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Monthly Current Affairs GK Digest: January 2022

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MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS GK DIGEST: JANUARY 2022

ITC LIMITED PARTNERED WITH INVEST INDIA

Current Context: The ITC Limited has entered into a partnership with Invest India.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **They have partnered to crowdsource innovative ideas and solutions for the single-use plastic (SUP) substitution.**
- Both entities aim to automate waste segregation through this partnership.
- Under the partnership, the ITC Paperboards and Specialty Papers Division (PSPD) has launched ITC Sustainability Innovation Challenge.
- Through this challenge, various innovative ideas will evolve from startups. These ideas will be related to having a sustainable packaging methodology and solutions for smart waste management.
- Theme of the challenge is 'Sustainable Solution' and the problem statements are 'Sustainable Packaging Solutions' and 'Waste segregation, collection, and handling'.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ITC Limited: Kolkata, West Bengal

TRIFED SIGNED MOU WITH RMP-NFPRC

Current Context: The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has signed MoU with Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini- Nation First Policy Research Centre (RMP-NFPRC).

KEY POINTS

- **The MoU was signed to have a partnered effort to leverage knowledge, expertise, and institutional strengths.**
- Both the entities will undertake research projects to develop tribal communities.
- They will review current government schemes like Van Dhan Yojana and will publish research findings in the form of joint reports.
- They will also conduct conferences, seminars in areas of their research activities for the tribal community welfare.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of TRIFED: New Delhi

JHARKHAND PARTNERED WITH ISB

Current Context: The Government of Jharkhand has entered into a partnership with the Indian School of Business (ISB).

KEY FACTS

- **They have partnered to empower the state's forest economy.**
- Hence the MoU was signed among the Department of Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste, Minority and Backward Class Welfare, Department of Forests of Jharkhand, and Bharti Institute of Public Policy at Indian School of Business.
- The entities will develop scalable and sustainable solutions to develop forest-industrial value chains.
- Under the MoU, the partnership among local communities, industry leaders who use forest products, government agencies will take place. These entities will generate jobs and wealth as well in the state.
- The pilot project in the same will be developed in the Gumla district of Jharkhand and further will be implemented in the rest of the state.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Jharkhand: Hemant Soren
 - Governor of Jharkhand: Ramesh Bais

LIC, GIC AND NEW INDIA ASSURANCE SYSTEMATICALLY IMPORTANT INSURERS

Current Context: As per the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC), and New India Assurance continue to be Domestically Systematically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) for FY2021-22.

DETAILS

- The D-SIIs tag is given to those insurers which are 'too big or too important to fail (TBTF)'.
- The failure of these insurers will cause a dislocation of the financial system and will affect majorly on the country's economy as well.

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of IRDAI: Hyderabad, Telangana

TASK FORCE TO EXPLORE DEVELOPMENT IN 6G TECHNOLOGY

Current Context: The Ministry of Communication's Department of Telecommunication (DoT) has framed a task force to explore development in 6G (6th Generation) Technology.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The task force is framed under the Technology Innovation Group (TIG).
- The members will explore technological innovations and commercial usage of 6G.
- They will give opportunities for 6G in areas like research, manufacturing, formation of its pre-standardization, and market-ready framework.
- **The 6 task forces are formed:**
 - Task Force on Multi-platform for the next-generation network: Bhaskar Ramamurthy, Director of IIT Chennai.
 - Task Force on Spectrum Policy: Abhay Karandikar, Director of IIT Kanpur.
 - Task Force on multi-disciplinary innovative solutions and devices: Bharadwaj Amrutkar, Director of IISc Bangalore.
 - Taskforce on devices: Kiran Kumar Kuchi, Director of IIT Hyderabad.
 - Taskforce for financing R&D: Ashok Kumar Tiwari, Technology member of Digital Communication Commission.
 - Taskforce on international standards: NG Subramaniam, Chairman of Telecommunications Standards Development Society of India.
- Every member and their respective teams will work to contribute to International Mobile Telecommunications Standard 2030 in the development work of 6G.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of Communication: Ashwini Vaishnaw

INDIA SEMICONDUCTOR MISSION

Current Context: The Union Information Minister, Ashwini Vaishnaw launched India Semiconductor Mission.

KEY FACTS

- This mission aims to generate a large amount of investment to set up semiconductor wafer fabrication facilities in-country.
- In this regard, the companies which are interested are invited by the center to work on the development of semiconductors.
- The mission is an independent and specialized business division under Digital India Corporation.

- The financial support of upto 50% of the project cost will be provided for the scheme to set up display fabs. This will attract large investment to manufacture Thin Film Transistor LCD or Active Matrix Organic LED, which are the types of display panels.
- The support of around Rs 12,000 crores per fab has been mandated under the scheme to set up display fabs in India.

'DIGI ZONE' — BY LIC

Current Context: The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has inaugurated 'Digi Zone' at Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai.

KEY POINTS

- **The 'Digi Zone' aims to enhance the digital footprint of LIC.**
- It will allow people to purchase policies in an online manner.
- Through the 'Digi Zone', people will also be able to pay their policy premiums and get benefits from other services.
- The 'Digi Zone' will make LIC a tech-driven life insurer.
- The information related to LIC's products and services will be provided through kiosks installed on the Digi Zone premises.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of LIC: Mumbai
 - Chairperson of LIC: M R Kumar

APPOINTMENTS ON 2ND JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Baldev Prakash: He was appointed as Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of Jammu & Kashmir Bank for the tenure of 3 years.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of J&K Bank: Srinagar
- **Amir Subhani:** He was appointed as Chief Secretary of Bihar. He has replaced Tripurari Sharan.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Bihar: Nitish Kumar
 - Governor of Bihar: Phagu Chauhan

MAJOR DHYAN CHAND SPORTS UNIVERSITY

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University.

DETAILS

- **The foundation stone was laid down at Meerut, Uttar Pradesh.**
- **It will be set up at Salawa and Kaili villages of Sardhana town in Meerut.**
- **The cost of the project is Rs 700 crore.**
- The university will help the region and country be self-reliant in sports equipment manufacturing.
- It will also help to fulfill the National Education Policy's objective to give importance to the sports in the country.
- The Major Dhyan Chand Sports University will provide international sports facilities to the youth as every year more than 1000 youths will graduate from this university.
- It is the first-of-its-kind Sports University which will have modern and state-of-the-art sports infrastructure facilities and will train youths in various sports.
- It will be equipped with synthetic Hockey ground, Football ground, Basketball, Volleyball, Handball, Kabaddi ground, and Lawn tennis court.
- It will be having a synthetic running stadium, swimming pool, Gymnasium Hall, Multipurpose Hall, cycling Velodrome, and dedicated areas for squash, weightlifting, gymnastics, shooting, archery, canoeing, and Kayaking.

PRE-QUALIFIED PROGRAM FOR UNSECURED LOANS

Current Context: Paisabazaar.com in partnership with Axis Bank launched a pre-qualified program for unsecured loans on its platform.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The pre-qualified program is based on deep technology and performs deep analytics in partnership with banks and non-bank financiers.**
- This will further allow selected customers to view customized and pre-qualified lending offers on the platform Paisabazaar.com.
- The bank's customers who are eligible for pre-qualified personal loans from the bank will be able to view and apply for desired offers and get instant access to credit.
- The process for the same will be entirely digital and will offer a great customer experience.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Paisabazaar.com: Gurugram, Haryana
 - HQ of Axis Bank: Mumbai

'PADHE BHARAT' CAMPAIGN

Current Context: The 'Padhe Bharat' was launched by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

KEY FACTS

- It is the 100-day Reading Campaign.
- It aims to improve the learning levels and abilities of the students.
- The campaign will develop the creativity, critical thinking, vocabulary, writing skills of the students.
- The students from Balvatika to class 8 can participate in the campaign.
- The verbal skills of the students will improve due to this campaign.
- It will conclude on 10 April 2022.
- The campaign will focus on all Indian languages.

APPOINTMENT AND RESIGNATION ON 3RD JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Vinay Kumar Tripathi: He was appointed as new Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Railway Board.

ABOUT

- **Durga Shanker Mishra:** He was appointed as Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh.
- **Abdalla Hamdok:** He announced his resignation to be the Prime Minister of Sudan.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Sudan: Khartoum
 - Currency of Sudan: Sudanese pound
- **Mohaed Hussein Roble:** He was resigned from the post of Prime Minister of Somalia. The resignation was handed to him by President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Somalia: Magadishu
 - Currency of Somalia: Somali Shilling

NIPPON INDIA MF LAUNCHED AUTO ETF

Current Context: The Nippon Life India Asset Management Limited (NAM India) which is the asset manager of Nippon India Mutual Fund (NIMF) launched Nippon India Nifty Auto ETF.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The offer for the new fund will be open from 5th Jan 2022 to 14th Jan 2022.

- The minimum amount of investment is Rs 1000 and investors can add Re 1 thereafter.
- It is basically an open-ended scheme.
- It will replicate the Nifty Auto Index as ETF will predominantly invest in stocks comprising the Nifty Auto Index in the same proportion which will further provide exposure to top 15 companies dealing in various domains like automobiles 4 wheelers, automobiles 2 and 3 wheelers, auto ancillaries, and tyres.
- The auto ETF will showcase the behavior and performance of the Automobiles sector and will be a benchmark against Nifty Auto TRI.
- Its aim is to offer investment returns in close to the total returns of the securities which are represented by the Nifty Auto Index before expenses and subject to tracking error.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Nippon Life India Asset Management Limited: Mumbai

KALPANA CHAWLA CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN SPACE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Current Context: The Kalpana Chawla Centre for Research in Space Science & Technology (KCCRSST) was inaugurated by Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

KEY POINTS

- **It is established at Chandigarh University, Gharuan.**
- **The research space center is the first of its kind in North India.**
- **He also launched Chandigarh University's Defence Scholarship Scheme.**
- The scheme is worth Rs 10 crore.
- Chandigarh University's Defence Scholarship Scheme is framed for the wards of Defence Personnel serving in any of the three services.
- He mentioned that due to such initiatives, India will become a leader in future technologies and the research space center will generate great talents who will touch new heights of success similar to late India-born astronaut Kalpana Chawla, who is the 'pride of India'.

FINO PAYMENT BANK RECEIVED APPROVAL FOR CROSS BORDER REMITTANCES

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India has approved Fino Payments Bank to commence international remittance business.

KEY FACTS

- **This was granted under Money Transfer Service Scheme (MTSS).**
- Henceforth, the Fino Payments Bank will be able to perform inward cross-border money transfer activities.
- The funds remitted by family members or friends from abroad will be directly withdrawn at the ATM or AEPS which are managed by Fino Payment Banks.

- This will help to enhance the robust distribution network of Fino Payment Bank as its customers will be able to receive funds from foreign countries.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Fino Payment Bank: Mumbai

INTEREST RATES ON THE SMALL SAVINGS SCHEMES UNCHANGED

Current Context: The GOI's Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs has retained the interest rate of small saving schemes unchanged for Q4 of FY22 in order to maintain the status quo.

DETAILS

- The reason behind this is the rising cases of COVID-19 in the country.
- The GOI interest rates on the small savings schemes.
- **Following are the interest rates for the fourth quarter of 2021-2022 (January – February – March 2022):**
 - Post Office Saving Account: 4%
 - 5 Year Post Office Recurring Deposit (RD) Account: 5.8%
 - Post Office Time Deposit (TD) Account – One Year: 5.5%
 - Post Office Time Deposit Account (TD) – Two Years: 5.5%
 - Post Office Time Deposit Account (TD) – Three Years: 5.5%
 - Post Office Time Deposit Account (TD) – Five Years: 6.7%
 - Post Office Monthly Income Scheme Account (MIS): 6.6%
 - Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (SCSS): 7.4%
 - 15-Year Public Provident Fund Account (PPF): 7.1%
 - National Savings Certificates (NSC): 6.8%
 - Kisan Vikas Patra: 6.9%
 - Sukanya Samriddhi Account: 7.6%

APPOINTMENTS ON 4TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: VS Pathania: He was appointed as 24th Director General (DG) of the Indian Coast Guard. He has replaced Krishnaswamy Natarajan who retired from the post.

ABOUT

- **S Sahoo:** He was appointed as panel head of the primary market advisory committee on data setup by SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India). The previous panel committee was headed by Madhabi Puri Buch.
- **Tarun Kapoor:** He was appointed to head the Energy Transition Advisory Committee (ETAC) set up by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

NEAT 3.0

Current Context: The Union Minister of Education, Dharmendra Pradhan launched NEAT 3.0.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The NEAT 3.0 signifies the 'National Educational Alliance for Technology'.
- He also launched regional language textbooks which are prescribed by the AICTE.
- The objective of NEAT 3.0 is to offer ed-tech solutions and courses to the students from a single dedicated platform.
- It will prove beneficial to economically disadvantaged students.
- The NEAT 3.0 is the Public-Private Partnership which is framed by GOI and the Education Technology companies.
- Around 58 global and Indian ed-tech startups have given their contribution to developing the platform.
- Around 100 courses and e-resources will be provided.

PM MODI INAUGURATED DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS IN MANIPUR AND TRIPURA

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Manipur and Tripura to inaugurate various developmental projects.

KEY POINTS

- He dedicated projects worth Rs 4,800 crores to Manipur.
- At Manipur, he laid the foundation stone for five National Highways which will be 110 km across and will develop road connectivity.
- He also inaugurated a steel bridge between Silchar and Imphal. It is built on the Barak river.
- He laid the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art cancer hospital in Imphal.
- In Tripura, he inaugurated the new Terminal Building of Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport. It is spread over 30,000 sq km.
- The Mukhyamantri Tripura Gram Samridhi Yojana was launched by PM Modi in Tripura.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Manipur: Nongthombam Biren Singh
 - Governor of Manipur: La. Ganesan
 - CM of Tripura: Biplab Kumar Deb
 - Governor of Tripura: Satyadeo Narain Arya

NBBL LAUNCHED UPMS

Current Context: The NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd. (NBBL) has launched the 'Unified Presentment Management System' (UPMS).

KEY FACTS

- **The NBBL is the wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).**
- **The UPMS aims to boost, enrich and simplify bill payment procedures in India.**
- Through UPMS, NBBL will be able to set up standing instructions for its customers. This will happen from any channel and for any mode on their recurring bill payments.
- The bills will be automatically fetched from the biller's end and will be delivered to the customer's end to perform the action. It will be in terms of auto-debit and bill payment management.
- The unique functionality of UPMS will be made available to the customers through centralized infrastructure support which is provided by Bharat Bill Pay Central Units (BBPCU).
- The service providers and fintech dealing in the digital payments ecosystem can avail UPMS facility in the sandbox environment of Bharat Bill Payments System (BBPS).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NBBL: Mumbai

SBI, ICICI BANK AND HDFC BANK RETAINED AS D-SIBS

Current Context: The State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, and HDFC Bank were retained as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) by the Reserve Bank of India.

DETAILS

- These three major banks are on the list of D-SIBs since 4th Sep 2017.
- The D-SIBs are those banks which if fail will impact negatively the economy of the country. Hence these banks are 'too big to fail'.
- The D-SIBs banks are classified into 5 buckets namely Bucket 1, Bucket 2, Bucket 3, Bucket 4, and Bucket 5. Bucket 5 is termed to be most important and then followed in decreasing order.
- The ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank are in Bucket 1 and SBI is in Bucket 3.

APPOINTMENTS ON 5TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Vinod Kannan: He was appointed as CEO of Vistara Airlines. He has replaced Leslie Thng.

ABOUT

- **Sushmita Dev:** She is the only woman inducted into the 31 members parliamentary standing committee constituted to examine 'The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021'.
- **Alka Mittal:** She was appointed as the 1st woman Chairman and MD (CMD) of ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation). She has replaced Subhash Kumar who retired from the post.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ONGC: New Delhi

- **G Asok Kumar:** He was appointed as new Director-General of National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), Ministry of Jal Shakti. He has replaced Rajiv Ranjan Mishra.

RBI RELEASED THE FRAMEWORK FOR SMALL VALUE OFFLINE DIGITAL PAYMENTS

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released a framework for small-value offline payment transactions which take place in digital mode.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Offline payments can be performed using any channel or devices like cards, wallets, or mobile phones, but must be made in proximity or in face-to-face mode.
- Offline digital payments are those payments that do not require internet or telecom connectivity.
- The upper limit for offline payment transactions was fixed at Rs 200 and the total limit on a payment instrument is at Rs 2000.
- There will not be a requirement for additional factors of authentication.
- The alerts via SMS or e-mail will be received by the customers.
- Payment instruments shall be enabled for offline transactions based on the explicit consent of the customer. Such transactions using cards shall be allowed without a requirement to switch on the contactless transaction channel.

UN'S WFP PARTNERED WITH TAPF

Current Context: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has entered into a partnership with The Akshaya Patra Foundation (TAPF).

KEY FACTS

- **They have partnered to give enhancement support to school meals programs in India.**
- They will work to enhance the effectiveness of the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) scheme i.e. the Mid-day meal facility in Indian schools.
- They will work together and share expertise to have food safety, food hygiene, capacity building of cooks and helpers, and enhancing nutritional content in the food they will provide.
- Both the entities will organize workshops, frame policy and strategy dialogues with the Government to improve the quality of the school meals program.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of WFP: Rome, Italy

BHARTI AIRTEL PARTNERED WITH HCIPL

Current Context: Bharti Airtel Limited has partnered with Hughes Communications India Private Limited (HCIPL).

KEY POINTS

- **The HCIPL is the subsidiary of Hughes Network Systems.**
- **They have partnered to offer satellite broadband services in India.**
- Under this joint venture, HCIPL will hold a 67% stake and Bharti Airtel will hold a 33% stake.
- Under the partnership, HCIPL will combine the Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) business of both the companies.
- They will offer flexible and scalable enterprise networking solutions to the government offices, enterprises dealing in baking, aeronautical, educational, maritime mobility sector, SMEs, and telecom industries using satellite connectivity.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Bharti Airtel: New Delhi
 - HQ of HCIPL: Gurugram, Haryana

AIRTEL PAYMENTS BANK RECEIVED SCHEDULED BANK STATUS

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted scheduled banks to Airtel Payments Bank.

DETAILS

- The status is given in the second schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.
- Now onwards, the Airtel Payments Bank can pitch for the government.
- It has become 4th payment bank to receive the status.
- It will be able to perform business opportunities with central and state governments.
- It can also participate in primary auctions and in government welfare schemes.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Airtel Payments Bank: New Delhi
 - MD and CEO of Airtel Payments Bank: Anubrata Biswas

APPOINTMENTS ON 6TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Atul Keshap: He was appointed as the President of the U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC) by the US Chambers of Commerce. He has replaced Nisha Desai Biswal.

ABOUT

- **Deepak Kumar and Ajay Kumar Choudhary:** They were appointed as new Executive Directors (ED) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- **Shafali Verma:** She is the Indian Women Cricket Player and was appointed as a brand endorser by the Bank of Baroda (BoB).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of BoB: Vadodara, Gujarat

19TH MEETING OF NTCA

Current Context: The 19th Meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was held recently.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **It was held under the chairmanship of the Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav.**
- The meeting observed the discussions about the tiger which is considered to be an endangered species and so various measures are to be adopted to protect and conserve these species.
- In order to have effective management of the tiger population, it is vital to have a reliable estimate of tiger number at Tiger Reserve & Landscape Level.
- In this regard, the 5th cycle of All India Tiger Estimation is being carried out in order to frame correct policy decision.
- In the meeting, it was mentioned that 51 Tiger Reserves are there in India which are undertaking efforts to protect tiger species. These reserves not only protect tigers but are equally vital because more than 35 rivers originate from these areas which are crucial for water security.
- At the meeting, an action plan to protect and conserve 7 major big cats including cheetah was also discussed.
- He mentioned that 14 Tiger Reserves are accredited under Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CA|TS) and NTCA is working on getting other Tiger Reserves evaluated for CA|TS accreditation.
- He also released a Water Atlas, mapping all the water bodies in the tiger-bearing areas of India.

'#BAHANECHHODOTAXBACHAO' CAMPAIGN

Current Context: The Campaign titled '#BahaneChhodoTaxBachao' was launched by SBI General Insurance.

KEY POINTS

- Under the campaign, the insurance company aims to create awareness among people about the need to buy health insurance to save tax.
- The campaign will also focus on various advantages of buying health insurance.
- The campaign is executed in a quirky Vox Pop format which features anchor Rudraksha Singh aka Rudy.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of SBI General Insurance: Mumbai

OPEN ROCK MUSEUM INAUGURATED IN HYDERABAD

Current Context: The country's first unique 'Rock' museum was inaugurated in Hyderabad.

KEY FACTS

- **It was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh.**
- **He also addressed** scientists working in CSIR- National Geophysical Research Institute.
- The Open Rock Museum will educate and enlighten people about several lesser-known facts.
- Around 35 different types of rocks from various parts of India will be displayed
- The displayed rocks are 3.3 billion years to around 55 million years of the Earth's history which are mostly from Odisha, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, and others.

HERO FUTURE ENERGIES PARTNERED WITH OHMIUM INTERNATIONAL

Current Context: The Hero Future Energies have partnered with Ohmium International.

DETAILS

- **They have partnered to build 1,000 MW of green hydrogen production facilities.**
- These facilities will be developed in India, the UK, and Europe.
- The overall ownership of the assets will be assumed by Hero Future.
- The designing, construction, operations, and maintenance of the facilities will be managed by Ohmium.
- In this partnership, renewable energy to produce green hydrogen will be supplied by Hero Future.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Hero Future Energies: New Delhi

MOU SIGNED BETWEEN ODISHA GOV. AND GAIL

Current Context: The government of Odisha signed MoU with GAIL.

ABOUT

- **The MoU was signed to develop cooperation in the production of eco-friendly fuels in the state.**
- The MoU agreement was signed by the public sector unit and the Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha (Ipicol).
- Under the MoU, the study related to setting up plants in areas of green hydrogen, green ammonia, and renewable energy like solar and wind will take place between the associated entities.
- The partnership will help the industries in the state as they will be supported in growing power requirements.
- Due to the green hydrogen, aggregate emissions of greenhouse gases will be cut down by the industries.

'SEA DRAGON 2022'

Current Context: The countries like India, Australia, Canada, the US, South Korea, and Japan participate in Sea Dragon 22 exercise.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- It is a multinational exercise.
- This year it is held at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. Basically, it is a US-led exercise.
- The participated countries focus on anti-submarine warfare training.
- They discuss about traditional maritime security challenges being faced in Indo – Pacific region.
- They conduct more than 270 hours of in-flight training activities which include tracking the target.
- The country which will score the highest point during the entire training process will be awarded the Dragon Belt award.

APPOINTMENTS ON 8TH JAN 2022

Current Context: Vijay Paul Sharma: He was reappointed as Chairman of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), which is an apex advisory entity under the Ministry of Agricultural and Framers Welfare.

ABOUT

- **Zhang Ming:** He was appointed as new Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
- **Static Part:**
 - Members of SCO: India, Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan
- **Jhulan Goswami:** She was appointed as Ambassador to Legends League Cricket's (LLC) All Women Match official team in which aims to promote women empowerment initiative and boost interest and participation of women in cricket
- **Static Part:**
 - Inaugural session of LLC is from 20th Jan 22 at Oman Cricket Stadium. LLC is the professional cricket league conducted for retired cricket players.

24TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON E-GOVERNANCE

Current Context: The 24th edition of the National Conference on e-Governance was inaugurated by Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh.

KEY POINTS

- It was inaugurated in Hyderabad, Telangana.

- **Theme of the conference:** 'India's Techade: Digital Governance in a Post Pandemic World'.
- It was organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) and the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology. It was held in association with the government of Telangana.
- Discussion to enhance e-governance initiatives in India were held.
- The conference gave the opportunity to the civil servants and industry experts to present their ideas to enhance e-governance initiatives in India.

INDIA AND SRI LANKA SIGNED AGREEMENT

Current Context: India and Sri Lanka have entered into an agreement to redevelop the strategic World War II-era oil tank farm in the island nation's eastern port district of Trincomalee.

KEY FACTS

- This is the bilateral economic and energy partnership between both the countries.
- They will redevelop the strategic Trincomalee Oil Tank Complex, which is also known as Trinco Oil Tank Farm.
- Due to this agreement, 85 of the 99 tanks will now be under the Sri Lankan control which were initially under India's control.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Sri Lanka: Sri Jayewardenapura Kotte, Colombo
 - Currency of Sri Lanka: Sri Lankan Rupee

3RD-NATIONAL WATER AWARDS-2020

Current Context: The third edition of National Water Awards-2020 were announced by the Union Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.

DETAILS

- **Below is the list of winners in each category:**
 - Best State: Uttar Pradesh (Followed by Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu)
 - Best District – North Zone: Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh
 - Best District– South Zone: Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
 - Best District– East Zone: East Champaran, Bihar
 - Best District– West Zone: Indore, Madhya Pradesh
 - Best District– North-East Zone: Goalpara, Assam
 - Best Village Panchayat– North Zone: Dhaspad, Almora, Uttarakhand
 - Best Village Panchayat– South Zone: Yelerapura Panchayat, Tumakuru District, Karnataka
 - Best Village Panchayat– East Zone: Telari Panchayat, Gaya District, Bihar
 - Best Village Panchayat– West Zone: Takhatgadh, Sabarkantha, Gujarat

- Best Village Panchayat– North-East Zone: Sialsir, Sirchip, Mizoram
- Best Industry for CSR activities: ITC Limited, Kolkata, West Bengal
- Best Industry: Welspun India Textile Ltd., Gujarat
- Best Media (Print & Electronic): Mission Paani (Network 18)
- Best Water User Association: Panchgachiya MDTW WUA, Hooghly, West Bengal
- Best School: Govt. Girls Hr. Secondary School, Kaveripattinam, Tamil Nadu
- Best Urban Local Body: Vapi Urban Local Body, Gujarat

STUDENT START-UPS AND INNOVATION POLICY 2.0 (SSIP-2.0) -- GUJARAT

Current Context: The CM of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel launched ‘Student Start-ups and Innovation Policy 2.0 (SSIP-2.0)’.

HIGHLIGHTS

- It was launched for a tenure of 5 years.
- Under the policy, provisions for the establishment of active innovation and incubation centers in all universities of the states will be developed.
- Around 50 lakh students across 1,000 higher education institutes and 10,000 schools of innovation and entrepreneurship will be benefited from the policy.
- The support and assistance from the experts will be given to 10,000 proof of concepts, prototypes, and 1,000 proof of concepts which are developed by students.
- The main objective of the policy is to financially support school students in innovation activities.
- The announcement of the policy took place during International Conference on Academic Institutions at Gujarat Science City in Ahmedabad.
- **Static Part:**
 - Dance forms of Gujarat: Garba, Dandiya Raas, Tippani Dance, Padhar dance
 - Wild Life Sanctuaries in Gujarat: Balaram Ambaji WLS, Jessore Sloth Bear WLS, Rampara WLS, Pania WLS, Indian Wild Ass Sanctuary

INDIA’S 1ST MOBILE HONEY PROCESSING VAN

Current Context: India’s first Mobile Honey Processing Van was launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Chairman, Vinai Kumar Saxena.

KEY FACTS

- It was launched at Village Sirora in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.
- The design of the van was made by KVIC itself at its Multi-disciplinary Training Centre, Panjokehra.
- It required the funds of Rs 15 lakh for the same.
- The Mobile Honey Processing Van has the ability to process up to 300 KG of honey in a time duration of 8 hours.

- It is equipped with a testing laboratory that will help to test the quality of honey produces.
- The Mobile Honey Processing Van is part of KVIC's Honey Mission, in which it aims to train beekeepers, distribute Bee Boxes to farmers.
- The mission will also help rural people to earn extra income through beekeeping activities.
- Through the van, the beekeepers will be able to process honey at their doorsteps. This will thus save time, reduce hassle travel work and cost for them.
- Due to Mobile Honey Processing Van, it is expected that good quality and quantity of honey production will take place on a vast scale.

IRDAI DECIDED TO SETUP 2 HUBS

Current Context: The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has decided to set up two hubs.

KEY POINTS

- **One hub will be dedicated to motor insurance which will be set up at the Institute of Insurance and Risk Management (IIRM).**
- **The other hub will be dedicated to property insurance which will be set up at National Insurance Academy (NIA).**
- The objective of both the hubs is to promote loss preventive measures in the industry of insurance.
- Also, an advisory committee will be framed under the chairmanship of NIA's Director. The committee will frame a repository of past risk inspection reports and will conduct surveys to inspect the report formats.
- The decision to set up hubs was based on the recommendations of a working group on loss prevention and minimization in the insurance industry sector.
- There will be the sub-committee on motor insurance which will develop rules to inspect vehicles and their operating process, which will be mandatory for the owners to follow in case of any event of a loss.
- Various safety features will be framed to make models of vehicles.
- The advisory committee will work for the tenure of two years.

AIRTEL PAYMENTS BANK PARTNERED WITH PARK+

Current Context: The Airtel Payments Bank entered into a partnership with Park+, which works to frame automated parking spaces through FASTags.

DETAILS

- **They have partnered to provide FASTag-based smart parking solutions to marquee commercial and residential properties in India.**
- The network and reach connectivity of Airtel Payments Bank will benefit this partnership.

- They will work to digitize the parking ecosystem using FASTag linked with the vehicles.
- Under the partnership, Park+ will offer FASTag services, issuance facility, recharge facility, and tech support to the Airtel Payment Bank.
- The customers of Airtel FASTag will be to access the facilities deployed by Park+.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Airtel Payments Bank: New Delhi
 - MD and CEO of Airtel Payments Bank: Anubrata Biswas

ASSAM PARTNERED WITH NDDDB

Current Context: The government of Assam has entered into a partnership with National Dairy Development Board by signing an agreement.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Under this partnership, they will be creating a Rs 2,000-crore joint venture to have holistic development of the dairy sector in the state.**
- A joint venture company will be established by allocating funds of upto Rs 2000 crore. It will process 10 lakh liters of milk through six new units in seven years.
- At the venture company, processing, packing, and marketing of the milk from more than 4,100 dairy cooperative societies will take place and will benefit more than 1,75,000 dairy farmers.
- Also, two cattle feed and organic manure manufacturing units will be set up.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NDDDB: Anand, Gujarat

INDIA'S FOREIGN CURRENCY RESERVES DECLINED-- RBI

Current Context: As per the latest data of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India's foreign currency reserves has reduced by \$1.466 billion to \$633.614 billion in the last week of 2021 i.e. on 31st Dec 2021.

ABOUT

- **The gold reserves raised to USD 39.405 billion from USD 14 million.**
- The decline in foreign exchange reserves was due to the reduction in foreign currency assets (FCA).
- FCA reduced by USD 1.48 billion to USD 569.889 billion.
- The foreign currency reserves possess foreign currency assets (FCAs), gold reserves, special drawing rights (SDRs), and India's position with IMF.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBI: Mumbai
 - Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das

'NIRAMAY' PROJECT LAUNCHED IN ASSAM

Current Context: The National Health Mission in partnership with Piramal Swasthya and Cisco launched the 'Niramay' project in Assam.

KEY FACTS

- The projects aim to evaluate and demonstrate the inclusion of Digital Health Technology in the state's health delivery sector.
- This will help to give digital tech support to the healthcare system of the state.
- Under this, a training program to make aware of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission will be undertaken.
- The 'Niramay' project is based upon Piramal Swasthya's indigenous healthcare technology platform 'Amrit'.
- The digital infrastructure with respect to rapid diagnostics, patient's health records, telemedicine support, etc will be enhanced at the grass-root level in three aspirational districts in Assam namely Baksa, Barpeta, and Darrang.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Assam: Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma
 - National parks in Assam: Dibru-Saikhowa NP, Kaziranga NP, Nameri NP, The Orang NP

J&K GOV. SIGNED MOU WITH CENTURY FINANCIAL

Current Context: The government of UT of Jammu and Kashmir signed MoU with Century Financial.

KEY POINTS

- **The MoU was signed to enhance current efforts to strengthen Hospitality & Tourism Industry in UT.**
- Century Financial is UAE's pioneering financial services company.
- In this MoU, Century Financial will be investing \$100 million in J&K.
- The funds will be used to construct 3 hotels and one commercial cum residential complex.
- This will give a boost to the economic and policy reforms in UT and will uplift its Hospitality & Tourism Industry which is affected due to the global pandemic.
- **Static Part:**
 - Lieutenant Governor of J&K: Manoj Sinha

RBI RELEASED NORMS FOR ENTITIES THAT HARNESS DATA FROM CICS

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released norms for entities that harness data from credit information companies (CICs) or credit bureaus.

HIGHLIGHTS

- It includes eligibility criteria and other allied norms.
- As per the norms, a company's net worth must be at least Rs 2 crore and it must be owned and controlled by an Indian resident, then only he/she is applying to become a designated user with a credit bureau. This has come amid accusations of lending applications with Chinese ties functioning in India.
- **As per the eligibility criteria for entities to be highlighted as Specified User under clause (j) of Regulation 3 of the Credit Information Companies (Amendment) Regulations, 2021:**
 - The company must be incorporated in India or a statutory corporation established in India.
 - The governing statute of the statutory corporation or memorandum of association of the company must allow business activity to process information for the support or benefit of credit institutions.
 - The ownership of the company should be well diversified.
 - The company should have at least three years of experience to execute the business or activity of processing information for the support or benefit of credit institutions and must have a proper track record in the same.
 - The promoters or directors of the company should not have any charge against being involved in any offence in the past as well.

79TH GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS 2022

Current Context: The winners of the 79th Annual Golden Globe Awards were announced.

KEY POINTS

- **The winners are selected by Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA).**
- **Below is the list of winners in each category:**
- Best Film (Drama): The Power of the Dog
- Best Film (Musical or Comedy): West Side Story
- Best Actress (Drama): Nicole Kidman for Being the Ricardos as Lucille Ball
- Best Actor (Drama): Will Smith for King Richard as Richard Williams
- Best Actress (Musical or Comedy): Rachel Zegler for West Side Story as María Vasquez
- Best Actor (Musical or Comedy): Andrew Garfield for tick, tick... BOOM! as Jonathan Larson
- Best Supporting Actress: Ariana DeBose for West Side Story as Anita
- Best Supporting Actor: Kodi Smit-McPhee for The Power of the Dog as Peter Gordon
- Best Director: Jane Campion for The Power of the Dog
- Best Screenplay: Kenneth Branagh for Belfast
- Best Animated Feature: Encanto
- Best Non-English Film: Drive My Car (Japan)
- Best Original Score (Motion Picture): Dune
- Best Television Series (Drama): Succession
- Best Television Series (Musical or Comedy): Hacks

- Best Television Motion Picture: The Underground Railroad

KOCHI—INDIA'S 1ST CITY TO HAVE WATER METRO PROJECT

Current Context: Kerala's Kochi city has become the first city in India to have a water metro project.

KEY FACTS

- **The city has launched the first in a series of battery-powered electric boats.**
- **This is the new project undertaken by Kochi Metro Rail Ltd.**
- It will be having an integrated water transport system with 15 identified routes.
- This will help to connect 10 islands that are situated along with the network of routes. The network is speeded with a span of 76 km which will be covered with a fleet of 78 fast, electrically powered hybrid ferries plying to 38 jetties.
- The boats are called 'Water Metros' which are having features like an aluminum catamaran, fully air-conditioned, wide windows.
- They are comprised of Lithium Titanate Oxide batteries which charge at a fast rate and serve for a long duration. Their charging time is 10-15 minutes.
- The price of each boat is Rs 7.30 cr.
- The total outlay of the project is Rs 819 crore which is supported by Indo-German Financial Corporation.
- The fund's worth Rs 579 crore are granted by Germany's funding agency named KfW and funds of Rs 102 crore are granted by the Kerala government and land acquisition worth Rs 72 crore.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Kerala: Pinarayi Vijayan
 - Governor of Kerala: Arif Mohammad Khan

RBL BANK PARTNERED WITH GOOGLE

Current Context: The RBL bank partnered with Google with an aim to enhance customer experience by adopting various strategies.

DETAILS

- Through this partnership, the bank aims to have an expansion of its digital platform Abacus 2.0.
- The bank will be able to implement improved data management and analytics features which will, in turn, offer effective cross-selling within the bank's customer base.
- There will be a reduction in the cost of customer acquisition.
- Google's cloud local infrastructure will offer a safe, secure, and fast banking experience to the customers of bank.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Google: California, US

- CEO of Google: Sundar Pichai
- HQ of RBL Bank: Mumbai
- Tagline of RBL Bank: Apno Ka Bank

APPOINTMENTS ON 11TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Navrang Saini: He was reappointed as interim Chairperson of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) for a period of 3 months i.e. till 5th March 2022.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of IBBI: New Delhi
- **Sudhir Kumar Saxena:** He was appointed to head the three-member committee constituted to enquire into the serious lapses in the security arrangements during PM Narendra Modi's visit to Punjab.
- **Urjit Patel:** He was appointed as Vice President of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for the tenure of 3 years i.e. till 2025. He has replaced D J Pandian.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of AIIB: Beijing, China
- **Haitham Al Ghais:** He was appointed as new Secretary-General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). He has replaced Mohammad Barkindo.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of OPEC: Vienna, Austria

EDELWEISS GROUP PARTNERED WITH INDIAN BANK

Current Context: The Edelweiss Financial Services and ECL Finance have partnered with Indian Bank.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **They have partnered to have a strategic co-lending agreement for priority sector lending.**
- They will be expanding their portfolio of lending products to the target customers.
- This partnership will therefore increase access to credit.
- Indian Bank's capital flows at low costs will be combined with the expertise on customer acquisition, the credit assessment, servicing, and robust technology of Edelweiss.
- Due to this, both entities will be able to expand the credit need of the customers.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Indian Bank: Chennai, TN
 - Tagline of Indian Bank: Your Own Bank
 - HQ of Edelweiss Financial Services: Mumbai

2022 ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL 1

Current Context: The 2022 Adelaide International 1 was held at the Memorial Drive Tennis Centre, Adelaide, Australia as two events.

KEY POINTS

- The first event featured a WTA 500 and ATP 250 combine tournament.
- **Below is the list of winners in each category:**
- Men's Single: Won by Gael Monfils (France)
- Women's Single: Won by Ashleigh Barty (Australia)
- Men's Doubles: Won by Rohan Bopanna and Ramkumar Ramanathan (India)
- Women's Double: Won by Ashleigh Barty and Storm Sanders (Australia)
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals): London, UK
 - HQ of WTA (Women's Tennis Association): Florida, US

INDIA SUCCESSFULLY TEST FIRED BRAHMOS SUPERSONIC CRUISE MISSILE

Current Context: India successfully test-fired the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.

KEY FACTS

- It was launched by the Indian Navy destroyer INS Vishakhapatnam off the Western coast.
- It hit the target in a precise manner.
- It has a speed of 2.8 Mach which is three times the sound speed.
- It is part of the BrahMos Aerospace, which is a joint venture of India and Russia.
- Its range was extended by DRDO from 298 km to around 450 km and it is thus termed as the world's fastest operational system in its class.
- **Static Part:**
 - Chief of Indian Naval Staff: Admiral R Hari Kumar

MELBOURNE SUMMER SET 2022

Current Context: The Melbourne Summer Set was a series of two events of tournaments of Tennis.

DETAILS

- It was held at Melbourne Park in Australia and was organized by Tennis Australia.
- **Melbourne Summer Set 1:** It featured ATP Tour 250 tournament and WTA 250 tournament. Both the events were played on hard courts.
- **Melbourne Summer Set 2:** It featured WTA 250 tournament and was played on hard courts.

- **Winners of Melbourne Summer Set 1:** Men's Single (Rafael Nadal); Women's Single (Simona Halep); Men's Doubles (Wesley Koolhof and Neal Skupski); Women's Doubles (Asia Muhammad and Jessica Pegula).
- **Winners of Melbourne Summer Set 2:** Women's Single (Amanda Anisimova); Women's Doubles (Bernarda Pera and Katerina Sinikova).

AXIS BANK PARTNERED WITH MINKASUPAY

Current Context: Axis Bank has entered into a partnership with MinkasuPay.

ABOUT

- They have partnered to grant biometric authentication solutions to perform net banking payments in merchant apps by using fingerprint or face IDs.
- For this purpose, there won't be any need for a username, password, or OTPs.
- This biometric authentication solution will reduce payment time from approx. 1 minute to just 3-4 seconds.
- The entities aim to enhance transaction success rate and customer experience.
- MinkasuPay's biometric authentication solution will be implemented, which will be a 2-factor authentication solution as per guidelines by RBI. This will result in quick, safe digital transactions.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of MinkasuPay: Coimbatore, TN

RBI'S SEPARATE INTERNAL DEPARTMENT FOR FINTECH

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India has established a separate internal department for fintech i.e. Financial technology.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The department commenced its operations on 4th Jan 2022 by subsuming the FinTech Division of the Department of Payment and Settlement Systems, Central Office (DPSS, CO).
- Various promotion of innovation will be managed by this department.
- It will identify challenges in fintech and will develop strategies to tackle them in a timely manner.
- The RBI's fintech department will be the central point of contact for all fintech-related activities.
- Ajay Kumar Choudhary was appointed as head of the department. He was recently promoted as Executive Director of RBI.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of RBI: Mumbai
 - Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das

INDIA SKILLS 2021

Current Context: The national competition of India Skills 2021 concluded recently which observed the participation of more than 200 participants.

KEY POINTS

- The participants were felicitated by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- Around 270 winners of the Competition were felicitated with 61 gold, 77 silver, 53 bronze, and 79 medallions of excellence.
- Odisha topped in the 'IndiaSkills 2021' contest by winning 51 medals. The medal tally for Odisha includes 10 gold, 18 silver, 9 bronze, and 14 medallions.
- The second position was marked by Maharashtra by winning 30 medals in total.
- The third position was marked by Kerala by winning 25 medals in total.
- The India Skills 2021 was organized by the National Skill Development Corporation.
- The winners will also get an opportunity to compete in the World Skills International Competition in Shanghai, China which will be held in Oct 2022.

INDIA'S GDP TO BE AT 8.3% FOR FY22- WORLD BANK

Current Context: The World Bank has projected India's GDP to be at 8.3% for FY22.

KEY FACTS

- For FY23, the World Bank has projected India's GDP to be at 8.7%, from 7.5% as estimated earlier by mentioning improving growth prospects.
- The forecast for FY2022/23 and FY2023/24 is upgraded to 8.7% and 6.8% respectively as there is higher investment from the private sector and infrastructure.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of World Bank: Washington, DC, US
 - President of World Bank: David Malpass

DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TEST FIRED MPATGM

Current Context: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully test-fired Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM).

ABOUT

- It was flight tested in its final 'deliverable configuration'.
- The MPATGM is a low-weight 'fire and forgets' type of missile.
- The test validated the minimum range successfully and the final impact event was captured on camera.

- The missile has a range of 2.5 km.
- It has already completed a similar successful test for a maximum range of 4,000 meters.
- The MPATGM will be manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Limited at its facility in Bhanoor, Telangana.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of DRDO: New Delhi
 - Chairman of DRDO: Dr. G Satheesh Reddy

LAZYPAY PARTNERED WITH SBM BANK INDIA

Current Context: PayU Finance's Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) solution named LazyPay has partnered with SBM Bank India.

DETAILS

- **They have partnered to launch LazyCard, which is a prepaid payment instrument.**
- **The LazyCard will be supported with a credit line and will work on the Visa payment network.**
- It is predicted that the card will reach over 62 million pre-approved users of LazyPay.
- It has a credit limit of up to 5 lakhs.
- The LazyCard can be availed at zero joining fees and zero annual fees.
- Various multiple transactional benefits and rewards are linked to it.
- It is comprised of various booster features which will allow the user to get access to the card by setting up a fixed deposit with SBM Bank India through the digital way of the mode of transactions.
- Thus, the user will secure money through fixed deposits with a high rate of interest than savings.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of SBM Bank India: Mumbai

HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX

Current Context: The Henley Passport Index for Q1 of 2022 was released.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **India was ranked at 83rd position in the index among 111 countries.**
- Henley Passport Index 2022: India Ranks 83rd in Q1.
- As per the report, India's passport has visa-free access to 60 destinations across the world in Q1 2022. It has free access to 58 destinations in Q4 of 2021.
- Japan and Singapore have emerged as the world's most powerful passports in 2022. Their passport holders are allowed to travel visa-free to 192 countries.
- The least position was marked by Afghanistan with a visa-free score of 26.

MSME TECHNOLOGY CENTRE—PUDUCHERRY

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 'MSME Technology Centre' in Puducherry in a virtual format.

KEY POINTS

- The center will function under the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
- It was developed at the funds of Rs 122 crore.
- It will focus on Electronic System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) Sector. It will enhance skill development and will develop entrepreneurial skills among the youths.
- **PM Modi also inaugurated the 'Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Manimandapam' in Puducherry.** It is a modern auditorium having an open-air theatre.
- The 'Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Manimandapam' is built at the cost of approx. Rs 23.15 crore and will be used for educational purposes.
- **Static Part:**
 - Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry: Tamilisai Soundararajan

NABARD SIGNED AGREEMENT WITH ARTHIMPACT DIGITAL LOANS

Current Context: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has entered into a partnership agreement with Arthimpact Digital Loans (ARTH).

KEY FACTS

- **They have partnered to provide end-to-end fintech solutions.**
- **They will also offer other support like skills, micro-financial services.**
- Under the agreement, ARTH will offer credit support, payments, and insurance solutions to the MSME enterprises.
- Both the entities will work to offer forward linkage support to SHGs.
- They will provide financial and technical support in partnerships with specialized entities to 500 enterprises across Uttar Pradesh.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NABARD: Mumbai
 - Chairman of NABARD: G R Chintala

GLOBAL PRIVATE BANKING AWARDS 2021

Current Context: The Global Private Banking Awards 2021 was organized by Professional Wealth Management (PWM) in a virtual mode.

DETAILS

- **The 'Best Private Bank' in India award was won by HDFC Bank in the award ceremony.**
- The awards were held to appreciate the contributonal efforts made by financial entities to boost digitalization, communication, and investment in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) strategies.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of HDFC Bank: Mumbai
 - CEO and MD of HDFC Bank: Sashidhar Jagdishan
 - Chairman of HDFC Bank: Atanu Chakraborty.
 - Tagline of HDFC Bank: We Understand Your World

APPOINTMENTS ON 14TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Alikhan Smailov: He was appointed as Prime Minister of Kazakhstan.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Kazakhstan: Nur-Sultan
 - Currency of Kazakhstan: Kazakhstani tenge
- **Justice Indu Malhotra:** She was appointed to head the five-member committee constituted by Supreme Court of India to probe the security breach during the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Punjab.
- **Rajkummar Rao:** He was appointed as the brand ambassador of RenewBuy, which is an online insurance platform. He was appointed for 1st 360-degree consumer advertising campaign which is based on the theme of 'Smart Tech, Right Advice' and highlights consumers' insurance needs.
- **Dr. S Somanath:** He was appointed as the new Chairman and Space Secretary of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). He will succeed Kailasavadivoo Sivan.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ISRO: Bengaluru
- **Ittira Davis:** He was appointed as the MD and CEO of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Ujjivan SFB: Bengaluru
- **Daniel Ortega:** He was appointed as the President of Nicaragua.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Nicargua: Managua
 - Currency of Nicargua: Nicarguan Cordoba
- **Shersingh B Khyalia:** He was appointed as the CEO of Adani Power Limited.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Adani Power Limited: Ahmedabad

AI DRIVEN STARTUP FOR WATER PURIFICATION WAS LAUNCHED

Current Context: The Union Minister of State (IC) Science & Technology, Minister of State (IC) Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh launched Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven Start-Up by IIT alumni for water purification through innovative technology.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The startup aims to offer clean drinking water at a low cost compared to the market price.
- The startup will also motivate other startups to use AI technology for various other purposes, which will prove beneficial to the people.
- **Also, MoU was signed between the Technology Development Board (TDB), which is a statutory body of the Department of Science & Technology of GoI, and Swajal Water Private Limited, which is a tech Start-Up company.**
- The company has a patent system named 'Clairvoyant' which makes use of AI technology to optimize purification systems and has the ability to predict future breakdowns.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Swajal Water Private Limited: Gurugram, Haryana

UCO BANK RUPAY SELECT CONTACTLESS DEBIT CARD

Current Context: The UCO Bank in partnership with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched 'RuPay Select contactless debit card'.

KEY POINTS

- The card is linked with various range of benefits and is designed to fulfill the needs and lifestyle of premium/HNI customers of the bank.
- It allows the ATM withdrawal limit of Rs 50,000 along with purchases of upto Rs 2 lakhs at PoS or e-commerce terminals.
- Various benefits can be gained at the club to gym membership, domestic to international lounge, etc. by swapping the card.
- The cardholders can also opt for an insurance cover of up to Rs 10 lakhs in case of death due to personal accidents and permanent disability.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of UCO Bank: Kolkata
 - MD and CEO of UCO Bank: Soma Sankara Prasad

16TH INDIA DIGITAL SUMMIT 2022

Current Context: The 16th India Digital Summit (IDS) 2022 was held via video conference which was addressed by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal in a virtual manner.

KEY FACTS

- It was organized by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).
- **Theme of IDS 2022:** 'Supercharging Startups'
- While addressing the summit, Union Minister Piyush Goyal, unveiled 'LEAP' which signifies 'Leverage, Encourage, Access and Promote' in order to take startups in forwarding direction of growth.
- At the event, he also mentioned that startups can help the rural economy of India to adopt digital mode and they can also help rural micro-entrepreneurs to adopt online platforms for the execution of their businesses.

RIL SIGNED MOU WITH GUJARAT

Current Context: Reliance Industries (RIL) has signed an MoU with the Government of Gujarat.

DETAILS

- **As per the MoU, they have made a total investment of Rs 5.955 lakh crore as part of Investment Promotion Activity for Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2022.**
- This partnership will generate 10 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities in the state.
- Through this partnership, RIL aims to make Gujarat net-zero and carbon-free and so has proposed to invest Rs 5 lakh crore in the state to set up 100 GW Renewable Energy Power Plant and Green Hydrogen Eco-System development. This will be having a time span of 10-15 years.
- RIL will develop an eco-system that will guide SMEs to adopt new technologies which will enhance the usage of Renewable Energy and Green Hydrogen.
- **Static Part:**
 - Wild Life Sanctuaries in Gujarat: Balaram Ambaji WLS, Barda WLS, Mitiyala WLS, Purna WLS, Rampara WLS, Pania WLS

INDIA GRANTS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT TO SRI LANKA

Current Context: India has come forward to support Sri Lanka in building up its depleted foreign reserves and for food imports.

ABOUT

- In this regard, India has granted financial assistance of USD 900 million loans to Sri Lanka.

- The island nation is currently facing a shortage of various essential commodities as the nation is facing a shortage of dollars to pay for the imports.
- Therefore, India's Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will support financially to Sri Lanka to tackle its crisis.
- These comprise deferment of Asian Clearing Union settlement of over USD 509 million and currency swap of USD 400 million.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Sri Lanka: Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, Colombo
 - Currency of Sri Lanka: Sri Lankan rupee

POWERGRID SIGNED JOINT DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH AFRICA50

Current Context: The Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) signed a joint development agreement with Africa50.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Africa50 is a pan-African infrastructure investment platform.**
- **They have partnered to develop Africa's first Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode transmission project in Kenya. The project is named as 'Kenya Transmission Project'.**
- They will jointly work in development, construction, finance, and operation domains for the project.
- The 'Kenya Transmission Project' will supply reliable power to Western Kenya.
- This will also pave way for an increase in private sector investments into the expansion of Africa's power transmission networks.
- The POWERGRID will contribute to providing technical and operational support for the project.
- And Africa50 will provide development and finance support for the project.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of POWERGRID: Gurgaon, Haryana

INDIFI TECHNOLOGIES PARTNERED WITH GOOGLE PAY

Current Context: Indifi Technologies has collaborated with Google Pay to offer instant loans to small merchants.

KEY POINTS

- **The loans will be granted via the Google Pay platform.**
- Through this partnership, both entities aim to solve the problems related to the working capital management of MSMEs.
- The merchants will be benefited as they will be able to run their businesses by opting loans.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Indifi: Gurugram, Haryana

OPERATION MISSION AMANAT

Current Context: 'Operation Mission Amanat' was launched by Indian Railways.

KEY FACTS

- **It aims to track the lost luggage of the passengers while traveling.**
- Through this operation, Indian Railways wants to develop a sense of trust among the passengers and allow them to travel without worrying about the luggage.
- Passenger can easily track their lost luggage through the mission.
- **The mission is taken up by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Western Railways.**
- The passengers will be able to check the details of their lost luggage from the images and photos which will be posted under the web link of the 'Mission Amanat-RPF' website.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Indian Railways: New Delhi
 - HQ of Western Railways: Mumbai

PASSEX EXERCISE

Current Context: The navies of India and Russia conducted the PASSEX exercise.

DETAILS

- **It was conducted at the port of Cochin, in the Arabian Sea.**
- Indian Navy's INS Kochi took part in the exercise.
- Russian Navy's RFS Admiral Tributes, Russian Naval Missile Cruiser Varyag, and Russian Tanker Boris Butoma took part in the exercise.
- The participants showcased interoperability between the two navies and performed various operations like cross-deck helicopter operations and seamanship activities.
- The PASSEX exercise was held to enhance interoperability, develop understanding, and have friendly relations between both countries.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Russia: Moscow
 - Currency of Russia: Russian Ruble

INDIA WILL INTRODUCE AND ISSUE E-PASSPORTS

Current Context: India will soon introduce and issue e-passports, which will secure biometric information.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The e-passports will be based on Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) and biometrics.**

- **It will be as per the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).**
- The announcement for the same was made by the Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs, Sanjay Bhattacharya.
- The passport jacket will have an electronic chip that will store important security-related data.
- The personal details of the applicants will be digitally signed and will be embedded in the passport booklet.
- If anyone, tampers with the chip, the system will identify it, resulting in the failure of the passport authentication.
- To manufacture e-Passports, India Security Press, Nashik has awarded the contract for procurement of ICAO compliant electronic contactless inlays along with its operating system necessary for chip-enabled e-Passports.

ODISHA PARTNERED WITH WFP

Current Context: The government of Odisha has entered into a partnership with United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

KEY POINTS

- **They have partnered to improve the food security of small and marginal farmers.**
- Through this partnership, both entities aim to strengthen resilience to climate change.
- The support to farmers will be given and they will be trained to tackle cyclones and adapt to the impact of the climate crisis.
- The farmers will be trained to select the right agriculture method, the right crop which will yield good fruit to them.
- In this way, both the entities will solve the issues related to food security and the incomes of the farmers.
- The state's Department of Agriculture and WFP will strengthen adaptability to climate variability among the small farmers.
- They will work to develop norms to manage food systems, enhance capacity building and food security in the state.
- Various toolkits, modules, and guidelines will be developed which will be used to enhance food security.
- **Static Part:**
 - Dance forms of Odisha: Odissi, Chhau dance, Ghumara Dance, Sambalpuri folk dance

INDIA OPEN 2022

Current Context: The India Open 2022 is a badminton tournament that took place at the K. D. Jadhav Indoor Hall in New Delhi.

DETAILS

- **Below is the list of winners in each category:**

- Men's Single: Lakshya Sen (India)
- Women's Single: Busanan Ongbamrunphan (Thailand)
- Men's Doubles: Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (India)
- Women's Doubles: Benyapa Aimsaard and Nuntakarn Aimsaard (Thailand)
- Mixed Doubles: Terry Hee and Tan Wei Han (Singapore)

APPOINTMENTS ON 17TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Amit Doshi: He was appointed as CEO of Britannia Industries Ltd. He has replaced Vinay Subramanyam.

ABOUT

- **Raghuvendra Tanwar:** He was appointed as Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ICHR: New Delhi

ICICI PRUDENTIAL AMC PARTNERED WITH FIRST TRUST ADVISORS

Current Context: The ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company (AMC) has entered into a partnership with First Trust Advisors, which is based in the US.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The First Trust Advisors serves in actively-managed exchange-traded funds.**
- **They have partnered to launch a global fund of funds.**
- Also, ICICI Prudential AMC will be the first one to launch strategic metal & energy equity fund of funds.
- It will invest in offshore funds which are managed by First Trust Advisors.
- Due to this partnership, ICICI Prudential AMC will be able to bring innovative active and exchange-listed offerings of First Trust to domestic investors.
- The ICICI Prudential strategic metal & energy equity fund of funds is open for subscription from 17th Jan to 31st Jan 2022.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of ICICI Prudential AMC: New Delhi

WEF DAVOS AGENDA SUMMIT 2022

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually addressed World Economic Forum's (WEF's) Davos Agenda Summit 2022.

KEY POINTS

- It is being held from 17th Jan to 21st Jan 2022.
- **Theme of the WEF Davos Agenda 2022:** 'The State of the World'.
- The event began with the addressing session by Chinese President Xi Jinping.
- It is the global platform for Heads of state and government, CEOs, and other major leaders.
- The participants express their vision for 2022 and share their expert solutions to tackle the challenges.
- While addressing, PM Modi highlighted the third wave of pandemic COVID-19 and mentioned that India is prepared to fight with it. He mentioned the vaccination count in India.
- He mentioned that every nation now must follow the 'One Earth, One Health' goal and help each other to deal with the pandemic.
- He also discussed various other issues like climate change, cryptocurrency, reforms, and initiatives taken in India to develop the Indian Economy.
- He also granted trust to the participants that it is the right time to make an investment in India as the country has become fully capable of becoming a reliable partner in the Global Supply Chain.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of WEF: Cologny, Switzerland

27TH NATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF SAHODAYA SCHOOL COMPLEXES

Current Context: The CBSE conducted the 27th National Annual Conference of Sahodaya School Complexes.

KEY FACTS

- It was hosted in virtual mode.
- The conference was hosted by the Sahodaya Samiti Gwalior.
- The conference observed the chief guest as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
- While addressing the conference, the Chief Minister highlighted the contribution of the education sector to the state's welfare.
- He also inspired the audience about the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.
- He also appreciated the efforts taken by CBSE.

COAL TO METHANOL (CTM) PILOT PLANT

Current Context: The Union Minister for Heavy Industries Mahendra Nath Pandey dedicated India's first 'Coal To Methanol' (CTM) pilot plant to the country.

DETAILS

- **It is developed by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL).**
- And it is set up at BHEL's Hyderabad unit.
- The CTM has a capacity of 0.25 TPD (tonnes per day).
- It will produce methanol from high-ash Indian coal. It will have a purity of 99%.
- This is the first of its kind technology demonstration in the country to convert high ash contained coal into methanol through a gasification route.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of BHEL: New Delhi

26TH CISO DEEP DIVE TRAINING PROGRAM

Current Context: The National e-Governance Division organized 26th Deep Dive Training Programme for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs).

HIGHLIGHTS

- **It was also organized for frontline IT officials from various Ministries and Departments, Government & Semi-Governmental organizations of central and state PSU units.**
- **The program aims to strengthen the cyber security ecosystem in India.**
- Under the program, various workshops will be held by the National e-Governance Division, which comes under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The participants will be trained to develop a cyber threat landscape and adopt best practices to enhance cyber security.
- Every participant will be made aware of digital technology.
- Various topics like governance risk and compliance, data privacy, cloud security, cryptography, application, and data security, mobile security will be covered in the workshops.

THE BEST FIFA FOOTBALL AWARDS 2021

Current Context: The Best FIFA Football Awards 2021 took place in a virtual mode in Zurich, Switzerland.

KEY POINTS

- **It was held to honor outstanding football players for their excellent achievements in the sport.**
- **Below is the list of winners in each category:**
- Best FIFA Men's Player: Robert Lewandowski (Bayern Munich, Poland)
- Best FIFA Women's Player: Alexia Putellas (Barcelona, Spain)
- Best FIFA Men's Goalkeeper: Édouard Mendy (Chelsea, Senegal)
- Best FIFA Women's Goalkeeper: Christiane Endler (Paris Saint-Germain and Lyon, Chile)
- Best FIFA Men's Coach: Thomas Tuchel (Chelsea, Germany)

- Best FIFA Women's Coach: Emma Hayes (Chelsea, England)
- FIFA Fair Play Award: Denmark national football team and medical staff
- FIFA Special Award for an Outstanding Career Achievement: Christine Sinclair (Female) & Cristiano Ronaldo (Male)

CANARA BANK PARTNERED WITH LENDINGKART

Current Context: The Canara Bank has entered into a co-lending partnership with Fintech company Lendingkart.

KEY FACTS

- **They have partnered to offer low-cost business loans to MSMEs.**
- **The loans upto Rs 10 lakh will be granted within the fast duration of time.**
- The loans will be provided with a fast turnaround time for approvals powered by the 'Lendingkart 2gthr' platform using 'zero touch' technology.
- The Canara Bank will explore the 'xlr8' platform of Lendingkart to distribute loans to the MSMEs and the 'cred8' platform to underwrite the loans granted.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Lendingkart: Ahmedabad
 - HQ of Canara Bank: Bangalore
 - Tagline of Canara Bank: Together we can

SYDNEY TENNIS CLASSIC 2022

Current Context: Below is the list of winners in each category of Sydney Tennis Classic 2022.

DETAILS

- Men's Single: Aslan Karatsev (Russia)
- Women's Single: Paula Badosa (Spain)
- Men's Doubles: John Peers (Australia) and Filip Polášek (Slovakia)
- Women's Doubles: Anna Danilina (Kazakhstan) and Beatriz Haddad Maia (Brazil)

CLICKPAY SERVICES FOR BILL PAYMENTS

Current Context: The MobiKwik partnered with NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd (NBBL).

ABOUT

- **They have partnered to launch the 'ClickPay' service to pay the bill payments for its customers.**
- Due to this, the customers of MobiKwik will be able to pay their recurring bills via their mobile phones.

- ClickPay is based on a two-step authentication payment feature.
- The billers will generate a payment link within the message of bill pay itself and using that link the customers can pay their required bill.
- The bill payment procedure will be a highly safe, secured one.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NBBL: New Delhi

MADHAVBAUG'S (VAIDYA SANE AYURVED LABS LTD), POWER MAP

Current Context: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, inaugurated Madhavbaug's (Vaidya Sane Ayurved Labs Ltd), Power MAP via video conference.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Power MAP is a medical analytics application, which is developed by Madhavbaug.**
- It is developed under the leadership of the CEO of Madhavbaug, Dr. Rohit Sane.
- The Power MAP will help the doctors with the necessary medical intelligence information about their patient's health parameters so that they can treat them effectively.
- The application is integrated with various medical services like pathology labs, dietitians, exercise experts, stress counselors, and other specialized consultants. This all can be accessed via a single click.
- The integration is through mibPULSE which in all in one health monitoring app.
- While inaugurating the application, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari emphasized the need for technology in the healthcare sector.
- The Power MAP is India's 1st intelligent chronic disease patients habit tracking system.

SIDBI SANCTIONED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO AU SFB AND JANA SFB

Current Context: The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has granted financial assistance support to two small finance banks (SFBs) namely: AU SFB and Jana SFB.

KEY POINTS

- **The financial assistance of Rs 650 crore was sanctioned to both the SFBs.**
- The funds will be utilized to finance companies and Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs).
- Due to this, various businesses will receive support to tackle the crisis raised due to pandemics in business activities.
- The informal MSME sector will be highly benefited from this support.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of SIDBI: Lucknow, UP
 - Chairman and MD of SIDBI: S Ramann

MSDE SIGNED MOU WITH IGNOU

Current Context: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signed MoU with Indira Gandhi Open University (IGNOU).

KEY FACTS

- **The MoU was signed to enhance the vocational and technical training framework.**
- In this regard, the MoU of 10-year long duration was signed between both the entities.
- The features of the MoU are in line with Sustainable Development Goals 4.4e and National Education Policy 2020.
- They will generate avenues for work opportunities for youths of the country by training them with vocational and technical skillsets.
- The beneficiaries of the program include trainees linked to the National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs), Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKKs), and Jan Shikshan Sansthan's (JSS).
- The project steering committee will be set up which will manage and execute the program.
- The members of the committee will be representatives from the varsity and the skill ministry.
- Students can enroll in a three-year degree course at IGNOU.

FLIPKART'S NEW START UP PROGRAMME

Current Context: The e-commerce giant, Flipkart has launched a new startup program.

DETAILS

- **Initially, it had successfully launched and executed the 'Flipkart Leap' program.**
- **And now, after successful completion of the first cohort of the program, the Flipkart Leap will be divided into two new programs namely Flipkart Leap Ahead (FLA) and Flipkart Leap Innovation Network (FLIN).**
- Both the new programs will support startups at various working stages.
- The startups will be supported with insights, mentorship and funding so that they can innovate and use different technologies.
- Therefore, the startups in India will get the opportunity to access Flipkart.
- The Flipkart Leap Ahead will invest in seed-stage startups. It will support startups dealing in fintech, supply chain, logistics, SaaS (focused on consumer tech), alternate commerce, B2B, social, health tech, agritech, and edtech.
- The selected startups will receive 1:1 mentorship guidance from Flipkart leaders.
- They will also receive an equity investment from Flipkart ranging between \$150,000 - \$500,000.
- The Flipkart Leap Innovation Network program will help the startups to engage with Flipkart's product and tech teams.

- The startups which have great solutions which will solve problems in businesses will be eligible for the FLIN program.

APPOINTMENTS ON 20TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Roberta Metsola: She was elected as President of the European Union's parliament. She has replaced David Sassoli.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of European Union's parliament: Strasbourg, France
- **Vikram Dev Dutt:** He was appointed as CMD of Air India. He has replaced Rajiv Bansal.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Air India: New Delhi
- **Vijay Shekhar Sharma:** He is the founder of Paytm and was appointed UA Ambassador of Universal Acceptance Steering Group.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Paytm: Noida, UP

'SAAATHI' MOBILE APP – SEBI

Current Context: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) launched a new mobile app named 'Saaathi'.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **It was launched by the Chairman of SEBI, Ajay Tyagi.**
- **The app is based on investor education.**
- It will be used to create awareness among the investors about facts and basic concepts of the securities market, KYC norms and processes, trading and settlement, mutual funds, recent market developments, investor grievances redressal mechanism, etc.
- The content on the app is available in Hindi and English language.
- Thus, the investors will be granted knowledge about the securities market in India.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of SEBI: Mumbai

DIGITAL GOVERNMENT MISSION

Current Context: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched a new project named 'Digital Government Mission'.

KEY POINTS

- The project is the next phase of e-governance.
- The 'Digital Government Mission' aims to boost the services delivery to the citizens using various advanced technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML).
- The citizens will be able to avail various government services without applying or waiting for a long time as the technologies will identify the eligible citizens itself.
- **Static Part:**
 - Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology: Ashwini Vaishnaw

INDIA SUPPORTED SRI LANKA TO PURCHASE PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

Current Context: The Government of India has offered financial assistance to Sri Lanka to purchase petroleum products.

KEY FACTS

- **In this regard, India has offered a USD 500 million Line of Credit (LoC) to Sri Lanka.**
- Due to this, the island nation will be able to purchase petroleum products as the nation is struggling to avail fuel and facing an energy crisis.
- The support was granted by Union External Affairs Minister, Dr. S Jaishankar.
- The signed document was further received by Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister, Prof. Gamini Lakshman Peiris.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Sri Lanka: Sri Jayewardenapura Kotte and Colombo
 - Currency of Sri Lanka: Sri Lankan Rupee

INDIA AND DENMARK COLLABORATED FOR R&D IN GREEN FUELS

Current Context: India has joined hands with Denmark to perform joint research and development work on green fuels.

DETAILS

- **Both the countries will be working on Green Hydrogen research works.**
- The joint committee meeting was held for the same in which the dignitaries discussed priorities and development in the science and technology field, in which they will innovate with a major focus on green solutions.
- They discussed strategies, investment in green research.
- They will also further review the work undertaken under the partnership.
- They will implement projects in domains like cyber-physical systems, bioresources, energy research, etc.

- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Denmark: Copenhagen
 - Currency of Demark: Danish Krone

AMAZON INDIA SIGNED MOU WITH NIF

Current Context: The e-commerce giant, Amazon India has signed MoU with NIF Incubation and Entrepreneurship Council (NIFientreC).

ABOUT

- The NIFientreC is the Technology Business Incubator managed by National Innovation Foundation (NIF), which comes under DST, GoI.
- They have signed MoU to enhance grassroots innovation, develop the local economy and livelihood of people in rural India.
- So they will generate livelihood opportunities for lakhs of people across India.
- They will bring experts dealing in various fields to conduct masterclasses, workshops, and other interactive training programs particularly in product distribution for the participants.
- They will promote the creativity and innovation of students and entrepreneurs so that they will become experts in consumer-based technology innovation and contribute to digital India.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NIF: Gandhinagar, Gujarat

IFSCA SIGNED MOU WITH INSURANCE INSTITUTE OF INDIA

Current Context: The International Financial Services Centers Authority (IFSCA) signed MoU with the Insurance Institute of India (III).

HIGHLIGHTS

- The MoU was signed to have capacity building for the experts and professionals in the insurance sector of IFSCs.
- Therefore, the III is involved in developing and updating the curriculum to build a dynamic insurance sector in India.
- The III will be offering training programs for professionals in the insurance business in India and overseas.
- It will perform research on the current academic curriculum and will update changes to it in order to match the present demands of IFSCA members in the insurance sector.
- The University of Mumbai will also be involved to update the curriculum.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of III: Mumbai

INDIA'S REAL GDP FOR FY23 TO BE AT 7.6% -- 'IND-RA'

Current Context: As per India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra), India's real GDP is to be at 7.6% for FY23.

KEY POINTS

- It will be 9.1% higher than FY20.
- However, the size of the Indian economy was expected to be 10.2% low than the FY23 GDP trend value.
- As per Ind-Ra, the fiscal deficit was to be at 5.8-6% of GDP in FY23.
- The merchandise export will grow to 18.31% YoY in FY23, which is termed to be good for global trade.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Ind-Ra: Mumbai

APPOINTMENTS ON 22ND JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Dileep Sanghani: He was unanimously elected as the 17th Chairman of the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO). He has replaced Balvinder Singh Nakai.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of IFFCO: New Delhi
- **Chanchal Kumar:** He was appointed as the MD of National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL), under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH).
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of NHIDCL: New Delhi

'MOBILE DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY' (I-LAB)

Current Context: The Union Minister of State for Science & Technology, Jitendra Singh launched 'Mobile Diagnostic Laboratory (I-LAB)'.

KEY FACTS

- **The Mobile Diagnostic Laboratory (I-LAB) is the first of its kind COVID-19 testing facility.**
- **It performs RT-PCR test and Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) test for the North-East part of India.**
- **It was launched in Mizoram.**
- The Mobile Diagnostic Laboratory (I-LAB) is developed by Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone (AMTZ) and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) which comes under the Science and Technology Ministry of India.

- It can also be used to test other infectious diseases like TB, HIV.
- Further, tests like mammography and vision testing will also be added to the testing lab.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Mizoram: Zoramthanga
 - Governor of Mizoram: Kambhampati Hari Babu

PM MODI LAUNCHED NEW CIRCUIT HOUSE NEAR SOMNATH TEMPLE

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the New Circuit House near Somnath Temple in Gujarat via video conference.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **It is built at the cost of Rs 30 crore.**
- It is 48 room Circuit House and has spread across 15,000 sq meters of area.
- It is the grand facility having a front façade resembling the architecture of a medieval-era palace.
- It is a four-story Circuit House and has two VVIP suite rooms, eight VVIP rooms, 24 deluxe rooms, kitchen, general and VIP dining areas.
- The auditorium has a seating arrangement for 200 people.
- **Static Part:**
 - National Parks and Wild Life Sanctuaries in Gujarat: Blackbuck NP, Gir Forest NP, Marine NP, Vansda NP, Barda WLS, Porbandar Bird Sanctuary, Purna WLS, Indian Wild Ass Sanctuary

‘AZADI KE AMRIT MAHOTSAV SE SWARNIM BHARAT KI ORE’ PROGRAMME

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the ‘Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav se Swarnim Bharat Ki Ore’ program via video conference.

DETAILS

- It is a national-level program and is inducted with seven yearlong initiatives.
- It aims to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav with the Brahma Kumaris.
- Under the program, 15000 events and 30 campaigns will be executed.
- The Brahma Kumaris is organizing the events to mark the 53rd Ascension Anniversary of Pitashree Prajapita Brahma, Founding Father of Brahma Kumaris.
- **The 7 initiatives of the Brahma Kumaris are:** (1) My India Healthy India (2) Aatmanirbhar Bharat: Self Reliant Farmers (3) Women: Flag Bearers of India (4) Power of Peace Bus Campaign (5) Andekha Bharat Cycle Rally (6) United India Motor Bike Campaign (7) Green initiatives under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK SIGNED MOU WITH GIFT SEZ

Current Context: The Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited (KMBL) has signed MoU with Gujarat International Finance Tec-City- Special Economic Zone (GIFT SEZ) Limited, which is the wholly-owned subsidiary of GIFT City.

KEY POINTS

- They have signed MoU to boost financial services and enhance customers' overall financial service offerings.
- They will work to promote GIFT International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) jurisdiction for Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) structures.
- They will arrange seminars to inculcate ease of doing business along with the global custody services.
- They will grant easy market access.
- They will also support cross-border activities for the fund management community.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of GIFT City: Gandhinagar, Gujarat
 - HQ of KMBL: Mumbai

INDIA'S FIRST AVGC COE

Current Context: The Karnataka government launched India's first AVGC Centre of Excellence (CoE).

KEY FACTS

- It was particularly launched by Dr. C N Ashwath Narayan, who is Higher Education and Electronics, IT, Biotechnology and Skill Development Minister.
- By launching this AVGC CoE, India is now one step forward to having 10% of the global AVGC market and has the potential to reach 20-25% by 2027.
- The AVGC signifies Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics.
- It was launched in Mahadevapura, Bengaluru.
- It is thus the pioneering high-tech supported digital media hub.
- It was launched under Innovate Karnataka initiative.
- It is also termed to be Asia's biggest AVGC CoE.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Karnataka: Basavaraj Bommai
 - Governor of Karnataka: Thaawar Chand Gehlot

HIMACHAL PRADESH AND HARYANA SIGNED MOU

Current Context: The state governments of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana have signed MoU.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The MoU was signed to construct the Adi Badri Dam on 77 acres of land in Himachal Pradesh.
- It will be constructed near the Adi Badri area of Yamunanagar, Haryana.
- The project is the revival of the Saraswati River.
- Funds of Rs 215.35 crore will be utilized to construct Adi Badri Dam.
- The dam will ensure continuous water flow of 20 cubic seconds from the Saraswati river throughout the year.
- The Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited will be responsible to execute the operation of the dam and its related infrastructure.
- The funding will be arranged by Haryana.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Himachal Pradesh: Jai Ram Thakur
 - Governor of Himachal Pradesh: Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar
 - CM of Haryana: Manohar Lal Khattar
 - Governor of Haryana: Bandaru Dattatreya

APPOINTMENTS ON 24TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Vinod Rai: He was appointed as independent chairman of Unity Small Finance Bank.

ABOUT

- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Unity SFB: Mumbai
- **Mia Amor Mottley:** She was sworn in as a Prime Minister of Barbados for the second term.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Barbados: Bridgetown
 - Currency of Barbados: Dollar

AIIB TO INVEST IN DEVELOPMENT OF DATA CENTRES SERVING IN ASIA

Current Context: The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) will be investing in the development of data centers which will be dedicated to serving in emerging Asia.

DETAILS

- Thus, AIIB will be investing \$150 million for the same.
- In this regard, AIIB will arrange funds through the Keppel Data Centre Fund II (KDCF II).
- The KDCF II is the private equity vehicle managed by Alpha Investment Partners Limited (Alpha).
- This investment will be AIIB's first data center project.

- AIIB will invest USD 100 million through parallel funds structure and USD 50 million through co-investment in KDCF II.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of AIIB: Beijing, China
 - President of AIIB: Jin Liqun

DISTRICT GOOD GOVERNANCE INDEX

Current Context: India's first 'District Good Governance Index' was launched virtually by Union Minister of Home and Cooperation Amit Shah.

KEY FACTS

- **It was launched for 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir.**
- **The top 5 winners in the index are:** Jammu (1st), Doda (2nd), Samba (3rd), Pulwama (4th), and Srinagar (5th).
- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in partnership with the Jammu & Kashmir Government has framed the index.
- The index is a document that shows the performance of ten governance sectors on the basis of 58 indicators with 116 data points.
- **Static Part:**
 - Jammu and Kashmir's lieutenant governor: Manoj Sinha

PLATINA FIXED DEPOSIT—UJJIVAN SFB

Current Context: The Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launched the Platina Fixed Deposit scheme.

KEY POINTS

- **It grants interest of 15 basis points in addition to term deposit rates of Ujjivan SFB.**
- It is the non-callable deposit, i.e. in this partial or premature withdrawals cannot be performed.
- The interest amount will be received monthly or quarterly or at the end of the maturity period will be received.
- The minimum FD amount is Rs 20 lakhs and the maximum amount is fixed to Rs 2 core.
- The tenure is ranging from 1 year to 5 years.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Ujjivan SFB: Bangalore

'APNA KANGRA' APP-- HIMACHAL PRADESH

Current Context: The Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Jai Ram Thakur launched the 'Apna Kangra' app.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The app was launched to grant a hassle-free experience to the tourists and enhance the sale of local handicrafts.
- Therefore, the app will serve the tourist as well as serve as an e-marketing platform for SHG products of the state.
- It will also help to empower rural women, youth in the tourism, hospitality sector.
- The CM also virtually inaugurated Radhe Krishna Cow Sanctuary at Luthan in the Jawalamukhi Vidhan Sabha area of Kangra.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of Himachal Pradesh: Jai Ram Thakur
 - Governor of Himachal Pradesh: Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar

FULLERTON INDIA PARTNERED WITH ONE97 COMMUNICATIONS

Current Context: Fullerton India which is the NBFC has partnered with One97 Communications which is the parent company of Paytm.

KEY POINTS

- **They have partnered to offer lending products to their merchant partners and customers.**
- Under the partnership, Paytm postpaid or buy-now-pay-later or innovative merchant loan products will be offered to the customers via the platform of Paytm by making use of Fullerton's risk assessment capabilities and understanding.
- They will add instant end-to-end digital originated loans to their valuable merchants and customers.
- Thus, they will enhance MSMEs by granting them loans via digital platforms.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Fullerton India: Mumbai

APPOINTMENTS ON 25TH JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Neeraj Chopra: He was appointed as the brand ambassador of GoodDot, which is a Plant-based meat company.

ABOUT

- **Vinodanand Jha:** He was appointed as Chairperson of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 Adjudicating Authority.
- **Armen Sarkissian:** He resigned from the post of President of Armenia.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Armenia: Yerevan
 - Currency of Armenia: Armenian Dram

17TH ICC AWARDS FOR THE YEAR 2021

Current Context: The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the winners of the 17th ICC Awards for the year 2021.

KEY FACTS

- It aims to honor the best international cricket players who performed excellently in the cricket sport of the previous 12 months i.e. from 1st Jan to 31st Jan 2021.
- **Below is the list of winners in each category:**
- Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year: Smriti Mandhana (India)
- Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year: Shaheen Afridi (Pakistan)
- ICC Umpire of the Year: Marais Erasmus
- ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year: Mohammad Rizwan (Pakistan)
- ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year: Tammy Beaumont (England)
- ICC Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year: Janneman Malan (South Africa)
- ICC Emerging Women's Cricketer of the Year: Fatima Sana (Pakistan)
- ICC Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year: Zeeshan Maqsood (Oman)
- ICC Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year: Andrea-Mae Zepeda (Austria)
- ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year: Babar Azam (Pakistan)
- ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year: Lizelle Lee (South Africa)
- ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year: Joe Root (England)

INDIPAISA PARTNERED WITH HITACHI PAYMENTS SERVICES

Current Context: Indipaisa has entered into a partnership with Hitachi Payment Services.

DETAILS

- **They have partnered to develop a new Fintech platform for the MSMEs in India.**
- **Indipaisa will offer a variety of payment solutions to the Indian MSMEs in partnership with Hitachi Payment Services.**
- This will help MSMEs to enhance their businesses and fulfill government tax laws.
- Both the entities will offer support of their technologies, centralized infrastructure, and expansive network to the MSMEs so that they can perform their businesses via digital mode.
- The entities will help in financial inclusion for the marginalized MSMEs.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Hitachi Payment Services: Mumbai

CSIR-CDRI DEVELOPED RT-PCR DIAGNOSTIC KIT NAMED AS 'OM'

Current Context: The CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) developed an indigenous RT-PCR diagnostic kit, named 'Om'.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **It will be used for testing the Omicron variant of coronavirus.**
- It will generate the results in two hours. Thus, it offers quick and cost-effective detection of omicron variants.
- It cost Rs 150.
- It can also be used to test other emerging variants of Covid infection and other respiratory infections.
- It will be launched by mid-February, once it gets approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- It is made by a team of three scientists, which was headed by senior principal scientist Atul Goel and four research scholars.

WORLD BANK APPROVED LOAN TO WEST BENGAL

Current Context: The World Bank has approved a loan of USD 125 million to the West Bengal government.

KEY FACTS

- **The loan was approved to support financially towards social protection service access to the poor and vulnerable section of society in the state.**
- **The loan was sanctioned under the 'WB Building state capability for inclusive social protection' operation.**
- This operation helps to enhance access to social assistance and target-based services to the poor and vulnerable section of society in the state.
- Various services like medical help via telemedicine, support to elders and differently-abled people, digital payments support, and access to the various public services will be granted under the operation using the funds.
- Around 400 programs will be executed by the state government under the operation.
- **Static Part:**
 - CM of West Bengal: Mamata Banerjee
 - Governor of West Bengal: Jagdeep Dhankar

INDIA'S 1ST INNOVATION CENTRE FOR GRAPHENE TO BE SETUP IN KERALA

Current Context: India's first innovation center for graphene will be developed in Kerala.

KEY POINTS

- It will be developed by Digital University Kerala (DUK) in partnership with the Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET).
- It will be set up in Thrissur, Kerala.
- The funds of Rs 86.41 crore will be utilized for the same.
- It will be India's first graphene R&D incubation center.
- The industrial partner will be Tata Steel Limited.
- The approval for the same was granted by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The centre will give chance to students, researchers, established industries, and budding startups to innovate and develop a thriving environment for innovative graphene-based product development.
- Graphene is having extraordinary electrical and electronic properties and will help to replace indium and cut the cost of OLED (organic light-emitting diode) screens in smartphones. It possesses good chemical stability, high electrical conductivity, and a large surface area, it is transparent and lightweight.

FLIPKART SIGNED MOU WITH FITT

Current Context: The e-commerce giant Flipkart has signed MoU with Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT).

DETAILS

- The FITT is an industry interface organization of the IIT Delhi.
- The MoU is part of Flipkart's ongoing Industry-academia collaboration program.
- As part of the MoU, both entities will work to perform research in the fields of social commerce, product recommendations to sellers, resellers, and the consumer product exploration journey.
- The research grants and market insights will be granted to FITT by Flipkart.
- They will conduct seminars, internship opportunities, and mentorship opportunities.
- They will thus make e-commerce accessible to more consumers and sellers.

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2021

Current Context: The Corruption Perceptions Index for 2021 was released by Berlin-based non-profit organization Transparency international.

ABOUT

- In the index, India is ranked at 85th position with a CPI score of 40.
- The index ranked 180 countries and territories as per their levels of public sector corruption and provided a scale from 0 to 100. The 0 defines the highest level of corruption and the 100 implies a clean level.

- The index ranking is based on 13 independent data sources and surveys on the execution process of businesses.
- **The 1st position is commonly shared by Denmark, Finland, and New Zealand with a score of 88.**
- Norway is placed at 4th position with a score of 85.
- The last rank position among 180 countries was marked by South Sudan with a score of 11.

CUB EASY PAY DEBIT CARD IN A FITNESS WATCH

Current Context: The City Union Bank in partnership with GOQii, which is the smart-tech-enabled preventive healthcare platform has launched the CUB fitness watch debit card.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **It is powered by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).**
- **The CUB fitness watch debit card is a wearable payment solution.**
- It is based on advanced technology which allows users to perform digital transactions in a safe and secure manner.
- It allows the customers to pay via an easy tap-and-go payment solution.
- They will have to hold the wristwatch in front of the PoS device during payment like tapping the card on PoS.
- To pay an amount above Rs 5,000, customers need to tap and enter their PIN.
- The introductory price of the product is Rs 3,499 (as compared to an actual cost of Rs 6,499).
- The wristwatch will allow users to monitor Oxygen level, body temperature, heart rate, blood pressure, and 18 exercise modes.
- Also, the free wellness package valid for 3 months to the early buyers is granted.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of CUB: Kumbakonam, TN
 - HQ of GOQii: California, USA

PASCHIM LEHAR (XPL-2022)

Current Context: The joint maritime exercise named Paschim Lehar (XPL-2022) was conducted by the Western Naval Command of the Indian Navy.

KEY FACTS

- It was held to enhance Inter-Service synergy among the Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Indian Army, and Coast Guard.
- Various weapon firings in the real view and their validation of operational missions were taken during the exercise'.
- It allowed the participated forces an opportunity to operate together under realistic conditions, in responding to contemporary maritime challenges, across the areas of the Command's responsibility.

- It was conducted in the Arabian Sea.
- Around 40 ships and submarines of the Indian Navy participated in the exercise.
- OPVs (offshore patrol vessels), FPVs (fast patrol vessels), and air cushion vessels of the Coast Guard also participated in the exercise.

META TO DEVELOP AI SUPERCOMPUTER

Current Context: The Meta's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg announced that the Meta is developing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputer.

DETAILS

- **The AI supercomputer is termed as 'AI Research SuperCluster (RSC)'.**
- It will be used to train machine learning systems.
- It is termed to be the world's fastest supercomputer and is about to complete in 2022.
- It will be equipped with 16,000 graphics-processing units.
- It will allow AI researchers of Meta to develop better AI models, work across 100 different languages, analyze text, images, and videos and develop augmented tools.

PENCILTON LAUNCHED 'PENCILCARD'

Current Context: The Pencilton, which is the teen-focused fintech startup has launched 'PencilCard'.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The 'PencilCard' is a debit card with NCMC (National Common Mobility Card) and it is launched for teens.**
- **It is launched in partnership with Transcorp.**
- The 'PencilCard' will serve as an all-in-one type of card i.e. debit card, bus card, and metro card.
- Thus, it will be used for multiple purposes in online as well as offline mode.
- Currently, it is possible for the teens to use it for travel on the airport line in Delhi and a KTC bus card in Pune and soon will be rolled out for metro travel in Pune, Chennai, and Mumbai.
- The PencilCard is also a Platinum RuPay card that will offer free access to all airport lounges in India.
- Using the Pencilton app, the card can be activated. After activation, the user can load money, get category-wise spend analysis, block or unblock the cards, define limits on spending, save in a digital piggy bank, and many other functions.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Pencilton: Hyderabad

CSIR SIGNED MOU WITH INSTITUT PASTEUR

Current Context: The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India has signed an MoU with France's Institut Pasteur.

KEY FACTS

- They have signed MoU to enhance the scope for cooperation in the health research sector of both countries.
- Under the MoU, they will perform joint research in the health sector.
- They will focus on emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and inherited disorders.
- They will develop effective and affordable healthcare solutions which will be useful for the people of both the countries and as well across the globe.
- They will work in the areas like Genomics of Inherited Diseases, Personalized Medicine, Infectious Diseases, Antimicrobial Resistance, and Development of New Models for Drug Screening.

GOI APPROVED MERGER OF PMC BANK WITH UNITY SFB

Current Context: The Government of India has approved the Scheme for the amalgamation of the Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative Bank Ltd (PMC Bank) with Unity Small Finance Bank Ltd.

KEY POINTS

- From 25th Jan 2022, all the branches of the PMC Bank started functioning as branches of Unity SFB.
- The Unity SFB is promoted by Centrum Financial Services Limited and Resilient Innovation Private Limited.
- Therefore, both the promoters of Unity SFB infused capital of Rs 1105.10 crore in the bank.
- Now onwards, Unity SFB will pay the customers of PMC Bank the amount it will receive from DICGC.
- The amount will be equal to the balance in the customer's deposit accounts upto Rs 5 lakhs within the period of 90 days.
- For the depositors with amounts more than Rs 5 lakhs, the payout for the additional amount will be divided.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Unity SFB: New Delhi

INDIA MORTGAGE GUARANTEE CORPORATION SIGNED MOU WITH MUTHOOT HOMEFIN

Current Context: The India Mortgage Guarantee Corporation (IMGC) signed MoU with Muthoot Homefin (India) Limited (MHIL).

DETAILS

- **They signed MoU to grant mortgage guarantee-backed home loan products to the customers of MHIL.**
- Affordable home loans will be granted.
- Through this MoU, Muthoot Homefin will be able to leverage mortgage guarantees as a risk mitigation tool to serve the demand for affordable and mid-income housing.
- Also, Muthoot Homefin will be able to enhance Muthoot Homefin through 108 branches in various locations.

'GRAMA ONE' LAUNCHED IN KARNATAKA

Current Context: The CM of Karnataka, Basavaraj Bommai launched 'Grama One' from Bengaluru.

ABOUT

- **The 'Grama One' aims to offer all the government services under one roof in rural parts of the state it was launched for 12 districts of Karnataka.**
- Around 100 government services will be granted under 'Grama One'.
- The 'Grama One' is the technology-based service that will offer services framed by departments like agriculture, women and child development, revenue, horticulture, etc.
- It aims to remove the role of middlemen to offer the service to the rural people.
- The 'Grama One' will ensure that appropriate services are granted to the rural people in a timely manner.
- **Static Part:**
 - Governor of Karnataka: Thawar Chand Gehlot

MAX LIFE PARTNERED WITH POLICYBAZAAR

Current Context: The Max Life Insurance Company Limited i.e. Maxlife has entered into a partnership with Policybazaar.com.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **They have partnered to offer 'Max Life Smart Secure Plus Plan' to the customers dealing on the platform of Policybazaar.**
- They aim to offer independent insurance to the homemakers.
- Currently, the homemakers are allowed for term insurance cover only as an add-on to their earning spouse's cover.
- The homemakers of the household who have an annual income over Rs 5 lakh and their age is between 18 and 50 years are eligible to opt for the plan.

- They can opt for an independent insurance cover from Rs 25 lakhs to Rs 49 lakhs in which it is irrespective of the fact whether the husband had a policy or not.
- This plan does not ask for the husband's eligibility.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Max Life Insurance Company Limited and Policybazaar: Gurugram, Haryana

PM MODI HOSTED 1ST INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA SUMMIT 2022

Current Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the 1st India-Central Asia Summit 2022 via video conference.

KEY POINTS

- **The summit observed the participation of Presidents of 5 Central Asia nations namely Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan.**
- It was held to enhance the cooperation between India and Central Asia.
- PM Modi assured to grant effective cooperation from India's side.
- All the dignitaries assured to frame the roadmap for cooperation in various fields.
- The comprehensive joint declaration was adopted by the dignitaries which will help to boost the India-Central Asia partnership.
- Also, India-Central Asia Secretariat will be set up in New Delhi.
- PM Modi emphasized enhancing trade between India and Central Asia.

'DIGITAL SANSAD APP'

Current Context: The 'Digital Sansad App' was launched by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

KEY FACTS

- **The 'Digital Sansad App' is the official mobile application of the Parliament.**
- It will allow Indians to access live proceedings of the House, observe Union Budget 2022 in live mode.
- The members of the parliament, as well as the public of the country, can access the app.
- People will be able to check what their members of Parliament are doing, they can observe their debates.
- The member of the parliament can record their attendance in the house via the app.
- The app also contains budget speeches since 1947, House discussions from the 12th to 17th Lok Sabha. Thus, past data is also present in the app.

INDIAN NAVAL PLACEMENT AGENCY SIGNED MOU WITH IIFL HOME FINANCE LTD

Current Context: The Indian Naval Placement Agency (INPA) has signed MoU with IIFL Home Finance Ltd (IIFL HFL).

DETAILS

- **They have signed MoU to explore the opportunities for the recruitment of Naval Veterans within IIFL HF.**
- NPA will identify a pool of Ex-Servicemen or dependents candidates for relevant roles as per standards of IIFL HFL.
- They will also conduct in-house assimilation and training programs.
- Therefore, through this MoU, IIFL HFL aims to offer Ex-Servicemen opportunities as per their qualifications, experience, and attributes which they gained during their service period.

GOOGLE TO INVEST IN AIRTEL

Current Context: Google will be investing USD 1 Billion in Airtel (Bharti Airtel).

ABOUT

- **Both the entities have signed a long-term, multi-year agreement.**
- **They have collaborated to enhance the growth of the digital ecosystem in India.**
- The agreement also includes an investment of USD 700 million in order to acquire a 1.28% stake in Bharti Airtel by Google.
- This agreement is the part of Google's fund for India called 'India Digitization Fund of USD 10 billion'.
- Both the organizations will develop Airtel's offering service network which will cover a wide range of devices in India.
- They will also develop India specific network domain which will use 5G technology.
- They will also work to develop a cloud ecosystem in India.

PHILIPPINES SIGNED DEAL WITH BRAHMOS AEROSPACE PRIVATE LIMITED

Current Context: Philippines has entered into a deal agreement with India's Brahmos Aerospace Private Limited.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The deal was signed for the supply of shore-based anti-ship variants of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.**
- **The deal of USD 374.96 million was signed for the same.**
- The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile is the joint product of Russia and India.
- This will be the 1st export order of the product.
- Under the deal, 3 batteries, training to the operators, training to the maintainers will be provided.
- The deal also includes an Integrated Logistics Support Package.
- **Static Part:**
 - Capital of Philippines: Manila

- Currency of Philippines: Peso

FAARMS PARTNERED WITH RGICL

Current Context: The Agri-tech startup company named FAARMS has entered into a partnership with Reliance General Insurance Company Ltd (RGICL).

KEY FACTS

- They have partnered to launch digital insurance solutions for farmers and rural people.
- The people living in rural areas or the farmers will be able to avail of various ranges of health and cattle insurance cover via the FAARMS app.
- The RGICL has specially designed insurance covers to serve farmers and rural people as per their requirements.
- The premium cycle of the insurance cover is scheduled around the harvest season so that the insurance holder will be able to pay the premiums.

IIFL SECURITIES PARTNERED WITH ALPHANITI

Current Context: IIFL Securities has partnered with Alphaniti, which is a fintech company.

KEY POINTS

- **The partnership will allow the investors to invest and trade in a stock offering.**
- Due to this partnership, Alphaniti will be able to redefine the experience of direct investments as it will offer high-quality products at affordable costs by leveraging big data, deep domain expertise, and technology.
- The customers of IIFL Securities will be able to invest and trade in a wide range of products offered by Alphaniti.
- Customers will be able to avail Alphaniti's unique single stock recommendation engine 'alphagenie'.
- The 'Alphagenie' will offer unbiased stock selection and unique value-added indicators like 'the probability of success' and 'risk-reward score'.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of IIFL Securities: Mumbai

INFOSYS PARTNERED WITH SAFE SECURITIES

Current Context: The tech giant Infosys has entered into a partnership with Safe Securities.

DETAILS

- They have partnered to get an enterprise-wide view about cyber attacks and cyber risks.

- **Therefore, to get the predictions of cyber attacks and risks, Safe Securities will offer its SaaS platform named 'Safe'.**
- The 'Safe' tool will help to anticipate the potential financial impact of each cyberattack before it is about to occur.
- The tool has the ability to measure, mitigate and manage cyber risks.
- Infosys with its expertise will deliver seamless customer service using automation, innovation, and efficiency abilities.
- They will thus bring 360-degree cyber risk management solutions to the Indian market.
- Their partnership will develop predictive risk quantification solutions to tackle cyber attacks and risks.

PAYTM MONEY LAUNCHED AN INTELLIGENT MESSENGER

Current Context: Paytm Money has launched an Intelligent Messenger.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **The name of an Intelligent Messenger is 'Pop', which is termed India's first Intelligent Messenger.**
- The 'Pop' will generate instant updates to track the investment made by the users in the stock market.
- It will provide various specific information about stock, portfolio analysis, stock market news, and many more.
- It will provide stock recommendations, news insights, and allied services.
- People will be able to look out for their portfolio via Pop.
- Thus, the company is leveraging artificial intelligence through Pop.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of Paytm Money Limited: Bangalore

APPOINTMENTS ON 31ST JANUARY 2022

Current Context: Pushp Kumar Joshi: He was appointed as new Chairman and MD of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL). He has replaced Mukesh Kumar Surana.

ABOUT

- **Justice Ayesh Malik:** She was appointed as the first female judge of the Pakistan Supreme Court which is based in Islamabad.
- **Arun Kumar Purwar:** He was appointed as Chairman of IIFL Finance.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of IIFL Group: Mumbai
- **Dr. V Anantha Nageswaran:** He was appointed as the new Chief Economic Adviser. He has replaced KV Subramanian.

RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON INDIAN MERCANTILE COOPERATIVE BANK LIMITED

Current Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed restrictions on Indian Mercantile Cooperative Bank Limited.

KEY POINTS

- **It is based in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.**
- **Also, a cap of Rs 1 lakh on withdrawals was imposed by the central bank.**
- The restrictions imposed as per the direction mentioned in subsection (1) of Section 35 A read with Section 56 of Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- The withdrawal restriction of Rs 1 lakh is applied to all saving and current accounts or any other account.
- The restrictions will remain in force for the next 6 months, commencing from 28th Jan 2022.
- Therefore, the Indian Mercantile Cooperative Bank Limited is not allowed to grant or renew any loans, perform advances and investments, etc without any prior approval from RBI.

META PARTNERED WITH FICCI

Current Context: Meta (Facebook) has entered into a partnership with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).

KEY FACTS

- **They have partnered to grant support to five lakh women-led small businesses in India.**
- The partnership will be executed under the #SheMeansBusiness program of Meta and the 'Empowering the Greater 50%' initiative of FICCI.
- Both entities will jointly develop a supportive ecosystem for women entrepreneurs.
- Meta will offer support through its initiatives like Grow your Business Hub, Commerce Partners Programme, and Facebook Business Coach.
- They will offer capital support, digital tools, conduction of training, and many more to uplift the women entrepreneurs.
- **Static Part:**
 - HQ of FICCI: New Delhi
 - Secretary-General of FICCI: Dilip Chenoy
 - President of FICCI: Sanjiv Mehta