

**EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 27,
2020**

TAMIL NADU

- **The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) - has identified five sites in Tuticorin district's Adhichanallur area for the establishment of an on-site archaeology museum to display the artefacts retrieved.**



- ✓ A team led by ASI superintending archaeologist (Trichy Circle) T Arun Raj inspected the sites with a drone on December 11 and on December 26
- ✓ The team also visited the site where the excavation was conducted in the year 2004.
- ✓ Adhichanallur is a pre-historic site, among the iconic ones identified in India and the only one in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The museum, which will be of international standards, will be established near one of the identified sites.
- ✓ ASI is now creating awareness and also promoting these sites with cultural notice boards.
- ✓ A petition was filed in the Madras high court bench, seeking the establishment of a museum at Adhichanallur.
- ✓ Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had also mentioned in the Union Budget for 2020 that a world class museum would be established in Adhichanallur.
- ✓ The Trichy circle office was established in October on the court's direction to facilitate the museum.

- ✓ The latest excavation, conducted beyond the ASI's protected area, at Adhichanallur by the Tamil Nadu archaeology department has led to the invention of burial urns, mud pipelines and other artefacts.
- **The toll plazas run by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) in the State - will not have cash payment lanes from January 1, 2021**
- ✓ Around 7 lakh vehicles cross the 46 plazas in the State daily.
- ✓ Motorists on vehicles without radio frequency-controlled FASTag cards, which enable electronic payments, will be instructed to buy the tags, charged double the amount and then allowed to pass.
- ✓ Presently, lanes at the extreme end of the plazas are specifically for vehicles making payments by cash.
- ✓ These will now be removed, and all lanes will only permit FASTag-enabled vehicles to pass.

STATES

- **On December 26, the Madhya Pradesh cabinet - approved the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Bill, 2020**
- ✓ Once passed, Madhya Pradesh would become the second state in the country after Uttar Pradesh to have such a law.
- ✓ The Bill is similar to the Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020, notified by the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh last month

Stringent norms

A look at the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Bill, 2020

- Up to 10 years in jail for conversion through misrepresentation, allurement, force, undue influence, coercion, marriage or any other fraudulent means

- Offences will be cognisable and non-bailable

- Those willing to convert will need to apply to the district administration 60 days in advance

- Religious leaders facilitating the conversion will also have to inform about it 60 days in advance

- In cases of conversion of members of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minors, a provision has been made for imprisonment of two to 10 years and ₹50,000 fine

- In case of mass conversions (of two or more persons), a provision of five to 10 years of imprisonment and minimum fine of ₹1 lakh has been made

- Parents, legal guardian or custodian and brothers and sisters of the converted person can lodge a complaint



- ✓ But, the MP bill provides a unique provision for the maintenance for the victim and her child
- ✓ The bill stipulates 10-year jail term and a fine of ₹1,00,000 for conversion “through marriage or by any other fraudulent means”.

- ✓ It makes the conversion a 'cognizable and non-bailable' offence, which means police can arrest without a warrant
 - ✓ The bill seeks to replace the Religious Freedom Act of 1968.
 - ✓ Under the bill, the parents of the victim or an organisation can register a complaint after which police will start an inquiry
 - ✓ It will be applicable to any person who got converted from one religion to another by misrepresentation, influence, enticement, threats, force, marriage and conspiracy
 - ✓ Also, such marriages done with the intention of conversion, will be considered 'null and void'
 - ✓ A child born of such an annulled marriage will have the right to maintenance expenses and inherit both paternal and maternal property.
 - ✓ Once a marriage is cancelled, the converted person will be deemed to have returned to their paternal religion.
 - ✓ According to the proposed bill, anyone found guilty of forcibly converting another person will be jailed for a year to five years and fined ₹25,000.
 - ✓ If the victim is a minor, woman, or belongs to an SC/ST community, the jail term will be between two and 10 years and fine ₹50,000.
 - ✓ If a person violates the law while hiding his religious identity or misrepresentation, the jail term will be three-10 years and the fine ₹50,000
 - ✓ In case of mass conversions (of two or more persons), a provision of five to 10 years of imprisonment and a minimum fine of ₹1 lakh has been made
 - ✓ Repeat offenders would be subjected to five to 10 years of imprisonment, while the registration of any organisation involved in such violation would be cancelled.
- **The ban on 4G internet in Jammu & Kashmir - has been extended by the Centre till January 8**
 - ✓ This was announced in an order issued by the Union Territory's administration on December 25
 - ✓ The internet speed shall be continued to be restricted to 2G in the entire Union territory
 - ✓ However, the 4G services will be available in the districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur, where mobile internet connectivity shall be continued to be made available without any speed-related restrictions
 - ✓ The clampdown on high-speed internet services is aimed at obstructing the attempts of large number of terrorists who were trying to infiltrate from across the border
- **The Forest Minister of Madhya Pradesh - launched the first hot air balloon safari of India in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve recently**



- ✓ The service is to be operated by a Jaipur based Sky Waltz company.
 - ✓ Tourists can watch tigers, Indian Sloth bear and leopards from a height during the ride.
 - ✓ The service is to be introduced later in other tiger reserves of the state such as Pench Tiger Reserve and Panna Tiger Reserve.
 - ✓ The Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve is located in the eastern Satpura hill range.
 - ✓ Kanha Tiger Reserve is also located in Madhya Pradesh.
- **The Assam Cabinet - approved the bill to make Bodo an official language of the state recently.**
- ✓ The bill has been framed in accordance to the Bodo Peace Accord signed between the Government of India, Assam Government, four Bodo rebel groups and two Bodo organizations.
 - ✓ The official language of Assam is Assamese, while Bengali and Bodo are the additional official languages.
 - ✓ Bengali is official language in three districts of Barak Valley and Bodo in Bodoland territorial Council areas.
 - ✓ The Assamese language agitation refers to a movement that demanded the recognition of Assamese language as an official language.
 - ✓ After the State Reorganisation Act, 1956, the Assam Sahitya Sabha demanded the use of Assamese as official language in the state.
 - ✓ In 1960, Assam official language Act was passed recognising Assamese as an official language in Assam.
 - ✓ In 2019, the Assam Cabinet approved to make Assamese the State Language.
 - ✓ According to Census 2011, there are more than 14.16 lakh people speaking Bodo language in the state of Assam.
 - ✓ They account to 4.53 % of the total population of the state.
 - ✓ The Assam cabinet also approved to setup the Bodo Kachari Autonomous Council, which is also a part of Bodo Accord signed in January 2020.
 - ✓ The Bodos are ethnic communities demanding separate land for them.
 - ✓ As per the article 343, the official language of Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari.

- ✓ Business in Indian Parliament shall be transacted only in Hindi or English.
- ✓ In addition to the official languages, the constitution recognises 22 regional languages, including Hindi but not English.

NATIONAL

- **On December 26, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - launched the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) SEHAT scheme via video-conferencing for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.**
 - ✓ SEHAT refers to Social Endeavour for Health and Telemedicine.
 - ✓ The scheme aims to provide free cashless treatment for the inhabitants of Jammu and Kashmir up to Rs 5 lakhs of health cover.
 - ✓ It extends health insurance coverage to all residents of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - ✓ At present, about 6 lakh families of the state were getting the benefit of the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.
 - ✓ After the implementation of SEHAT health plan, about 21 lakh families will get benefitted
 - ✓ The scheme will include all the Indoor Patient Department cases of Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.
 - ✓ The Jammu and Kashmir Medical Supplies Corporation is to provide the medical supplies for the hospitals under the scheme.
 - ✓ Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana was rolled out in Jammu and Kashmir in 2018
 - ✓ West Bengal, Odisha and Telangana are the states that did not implement Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana or Ayushman Bharat.
 - ✓ Delhi was the last government to implement the scheme in April 2020.
- **India – to regain its position as the fifth largest economy by 2025 and emerge as the third largest by 2030 in dollar terms and remain in that position until 2035**
 - ✓ This was revealed by the latest World Economic League Table 2021 published by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)
 - ✓ The report reworked the economy forecasts for 193 countries up to 2035 considering the impact of Covid-19 pandemic
 - ✓ China is now forecast to overtake the US economy in 2028, five years earlier than in 2033 as previously forecast.
 - ✓ According to the report, the pandemic has contributed to a loss of \$6 trillion GDP in 2020.
 - ✓ According to the IMF, India has overtaken UK and France as the fifth largest economy in 2019, which has been reversed now due to the impact of the pandemic
 - ✓ UK has overtaken India in this year's forecasts and stays ahead till 2024 before India takes over again

World Economic League Table 2020

Country	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
United States	1	1	1	2	2

5TH PLACE BY '25

➤ India overtook the UK and France to become the 5th

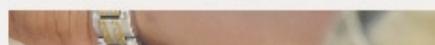
- ✓ The Indian economy, Asia's third largest, has been hit hard by one the strictest lockdowns in the world imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - ✓ As economic activity came to a stop, the economy contracted by a record 23.9% in the June quarter.
 - ✓ This was among the sharpest contractions among major and G-20 economies.
 - ✓ But the lifting of the lockdown since June and easing of curbs has led to a sharp recovery and the contraction has narrowed to 7.5% in the September quarter.
 - ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) now estimates the economy to return to positive range by the third quarter of the current fiscal year that ends in March 2021.
 - ✓ Under the impact of pandemic, India will now have to wait till 2024 to achieve its target of emerging as a \$5 trillion dollar economy.
- **The Centre's ambitious flagship scheme Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) - has achieved 32.3% coverage of tap connections in rural India**
- ✓ Launched in partnership with the States in August 2019, the scheme seeks to ensure that every rural household of the country gets assured drinking water supply by 2024
 - ✓ Since December 25, 2019 when the operational guidelines for the scheme's implementation were released, more than 3 crore households have been provided with tap water connections till now.
 - ✓ It emerged as another key scheme of the government during the second term under PM Narendra Modi
 - ✓ During the first term, the government implemented the flagship scheme of Swachh Bharat Mission successfully
 - ✓ In its first term from 2014 to 2019, the Centre reportedly built over 11 crore toilets in the country.

Drop by drop

The Jal Jeevan Mission, which aims to provide assured tap water supply to every rural household by 2024, has reached

32.3% coverage

Total number of



- ✓ Overall, as of now, 6.15 crore (32.3%) households of the country are getting tap water supply into their homes.
 - ✓ Every year, more than 3 crore households are to be given tap water connections.
 - ✓ Almost 1 lakh new connections are getting added on daily basis.
 - ✓ Out of a total of 731 districts, 256 districts and 1,592 blocks have been classified as water-stressed or drought prone in the country
 - ✓ To ensure its implementation without any funding crunch, in 2020-21, a sum of ₹23,500 crore has been allocated for the implementation of the JJM.
 - ✓ Besides this, in 2020-21, 50% of 15th Finance Commission Grants to Rural Local Bodies amounting to ₹30,375 crore as a tied grant, will be utilised for water supply and sanitation
- **The Reliance Industries Limited and British Petroleum - recently announced the start of gas production from the R cluster.**
- ✓ It is the first of the three deepwater gas projects jointly developed by Reliance Industries Limited and British Petroleum.
 - ✓ The R cluster is the deepest off-shore gas field in Asia, which is part of the KG-D6 block of the Krishna Godavari Basin.
 - ✓ The other 2 deep-water gas projects in the block are Satellite Cluster and the MJ gas field.
 - ✓ The R cluster is expected to have a peak production of 12.9 MMSCMSD, which is 10% of India's natural gas output at present.
 - ✓ The British Petroleum and Reliance India Limited are planning to jointly invest Rs 40,000 crores on the three fields.

- ✓ The production from the R cluster was planned to start by May 2020 but has been delayed due to Covid-19.
 - ✓ The satellite cluster is proposed to start production in 2021-22.
 - ✓ All the three projects are being planned to boost the domestic production of natural gas.
 - ✓ This will increase the country's energy share of natural gas from 6.2% at present to 15% in 2030.
 - ✓ The estimated natural gas reserves in India as of March 2018 were 1,339 billion cubic metres.
 - ✓ The largest natural gas reserve in the country is located in the Eastern and the Western offshore.
 - ✓ The first Natural Gas reserve in India was discovered in 1889 in Digboi, Assam.
- **The Centre - has recently introduced the E20 fuel to promote green fuel such as ethanol.**
- ✓ In this regard, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways recently published a draft notification inviting comments from the public for adoption of E20 fuel
 - ✓ The Government is planning to promote an ethanol-based economy of 2 lakh crores of rupees in next 5 years
 - ✓ At present the ethanol economy of India is at twenty-two thousand crores of rupees
 - ✓ E20 refers to the mix of 20% of Ethanol with gasoline
 - ✓ At present, the permissible level of blending is 10% of Ethanol in the country
 - ✓ In spite of this, the country has achieved only 5.6% blending in the year 2019
 - ✓ In 2018, the National Policy on Biofuels was launched
 - ✓ It aims to convert the surplus food grains into ethanol, based on an approval from the National Biofuel Coordination Committee
 - ✓ The EBP (Ethanol Blended Programme) programme was launched in 2003 to promote the blending of Ethanol in petrol
 - ✓ The usage of E20 reduces vehicular emission
 - ✓ Ethanol is a biofuel, which is a byproduct of biomass left by agricultural feedstock
- **Skill India - recently established the Centre of Excellence for skill development in power sector.**
- ✓ It has been set up in the campus of National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurugram, Haryana.
 - ✓ The centre is an outcome of collaboration between Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of National Education and Youth (Government of France) and Schneider Electric
 - ✓ It has been established to design and deliver training for instructors, trainers in solar and power sectors using high-end modern solar labs
 - ✓ The Power Sector Skill Council is to manage the operations of the centre.

- ✓ It will prepare the required learning contents for various profiles in generation, transmission and distribution of power
- ✓ The Skill India Mission was launched in 2015 to provide necessary technical skills to more than forty crore people by the year 2022
- **In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the Marine Products Export Development Authority - recently launched a multilingual call centre for Aquafarmers at Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh**
 - ✓ The initiative is first of its kind in the country.
 - ✓ It will address the technical issues and impart knowledge about efficient farming methods round the clock
 - ✓ The call centre can handle calls in English and Hindi
 - ✓ Through these call centres the Aquafarmers can seek advice from the experts regarding their concerns and problems
 - ✓ They can also get information about the support schemes extended by MPEDA through these call centres
 - ✓ The call centres will help the Aquafarmers follow best management practices to boost production and ensure quality of produce
 - ✓ The State of Andhra Pradesh is one of the major fish producing state in the country
 - ✓ Together with Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal and Gujarat, the state contributes more than 60% of marine products of the country.
- **The CAROTAR, 2020 guidelines for the 'rules of origin' – came into effect from September 2020**
 - ✓ CAROTAR refers to Customs (Administration of Rules of Origin under Trade Agreements) Rules
 - ✓ They seek to enforce the “rules of origin” for the rate on imports under Free Trade Agreements
 - ✓ The rules provide a list of minimum information regarding the ‘origin’ of imports to be possessed by the importer.
 - ✓ They are aimed at checking shipments of low-quality products into India
 - ✓ The rules will also bring in strict restrictions on dumping of goods by a third country, especially like China
 - ✓ The CAROTAR rules assist the importer to ascertain the country of origin, support customs authorities and claim concessional duty under Free Trade Agreements.
 - ✓ India has signed Free Trade Agreements with several countries such as south Korea, Japan and several other ASEAN countries.
- **The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation - recently commenced oil production from Ashokenagar-1 well located in the Bengal Basin.**
 - ✓ With this, Bengal Basin becomes the eighth oil producing basin in the country.

- ✓ The other oil producing basins located in the country include - Mumbai Offshore, Krishna-Godavari river basin, Cauvery, Assam Shelf, Rajasthan, Assam-Arakan, Cambay and Fold Belt
 - ✓ The Ashokenagar-1 well was established under the Early Monetization Plan of Government of India.
 - ✓ The ONGC covers 83% of established oil and gas reserves in the country
 - ✓ According to the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons, there are twenty-six sedimentary basins in India, covering 3.4 million square kilo metres.
 - ✓ Of these 16 are on land basins, three are off-shore basins and seven are located on both on land and off-shore.
 - ✓ India has planned to reduce its oil dependence on imports to 67% by 2022 as compared to 77% in 2013-14.
 - ✓ India generates 35.2 million tonnes of petroleum products from its indigenous crude oil production.
 - ✓ India imports oil mainly from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Nigeria, UAE, Venezuela, Kuwait, Mexico, Angola, United States, Malaysia, Oman, Brazil, Qatar and Russia.
- **The Government of India – signed \$500 million loan pact with World Bank to develop Green National Highway Corridors in the country**
- ✓ These corridors are to be developed in Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
 - ✓ Under the project, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways proposed to construct 783 km of highways.
 - ✓ The roads built under the project will combine safe and green technology designs.
 - ✓ It will promote efficient use of water and construction materials to reduce depletion of natural resources and greenhouse gases
 - ✓ The tenure period of the loan is 18.5 years.
 - ✓ The Union Cabinet approved the project of building 780 kilometres of Green National Highway at a cost of Rs 7,660 crores in March 2020.
 - ✓ The main objective of Green Highways is to promote greenery measures like plantation, transplantation, beautification and maintenance along the National Highways.
 - ✓ A budget of 1% of the total project cost is to be allocated for highway plantation and its maintenance.
 - ✓ The greenery measures are being undertaken under the Centre's Green Highway Policy.
 - ✓ According to the policy, Rs 1,000 crores per year will be available for plantation purpose.
 - ✓ The plantations will be monitored by BHUVAN and GAGAN satellite systems of ISRO.

- **The Air Quality commission - recently directed all the industries in the National Capital Region to switch over to Piped Natural Gas.**
- ✓ The twenty-member Commission was formed by Ministry of Environment.
- ✓ The commission directed the Delhi Pollution Control Committee to inspect and identify industries using unapproved fuels and take stringent penal actions in case of non-compliances.
- ✓ DPCC (Delhi Pollution Control Committee), Indraprastha Gas Limited and GAIL (Gas Authority of India Limited) are to provide required assistance for the Piped Natural Gas
- ✓ The commission has identified 1,644 industrial units spread across 50 industrial areas in Delhi that are required to switch over to Piped Natural Gas.
- ✓ The deadline of switch over is January 31, 2021, as per the Commission
- ✓ The System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) operating under Ministry of Earth Science recently announced that the air quality of the national capital has been deteriorating continuously.
- ✓ It has remained “Very Poor” category, with an overall Air Quality Index (AQI) score of 373.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The World Health Organisation (WHO) – has listed out 10 global health issues to track in 2021**
- ✓ It includes speeding up access to Covid-19 tests, medicines and vaccines and to tackle health inequities.
- ✓ A bio bank is proposed to be set up to share pathogen materials and clinical samples to facilitate rapid development of safe and effective vaccines.
- ✓ The UN health body has said that countries around the world will need to move swiftly to repair and reinforce their health systems in 2021
- ✓ In 2019, WHO’s latest Global Health Estimates revealed, non-communicable diseases were responsible for seven of the top 10 causes of death.
- ✓ In 2020, it says, it was evident how particularly vulnerable people with non-communicable diseases were to Covid-19.
- ✓ The UN agency will focus on screening and treatment programmes for diseases like cancer, diabetes and heart disease in the next year
- ✓ Also, WHO will work to implement the new ten-year Roadmap for Neglected Tropical Diseases.
- ✓ It will strive towards combating drug resistance through its Global Leadership Group for Antimicrobial Resistance.
- ✓ Other major focus areas include a new Global Diabetes Compact, and a campaign to help 100 million people quit tobacco
- ✓ WHO is planning a conference in June 2021 to support health in Small Island Developing States.

- ✓ Further, the WHO is to provide support to the countries in strengthening their data and information through the SCORE Technical Package, which is basically a collection of WHO health-related data tools
- **The Berber's dish of Couscous, Singapore's Hawker culture, Budima dance of Zambia and wine horse of Spain – were recently included into the UNESCO list of Intangible Heritage**
- ✓ The Berbers are ethnic group living in West Africa and North Africa
- ✓ The Couscous is a Berber's dish, which is a staple grain food of people living in Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and Libya



- ✓ The Budima dance of Zambia is the warrior dance that is performed during funeral processions, traditional ceremonies, thanksgiving and harvest celebrations
- ✓ The Wine Horses is a festive equestrian manifestation, which is held each year from 1 to 3 May in the town of Caravaca de la Cruz of Spain.
- ✓ The central event consists of a horse parade around the town's streets and up to the castle accompanied by four grooms on foot
- ✓ Singapore's Hawker culture is a government sponsored tradition-based street food restaurants located at a common place
- **The European Union - recently announced that it is completely banning the exports of unsorted plastic to poor and less industrialised nations.**
- ✓ The new rules of the European Union will amend the 2006 Waste Shipment Regulation.
- ✓ However, the new rules will allow the export of hazardous and plastic waste only to countries that intends to recycle, especially OECD countries
- ✓ The new rules are a part of the Green Deal of European Union to establish a circular economy
- ✓ They have been imposed based on 1989 Basel Convention
- ✓ Earlier, China had banned the import of plastics in 2018.
- ✓ The plastic waste of European Union fell from three million tonnes in 2016 to 1.9 million tonnes in 2019.
- ✓ The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was signed in 1989.

- ✓ It aims to reduce the movement of hazardous waste between the signatory nations.
- ✓ As of October 2018, 186 states have signed the convention including European Union.
- ✓ India, United States and Haiti have signed the convention but not ratified it.
- ✓ The Green Deal of European Union is a commitment under 2015 Paris Agreement.
- ✓ The deal is a 100 billion Euro plan to achieve Net Zero Green house Gas emission by 2050.

COMMITTEES

- **The Standing Committee headed by the senior Congress leader Anand Sharma - recently submitted a report “Management of COVID-19 pandemic and related issues”.**
 - ✓ The report was submitted to the Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu
 - ✓ The committee has suggested that the National Migrant Workers Database should be created at the earliest.
 - ✓ In September 2020, the Ministry of Labour had announced to set up a National Migrant Workers Database in Rajya Sabha.
 - ✓ The database, to be created based on the twelve-digit Aadhaar number, will act as social security coverage to the migrant workers.
 - ✓ All the unorganised workers will also be included separately in the database to help them get employment, alongwith their details of skill set
 - ✓ Also, it should contain details of origin and destination state of the migrant workers, so that their movement can be monitored.
 - ✓ The initial registration of the migrant workers into the database is to be done with the existing data available under One Nation, One Ration Card scheme and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.
 - ✓ Also, the data from State Insurance Corporation and Employees Provident Fund Organization are to be utilised.
 - ✓ The other recommendations of Anand Sharma Committee include
 - ✓ The Disaster Management Act, 2005 and the Epidemics Diseases Act, 1897 are insufficient and should be amended
 - ✓ The amendment of the provisions of Epidemics Diseases Act, 1897
 - ✓ The framing of “Public Health Act” to keep the private hospitals under check
 - ✓ The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 should also be amended
 - ✓ More fund should be allocated to the government hospitals to equip them strong enough to handle pandemics
 - ✓ On November 10, 2020, the Ministry of Finance approved the creation of National Database of Unorganised Workers and it is already under implementation
 - ✓ This is different from the National Database of Migrant Workers.

- ✓ The Centre has allocated Rs 650 crores to create the National Database of Migrant Workers.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **India's first human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan – will be using eco-friendly fuel in its liquid fuel engines**
- ✓ This was revealed by Isro chairman K Sivan during an event in Chennai
- ✓ The mission will be carrying three Indian astronauts to a low-earth orbit
- ✓ Isro now uses unsymmetrical dimethylhydrazine as propellant and nitrogen tetroxide as oxidiser in its liquid fuel engines.
- ✓ The fuel and exhaust are toxic.
- ✓ Further, Isro is developing green propulsion for human space flight mission.
- ✓ It plans to use either hydrogen peroxide-based mono propulsion system or hydrogen peroxide along with ethanol as by-propellant.
- ✓ Both hydrogen peroxide and its by-propellant are green and not toxic, while even the exhaust is not toxic
- ✓ Isro will be using liquid oxygen (LOX) methane engines in the future rockets

ECONOMY

- **The mandatory requirement of 1% cash payment of GST liability – comes into effect from January 1**
- ✓ The move would be applicable to about 45,000 taxpayers
- ✓ This comes to only 0.37% of the total businesses registered in the Goods and Services Tax system.
- ✓ To curb tax evasion by way of fake invoicing, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) had recently made it mandatory for businesses with monthly turnover of more than ₹50 lakh to pay at least 1% of their GST liability in cash.
- ✓ The new rule restricts use of input tax credit (ITC) for discharging GST liability to 99% effective January 1, 2021.
- ✓ However, this restriction will not apply in cases where the managing director or any partner has paid more than ₹1 lakh as income tax
- ✓ Also, it will not be applicable to the registered persons who have received a refund amount of more than ₹1 lakh in the preceding financial year on account of unutilised input tax credit.
- ✓ Out of the total GST taxpayer base of 1.2 crore, only about 4 lakh have monthly supply value greater than ₹50 lakh.
- ✓ Of these, only about 1.5 lakh pay less than 1% of their GST liability in cash.
- ✓ The CBIC has booked about 12,000 cases of ITC fraud and arrested 365 persons in such cases so far.

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) – has proposed to introduce “Positive Pay System” from January 1, 2021 for cheque transactions above Rs 50,000 to enhance safety features and eliminate frauds.**
- ✓ The new system reconfirms key details of large-value cheques, where the transactions are above Rs. 50,000.
- ✓ The details of cheque are cross checked by the Cheque Truncation System in an electronic ‘means’ and discrepancies are flagged to the drawee and presenting banks
- ✓ The new facility is to be developed by the National Payments Corporation of India.
- ✓ The Cheque Truncation System is currently available all over India.
- ✓ It presently covers 2% of the retail payment in terms of volume and 15% of the retail payment in terms of value.

