



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 26, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- **Raptee Energy, a startup which is developing electric motorcycles - has become the first startup to be incubated at Anna University.**
- ✓ The university will provide working space, laboratory access, mentor support and connect with venture capitalists for the startup to design and develop the product.
- ✓ Anna Incubator, established with the support of Atal Innovation Mission, has selected a total of 24 startups for pre-incubation course.
- ✓ The other 23 startups are in the final stage of pre-incubation programme.
- ✓ The startup has two prototypes of electric motorcycles and is testing vehicle control units on private roads.
- ✓ After the testing exercises, the startup is looking at the product launch by October 2021

### NATIONAL

- **The Centre – is planning to initiate a dry-run of the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccine across the country in four States during next week**
- ✓ Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat and Punjab have been selected for the dry-run, considering the geographical locations.
- ✓ To start with, each State will plan it in two districts and in different (five) session type settings, e.g. district hospital, CHC/PHC, urban site, private health facility, rural outreach, etc.,
- ✓ According to Ministry of Health, this exercise would enable end-to-end mobilisation and testing of the Covid-19 vaccination process
- ✓ It would also check the usage of Co-WIN in the field environment, the linkages between planning, implementation and reporting mechanisms and identify challenges and guide the actual implementation, including improvements in the process.
- ✓ The move would also provide a hands-on experience to programme managers at various levels.

- ✓ An important focus of the dry run will be on management of any possible adverse events following immunisation (AEFI)
  - ✓ The mock drill will include concurrent monitoring and review at the block and district levels and preparation of feedback to be shared with the State and Union Health Ministry
  - ✓ This two-day activity is planned on December 28 and 29.
  - ✓ A detailed checklist has been prepared by the Health Ministry and shared with the four States to guide them in the process.
  - ✓ Meanwhile the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration of COVID-19 (NEGVAC) has recommended three prioritised population groups, including healthcare workers (about one crore), frontline workers (about two crore) and prioritised age group (about 27 crore).
- **On December 24, the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry - invited comments on a draft Bill for setting up a university for disability studies and rehabilitation sciences from the public.**
- ✓ The Ministry sought comments on the draft University of Disabilities Studies and Rehabilitation Sciences Bill, 2021 till January 3.
  - ✓ According to the Ministry, the proposed university, to be located in Kamrup district, Assam, would be “the first of its kind.”
  - ✓ The university would be a multi-disciplinary institution for research and courses from Bachelor’s level onward.
  - ✓ The Ministry’s proposal stated that there was a shortage of rehabilitation professionals in the country.

## COMMITTEES

- **The government - has set up a seven-member committee to recommend modalities for conducting a “high quality aptitude test” for admission to undergraduate programmes in central universities.**
- ✓ The plan will take effect from the 2021-22 academic session
  - ✓ The computer-based common test will be conducted by the National Testing Agency
  - ✓ All aspirants will have to appear for the common aptitude test (comprising verbal and quantitative ability and logical reasoning), followed by subject-specific tests.
  - ✓ The committee is expected to submit its recommendations within a month.
  - ✓ The decision of the government would give an opportunity to universities to enrol aspirants with “aptitude” for a course and also eliminate the need to appear in multiple admission and entrance exams.
  - ✓ The minimum eligibility to be set for the test would also ensure that more candidates are eligible for admission.
  - ✓ According to the National Education Policy, 2020, NTA “will work to offer a high-quality common aptitude test, as well as specialised common subject exams in

the sciences, humanities, languages, arts, and vocational subjects, at least twice every year.

- ✓ However, the exams would be conducted only once for the 2021-22 session.
- ✓ The seven-member committee will be chaired by Professor R P Tiwari, vice chancellor of Central University of Punjab, Bathinda.
- ✓ The other members include VCs of DU, Central University of South Bihar, Central University of Mizoram and Banaras Hindu University, along with director general of NTA and joint secretary (central universities) of MoE.
- ✓ As per UGC, as of June 2020, there are 54 central universities in the country.

## **PERSONALITIES**

- **Arya Rajendran (21 years) of ruling CPI (M) party – is all set to become the youngest corporation mayor of Kerala and also the youngest ever Mayor in the country.**



- ✓ Arya, a second year college student of BSc mathematics, was elected as a 'councillor' from the Thiruvananthapuram corporation six days before
- ✓ The Thiruvananthapuram district secretariat of the ruling CPI(M) recommended Arya's name for the post of mayor on December 25, which has to be ratified by the party's state secretariat.
- ✓ The mayoral election will take place on December 28 and Arya is certain to be voted mayor in the council where LDF has an absolute majority
- ✓ The other young mayors elected in various corporations across the country include -
  - ✓ Suman Koli, who had become mayor of Bharatpur municipal corporation in Rajasthan at the age of 21 in 2009
  - ✓ Sanjeev Naik, who was chosen as the mayor of Navi Mumbai at the age of 23 in 1995
  - ✓ BJP leader and former Maharashtra Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis, who was elected as the mayor of Nagpur Municipal Corporation at the age of 27.
  - ✓ Nuthan Rathore, who became the first mayor of Firozabad municipal corporation, UP, in 2017 when she was 31.

- ✓ Arya's father, Rajendran, an electrician by profession, is an active CPM worker.
- ✓ Her mother, Sreelatha, is a homemaker and LIC agent.
- ✓ She was elected to the corporation council in the recent civic body polls from Mudavanmugal ward with a majority of 549 votes and sworn in as a councillor of the city corporation on December 21.
- ✓ A state committee member of the Students Federation of India (SFI), Arya is also the state president of Balasangam, the children's wing of the Left party.

## DEFENCE

- **The Defence Minister Rajnath Singh - handed over three systems developed by DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organization) to the chiefs of the Defence Forces recently.**

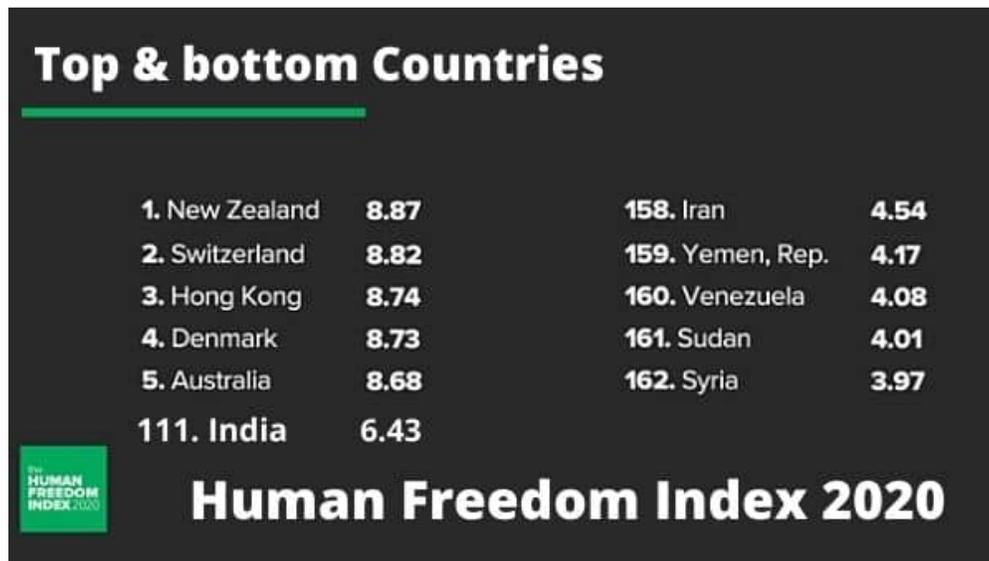


- ✓ The three systems are - IMSAS (Indian Maritime Situational Awareness System), Astra Mk-1 and BOSS (Border Surveillance System)
- ✓ The IMSAS was handed over to the Indian Naval Chief Admiral Karambir Singh.
- ✓ The Astra Mk-1 was handed over to the Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria.
- ✓ The BOSS was handed over to the Army Chief General MM Naravane.
- ✓ IMSAS is an indigenous, high performance intelligent software system that provides Global Maritime Situational picture and analytical capabilities to the Indian Navy
  - ✓ It was developed by the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR).
- ✓ In order to strengthen its surveillance in the Indian Ocean Region, India has been building its own maritime awareness and mission planning measures like 'Trigun'
  - ✓ Trigun, developed by CAIR, has the capability to collect all the data about military and civil vessel, aircraft and submarines.
  - ✓ The first phase of the system was completed in 2012, second phase in March 2020 and the last phase is to be completed by 2024.
- ✓ BOSS is an all-weather electronic surveillance system developed by the Instruments Research and Development Establishment.
  - ✓ The system is deployed in Ladakh border area.

- ✓ It monitors Line of Actual Control by automatically detecting intrusions in harsh high-altitude sub-zero temperature areas with remote operation capability.
- ✓ ASTRA Mk-1 weapon system was developed by Defence Research and Development Laboratory.
  - ✓ It is an indigenously developed first beyond range missile that can be launched from Light Combat Aircraft, Sukhoi-30, Mig-29 and Mig-29K.

## RANKINGS

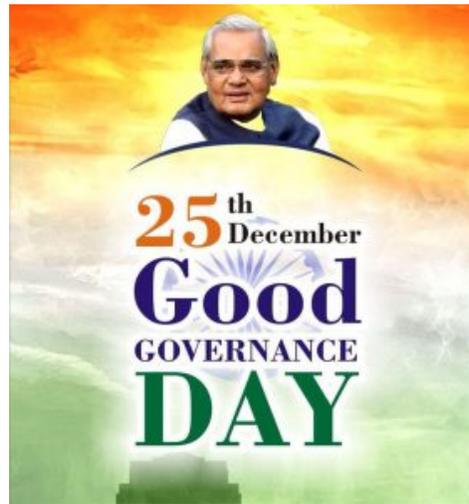
- **India – is ranked at 111<sup>th</sup> place in the Human Freedom Index, 2020**



- ✓ The country is ranked at 94<sup>th</sup> place in the index released last year
- ✓ The Human Freedom Index is published by the Cato Institute and Fraser Institute.
- ✓ According to the Index, there is decrease in personal freedom since 2008 globally.
- ✓ The Index uses 79 distinct indicators of personal and economic freedom.
  - ✓ It includes size of the Government, rule of law, security and safety, civil society, size of government, property rights, expression, religion, freedom to trade internationally, etc.
- ✓ The index ranks countries based on economic, civil and personal freedom.
- ✓ India's neighbours China and Bangladesh were ranked 129 and 139 respectively.
- ✓ **New Zealand, Switzerland and Hong Kong secured the first three spots.**
- ✓ The scores of India in the Human Freedom Index were -
  - ✓ 6.30 out of 10 in Personal freedom,
  - ✓ 6.56 out of 10 in Economic Freedom and
  - ✓ 6.43 out of 10 in Human Freedom.
- ✓ Syria was ranked the last in the index due to war scenarios in the country.
- ✓ As per the index, 15% of the world population live in the topmost free quartile, while 34% of the world population live in the bottom quartile.

# NATIONAL DAY

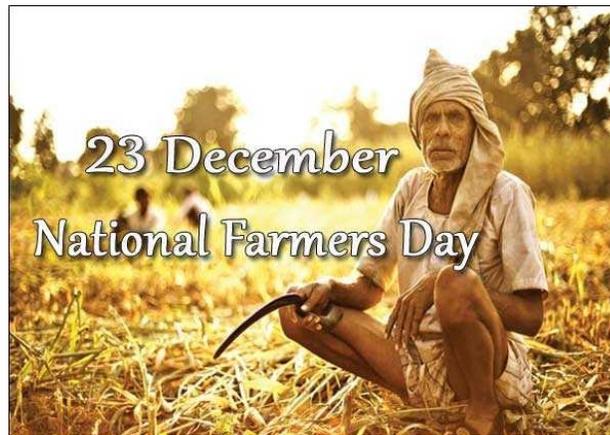
## ➤ Good Governance Day – December 25



- ✓ The day aims to create awareness about the government's accountability, responsibilities and duties that needs to be fulfilled
- ✓ Former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary is observed as Good Governance Day every year
- ✓ A great statesman, Atal Bihari Vajpayee served three terms as the prime minister of India - first for a term of 13 days in 1996, then for 13 months from 1998 to 1999 and after that a full term from 1999 to 2004
- ✓ Earlier, he served as the external affairs minister in the Prime Minister Moraji Desai cabinet
- ✓ During his tenure, Pokhran-II nuclear test was conducted
- ✓ Vajpayee was known for his oratory skills and is also a poet
- ✓ On December 23, 2014, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (posthumously) were announced as recipients of India's highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna.
- ✓ Immediately, PM Modi announced that the birth anniversary of the former Prime Minister would be treated as Good Governance Day.

## ➤ National Farmers Day (Rashtriya Kisan Diwas) - December 23

- ✓ The day is celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Choudhary Charan Singh.
- ✓ The day was established in the year 2001.
- ✓ Choudhary Charan Singh was born in a peasant family in Meerut in the year 1902
- ✓ He followed the Slogan "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" that was given by the former PM Lal Bahadur Shastri.
- ✓ He was an active participant of Arya Samaj and Indian National Congress during the independence struggle.



- ✓ Charan Singh served as the Prime Minister for a very short period between 1979 and 1980.

Choudhary Charan Singh was born on Dec 23, 1902

## FARMERS' LEADER

Became 5th prime minister of India in 1979

His birthday is celebrated as **KISAN DIWAS** across the country

In 1938, introduced the **Agriculture Produce Market Bill** to protect the interest of farmers from the greed of traders

Abolished **Zamindari from UP** through the Zamindari Abolition Act, 1950 & brought about the Land holding Act, 1960

Authored several books including *Abolition of Zamindari, Co-operative Farming X-rayed & India's Poverty & its Solution*

Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport in Lucknow & Chaudhary Charan Singh University in Meerut have been named after him

- ✓ During his term as the PM of the country he brought in several farmer friendly initiatives.
- ✓ Charan Singh introduced the Debt Redemption Bill in 1939, which aimed at giving relief to the farmers from the money lenders
- ✓ Later, he got the Consolidation of Holdings Act passed in 1953
  - ✓ Under the act, the fragmented land holdings of the farmers were pooled and re-allotted to farmers in such a way that each farmer got a single farm.
- ✓ Charan Singh founded the Kisan Trust in 1978.
- ✓ In recognition of his contributions towards the welfare of the farmers, his memorial in New Delhi was named as Kisan Ghat.