

Current Affairs: 23.03.2021

Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal inaugurates Shaheed Bhagat Singh Smarak in New Delhi



The Union Minister of Education, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', virtually inaugurated the **Shaheed Bhagat Singh Smarak in New Delhi** on March 23, 2021.

The inauguration took place on the occasion of a programme organised by the University of Delhi on 'Shaheed Diwas' to pay homage and commemorate 90 years of martyrdom of our national icons of the Indian National Movement - Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru.

Government of UP and MP sign agreement with Jal Shakti Ministry for 'Ken-Betwa Link' project



On the occasion of World Water Day on March 22, 2021, the governments of **Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh** signed an agreement with the **Union Ministry of Jal Shakti** to implement the **Ken-Betwa river interlinking project**. The main purpose of this project is to carry water from surplus regions to drought-prone and water-scarce region through interlinking of rivers. Under the project surplus water will be transferred from the **Ken river in Panna district in Madhya Pradesh to Betwa river in Uttar Pradesh**. The project will benefit **Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh**, by resolving the water scarcity and thus bring prosperity in this region. The water will be transferred through the construction of the Dhaudan Dam and a 221 km-long canal. The Ken-Betwa Link Project will provide annual irrigation of 2.51 lakh hectares, 1,700 million cubic meters (mcm) of water to Uttar Pradesh and drinking water supply to about 62 lakh people and also generate 103 MW of hydropower.

POWERGRID Launches Certified E-Tendering Portal "PRANIT"



State-owned **Power Grid Corporation of India (POWERGRID)** has launched an "e-Tendering Portal" called 'PRANIT' to make tendering process more transparent. The portal "PRANIT" will involve less paperwork and allow ease of operation, which in turn will make the tendering process more transparent. The portal has been certified by **Standardisation, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC)**, under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, GoI. POWERGRID is the **only organization in India** to have an e-procurement solution on **SAP Supplier Relationship Management (SRM)**, complying with all applicable requirements relating to security and transparency as stipulated by STQC.

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MoD signs Rs 1,056 crore contract with MDSL to supply 1,300 Light Specialist Vehicles to Indian Army



The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract with Mahindra Defence Systems Ltd (MDSL) on March 22, 2021, to procure 1,300 Light Specialist Vehicles (LSV) for the Indian Army. The total cost of the deal is Rs 1,056 crore and the induction of the vehicles into the Army would be completed in four years. The Mahindra Defence LSV is the only vehicle that passed all the field, ballistics, and technical trials, carried out by the Indian Army in different terrains including high altitude, deserts, and plains. LSV is a modern fighting vehicle **indigenously designed and developed by MDSL.**

ISRO Demonstrates India's First Free-Space Quantum Communication Over 300 Metres from Ahmedabad



In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully demonstrated free-space Quantum Communication over a distance of 300 metre, with several technologies developed within the country. The demonstration included live video conferencing using quantum-key-encrypted signals, at Space Applications Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad, between two

line-of-sight buildings within the campus. The experiment was done at night to ensure that there is no interference of the direct sunlight. This is a major milestone achievement for unconditionally secured satellite data communication using quantum technologies

Russia Launches 38 Satellites From 18 Countries Into Space on Soyuz Rocket



On March 22, 2021, Russian space agency 'Roscosmos' successfully launched 38 foreign satellites into orbit, onboard Soyuz-2.1a carrier rocket from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. The 38 satellites belonged to 18 countries including South Korea, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy and Brazil. One of these satellites named 'Challenge-1' was the first-ever satellite made completely in Tunisia, which was created by the Telnet

telecommunications group.

RBI Constitutes 5 member Standing External Advisory Committee under Shyamla Gopinath for evaluating applications for Universal Banks and SFBs



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a five members standing external advisory committee (SEAC) to evaluate applications for “on-tap” licensing of universal banks and small finance banks (SFBs). The committee will be chaired by the former RBI deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath. The panel will have a tenure of three years.

- Other members include
 1. Revathy Iyer – Director, central board, RBI
 2. B Mahapatra – Former executive director, National Payments Corporation of India
 3. T N Manoharan – Former chairman, Canara Bank
 4. Hemant G Contractor – Former MD, State Bank of India, and former Chairman, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority.

India has world’s fourth strongest armed forces, China tops: Military Direct

The military force of India stands at number four place in the world, according to a study titled “ultimate military strength index” released by defence website Military Direct. China has the strongest military force in the world, with a score of 82 out of 100 points. The USA is in the second place, despite their enormous military budgets with 74 points. The index score was calculated after taking into consideration various factors including budgets, number of inactive and active military personnel, total air, sea, land and nuclear resources, average salaries, and weight of equipment.

Top 5 Countries in the Index

Rank	Country	Score (100)
1	China	82
2	USA	74
3	Russia	69
4	India	61
5	France	58

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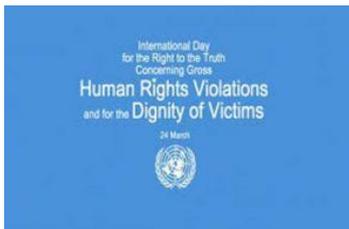


World Tuberculosis Day: 24 March



World Tuberculosis Day is observed every year on **24 March** to create awareness among the public about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease. The theme of World Tuberculosis Day 2021 is ‘**The Clock is Ticking**’.

International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims: 24 March



Every year **March 24** is observed as the **International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims**, to say no to all forms of violence, injustice and oppression against humanity.

The day aims to pay tribute to those who have devoted their lives to, and lost their lives in, the struggle to promote and protect human rights for all. The day proclaimed by the **United Nations in December 2010**.