the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change accommodating three ministers and their offices along with about 600 officials. The inauguration of the building, 28 February 2014, was conducted by the then prime minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.
124. (b) Lakshadweep is a group of islands, located 200 to 440 km off the southwestern coast of Indi(a)
125. (a) Environmental permits have been issued for different tourism projects as a part of Niti Aayog's scheme in the three islands, while maintaining the natural beauty and security of Lakshadweep.
126. (a) Mastcam-Z's design is an evolution of NASA's Curiosity Mars rover's Mastcam instrument, which has two cameras of fixed focal length rather than zoomable cameras. The two cameras on Perseverance's Mastcam-Z dual cameras are mounted on the rover's mast at eye level for a person 6 feet, 6 inches (2 meters) tall.
127. (c) Both the options are true and therefore, C is the correct answer.
128. (b) India's Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) or Mangalyaan was launched on board a PSLV C-25 rocket with aim of studying Martian surface and mineral composition as well as scan its atmosphere for methane (an indicator of life on Mars)
129. (d) All the above options are the objectives of the Mars Mission 2020. Therefore, D is the correct answer.
130. (c) The science rover Perseverance of NASA landed on the Red Planet (MARS) on February 18, 2021. This rover is the most advanced astrobiology laboratory that has been ever sent another planet. It will firstly search the traces of ancient microbial life on the Planet. It entered the MARS with a speed of 12,000 miles per hour or 19,000 km per hour. The most challenging part of the robotic vehicle was its self-guided descent and landing during a complex series of maneuver. It was called as 'seven minutes of terror' by NAS(a)
131. (c) The ISA is headquartered in Gurugram Indi(a)
132. (d) ISA is the nodal agency to implement the global electricity grid plan of India called "One Sun One World One Gri(d)
133. (b) Plan was launched with the objective of transferring the solar power power generated in one region to feed the electricity demands of another region The WSB launched because many member countries of the ISA face the challenge of raising finances on their own.
134. (b) New York, Jul 23 (PTI) Nicaragua has become the latest country to join the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement, an initiative led by India to promote sustainable energy.
135. (a) Upendra Tripathy, director-general of the IS(a)
136. (c) Both the above options are true and therefore, C is the correct answer.
137. (d) Iceland takes the crown as the country with the highest percentage of news consumed online (93 percent) through digital devices such as mobiles, online, on social media or news apps.
138. (a) The amended legislation - the News Media Bargaining Code - was passed by Australia's House of Representatives on Thursday, after earlier going through the Senate.
139. (c) Facebook said after those revisions were made that the new agreement would allow it to "support the publishers we choose to." It later revealed a deal with major Australian news company Seven West Media, with plans to sign more with other publishers. Google, meanwhile, had already been trying to get ahead of the new legislation by announcing partnerships with media organizations in Australia, including Seven and Rupert Murdoch's News Corp
140. (a) Only A is true as the legislation is towards all tech giants including Google. Therefore, A is the correct answer.
141. (c) Assamese singer, music composer, film director and actor, Bhupen Hazarika(a)

- Popularly known as the 'Bard of the Brahmaputra', the inimitable Bhupen da enthralled many music lovers across the world and significantly so in Assam, Bengal, Bangladesh, Bollywood and beyond.
142. **(b)** Will provide seamless connectivity to the Eastern parts of India
Will enhance various development activities for the people living around River Brahmaputra and River Barak.
Ro-Pax services will help in reducing the travel time
Speedier connectivity between banks will reduce the distance to be travelled by road
Ro-Pax operation between Neamati and Majuli will reduce the total distance of 420 Km currently being travelled by vehicles to only 12 Km
Small-scale industries of the region will derive logistical benefits to grow faster.
143. **(b)** The Dhubri-Phulbari bridge will reduce the distance of 205km to 19km, which is the total length of the bridge.
144. **(d)** The Majuli bridge will be located on NH-715K and will connect Neematighat (on Jorhat side) and Kamalabari (on Majuli side).
145. **(b)** L&T Construction, the construction arm of infrastructure major Larsen and Toubro (L&T), has bagged the contract to build India's longest river bridge.
Recently, the company has won a 'mega' contract worth more than ₹7,000 crore from National High-Speed Rail Corp to construct 87.57 km long stretch of Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail also known as the bullet train project.
146. **(d)** The document has recognised seven thematic areas: national accounting framework for the blue economy and ocean governance; coastal marine spatial planning and tourism; marine fisheries, aquaculture, and fish processing; manufacturing, emerging industries, trade, technology, services, and skill development; logistics, infrastructure and shipping, including trans-shipments; coastal and deep-sea mining and offshore energy and security, strategic dimensions and international engagement.
147. **(b)** India has an umbrella scheme by the name of O-SMART which aims at regulated use of oceans, marine resources for sustainable development.
148. **(a)** The concept was introduced by Gunter Pauli in his 2010 book- "The Blue Economy: 10 years, 100 innovations, 100 million jobs".
149. **(b)** Ministry of Earth Science has invited suggestions on the Draft Blue Economy Policy for India (a) The Draft Blue Economy Policy document outlines the vision and strategy that can be adopted by the government to utilize the oceanic resources available in the country
150. **(b)** India's Minister for Earth Sciences, H.E. Dr Harsh Vardhan, and Norway's Minister for Climate and Environment, H.E. Mr Sveinung Rotevatn, opened the India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development FEB 2020. The two countries also commenced a new collaboration on Integrated Ocean Management & Research.

TOPIC GALAXY FEBRUARY 2021

Unprecedented Level of
Unemployment in India

UAPA Act and Bhima Koregaon
Case

UAPA act 1967 and Bhima
Koregaon Case

Recent Political Developments
in Sri Lanka

Political Crisis in Puducherry

Military Coup in Myanmar

Law of Sedition with Respect
to Disha Ravi Case

Increasing Fuel Prices and State
of Indian Economy

G-7 and Recent Developments

Elections in West Bengal,
Kerala, Assam, Tamil Nadu &
Puducherry & model code of
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Disinvestment and
Corporatisation

Disha Ravi and Twitter Toolkit
Case

BRICS

ATF and Recent Developments

ONE LINERS

1. Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman is presenting the Union Budget 2021 for the 3rd time.
2. Total COVID-19 support measures amount to 13 per cent of GDP and total COVID-19 support measures by government and RBI amounts to Rs 27.1 lakh crore. The 'Aatmanirbhar' Packages accelerated India's rate of reform.
3. Jal Jeevan Mission with an outlay of Rs 2.87 lakh crore to cover houses and to be implemented over five years. Budget 2021 will also launch Mission Poshan 2.0. Besides this, the launch of urban 'Swacch Bharat Mission' 2.0 with an outlay of Rs 1.42 lakh crore has been made.
4. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced voluntary vehicle scrapping policy. Vehicles to undergo fitness test – which is 20 years for passenger vehicles and 15 years for commercial vehicles. Further details of the scrapping policy to be announced shortly.
5. Rs 35,000 crore to be allocated for further funds for COVID-19 vaccines. we will provide more for COVID-19 vaccines if required. The private sector may be kept out of vaccination efforts it appears, a disappointment for them. At a blended cost of Rs255/dose (in the first phase), that will cover 2 doses of the vaccine for 68.6crore people in FY22.
6. Government has committed Rs 1.97 lakh crore for Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) covering 13 sectors. Further, 7 textile parks will be launched for over three years.
7. National Infrastructure Pipeline has been expanded to 7,400 projects. Further, projects worth Rs 1.1 lakh crore have been completed under the National Infra Pipeline. The government will also introduce a bill to set up DFI providing Rs 20,000 crore to launch the National Asset Monetisation Pipeline to fund new infra projects.
8. More than 13,000 km of roads awarded under Bharat Mala project. Around 3,800 km have been constructed in Bharatmala so far and 8,500 km to be awarded by March 2022. Will complete additional 11,000 km of NH corridor by March 2022. More economic corridors are being planned – 3,500 km of NH works are ongoing in Tamil Nadu.
9. The government will allot Rs 1.03 lakh crore for National Highway Projects in Tamil Nadu; Rs 65,000 core for National Highway Projects in Kerala; Rs 25,000 crore for National Highway Projects in West Bengal.
10. Supplementary Nutrition Programme and POSHAN Abhiyaan to be merged, Mission POSHAN 2.0 to be launched, To strengthen nutritional content, delivery and outcome, Intensified strategy for improving nutritional outcomes in aspirational districts.
11. In Budget 2021, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced Rs 1.1 lakh crore for Indian Railways.
12. A record Rs 1,10,055 crore has been provided for Indian Railways. Out of the total, Rs 1,07,100 crore will be provided for capital expenditure in 2021-22, says FM Nirmala Sitharaman.
13. The government plans to sell part of its holding in Life Insurance Corporation of India through an initial public offering in the coming year. An amendment to the existing Act to facilitate the public offer, says FM Nirmala Sitharaman.
14. Strategic disinvestment of companies including BPCL, Air India, Pawan Hans, IDBI Bank, Container Corporation of India to be completed in 2021-22, Sitharaman has announced. The government will ask Niti Aayog to start working on identifying the next list of companies for strategic sale.
15. FM announces further infusion of Rs 20,000 crore for public sector banks.
16. FDI in insurance sector proposed to be hiked to 74% from 49% now.
17. Rs 1,000 crore to solar energy corporation and Rs 1,500 to renewable energy development agency.
18. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announces a new gas pipeline project for Jammu and Kashmir.
19. FM Sitharaman proposes an increase in agriculture credit target to Rs 16.5 lakh crore. "The MSP regime has undergone a change to assure price that is at least 1.5 times the cost of production across all commodities. The total amount paid to paddy farmers surged to Rs 1.72 lakh crore in 2020-21."
20. The government has announced the extension of benefits of the Ujjawala scheme to an additional 1 crore people. The scheme, which provides LPG connections with financial assistance from the central government and currently benefits 12 crore households, will be extended further to provide clean cheap cooking fuel.
21. FM puts disinvestment receipts at Rs 1.75 lakh cr for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2021. Two PSBs and one general insurance company to be divested, legislations amendments to be introduced in this session.
22. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an allocation of Rs 300 crore to the state of Goa for celebrating the 60th anniversary of the liberation from Portuguese rule.
23. FM announces a special scheme for the welfare of women and children in Assam and West Bengal. Rs 1,000 crore for Bengal, Assam tea workers.
24. Fiscal deficit estimated at 9.5% of GDP for 2020-21. Fiscal deficit for 2021-22 at 6.8% of GDP.
25. Non-resident individuals with entrepreneurial potential are now enabled to set up One Person Companies (OPC) with no paid-up capital and turnover restrictions, reducing registration timeline from 182 days to 120 days. Earlier only Indian resident citizens were permitted to set up OPCs. This would be attractive to the Indian Diaspora.
26. Exemption duty on steel scrap up to March 2022; customs duty on naphtha cut to 2.5 pc: FM
27. Indian-American Bhavya Lal was appointed by NASA as the Acting Chief of Staff of the US space agency. She served as a member of the Biden Presidential Transition Agency Review Team for the agency and oversaw the agency's transition under the administration of President Joe Biden.
28. In accordance with the latest United Nations World Tourism Organization (UN-WTO) "World Tourism Barometer", the year 2020 was the "worst year on record" as global tourism suffered adversely due to international travel bans implemented to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.
29. Oxford Languages, the world's leading dictionary publisher, has named 'Aatmanirbharta' as the Hindi word of the year 2020.

30. The Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani inaugurated the 8th India International Silk Fair on Virtual Portal on 31st January 2021. The five days event is being held on the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council's virtual platform due to COVID-19 pandemic. The fair is considered to be India's biggest silk fair.
31. The Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the National Tribal Festival "Aadi Mahotsav" at Dilli Haat, INA, New Delhi. The Aadi Mahotsav 2021 is being organized from February 1-15, 2021.
32. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the centenary celebrations of the Chauri Chaura incident on February 4 via videoconferencing. February 4, 2021 marks 100 years of the 'Chauri Chaura' incident, a landmark event in the country's fight for independence.
33. Indian-American Bhavya Lal was appointed by NASA as the Acting Chief of Staff of the US space agency. She served as a member of the Biden Presidential Transition Agency Review Team for the agency and oversaw the agency's transition under the administration of President Joe Biden.
34. In Myanmar, a military coup was put in place on 1st February 2021, after the country's military detained State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi along with President Win Myint and other members of the ruling party. Myanmar military (also known as the Tatmadaw), took this step because they declared the November 2020 Myanmar general election results fraudulent, in which Aung San Suu Kyi won a landslide victory in Parliamentary election 2020 to form next Government.
35. The ruling Community Party of Vietnam has reelected its 76-year-old General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong for a third five-year term. He is serving the post since 2011. Trong was granted an exemption to contest in the election, though he was above the age limit of 65. The General Secretary is the highest office within the Communist Party of Vietnam. Trong also holds the position of the President of Vietnam since 2018.
36. Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama has come out with his new book titled 'The Little Book of Encouragement', in which he has shared quotes and words of wisdom to promote human happiness.
37. United States President Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, is publishing his memoir titled "Beautiful Things", which narrates about his struggles with addiction and drug abuse.
38. 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.
39. Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services has announced the appointment of Anish Shah as the chairman of the board, effective April 2, 2021. Shah is already a director of the company.
40. Spicejet chairman Ajay Singh defeated Ashish Shelar in a high-profile contest to get re-elected as president of Boxing Federation India for a second term.
41. Department of Personnel and Training, under Personnel Ministry, has appointed Praveen Sinha, as the interim director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), with immediate effect on 03 February 2021.
42. Defence minister Rajnath Singh has inaugurated Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's (HAL) second Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-Tejas production line in Bengaluru, ahead of the upcoming Aero India 2021. The deal to be signed in the next few days with HAL would strengthen the Indian Air Force's fleet of homegrown fighter jet 'LCA-Tejas' and overall combat capability.
43. The Aero India 2021 event, country's premier aerospace and defence exhibition, kick-started at Air Force Station Yelahanka in Bengaluru. The 13th edition of the international event touted as the world's first-ever hybrid aero and defence show will see several aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF), Army, Navy, Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL), and the Coast Guard participating in the show.
44. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has presented the 50th Kerala State Film Awards 2019 and the J C Daniel Award at a function here. Pinarayi Vijayan released the stamp published in connection with the International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK).
45. Music composer AR Rahman and social activist from Saidapet Hari Krishnan were among the 14 people who were presented the fourth edition of the Alert Being Awards 2020 by the NGO ALERT, for their Good Samaritan work.
46. Raksha Mantri, Rajnath Singh has inaugurated the 'Chiefs of Air Staff (CAS) Conclave' at Air Force Station Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka. The two-day conclave has been organised by Indian Air Force, from 3 to 04 February 2021, in a Hybrid Form with extensive use of digital media.
47. India's position has slipped by two places to be placed at 53rd spot in the 2020 Democracy Index, from among 167 countries. The overall score of India is 6.61 in the Index, on a scale of 0-10. India has been classified as a 'flawed democracy'.
48. 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 firstclass cricket national championship will not be held in 2020-21 domestic season.
49. Jay Shah, the incumbent Secretary of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has been appointed as the new President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC). He is the youngest person ever to be appointed to the office.
50. Tamil Nadu beat Baroda in the final to win the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy 2020-21. The tournament was the twelfth edition of Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy and was played at Sardar Patel Stadium (Motera Stadium), Ahmedabad.
51. Former right-arm fast bowler Merv Hughes has been inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame.
52. Fast bowler Ashok Dinda, has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. The 36-yearold right-handed pacer made his first-class debut for Bengal in 2005 and played for 15 years in Bengal cricket.
53. World Leprosy Day is observed around the world on the last Sunday of January every year. This year World Leprosy Day held on 31 January. The day is celebrated to raise global awareness of this deadly ancient disease and call attention to the fact that it can be prevented, treated and cured. This year theme of World Leprosy Day 2021 is "Beat Leprosy, End Stigma and advocate for Mental Wellbeing".
54. World Wetlands Day is observed every year on February 2 globally. The day aims to raise awareness about the crucial role played by wetlands for people and our planet. The international theme for World Wetlands

- Day 2021 is 'Wetlands and Water'. 2021 marks 50 years of the Convention on Wetlands.
55. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is celebrating its 45th Raising Day on 01 February 2021. The ICG was formally established on February 1, 1977, by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence.
 56. The Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul J. Crutzen, has passed away. He won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995.
 57. Former Australian captain Steve Smith won the third Allan Border Medal of his career at the Australian Cricket Awards for the period 2020-21.
 58. World Unani Day has observed every year on 11th February. The main objective of World Unani Day is to spread awareness about health care delivery through the Unani system of medicine through its preventive and curative philosophy.
 59. Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays floral tribute to former Bharatiya Jana Sangh leader Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya on his 53rd death anniversary as part of 'Samarpan Diwas', in New Delhi on Feb. 11, 2021.
 60. The state government of Madhya Pradesh has launched a water conservation campaign called 'Jalabhishekam', under which more than 57,000 water structures has been constructed. The campaign was inaugurated by the Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually.
 61. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has put a probe called Hope in the orbit around the MARS. UAE has become the fifth country to launch the spacecraft into the orbit of MARS after United States, Soviet Union, Europe and India.
 62. The Pakistan Army conducted a successful testfiring of a short-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile 'Babar' on February 11, 2021. This test was the third missile test carried out over the past three weeks.
 63. A book titled 'By Many a Happy Accident: Recollections of a Life' has been authored by M Hamid Ansari. Mohammad Hamid Ansari was the vice president of India and chairman of the Rajya Sabha for two consecutive terms from 2007 to 2017.
 64. A Book titled 'Platform Scale: For a Post-Pandemic World' has been authored by Sangeet Paul Choudhary. It is published by Penguin Random House India.
 65. Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Defence and MP Jual Oram has launched 'Turn Around India: 2020-Surmounting Past Legacy', a book on creating economic awareness among masses. The book is authored by RP Gupta.
 66. Actor-producer Priyanka Chopra Jonas officially turned author with the release of her first book, "Unfinished: A Memoir", which she described as "honest, raw and vulnerable". The end result is a book, published by the Michael Joseph imprint, which covers her dual-continent 20-year-long career as an actor and producer and her work as a Unicef Goodwill Ambassador.
 67. Google Cloud has appointed Bikram Singh Bedi as the new Managing Director for its India Business. He will succeed Karan Bajwa, who has been elevated as Vice president for the Asia Pacific (APAC) region cloud operations at Google Cloud.
 68. Nigerian economist Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has been chosen as the next Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO). She would be the first woman as well as the first African nation to lead the organization.
 69. The India-US joint military exercise "Yudh Abhyas 20" commenced in Mahajan Field Firing Range of Bikaner district in Rajasthan. This is the 16th edition of an annual bilateral joint exercise of both the armies. It will continue till the 21st of this month.
 70. Robert Irwin, an Australian wildlife photographer, has won the first prize in the Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice Award Contest. Robert won the award for the image titled 'bushfire', which is the picture of the devastating Australian Bushfire in 2020, he captured using a drone, near the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve in Cape York, Queensland.
 71. The Tamil film "Koozhangal" has won "Tiger" award, at the 50th edition of the International Film Festival Rotterdam 2021. The Tiger award is the top honour of the festival, given for best film. Koozhangal (meaning Pebbles) has been Produced by Nayanthara and directed by Vinod Raj PS.
 72. Telangana-based Manasa Varanasi has been crowned as the winner of VLCC Femina Miss India World 2020. Manasa Varanasi was crowned by the winner of Miss India 2019, Suman Ratan Singh Rao from Rajasthan. The 23-year-old will now represent India at the 70th Miss World pageant in December 2021.
 73. In India, the National Women's Day is observed every year on 13 February to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu. This year Nation celebrates its 142nd Birth Anniversary. She was born on February 13, 1879. She was famous for her nickname 'Nightingale of India' or 'Bharat Kokila' because of her poems.
 74. World Radio Day is celebrated on 13 February each year to recognize radio as a powerful medium, which brings people together from every corner of the globe, to promote diversity and help build a more peaceful and inclusive world. The theme of World Radio Day 2021 is "New World, New Radio".
 75. Tennis legend Akhtar Ali, a father figure in Indian tennis, passed away. He represented India in eight Davis Cup ties against Pakistan, Malaysia, Iran, Mexico, Japan and Monaco between 1958 and 1964.
 76. Bollywood actor and Raj Kapoor's son Rajiv Kapoor passed away. He made his acting debut with 1983 movie Ek Jaan Hain Hum.
 77. Former media baron Peter Mukerjee has come out with his memoir 'Starstruck: Confessions of a TV executive'.
 78. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted an eight-member expert committee on Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs) to examine issues and suggest a road map for strengthening the sector. The committee will be chaired by the former RBI Deputy Governor N. S. Vishwanathan.
 79. The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has announced the SERB Women Excellence Award for the year 2021, on the occasion of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science.
 80. Bhim Army Chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad and five Indian-origin personalities have been featured in the 2021 TIME100 Next. TIME100 Next 2021 is the second edition of the annual list of Time magazine's 100 'emerging leaders who are shaping the future.'
 81. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh recently launched an online portal 'e-Chhawani' and mobile app, to facilitate 'ease of living' and 'ease of doing' for the residents of the Cantonment Boards across the country.

82. The National Informatics Centre (NIC), under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, has launched an instant messaging platform called "Sandes". Similar to WhatsApp, the new government instant messaging systems (GIMS) platform can be used for all kinds of communications by anyone using a mobile number or email id.
83. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has virtually launched 'Mahabahu-Brahmaputra' initiative in Assam. He laid the foundation stone for the Dhubri Phulbari bridge. PM also perform the bhumi puja for the construction of Majuli Bridge in Assam.
84. The three-day famous "Mandu Festival" began at the historic town of Mandu in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh on February 13, 2021. The festival will culminate on February 15, 2021. The festival is organised by the state government of Madhya Pradesh to showcase each and every aspect of the ancient Mandu city, ranging from food, music, history & heritage, art & craft etc.
85. The former European Central Bank Chief Mario Draghi has been sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Italy on 12 February 2021.
86. The first day of the spring called 'Pahela Phagun' was celebrated in Dhaka, Bangladesh despite the continued shadow of Corona pandemic in the country. Cultural organisations held programmes at different venues in the city to herald the beginning of the spring. Programmes were held at the Suhrawardy Udyan, Nandan Manch of Shilpakala Academy and several other locations.
87. The Prime Minister of Georgia, Giorgi Gakharia has announced his resignation. The 45-year-old Gakharia served as the Prime Minister from 8 September 2019 to 18 February 2021.
88. Former media baron Peter Mukerjea has come out with his memoir 'Starstruck: Confessions of a TV executive'. The book is presented as a recollection of his experiences in the satellite television industry in India and the changes it has gone through over the years.
89. Award-winning writer, journalist and speaker, Meghna Pant has penned a new book "The Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Good News". The book will be released in April 2021, and soon be seen as a major motion picture under the title Badnam Ladoo.
90. Prizewinning writer Irwin Allan Sealy's new novel 'ASOCA: A Sutra', an imagined memoir of Ashoka The Great. The novel will be presented as an imagined memoir of Ashoka The Great, the emperor who ruled most of the Indian Subcontinent and played a pivotal role in the spread of Buddhism from India to other parts of Asia in the 3rd century BC.
91. Tata Motors Limited has appointed Marc Llistosella as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD). The appointment of Llistosella will be effective from July 1, 2021.
92. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) has announced Dr Ajay Mathur as its new DirectorGeneral following his election at the first special assembly of ISA members. Dr Mathur replaces Mr Upendra Tripathy, who has served as DirectorGeneral since the ISA was founded in 2015.
93. Ajai Malhotra became the first Indian to be elected as the Chairperson of the United Nations Advisory Committee of the Human Rights Council.
94. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has handed over the indigenous main battle tank Arjun Mk-1A to the Army in a function at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai. Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Mukund Naravane received the model of the tank, designed and developed by Chennai-based Combat Vehicles Research & Development Establishment (CVRDE), a unit of the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO).
95. India joined Iran and Russia in the naval exercise dubbed as "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021", which kicked-off in the northern part of the Indian Ocean.
96. Indian Naval Ship Pralaya reached Abu Dhabi in UAE to participate in the Naval Defence Exhibition (NAVDEX 21) and International Defence Exhibition (IDEX 21) from February 20 to 25, 2021. NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21 is one of the leading international naval and defence exhibitions of the region.
97. Defence Research and Development Organisation has successfully carried out joint user trials of indigenously developed Helina and Dhruvastra Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) from the Advanced Light Helicopter at the Pokhran deserts in Rajasthan.
98. S. Theodore Baskaran who is a writer, a historian, a naturalist and an activist has won the Sanctuary Lifetime Service Award, 2020. The award was instituted by the Sanctuary Nature Foundation.
99. India joined Iran and Russia in the naval exercise dubbed as "Iran-Russia Maritime Security Belt 2021", which kicked-off in the northern part of the Indian Ocean.
100. Former India wicketkeeper-batsman Naman Ojha has announced his retirement, from all formats of cricket. He made his first-class debut for Madhya Pradesh in 2000-01.

LEGAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. The Supreme Court of India agreed to examine the adjudication of various cases pending in the Delhi and Rajasthan High Courts to declare a “uniform minimum age” for marriage. A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian issued notice on a plea which was filed to “secure gender justice, gender equality, and dignity of women”. The transfer petition was filed by lawyer Ashwini Upadhyay and the plea sought a direction to the Union government to remove the anomalies in the minimum age of marriage and make it gender-neutral and uniform for all citizens. Further, the transfer of cases to itself by the Supreme Court is done under Article 139A for the cases involving the same or substantially the same questions of law pending before two or more high court. (SOURCE: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/sc-agrees-to-examine-plea-on-uniform-marriage-age/articleshow/80659433.cms>)
2. Summons were issued to the Union Home Minister Amit Shah by a designated MP/MLA court in Bidhannagar, West Bengal to appear before it, in relation to a case of defamation filed by Trinamool Chhatra Parishad MP Abhishek Banerjee. The court has ordered the home minister to answer the charges under Section 500 of IPC i.e. Defamation and is asked to appear in person or through a lawyer. Sanjay Basu, the lawyer appearing for Abhishek Banerjee, has claimed that Shah had made certain defamatory statements against the TMC MP on August 11, 2018 at a rally of the BJP at Mayo Road in Kolkata. (SOURCE: [livelaw/ news-updates/amit-shah-abhishek-banerjee-defamation-trinamool-mp-summons-west-bengal-court-170146](https://livelaw.com/news-updates/amit-shah-abhishek-banerjee-defamation-trinamool-mp-summons-west-bengal-court-170146))
3. A division bench of the Supreme Court consisting of Justice Indu Malhotra and Justice Ajay Rastogi allowed the appeal filed by NHAI (National Highway Authority of India) and set aside an earlier Delhi High Court order and thus directing the parties to approach the Indian Council of Arbitration for the adjudication of the disputes in accordance with ICA Rules of Domestic Commercial Arbitration & Conciliation, 2016. Further, the court also appointed as the Sole Arbitrator in the matter, former Supreme Court Judge, Justice GS Singhvi, so as to adjudicate all claims and counter claims of parties in this matter. (SOURCE: [livelaw/ news-updates/nhai-vs-progressive-construction-supreme-court-appoints-justicertd-gs-singhvi-as-sole-arbitrator-in-170079](https://livelaw.com/news-updates/nhai-vs-progressive-construction-supreme-court-appoints-justicertd-gs-singhvi-as-sole-arbitrator-in-170079))
4. The Parliamentary Standing Committee, headed by Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change has recommended that the government should address the concerns raised over the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019, including over creation of a national databank of crime scene DNA profiles and fears of communities being targeted. Further, the Parliamentary Standing Committee strongly recommends only one National Data Bank, to minimise chances of misuse of data. Further, dissent note is submitted by the two members of the panel, Asaduddin Owaisi, a Lok Sabha member from Telangana, and Binoy Viswam, a Rajya Sabha member representing Kerala. This bill was first introduced in Lok Sabha by Harsh Vardhan as the Minister for S&T in August 2018 and passed in January 2019, but lapsed due to dissolution of Lok Sabha in 2019. (SOURCE: https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/parliamentary-panel-raises-concerns-over-proposed-dna-technology-bill-121020302010_1.html#:~:text=A%20parliamentary%20panel%20has%20raised,to%20do%20with%20the%20case.)
5. The NITI Aayog has asked the Jaipur based research organisation 'Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) International' to conduct a study on the “economic impact” of various judgments delivered by courts and tribunals and the ‘judicial activism’ of such courts and tribunals. The CUTS is a registered, recognised, non-profit, non-partisan, non-government organisation (NGO) pursuing social justice and economic equity both within and across borders. Further, the objectives of the research is “narrative building for sensitising the judiciary on the economic impact of their decisions” and to do an objective cost-benefit analysis of the economic impact of the decisions. (SOURCE: <https://indianexpress.com/article/business/niti-aayog-orders-study-on-economic-impact-of-judicial-decisions-7178976/>)
6. The state government of Karnataka informed the Karnataka High Court’s Division bench of Chief Justice Abhay Oka and Justice Sachin Shankar Magadam that it proposes to have legislation for regulating online gambling and betting in the state. The bench previously gave the government 6 week time period to file its statement of objections to a petition which seeks to ban all the online betting or gambling platforms of any nature unless regulations are established. The petition was filed by Sharada D R over regulatory vacuum and absence of any body or monitoring agency for the same. (SOURCE: [livelaw/ news-updates/karnataka-high-court-online-gambling-legislation-betting-169959](https://livelaw.com/news-updates/karnataka-high-court-online-gambling-legislation-betting-169959))
7. The Rajya Sabha has passed the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020, which seeks to provide greater autonomy and flexibility to the ports by professionalising their governance by setting up boards for each major port. The bill also seeks to replace the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963. This bill applies to the 12 major ports of the country which are - Deendayal (erstwhile Kandla), Mumbai, JNPT, Marmugao, New Mangalore, Cochin, Chennai, Kamarajar (earlier Ennore), V O Chidambarnar, Visakhapatnam, Paradip and Kolkata (including Haldia). The bill proposes to create a Board of Major Port Authority for each of these ports. These Boards will replace the existing Port Trusts under the 1963 Act, that are comprised of members appointed by the central government. (SOURCE: <https://www.livelaw.in/news-updates/parliament-passes-major-port-authorities-bill-2020-169655>)
8. The Lok Sabha has passed the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021. It was introduced by the Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad in February 2021. The bill seeks to amend the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996. It is already in force by the way of ordinance which was promulgated by the President in

November, 2020. The main features of the bill is the amendment with regards to the regulations of qualifications of the arbitrators, experience and norms for accreditation of arbitrators and unconditional stay on awards in certain cases.

(SOURCE:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/parliament-live-updates-february-12-2021/article33816456.ece>)

9. The Delhi High Court has rejected a criminal defamation case filed against a journalist Priya Ramani by a former Union Minister MJ Akbar, over her tweets accusing him of sexual harassment in 2018 MeToo movement. Ramani pleaded truth, good faith, public interest and public good as her defence in the defamation trial. According to the court, the right of reputation, which is an integral part of Article 21 of the Constitution, cannot be protected at the cost of the right of life and dignity of women. Further, existence of Section 499 (Criminal Defamation) of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 is not a restriction on the freedom of speech and expression.

(SOURCE:

<https://www.barandbench.com/news/litigation/delhi-court-acquits-priya-ramani-in-mj-akbar-defamation-case>)

10. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison discussed Canberra's media policy with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on the backdrop of its reach out to India and other countries like France, UK and Canada so as to stitch a global coalition against tech giants Google and Facebook. Australia's proposed law, News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code Bill 2020, mandates a bargaining code that aims to force Google and Facebook to compensate media companies for using their content. The Bill is expected to set a precedent in regulating social media across geographies. Further, the bill also provides for

provisions of arbitration and fine and the negotiations to be done with local publishers by the Big Tech Firms.

(Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/australias-new-bill-to-regulate-facebook-google-figures-in-morrison-chat-with-pm-modi/article33886159.ece>)

11. After the Rajya Sabha, the Lok Sabha has also passed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha by Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy and it seeks to replace an ordinance which is already in place (signed by the President in January 2021) which merges the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) cadre of All India Services Officers such as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service with the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre. The bill amends the Section 88 of the Act and brings clarity to Section 13 of the J&K Reorganisation Act.

(SOURCE:

<https://www.livewlaw.in/news-updates/parliament-pass-jammu-kashmir-reorganisation-amendment-bill-2021-ias-ips-all-india-service-169826>)

12. Justice Puligoru Venkata Sanjay Kumar, who is the present Judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, is appointed as the Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court. The notification for the same was issued by the Ministry of law and justice. Justice PV Sanjay Kumar has replaced Justice Ramlingam Sudhakar, who was working as the Acting Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court since 2018. Further, the appointment is done by President in the exercise of his power conferred under Article 217 (1) of the Constitution of India.

(SOURCE: <https://www.livewlaw.in/news-updates/justice-pv-sanjay-kumar-of-the-ph-high-court-appointed-as-chief-justice-of-manipur-high-court-169797>)

ARTICLES YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO MISS

1. BEATING DOWN CRITICAL JOURNALISM, CREATIVE FREEDOM

The curious deference of the judiciary is part of the precariousness of the rights to freedom in India today

Rioting in India's capital city on a day reserved for the celebration of the Republic, was a new low in unravelling political concord. Within days of that trauma, points of entry into Delhi were barricaded with layers of concrete and steel, interwoven with vicious spools of concertina wire. Some locations had lethal iron nails embedded into the road and trenches dug deep to prevent the ingress of farmers long encamped around the capital city, protesting recent legislation that goes by the title of "agricultural reforms".

Media clampdown

A few days after the riots, expectations that public resentment would enable the forceful dispersal of protests seemed belied. Active efforts to deter critical reporting were by then under way. Nine senior **journalists were charged under the law of sedition**, for reporting the ambiguous circumstances of the sole fatality in the riots.

A **young freelance journalist was arrested** and charged with lacking appropriate media credentials. Even as he was **granted bail**, in a rare exception to what is becoming the general rule of denial, the Home Ministry decreed that only journalists with press credentials granted by the central government could legitimately report on the farmers' agitation.

A number of **social media pages run by newspapers and websites were blocked** by executive order. For media platforms that did not relent, the legal process of securing injunctions began, along with an unobvious threat that employees of the social media company, **Twitter, could face arrest** for failure to comply.

The tragedy of a government that remains deaf to the anxieties of a significant section of Indian citizens was transformed into farce, when formidable machines of propaganda were mobilised on February 3, to push back against two inconsequential **Twitter posts, by a music artiste** from the United States and **an environmental campaigner from Sweden**.

Editorial | **An inevitable showdown: On government's notice to Twitter**

Imperfections made worse

Events since Republic Day constitute an unprecedented assault on three of the "rights to freedom" granted under **Article 19 of the Constitution**: free speech, free movement, and peaceful assembly. Like several other Articles in the Fundamental Rights chapter, Article 19 includes a non obstante clause: notwithstanding all its promises, each of the rights comes with certain conditions attached.

These clauses were in most part inserted by the **First Amendment to the Constitution**, when the government of a fledgling nation sought to negotiate the fine line between freedom and necessity. It was a manifestly imperfect job of resolving a conundrum that has defied the most determined philosophical inquiries. And those imperfections have been compounded by decades of judicial default and executive caprice.

The Supreme Court has spoken up in its lucid interludes, but often retreated rather than face down obvious abuses. In matters of sedition, the first impulse of the judiciary in the afterglow of the Republic's emergence, was to strike the law down. Article 13 of the Constitution annulled every law that was inconsistent with the fundamental rights chapter and the Patna High Court was on solid ground when it held the sedition clause in criminal law unconstitutional. A few years later, in a milieu more sensitive to possibilities of disorder, the Supreme Court reinstated the law, but held it applicable only to "activities as would be intended ... to create disorder or disturbance of public peace by resort to violence".

Editorial | **In search of malice: On FIRs against journalists**

In 2012, the Gujarat High Court upheld this precedent in a matter involving the country's largest English language newspaper, The Times of India, after sedition charges brought by the Commissioner of Police in Ahmedabad city. It also added that the Constitution protected strong commentary on "measures or acts of the Government, or its agencies, so as to ameliorate the condition of the people or to secure the cancellation or alteration of those acts by lawful means".

It took the newspaper and three employees, four years to secure full discharge. A luxury by the standards of the judicial system, this is one denied to most independent journalists and smaller media houses, entrapped in the coils of whimsical prosecution by police and other actors anxious to evade public scrutiny.

State's new weapon

The nine journalists charged after the violence at the Red Fort have been spared arrest, but that possibility will hang heavy over their practice for years, potentially inducing a "play-safe attitude". The State government in Uttar Pradesh, inattentive to even these niceties, has used arrest as literally the first recourse against critical journalism.

Siddique Kappan, who works with a number of news organisations and is a member of the Kerala Union of Working Journalists, was **arrested by the police while on his way to Hathras** early in October, to report on **the death after alleged sexual assault, of a young girl of the Dalit community**. He was charged with sedition and other

offences, and the statutes invoked, including the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, could potentially result in indefinite detention.

Angle of religion

Politics of religious offence constitute another clear threat to freedom of speech and expression. The **arrest of a stand-up comic, Munawar Faruqui**, in Indore, for jokes that he did not crack, represents a particular depth of absurdity. He was denied bail in successive hearings and **the Madhya Pradesh High Court was particularly severe** in its strictures about an intent which remained unexpressed. He finally was **granted bail** after over a month in detention, by the Supreme Court.

In deciding the **S. Rangarajan versus Jagjivan Ram** case in 1989, the Supreme Court declined to embrace a doctrine of censorship. The benchmark for judging the potential for offence had to be a “reasonable” person and not someone of “weak and vacillating” mind. Yet, in the case of the TV serial, *Tandav*, whose producers and cast face charges despite multiple apologies, the Court has now chosen to underline the conditional nature of the free speech right. An actor seeking exemption from arrest because he was only a paid professional, was **told that he should not “play a role which hurts religious sentiments”**.

Another blow

In the matter of regulating the right to freedom of movement, the Supreme Court has encountered unanticipated turbulence. Last year, while hearing a petition seeking the dispersal of protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Delhi’s Shaheen Bagh area, the **Court ruled that expressions of dissent should take place in “designated places only”**.

When called upon to apply the same principle to ongoing farmers’ protests, the Court balked. A ruling that the protests were unconstitutional would have been the legal basis for a coercive dispersal of the farmers. Hesitant about that, the Court sought to play problem solver, **nominating a team of mediators** to find the solution the government had set its face against. It did not end well for the parties involved, and least of all, for public perceptions of the integrity of judicial institutions.

Asymmetry in the application of the law, when charges are brought against partisans of the ruling party is another feature, widely commented on. While hearing a recent matter involving hate speech, the Chief Justice of India observed that **the Court is trying to discourage litigation under Article 32**, which **enables any citizen to invoke the writ jurisdiction of the higher judiciary** when fundamental rights are threatened. This ambivalence towards an article that B.R. Ambedkar called the “heart and soul of the Constitution”, and the curious **judicial deference to the political executive**, are central parts of the story of how precarious the rights to freedom are today.

2. EXPLAIN SPEAKING: INVERTED-V — THE SHAPE OF INDIA’S GDP GROWTH RATE OVER THE PAST DECADE

The likely gains in FY22 will only bring the economy at par with where it was at the end of FY20

Last two weeks saw a flurry of macroeconomic publications — the **presentation of the Economic Survey for 2020-21**, the **Union Budget for 2021-22**, and the **first bi-monthly monetary policy review by the Reserve Bank of India**.

But this flood of information also hid something crucial — the **First Revised Estimates (FRE) of GDP growth in 2019-20**, which were released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) on January 29.

In the past, we have explained how GDP revisions, even though a routine exercise, can be of importance, especially when the growth rate **fluctuates significantly enough**.

The latest revisions have not only tweaked the GDP growth rates for 2019-20 but also recalibrated the GDP growth rates of two more years — 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Accordingly, India’s GDP likely grew by just 4% in 2019-20 as against 4.2%. The MoSPI press release also dialled down the GDP growth rate for 2017-18 from 7% to 6.8%. However, for 2018-19, the GDP growth rate has now been moved up from 6.1% to 6.5%.

There are three main takeaways from this tweak of GDP data.

1: The extent of data revisions

Take the example of 2018-19. According to the First Advance Estimates for 2018-19 released on January 7, 2019, the GDP was to grow by 7.2%. Then Second Advance Estimates in February 2019 said the GDP would grow by 7%. The Provisional Estimates at the end of May 2019 pegged the GDP growth at 6.8%. Then the First Revised Estimates, released on January 31, 2020, revised the growth rate down to just 6.1%. Now the Second Revised Estimates for FY19 inform us that the GDP grew by 6.5%. To be sure, there are at least two more revisions left — the “third revised estimates” (another year down the road) and the “actuals” (two years hence).

Similarly, the year 2019-20 started off with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman expecting the GDP to grow by 8%-8.5%. The First Advance Estimates in January 2020 finally accepted that the economy will grow by just 5%. By the time the year was over, the estimates pegged the growth rate at 4.2%. Now, a year later, the First Revised Estimates have been dialled down the growth rate to just 4%.

Another example is from 2016-17 when the GDP growth rate went up from 7.1% (according to the First Advance Estimates) to 8.3% in the final analysis.

Mind you, these revisions are for years before the Covid pandemic disrupted the Indian economy and none of them involves a change in methodology.

2: The importance of India's GDP in 2019-20

The combined result of an 8% GDP contraction in the current year (2020-21) followed up by a (projected) 10%-11% GDP growth in the next financial year (2021-22) will be that, at the end of March 2022, the absolute level of India's GDP will be almost the same as it was in March 2020 — that is, the end of 2019-20.

That makes the absolute level of India's GDP — the total GDP expressed in rupee terms — in 2019-20 all the more significant.

But as things stand, given the extent of revisions — not just in 2019-20 data but also in GDP levels of preceding years — it would be hard to be sure of what India's GDP was at the end of March 2020.

The year 2019-20 is also significant for another reason. Since the Covid disruption hit the Indian economy only in the last week or so of March 2020, the overall GDP growth of 2019-20 provides a good measure of how weak/strong the Indian economy was going into the pandemic. This, in turn, should ground our expectations about how fast can India grow from 2022-23 onwards — that is, once the low base effect of 2020-21 has run its course in 2021-22.

3: The “inverted-V” shape of India's GDP growth rate during the past decade

The past decade started with policy paralysis and sub-optimal growth rate. But as the chart below alongside shows, India's GDP growth rate followed an “inverted-V” shape before Covid brought the economy down to a complete halt. The chart below gives a glimpse of the supply side of the economy. It maps the growth rate of the Gross Value Added (GVA) in India's manufacturing sector. This, too, followed an inverted-V shape.

The manufacturing sector is possibly the most important sector for India as it has the capacity to absorb the maximum number of unemployed people in the country. The GVA growth rate of a sector shows how well that sector has grown over the years.

The upshot: There is much talk about India registering a “V-shaped” recovery in the next financial year (2021-22). But, what the data above suggests is a more broad-based loss of growth momentum in the economy before Covid. The likely gains in FY22 will only bring the economy at par with where it was at the end of FY20.

In other words, the actual recovery — whatever be its shape — will start once India starts growing beyond the FY20 levels of GDP.

3. EXPLAINED: HOW ARE THE MYANMAR PROTESTS BEING ORGANIZED?

Protests in Myanmar against the military coup that removed Aung San Suu Kyi's government from power have grown in recent days despite official efforts to make organizing them difficult or even illegal.

Protests in Myanmar against the military coup that removed Aung San Suu Kyi's government from power have grown in recent days despite official efforts to make organizing them difficult or even illegal. Here's a look at who is organizing the protests and the obstacles they face:

Is protesting allowed?

It was a grey area for many days after the Feb. 1 coup, which also included the declaration of a state of emergency. But with the protests growing and spreading in recent days, the military on Monday issued decrees that effectively ban peaceful public protests in the country's two biggest cities.

Rallies and gatherings of more than five people, along with motorized processions, are outlawed and an 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. curfew has been imposed for areas of Yangon and Mandalay, where thousands of people have been demonstrating since Saturday.

The restrictions have raised concerns about the potential for a violent crackdown.

Who is leading the protests?

For the most part the protests have grown organically.

“This movement is leaderless — people are getting on the streets in their own way and at their own will,” said Thinzar Shunlei Yi, a prominent activist.

Activist groups, professional work groups, unions and individuals across Myanmar have all come out in opposition to the coup, as has Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party.

Shortly after the return to direct military rule — which Myanmar experienced for five decades until 2012 — a Facebook page titled “Civil Disobedience Movement” started issuing calls for peaceful protests. The page now has more than 230,000 followers and hashtags associated with it are widely used by Myanmar Twitter users.

Health care workers also started a protest campaign, wearing red ribbons, holding signs and urging other medical staff to not work at state-operated health facilities.

Street protests over the weekend featured the heavy presence of unions, student groups and other groups representing professions as diverse as park rangers and book printers.

Yangon residents have voiced dissent by banging pots and pans together across the city at night.

What are the obstacles?

One of the biggest challenges for protesters has been the military's attempts at blocking communications.

Authorities first went after Facebook — which has more than 22 million users in Myanmar, or 40% of the population — but people simply moved to other platforms like Twitter.

Making the rounds have been copies of safety protocol information sheets, some of them originally from Hong Kong, with instructions on how to encrypt communications and how to stay safe during protests.

Over the weekend the military temporarily cut internet access and some phone services. Protestors were quick to adapt, with some even using phones registered in neighboring Thailand.

“Even when the internet was completely cut off on Saturday for 24 hours, people were able to communicate within Myanmar by phone and SMS,” said Clare Hammond, a senior campaigner the rights group Global Witness.

For some who don't have phone service or internet access during blackouts, word of mouth and simply historical precedent has brought them to protest sites, many of which are the same as in previous uprisings against military rule.

Will the protests continue?

So far protesters seem undeterred, even with the new restrictions on demonstrations.

Nevertheless, some are concerned that the military is laying the groundwork for a violent crackdown such as those that ended protest movements in 2007 and 1988.

Linda Lakhdhir, a legal advisor at Human Right Watch, said the military could try to use the violation of the military's decrees as well as other laws already in place as justification for a crackdown.

“They may maybe a terrible, abusive, draconian laws, but the military will justify (use of them) as them following the law,” she said.

Authorities fired water cannons and rubber bullets at some protests on Tuesday, ratcheting up tensions.

4. DEADLOCK IN COLLEGIUM: CJI BOBDE MAY RETIRE WITHOUT ANY APPOINTMENT TO SUPREME COURT

The last time a CJI retired without a single appointment to the SC was in 2015 during the tenure of CJI H L Dattu when there was an unprecedented stand-off between the judiciary and the government over the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC).

With just over a month left in his 14-month tenure as Chief Justice of India, the Justice S A Bobde-led collegium is yet to make its first recommendation of a judge to be appointed to the Supreme Court since he took office in November 2019.

The last time a CJI retired without a single appointment to the SC was in 2015 during the tenure of CJI H L Dattu when there was an unprecedented stand-off between the judiciary and the government over the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC).

This time, though, the impasse is within.

Sources told **The Indian Express** that one reason is the lack of consensus in the collegium – comprising CJI Bobde and Justices NV Ramana, Rohinton Nariman, U U Lalit and AM Khanwilkar – on recommending Justice Akil Kureshi, Chief Justice of Tripura High Court, to the apex court.

The stalemate in the collegium comes even as the process of appointment of at least six SC judges is due.

The apex court is short of four judges while two retirements — of CJI Bobde and Justice **Indu Malhotra** — are due in the next two months. Additionally, Justices Ashok Bhushan, Rohinton Nariman and Navin Sinha will retire this year.

Justice Kureshi is, currently, No. 2 in the all-India seniority list after Karnataka HC Chief Justice Abhay Oka whose parent HC is the Bombay HC. While Oka is set to retire in May 2022, justice Kureshi will retire in March 2022. However, in terms of regional representation, the SC currently has four judges- CJI Bobde, justices AM Khanwilkar, DY Chandrachud, Bhushan Gavai from Bombay HC, which is also justice Oka's parent HC, there is only one judge-justice MR Shah from the Gujarat HC which is also justice Kureshi's parent HC.

Justice Kureshi's appointment as CJ of Tripura was also a point of contention for the then SC collegium headed by CJI **Ranjan Gogoi**.

In September 2019, the SC court collegium had reversed its May 2019 recommendation appointing Justice Kureshi as CJ of Madhya Pradesh High Court after the government sent the file back for reconsideration and instead recommended him for the position of Chief Justice of Tripura.

Without citing reasons, the collegium said that its reconsideration was based on the “communication and material” placed by the Department of Justice.

Even in November 2018, when the post of CJ of the Gujarat High Court fell vacant, Justice Kureshi, who was then the seniormost judge of the High Court, was to take charge as acting Chief Justice of Gujarat HC as per convention.

However, the government named Justice AS Dave, who was then the second most senior judge in the Gujarat High Court after Kureshi, as acting Chief Justice and, instead, transferred Justice Kureshi to Bombay High Court as its fifth most-senior judge.

This unusual situation would have led to Justice Kureshi being a judge in Gujarat HC until he took office in Bombay HC while his junior would be acting CJ. However, this, too, was reversed when the Gujarat HC Bar launched a protest and moved the SC.

CJI Bobde inherited just one vacancy, that of former CJI Ranjan Gogoi, against the total strength of 34 judges when he took over. However, three judges have retired since leaving the SC with 30 judges.

The first vacancy in CJI Bobde's tenure was at least nine months ago when justice Deepak Gupta retired in May last year.

In contrast, four of his predecessors had at least four appointments by the government irrespective of the duration of their tenures. Former CJI Ranjan Gogoi inherited seven vacancies when he took office but 14 judges were appointed during his tenure and, for a few weeks before he retired, he presided over a SC that functioned at its full strength.

Apart from the 14 SC appointments, 146 high court appointments were made during his tenure. Gogoi, incidentally, had a slightly shorter tenure of 13 and a half months as CJI.

Former CJI Dipak Misra, who preceded Gogoi, saw four SC appointments and 81 appointments to high courts although his 13-month tenure was fraught with controversy including an unprecedented impeachment move against him. He was CJI from August 2017 to October 2018.

Four SC judges were appointed during the term of Misra's predecessor, former CJI JS Khehar in his short tenure of less than eight months. Before CJI Khehar, former CJI TS Thakur who was CJI between December 2015 and January 2017 also saw four judges appointed to the SC.

However, between September 2014 and December 2015, when Justice HL Dattu was CJI, there were no appointments made to the SC as the NJAC, which sought to alter the process of judicial appointments by giving the executive a foot in the door, was under challenge before the court.

On October 16, 2015, a five-judge bench of the SC struck down the constitutional amendment that sought to establish the NJAC. That case, which had the judiciary fighting an existential turf-war against the government, had grounded the appointment of judges to the SC as well as to the HCs.

5. TOOLKIT CONTENT DOES NOT DISCLOSE SEDITION, SAYS FORMER SC JUDGE

Charges in the case show a “non-application of mind”, says Justice Deepak Gupta

Publicly **available content of the ‘toolkit’**, which led to the arrest of 22-year-old climate activist Disha Ravi, does not disclose sedition, former Supreme Court judge Justice Deepak Gupta told The Hindu in a phone interaction on Tuesday.

“The first toolkit that I read which is in public domain... I don't know whether the police have something else, but what is in the public domain does not disclose anything to indicate there is any incitement to violence. I heard some police official say in an interview that on January 26 they said ‘you march to Delhi’, but he forgets they also said ‘we will come back with the farmers’. At best, it could be an offence of violating Section 144 which may have been in force in Delhi,” Justice Gupta said.

The former judge said “moving to the Capital of the country to press forth your demands is not an act of sedition”.

Justice Gupta said charges in the toolkit case show a “non-application of mind”.

“They have also put Section 153 and 153A (IPC), which is disaffection against society and religion. I don't know where they get these from... In my view there is no case of sedition made out,” Justice Gupta said.

Ms. Ravi was remanded to custody on multiple charges like sedition, criminal conspiracy and promoting enmity between groups in connection with a toolkit on the farmers' protest.

Exponential increase in arrests

Noting there has been an “exponential increase in arrests in the past few years”, Justice Gupta said this may “create a sense of fear”.

“Youngsters and activists, they may be right or they may be wrong. I may not agree with what they say, but they have a right to say it. By arresting, you are sending a message that don't become an activist or don't take part in this or your future could be in jeopardy. If you do that and succeed, then we will no longer be a democracy. We will not be the India which our founding fathers wanted it to be. Every voice should be heard,” Justice Gupta said.

He explained that a show of disaffection would not amount to sedition. Disaffection has to be accompanied with incitement of violence or public disorder to constitute the offence.

Justice Gupta cited the Balwant Singh case in which the apex court had set aside the conviction of two men accused of raising some slogans like “Khalistan zindabad”.

“The Supreme Court said this by itself does not constitute sedition. How does Disha Ravi's case compare with those cases? I hope the police read these judgments and know what is the law of sedition.”

Discouragement of dissent

He said the discouragement of dissent or discussion is spread across the political spectrum. While “dissent is the essence of democracy”, people who voice contrary views and their supporters are termed “anti-nationals”.

“If there is no dissent there is no democracy. Democracy itself means there are two views... Just because a citizen does not agree with the government does not mean that the person is not patriotic. We all love our country. We are all patriots... To have different points of view is democracy,” Justice Gupta noted.

He said the discomfort with contrarian views is spread across the political spectrum.

“It seems the powers-that-be do not encourage discussion or dissent in any manner whatsoever. And it goes across the political spectrum. Whether it is a government in Chhattisgarh, which is a different party, or West Bengal where somebody made a cartoon of the CM or a joke... The number of cases has increased exponentially in the last few years...” he said.

6. DNA TECHNOLOGY (USE AND APPLICATION) REGULATION BILL, 2019:

Context:

Leaders of All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) and CPI have filed dissent notes to the parliamentary standing committee’s report on the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019 on the following grounds:

1. The bill does not take into account their concerns over privacy violations.
2. If enacted, the Bill will target Dalits, Muslims and Adivasis by way of DNA sample collection and indefinite storage.

What are the main concerns and issues wrt to the bill?

The Bill proposes DNA sampling and profiling of citizens accused of crime or reported missing, and storing their unique genetic information for administrative purposes.

The fear is that:

1. The law could be used for caste or community-based profiling.
2. The Bill runs afoul with the standards set in **the Puttaswamy and Subramanian Swamy judgments** of the Supreme Court.
3. In the absence of a statutory framework protecting the right to privacy, this Bill will cause irreversible damage to individuals’ right to privacy as well as the criminal justice system.
4. Without adequate statutory safeguard to protect against the opacity of the law on the sort of information being collected and its unrestricted usage for a variety of purposes this law is susceptible to future misuse and abuse.

Highlights of the Bill:

1. As per the Bill, national and regional DNA data banks will be set up for maintaining a national database for identification of victims, suspects in cases, undertrials, missing persons and unidentified human remains.
2. Punishment: Those leaking the DNA profile information to people or entities who are not entitled to have it, will be punished with a jail term of up to three years and a fine of up to Rs. 1 lakh.
3. Usage: As per the bill, all DNA data, including DNA profiles, DNA samples and records, will only be used for identification of the person and not for “any other purpose”.
4. The bill’s provisions will enable the cross-matching between persons who have been reported missing on the one hand and unidentified dead bodies found in various parts of the country on the other, and also for establishing the identity of victims in mass disasters.
5. The Bill establishes a DNA Regulatory Board to accredit the DNA laboratories that analyse DNA samples to establish the identity of an individual.

7. HC STRIKES DOWN SEC ORDER CONFINING MINISTER TO HOME

State Election Commissioner (SEC) N. Ramesh Kumar’s order that Panchayat Raj & Rural Development Minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy should be confined to his residence till February 21 to prevent him from vitiating the process of Gram Panchayat (GP) elections, was struck down by the High Court on Sunday. However, the court barred the Minister from interacting with the media till the above date.

Justice D.V.S.S. Somayajulu delivered the verdict after hearing the arguments on a house motion petition filed by Mr. Ramachandra Reddy Saturday evening against the SEC’s order to the Director General of Police, which was for restricting the Minister’s movements till February 21, when the last phase of the panchayat elections are scheduled to be held.

A main point in the Minister’s petition is that he got to leave his residence on Sunday morning to receive President Ram Nath Kovind who was on a visit to Chittoor district, at the Renigunta airport.

Appearing for the Minister, senior advocate C.V. Mohan Reddy contended that the impugned action was beyond the jurisdiction of the SEC and in violation of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution. He also insisted that the SEC should have put the Minister on notice before issuing the proceedings, and claimed that his client only criticised the SEC’s order that ‘unanimous elections’ in some districts should not be notified.

Senior lawyer B. Adinarayana Rao told the court that the SEC's order was necessitated by the Minister's exhortation to election authorities to defy the orders of SEC, which adversely affects the conduct of elections, and that the SEC did not intend to fully curtail the Minister's liberty.

The SEC did not have any objection to Mr. Ramachandra Reddy discharging his functions as the Minister.

'Unprecedented'

Advocate-General S. Sriram said the right to free speech and liberty are provided under Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution and they can be curtailed only on reasonable grounds and orders to that effect are liable to be tested on grounds such as proportionality and mala fide including arbitrariness.

He further said the kind of restraint which the SEC sought to impose on the Minister was unprecedented and therefore required a judicial examination.

A prior notice would have established the facts as the content of the Minister's speech was contested, especially in the context of the distinction between hate speech and an inflammatory speech. The SEC should have justified his restraint order on the touchstone of fair and due process, the A-G observed.

8. DISHA RAVI CASE: WHAT IS A TOOLKIT THAT HAS BROUGHT ACTIVISTS UNDER THE LENS?

Context:

Activist Disha Ravi is in custody of the Delhi Police for editing and sharing a toolkit with globally known teen anti-climate change campaigner Greta Thunberg.

1. Some others have also been booked for coordinating with pro-Khalistan outfit Poetic Justice Foundation (PFJ) in connection with protest by farmers' unions over the new farm laws.

What is a toolkit?

A toolkit has become a handy tool in sustaining a movement or campaign in times of social media influences.

1. It is a document created as an explainer on an issue as a guide to everybody who is associated with the campaign or can be roped in to give a fillip to the campaign.
2. It also provides a roadmap of how to take forward the campaign or agitation explaining what needs to be done, when and how.

What's the case now?

In the present case, the toolkit became an accidental disclosure when Greta Thunberg on February 5 shared a Google document, a "toolkit, inadvertently. She deleted the tweet later, but it became a headline.

1. The toolkit tried to "explain the farmers' protests" against the Modi government on the Delhi borders over the farm laws passed by Parliament in 2020.
2. After investigations, the Delhi police found that some pro-Khalistani elements were involved in creating disaffection against the country.
3. Disha Ravi is now accused of being a "key conspirator" for preparing and sharing the document.

What is Khalistan movement?

Khalistan movement was a separatist campaign primarily backed by Pakistan to foment terrorism during 1980s in Punjab. There have been attempts in recent times by groups based in Pakistan and Canada to revive the campaign with no practical traction in India.

9. CABINET APPROVES AMENDMENTS TO JUVENILE JUSTICE ACT, EMPOWERS DMs TO ISSUE ADOPTION ORDERS

Union Minister Smriti Irani also announced that certain crimes by children will not fall under 'heinous' category, thus ensuring that they are not tried in adult courts.

New Delhi: Children accused of offences where the maximum sentence is more than seven years but in which no minimum sentence is prescribed will no longer be tried in adult courts, and from now on, district magistrates as well as the additional district magistrates will be allowed to issue adoption orders.

These are among the major amendments to the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, that the union cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved Wednesday.

The amendments also state that crimes committed by children, in which the minimum sentence is less than seven years, will be categorised as "serious" and not "heinous" offences.

In effect, this will mean that such children will be treated as juveniles and will not have to go through the adult criminal justice system.

"Under the act, offences where the maximum sentence is more than seven years but no minimum sentence is prescribed, or a minimum sentence of less than seven years is provided shall be treated as serious offences," Union Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani said at a press conference Wednesday.

In January 2020, the Supreme Court had **observed** that offences that carried maximum of more than seven years imprisonment, but with no minimum sentence of fewer than seven years should be treated as 'serious' and not as 'heinous' offences.

During the **hearing**, senior Advocate Siddharth Luthra had pointed out to the bench that there was a fourth category of offences, in which the minimum sentence is less than seven years. He also said that in some cases, there is no minimum sentence prescribed but the maximum sentence is more than seven years.

The court had then asked the law and home ministries to make sure that the fourth category of offences was addressed by Parliament as early as possible or by the executive through an ordinance.

Wednesday's cabinet decision addresses these issues.

"This is a welcome move and would help the cause of juvenile justice. This characterisation was important because, as per the prevailing law, a child below 18 years has to be treated as a juvenile/child for all purposes. There is, however, one exception to this — where the child is alleged to have committed a 'heinous offence'. If a child has committed a 'heinous offence', the child (if between the age of 16-18 years), can be tried as an adult and taken out of the protective umbrella of the juvenile justice system," said Bharat Chugh, a former civil judge and now advocate at the Supreme Court. "The amendment seeks to prevent that from happening by limiting the ambit and definition of 'heinous offences'."

Empowering district magistrates

In addition, the cabinet also approved amendments to the Act that will now empower district magistrates as well as the additional district magistrates to issue adoption orders.

"The amendments include authorising district magistrate including additional district magistrate to issue adoption orders under Section 61 of the JJ Act, in order to ensure speedy disposal of cases and enhance accountability," said a government press release.

All functions related to adoption will now come under the district magistrate. In addition, children who have suffered trafficking, drug abuse or have been rescued or children abandoned by their guardians too will come under child in need of protection or CARE, the release added.

"If children have been reunited with their parents or are found dead, that data too will be under the district magistrate, which will be given to the state government for proper evaluation," Irani said at the press conference. "In addition, DMs and ADMs can also decide adoption cases and appeals can be done at the divisional commissioner level."

In addition, to enhance accountability, the amendments have also empowered district magistrates to monitor agencies responsible for implementing the JJ Act.

10. 'APPROACH HIGH COURT' : SUPREME COURT REFUSES TO ENTERTAIN PETITION CHALLENGING MADHYA PRADESH 'LOVE JIHAD' LAW

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a writ petition which challenged the constitutional validity of the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Ordinance dealing with religious conversions and inter-religious marriages.

"Approach the MP High Court. We would like to have the views of HC. We've sent similar matters back to HC", a bench headed by the Chief Justice of India observed while considering a writ petition filed Vishal Thakre and few others.

The bench asked the petitioner's counsel to withdraw the petition and granted liberty to move the High Court. The Madhya Pradesh High Court has already issued notice on a petition challenging the Freedom of Religion Ordinance on January 30.

The petitioners had contended that the MP law, which followed a similar ordinance made by the Uttar Pradesh in the name of 'Love Jihad', infringed a person's right to privacy and freedom of choice, leading to the violations of fundamental rights under Articles 14, 19(1)(a) and 21 of the Constitution of India.

Recently, the Supreme Court had refused to entertain a similar petition filed by PUCL against the UP ordinance on religious conversions asking them to approach the High Court.

Another petition filed by Vishal Thakre and others challenging the UP Ordinance is pending in the SC. Also pending is a PIL filed by "Citizens for Justice and Peace(CJP)" against the UP Ordinance and the Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act. Earlier this week, a CJ-led bench had allowed the CJP to bring on record challenges against similar laws made by Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Jamiat Ulema-E- Hind(a body of Islamic scholars) has impleaded in the petition filed by CJP saying that the laws are being used to harass several Muslim youths.

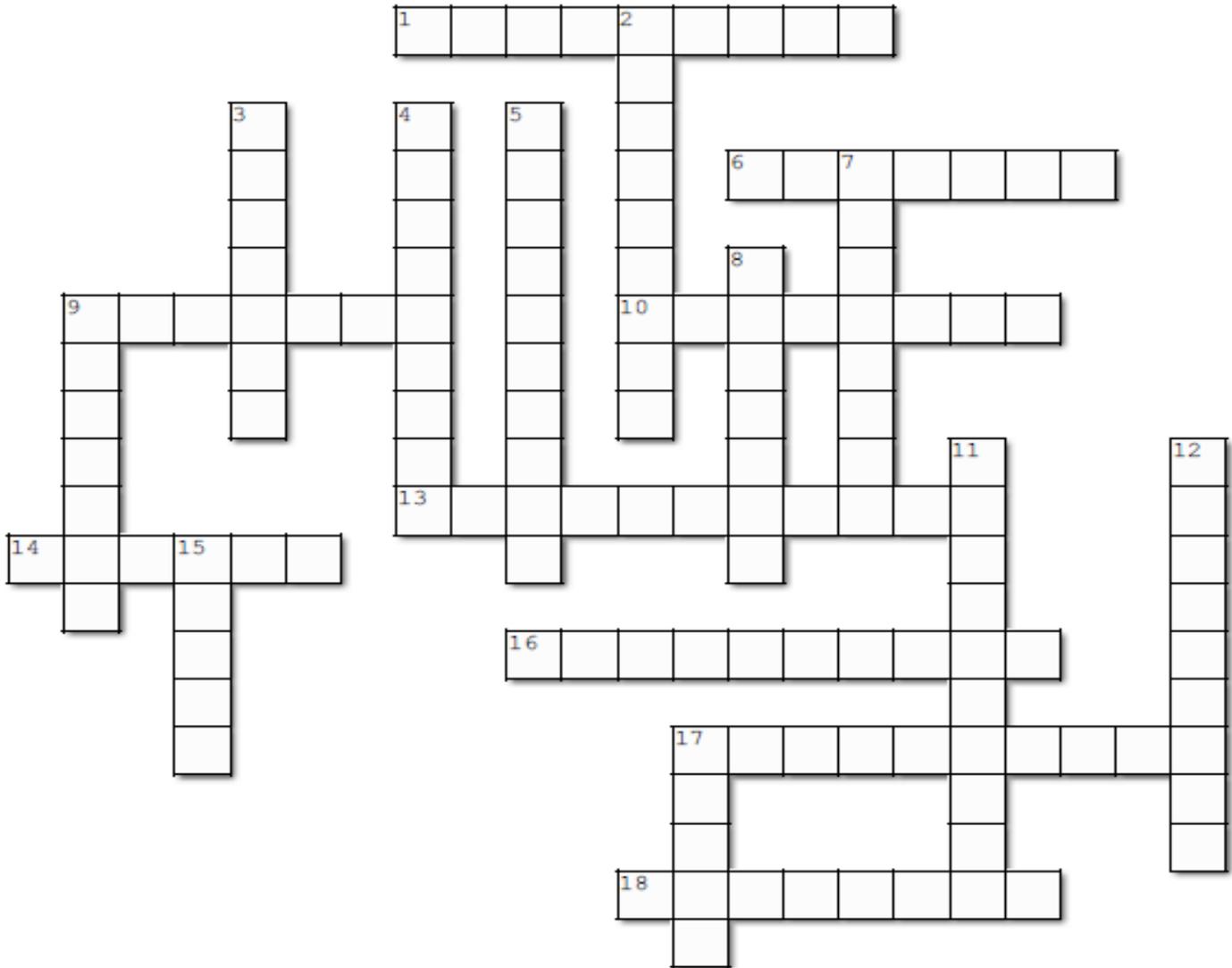
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LEGAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

COMPLETE THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE BELOW



ACROSS	DOWN
1. violation or injurious treatment of a sacred object or person 6. pardon 9. written amendment in a will 10. agreeable 13. liability on a property 14. two are related by blood or adoption wholly through males 16. prevent one from receiving money or property after one's death 17. acceptable 18. right over a neighbour's land or waterway	2. guilty 3. Having the same mother but different fathers 4. Not Guilty 5. A partner in a crime 7. substituting new contract with old one 8. lying against oath 9. To leave property in the custody of another 11. Abrogation or cancellation of a contract 12. Behaviour or language showing disrespect for religion or God 15. elsewhere 17. another name of a person

CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY: FEBRUARY

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 15. Alibi
16. Disinherit
17. Admissible (across),
alias (down)
18. Easement | 10. Amenable
11. Rescission
12. Blasphemy
13. Encumbrance
14. Agnate | 6. Amnesty
7. Novation
8. Perjury
9. Codicil (across),
consign (down) | 1. sacrilege
2. Incupate
3. Uterine
4. Excupate
5. Accomplice |
|---|--|---|---|