

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JAN 4, 2020

STATES

- **The Maharashtra Government – inaugurates ‘Cyber Safe Initiative’ on January 3**
- ✓ The initiative was launched on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Indian Social Reformer and the country’s first female teacher, Savitribai Phule.
- ✓ It aims to create awareness on various cyber crime laws and about atrocities committed against children and women.
- ✓ Earlier this year, the Home Affairs Ministry had launched the Cyber Crime Prevention against women and children Scheme in January 2019 with a budget allocation of Rs 223.198 crores.
- ✓ The Ministry is also running a twitter handle called “Cyber Dost” that posts regular tweets on prevention and protection against cybercrimes.
- ✓ Savitribhai Phule, hailed as “Mother of Indian Feminism”, was instrumental in promoting women rights in the country
- ✓ She along with her husband Jyotirao Phule founded the first India’s girls’ school in Pune in 1848.
- ✓ They both have also founded Satyashodhak Samaj that supported inter-caste marriages.
- ✓ In 2015, The Union Government renamed University of Pune as ‘Savitribai Phule Pune University’.

NATIONAL

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – inaugurated and delivered the inaugural address at the 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC-2020) at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru on January 3, 2019**
- ✓ The PM advocated the concept of “innovate, patent, produce and prosper” as a new ‘motto’ for young scientists
- ✓ Referring to the theme of ISC-2020 — Science and Technology: Rural Development — the Prime Minister stressed that science and technology (S&T)

will play a major role in achieving the nation's goal of \$5 trillion economy in this decade

- ✓ The Prime Minister urged the scientists to find technological solutions to pressing issues like stubble burning, depleting groundwater table, prevention of communicable diseases, eradication of TB and environment-friendly transportation
- ✓ He had also asked the scientists to lead India onto the path of innovation and prosperity with the tagline "Innovation must be by the people and for the people"
- ✓ During the inauguration of the 107th Indian Science Congress, the Prime Minister also launched the Indian Science Technology and Engineering facilities Map (I-STEM) Portal.
- ✓ The portal will serve as the gateway for researchers to locate a specific type of facility required to conduct their research and development work in the country.
- ✓ A highlight of the event is a Farmers' Congress, which is expected to see 110 "innovative" farmers discussing climate change and novel practices.
- ✓ About 15,000 participants are expected to attend the event that will be held between January 3 and 7, 2020
- ✓ Two Nobel Prize winners, Stefan Hell and Ada Yonath are also expected to attend the congress and conduct lectures.
- ✓ The Congress is hosted by the Department of Science and Technology.
- **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone - to acquire a majority 75% stake in Krishnapatnam Port Company (KPCL) at an estimated budget of around ₹10,125 crore.**
- ✓ The balance stake will be held by the Hyderabad-based engineering major, CVR Group
- ✓ Krishnapatnam port is located in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh
- ✓ It is the second-largest private sector multi-cargo port in India.
- ✓ It handled 54 million metric tonnes (MMT) in FY19.
- ✓ It had recorded a revenue of ₹2,394 crore in FY19 compared with ₹1,969 crore in FY18
- ✓ KPCL is engaged in the business of handling containers, coal and other bulk cargo, including liquid cargo
- ✓ The country's largest private port is operated by Adani Group at Mundra in Gujarat's Kutch district

PRIVATE PORT PLAYERS

■ Capacity ■ FY19
(Figures in mt)

Adani Ports **395**
208

Essar Ports **110**
50

JSW Infra **113**
NA

Notes: Major and private ports capacity is estimated at 2,000 mt and FY19 saw total cargo volume of 1,280 mt, according to industry estimates



- ✓ It has been handling over 100 MT of cargo for the past few years consecutively
 - ✓ The Adani group is the largest port developer and operator in India
 - ✓ The group runs 11 strategically located ports and terminals at Mundra, Dahej, Kandla and Hazira in Gujarat, Dhamra in Odisha, Mormugao in Goa, Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, and Kattupalli and Ennore in Chennai
 - ✓ These facilities represent 24% of the country's total port capacity.
 - ✓ The group is also developing a transshipment port at Vizhinjam, Kerala and a container terminal at Myanmar.
- **The Government - has approved setting up of 2,636 charging stations in 62 cities across 24 States/UTs under the Phase II of FAME India scheme**
- ✓ The availability of better charging infrastructure will encourage original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to launch new Electric vehicle models
 - ✓ The idea behind the setting up of these charging stations is to make sure at least one charging station is available in a grid of 4 km x 4km area in the selected cities.
 - ✓ Of the 2,636 stations, 1,633 will be fast charging stations and the rest will be slow charging stations.
 - ✓ About 14,000 chargers will be installed across the selected cities



- ✓ FAME India refers to 'Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) and Electric Vehicles;
- ✓ The phase I of the scheme was launched on April 1, 2015 with a budget allocation of Rs 895 crores.
- ✓ The phase II of the scheme was launched on April 1, 2019 with an allocated budget of Rs 10,000 crores.
- ✓ HAdeMO, Indian Bharat Standard and Combined Charging System (CCS) are the three charging technologies to be used by the Government
- ✓ CHAdeMO is a quick charging method that delivers up to 62.5 KW by 500 volt and 125 ampere DC (Direct Current).
- ✓ The CCS involves both DC and AC charging

- **The Ministry of External Affairs – has decided to set up a new division called NEST – ‘New and Emerging Strategic Technologies’**
- ✓ It is intended to increase investment coordination among the various states of the country and also with the foreign countries.
- ✓ It will also aid in coordination among domestic ministries and departments.
- ✓ The new division will act as a ‘nodal point’ to exchange information with foreign governments and with multilateral fora like United Nations, G20 and others.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The Lai Haraoba festival - began in Tripura on January 2**
- ✓ It is celebrated by Meitei people to please sacred trees called “Umang Lai”
- ✓ The Meitei people speak the language called “Meiteilon”, which is included in the Eighth Schedule of Constitution of India among the other 22 languages
- ✓ The community is spread across other states like Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Meghalaya and also in Myanmar and Bangladesh
- ✓ The followers of the religion mainly worship natural elements such as mountains, water and fire
- ✓ The Lai Haraoba Festival is also celebrated in the state of Manipur during the month of May.

PERSONALITIES

- **Major General Qassem Suleimani, the Head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' (IRGC's) Quds Force – was killed by the US-authorized airstrikes near the International airport at the Iraqi capital, Baghdad**
- ✓ He was killed along with some of his Iraqi allies by the missiles fired from an American MQ-9 Reaper drone, after arriving from Damascus, Syria
- ✓ Top Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, an adviser to Gen. Soleimani, was also killed in the attack authorised by U.S. President Donald Trump.

THE UNMANNED KILLER IN BAGHDAD STRIKE

The strike that killed Iranian general Qassim Suleimani is not the first time that US has used a drone against hostile targets. Here's all about the one that carried out Friday's strike

It can both spy and destroy

➤ The MQ-9 Reaper drone was developed to support overseas ops. The “M” indicates US defence dept designation of multi-role; “Q” means remotely piloted aircraft and “9” says it's ninth in the series of remotely piloted aircraft systems

➤ It is useful for striking against or doing recon on fleeting, and time-sensitive targets

On board: Cameras and missiles

The MQ-9 Reaper carries a targeting system that comes with a suite of visual sensors

Among its weapons are four laser-guided air-to-ground Hellfire missiles for highly accurate, low-collateral damage strikes

Remote Crew	Max. takeoff weight	Payload	Flight ceiling	Range
2 (pilot and sensor operator)	4,760 kg	1,701 kg	Up to 50,000 feet	1,150 miles

Fuel capacity

2,200 litres

Speed

230 mph

Maker

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc

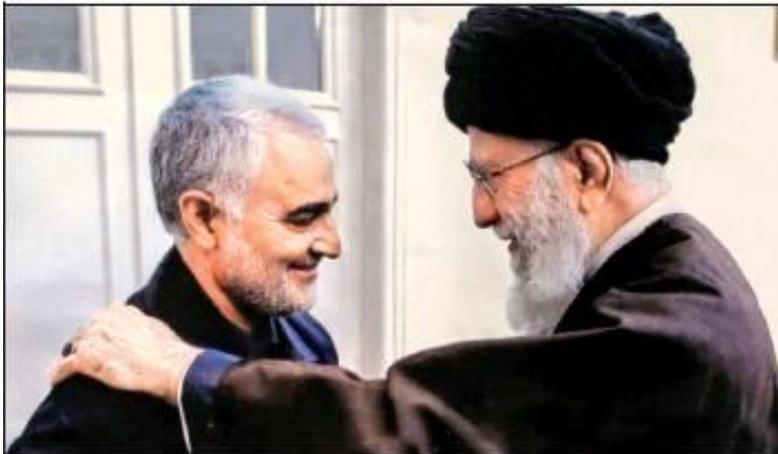
Unit cost
\$64.2 million (in 2006; it includes four aircraft, sensors etc.)



- ✓ The 62 year old, General Qassem Suleimani was one of the most influential person in Iran, often labeled as the next leader of the nation.
- ✓ He is also a well known personality in other countries like Syria, Lebanon and Iraq
- ✓ He was responsible for carrying out operations beyond Iran in West Asian countries and was a major opponent of the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ According to the US, Gen Suleimani and his Quds Force were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American and coalition service members and the wounding of several Americans.
- ✓ Suleimani took command of the Quds Forces around 21 years ago with an aim to make Iran a supreme power in the Middle East
- ✓ At a time when the US was not recognising Bashar Al-Assad regime in Syria, Iran backed the Russia-supported Bashar al-Assad regime
- ✓ He also helped armed groups defeat ISIS in Iraq.

ASSASSINATED SOON AFTER BAGHDAD LANDING

Head of Iran Revolutionary Guard's Quds Force taken out by MQ-9 Reaper drone, which fired missiles at his convoy as it left Baghdad International Airport; Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, dy chief of Iraqi paramilitary force Hashed al-Shaabi, among 9 others killed



- Suleimani's body torn to pieces. He was identified only by the ring he wore
- A poor farm boy, he joined Revolutionary Guard in 1979 and rose rapidly during war with Iraq (1981-88). Named Quds Force chief in 1998
- Described as the most powerful general in the Middle East. Extremely

close to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (both together in pic above) who officiated at his daughter's wedding

- Believed to be mentor of outfits like Badr Brigade in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon & Syria, Hamas in Gaza; architect of every significant intel & military operation by Iran in the past 20 years

'More Significant Than Osama's Killing'

➤ The Atlantic termed it "America's most consequential strike this century", says the killing would have greater repercussions than deaths of Osama bin Laden & Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. "Unlike them, Suleimani had the power and resources of an entire state at his back..." it wrote

“ His departure to God does not end his path or his mission but a forceful revenge awaits the criminals who have his blood and the blood of the other martyrs...on their hands — Ayatollah Ali Khamenei | Iran Supreme Leader

General Suleimani has killed or badly wounded thousands of Americans... and was plotting to kill many more... but got caught...He should have been taken out many years ago!

— Donald Trump | US President

- ✓ In 1979, Suleimani joined the Revolutionary Guards, a branch of the Iranian Armed Forces, which was founded after the Iranian Revolution on April 22, 1979

- ✓ While the Iranian Army defends Iranian borders, the Revolutionary Guards protects its political system, primarily insulating it from foreign interference and coups.
- ✓ The main job of the Quds Force, as the foreign operational wing of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), was to build a network of operatives, organisations, militias and parties under Iran's influence.
- ✓ Known as shadow commander for his indirect war against the US, he was on the US 'hit list' for long because of his alleged role in deaths of thousands of civilians, including US citizens, in Iraq.
- ✓ Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei appointed Brigadier General Esmail Qaani as the new head of the Revolutionary Guards' foreign operations arm following the killing of its commander, Qasem Soleimani
- ✓ Qaani was described by Khamenei as one of the "most decorated commanders" of the Guards during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

SPORTS

- **Indian Table Tennis star, Manav Thakkar - has jumped 9 places to become the World no.1 in the Under-21 men's singles category in the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings.**



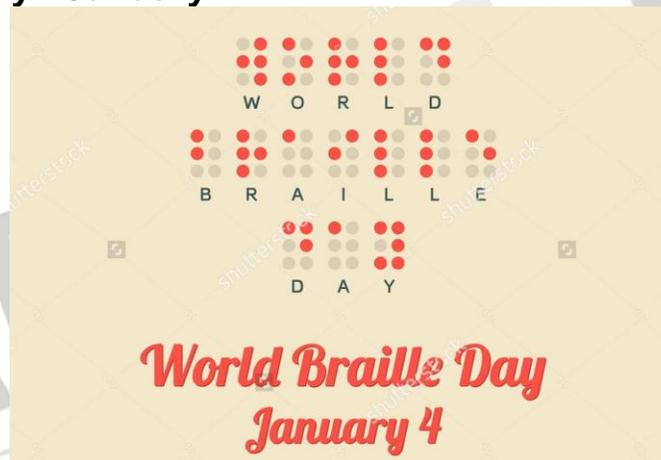
- ✓ The 19-year-old achieved the top ranking after winning the U-21 men's singles title at the ITTF Challenge Plus Benemax-Virgo North American Open in Markham, Canada in December 2019
 - ✓ Earlier, Manav has achieved the ranking of world no. 1 in the Under-18 category in February 2018.
 - ✓ He was part of the Indian men's team which won a bronze medal in the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.
 - ✓ Among other Indian Table Tennis players, Sathiyan has retained his 30th spot in the senior category, while Achanta Sharath Kamal has climbed a spot to 33rd position in the world table tennis rankings issued on January 2
 - ✓ Top woman paddler of the country, Manika Batra was static at the 61st position
- **The 3rd edition of 'Khelo India Youth Games' - are scheduled to be held between February 10, 2020 and February 22, 2020 in Guwahati, Assam.**



- ✓ The annual sporting extravaganza hosts various National level Multidisciplinary grass root level games
- ✓ It includes two categories namely under-17-year school students and under-21-year college student
- ✓ The event will be held in 20 disciplines.
- ✓ Under the event, an annual scholarship of Rs 5,00,000 is given for 1000 kids to prepare them for international sporting events.
- ✓ The first edition of the event was held in New Delhi and the second edition in Pune
- ✓ Khelo India games were launched by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in January 2018.
- ✓ Haryana topped the medals tally in the inaugural games.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ **World Braille Day - January 4**



- ✓ The day commemorates the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of Braille system, a language of 6 dots designed for visually impaired persons.
- ✓ Louis Braille, born in France, lost both his eyes at the age of 3
- ✓ The day is observed to spread awareness about the significance and importance of Braille as a means of communication
- ✓ The first World Braille Day, celebrated by the United Nations, was observed in 2019
- ✓ The Braille system, consisting of six dots to represent each alphabet and number, is used by the visually disabled people to read and write.
- ✓ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted in 2006, aims to secure the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.
- ✓ According to the World Health Organization, around 36 million people were affected globally with blindness and around 216 million people have 'moderate' to 'severe' visual disability.

QASSIM SULEIMANI & IRAN VS USA – A REPORT

The man who threatened to destroy ‘all US capabilities’

Qassim Suleimani challenged US openly and repeatedly. He cemented Iran’s influence in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen. His death opens a new chapter in global geopolitical tensions

The second most powerful man in Iran

● Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, 62, led the Quds Force, an elite arm of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps that works across borders, since 1998

● Considered the second-most powerful person in Iran after supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, he was key in Iran’s efforts to expand its influence across Middle East

● Born in 1957 to a poor family in eastern Iran, rose through the ranks during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s

● Enjoyed immense popularity. A former CIA analyst said that “to the Middle Eastern Shi’ites, he is James Bond, Erwin Rommel and Lady Gaga rolled into one”. Awarded ‘Order of Zolfiqar’, Iran’s highest military honour, in 2019

● Sanctioned multiple times by US government

● Survived numerous assassination bids over two decades. Was rumoured to have



“We are near you, where you can’t even imagine. Come. We are ready. If you begin the war, we will end the war. You know that this war will destroy all your capabilities”

–Suleimani’s response to Trump’s 2018 tweet warning Iran against threatening US

His departure to God does not end his path or his mission

–Ayatollah Ali Khomeini on Suleimani’s death

Countries where Iran supports proxies & allies



died in a 2006 plane crash in Iran, in a Damascus bombing in 2012, and while leading pro-Assad forces in Aleppo in 2015. In October 2019, Iran said it had thwarted another attempt by Israeli and Arab agencies

Quds’ ‘Holy’ wars

10,000-20,000

SIZE OF THE QUDS FORCE

● Quds Force provides military help to pro-Iranian and pro-Shiite movements and leaders. It was created during the Iran-Iraq War in 1980

● Quds refers to Jerusalem and means ‘Holy’ in Persian. It has been sanctioned since 2007 by US for terrorism

Involved in Mideast conflicts

● After US invasion of Iraq in 2003, Quds was involved with Shiite-dominated Iraqi government

● During Syrian civil war, starting 2011, Suleimani mobilised militias in support of President Bashar al-Assad

● Quds is helping Houthi rebels fighting the government in Yemen, locking it in a

conflict with a Saudi Arabia-led coalition

● In Iraq, Quds helped the Popular Mobilisation Forces, an Iran-backed paramilitary outfit, in fight against Islamic State

Quds’ parent – the Guard – key to Iran’s military, economy

150,000

The Guard’s size is much smaller than

Iran’s conventional army of 350,000. It has ground forces, naval and air forces. It’s also in charge of Iran’s ballistic missiles and nuclear programmes

● The Guard was created to protect the ideals of Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution. It reports to Ali Khamenei

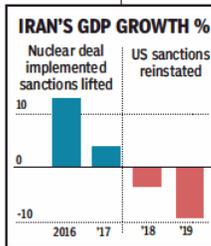
● The Guard are tasked with patrolling Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of world’s oil supply passes

● It is thought to control around a third of Iran’s economy through a series of front companies

Also killed: Iraqi militia leader

● Iraqi-origin Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, 66, was the leader of the Iran-backed Iraqi militia, Kataib Hezbollah. As deputy head of Popular Mobilisation Forces, he also led fight against Islamic State in Iraq

● In 2009, he and Kataib Hezbollah were designated as terrorist outfits by US



US-IRAN: ON THE BRINK FOR DECADES

JAN 1984

US designates Iran a state sponsor of terrorism, slaps sanctions

MAY 2018

US prez Donald Trump withdraws from Iran nuclear deal. US re-imposes sanctions

JULY Iran seizes British-flagged oil tanker, releases it six weeks later. US blames Iran for a series of attacks on vessels passing through Persian Gulf

DEC 27 An American contractor dies in rocket attack by Iranian-backed militia. US launches retaliatory airstrikes against Iranian-backed militia outposts in Iraq and Syria

JAN 3, 2020

Suleimani killed in a US airstrike. Deputy commander of Quds, Brig. Gen. Esmail Ghaani, appointed his successor

JULY 2015 Iran agrees to deal with US, and other Western nations, to curtail its nuclear programme in exchange for relief from sanctions

APRIL 2019 US designates Revolutionary Guard a terrorist outfit

SEPT Iran-backed Yemen rebels attack two major Saudi oil facilities, cutting its oil output in half

DEC 31 Pro-Iran militia besiege US embassy in Baghdad to protest US strikes

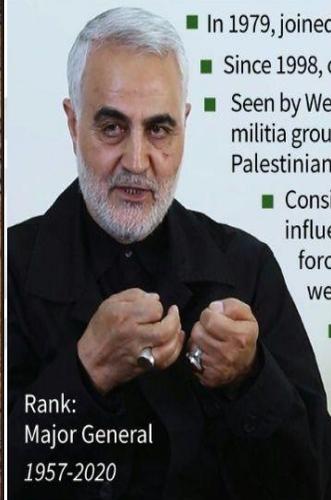
Source: Media reports, USIP, US dept of treasury, US Congressional Research Service

HOW US FORCES KILLED QASEM SOLEIMANI



Qasem Soleimani

Iran's Revolutionary Guards commander



- In 1979, joined Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)
- Since 1998, commander of IRGC elite Quds Force
- Seen by Western leaders as central to Iran's ties with militia groups including Lebanon's Hezbollah and Palestinian Hamas
- Considered the key architect of Iran's regional influence, leading the fight against jihadist forces and extending Iran's diplomatic weight in Iraq, Syria and beyond
- Had a popularity rating of 83 percent, according to 2018 survey by IranPoll and University of Maryland

Rank:
Major General
1957-2020

Killed in a US strike in Baghdad on January 3

Photo source: IRIB

© AFP

Tensions between the United States and Iran





TRUMP v IRAN

