

Weekly Current Affairs

9-15 January, 2022

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NATIONAL NEWS

1. Elections in five states from Feb 10-March 7

- Election Commission announced that the assembly elections in UP, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa will be held between February 10 and March 7 in seven phases.
- The counting of votes will be held on March 10.
- Uttar Pradesh to go to poll in 7 phases from Feb 10-March 7; Punjab, Uttarakhand and Goa to vote on February 14 and Manipur to vote on Feb 27 and March 3.
- The Model Code of Conduct has come into effect in the five states with the announcement of elections.

2. SC to set up high-level committee to inquire into security lapses

- Supreme Court to constitute high-level committee headed by retired Supreme Court judge to investigate lapses in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's security in Punjab.
- Three-judge bench comprises of Chief Justice NV Ramana and Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli was hearing the plea.
- PM convoy was stranded on a flyover due to a blockade by protesters in Ferozpur after which he returned from poll-bound Punjab without attending the planned events, including a rally.

3. Odisha decided to raise upper age limit for state services from 32 to 38

- Odisha Govt has decided to raise upper age limit for entry to state government services from 32 to 38
- However, it will be effective only for the recruitment advertisements made in calendar years 2021 and 2022 or to be made in 2023.
- This decision was taken in a cabinet meeting held under chairmanship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in the state capital Bhubaneswar.
- The decision was taken to enable the youth to avail opportunities to enter govt jobs.

4. IEPFA signs MoU with IGNOU for promoting Investor Education in Delhi

- Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) has signed MoU with Indira Gandhi National Open University to propagate Investor Education, Awareness and Protection by utilizing the tele-lecturing facility of Gyan Darshan Channel.
- Proposed lecture series of 75 episodes will be a live tele-lecturing series on 24x7 Gyan Darshan TV channel.

- The repository of the tele-lectures is available on IEPFA's official YouTube channel.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. Bangladesh discovers huge natural gas hydrate deposits in Bay of Bengal

- Bangladesh has discovered huge potential natural gas hydrate deposits of 0.11 to 0.73 trillion cubic feet in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- It is equivalent to 17-103 TCF of natural gas reserves.
- The study undertaken over the last three years was conducted by the Petrobangla, Bapex, local experts and the National Oceanography centre in Southampton, UK.
- The study has come up with the preliminary idea about the location and nature of the gas hydrate discovery.

NEW APPOINTMENTS AND PERSON IN NEWS

1. Director Ranjith likely to become Chairman of Kerala Chalachithra Academy

- Director Ranjith is likely to become the chairman of the Kerala Chalachithra Academy. The official announcement will be made soon. Ranjith said he would respond after the official announcement. Currently, director Kamal is the chairman of Chalachithra Academy. He was elected chairman in 2016.
- Ranjith made his debut film writing in 1987 with 'Oru May Masa Pulari'. Later he became a part of films like Witness and Peruvannapurathe Visheshangal. In 1993, the film 'Devasuram' marked a turning point in his career. The movie and its character Mangalassery Neelakantan became a classic in Malayalam cinema. Subsequently, several hit films were penned by him, including Aaram Thampuran, Summer in Bethlehem, Narasimham and Valyettan.

2. Viresh Kumar Bhawra assumes charge as Director General of Punjab Police

- Viresh Kumar Bhawra (1987-batch IPS officer) has assumed the Charge of Director General of Punjab Police.
- He replaced officiating DGP Siddharth Chattopadhyaya.
- He was the DGP of Punjab Home Guards.
- After assuming the charge, Punjab Police will ensure smooth conduct of elections, and will be eradicating drug menace and terrorism from the state.

3. Prashant Ranjan appointed as Director in the Ministry of Tourism

- Prashant Ranjan (IRS officer of 2007 batch) has been selected for the appointment as Director in the Ministry of Tourism.
- His tenure will be of 5 years from the date of taking over charge of the post or until further orders, whichever event takes place earlier.
- He had served as Deputy Commissioner of Income Tax, Noida, Nagpur, Ranchi, Jamshedpur and Ghaziabad.
- Ministry of Tourism is the apex body for the development and promotion of tourism in India.

4. Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas appointed as next IMF's Chief Economist

- French-born economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas has been named as the next chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- He will succeed Gita Gopinath, first woman to serve as the Fund's chief economist.
- He will initially join the IMF on a part-time basis from Jan 24, 2022 and will take up on role on full-time basis from April 1, 2022
- Gita Gopinath will take over as 1st deputy managing director of IMF from January 21 2022

5. Hardeep Puri releases brochure themed 'Smart Cities, Smart Urbanization'

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is organizing a series of 30 events under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav by Prime Minister to commemorate 75th anniversary of Independence
- It will culminate in a grand finale of 'Smart Cities, Smart Urbanization' conference, wherein 6 main events will be organized in Surat tentatively on the 4th and 5th of February, 2022
- An illustrated brochure themed 'Smart Cities, Smart Urbanization' was also formally launched by Hardeep Puri virtually.

6. Alikhan Smailov named Kazakhstan's Prime Minister

- Alikhan Smailov (49 years) has been appointed unanimously as the new Prime Minister of Kazakhstan
- His name was nominated by Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on 11th January, 2022.
- Prior to this, he served as finance minister of Kazakhstan from 2018 to 2020
- He became the first deputy prime minister in the Cabinet in 2019.
- Kazakhstan is Central Asian country, extends from Caspian Sea to the Altai Mountains.

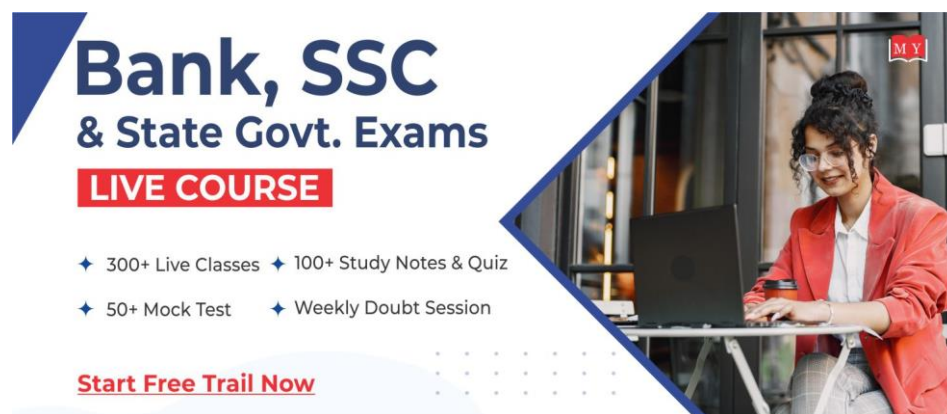
7. SC appoints high-level committee to investigate PM's security breach

- Supreme Court has appointed high-level committee to look into the alleged security breach of Prime Minister's Punjab
- Chairperson of the committee: former SC Judge, Indu Malhotra,.
- look into the alleged security breach of Prime Minister's Punjab visit on 5th January this year.
- Three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Nuthalapati Venkata Ramana and comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, have passed the order for the same

BANKING

1.RBI approves re-appointment of Anup Bagchi as ED of ICICI Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the re-appointment of Anup Bagchi as an Executive Director of ICICI Bank for a period of 3 years.
- The shareholders of the bank at its Annual General Meeting in August last year had approved Bagchi's re-appointment for five years effective February 1, 2022.



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2.Navrang Saini further gets additional charge as IBBI Chairperson

- The center has further assigned the additional charge of the the chairperson of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) to Navrang Saini.
- The Centre had in Oct last year assigned additional charge of chairperson of IBBI Saini for a period of three months.
- The IBBI Chairperson is appointed by the center on the recommendations of the selection committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary.
- M S Sahoo, who was the first Chairperson of IBBI since October 1, 2016.

3. KVG Bank joins hands with Mecwin Tech to finance solar pump-sets for farmer

- Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) and the Bengaluru-based Mecwin Technologies Ltd signed an MoU to introduce farmer-friendly solar-powered pump-sets using bank finance.
- The MoU will benefit farmers since Mecwin Technologies Ltd is specialised in the production and management of solar irrigation pump-sets.
- Apart from this, the bank has the largest branch network in rural areas.
- KVGB was the first bank to introduce solar loan schemes.

4.RBL Bank collaborates with Google to advance next-gen customer experience

- RBL Bank and Google announced a strategic collaboration to fuel the Bank's customer experience strategy.
- Through this the bank will expand its value proposition to serve its rapidly growing customer base through the digital platform, Abacus 2.0.
- It will enable better customer data management, and analytics, enabling effective cross-selling within the Bank's large customer base.
- The Bank aims to provide a holistic one-stop solution to its existing and new customers.

5.Airtel Payments Bank tie-up with Park+ to offer FASTag-based Parking Solutions

- Airtel Payments Bank and Park+ have collaborated to offer FASTag-based smart parking solutions to marquee commercial and residential properties across India. This partnership will utilize the reach of Airtel Payments Bank to digitize the parking ecosystem using FASTag associated with the vehicle. Park+ is backed by Sequoia Capital and Matrix Partners and is engaged in automating parking spaces through FASTag.

About the collaboration:

- The collaboration aims to leverage the deep distribution reach and digital payments stack of Airtel Payments Bank to digitize the parking ecosystem using FASTag associated with the vehicle. Park+ will offer its entire suite of FASTag services including issuance, acquiring, recharge, and technology support to Airtel Payments Bank. Park+ access control systems are installed at over 1500 societies, over 30 malls, and over 150 corporate parks across the country.

6.Labour Minister releases report on 2nd round of Quarterly Employment Survey

- Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav has released the report of second quarter of Quarterly Employment Survey

- It is the part of All-India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey
- The report highlights that manufacturing sector engages 39%, education 22% and Health 10% of the estimated workers.
- Overall percentage of female workers stood at 32.1%.
- Regular workers constitute 87% of the estimated workforce in the nine selected sectors.

7. World Bank forecasted Indian Economy to grow at 8.3%

- World Bank has forecasted Indian economy to grow at 8.3% in the current financial year in its latest Global Economic Prospects
- It has upgraded India's GDP growth for the next fiscal to 8.7%, reflecting higher investment from the private sector and in infrastructure, and dividends from ongoing reforms.
- Global economic growth is estimated at 4.1% in current financial year and 3.2% in the next fiscal.

8. India Ranks 83rd in Q1 Henley Passport Index 2022

- India has been ranked 83rd among 111 countries in the latest Henley Passport Index, released for Q1 of 2022
- India improved its position by seven places from 90th in Q4 of 2021 in October.
- Indian passport has visa-free access to 60 countries worldwide in Q1 2022
- Top performers: Japan and Singapore, followed by Germany and South Korea
- Least Performer: Afghanistan with score of 26
- Index is based on exclusive data from International Air Transport Association (IATA)

SCIENCE TECH & DEFENCE

1. TCS bags Passport Seva II contract

- MEA has selected TCS for the 2nd phase of the Passport Seva Programme, the country's largest mission-critical e-governance programme.
- Launched in 2008, the PSP saw TCS transforming the delivery of passport-related services, digitizing the processes, and setting global benchmarks in timeliness, transparency, and reliability.
- In the next phase, TCS will refresh existing facilities and systems, and develop innovative new solutions to enable the issuance of e-passports.

2. PhonePe crosses 350 m registered users mark

- Digital payments platform PhonePe has crossed 350 million lifetime registered users.
- The platform's registered user base has grown 28% from 273 million in January to 350 million in December 2021.
- PhonePe also reported 150 million monthly active users (MAU) and an annualised total payment value (TPV) of \$651 billion in December.
- PhonePe is among the leading UPI platforms with over 45 per cent market share in terms of the volume of transactions processed in December.

3.FCRA licences of JNU, DU, IITD, RKM and others restored

- The renewal of as many as 179 FCRA licences was denied by the MHA in December last year while the licences of 5,789 NGOs had lapsed.
- The total number of active NGOs registered under FCRA came down to 16,907 from 22,797.
- Some NGOs informed the MHA on Monday that they had filed the renewal applications online ahead of the deadline but their names were in the list of NGOs whose licences had lapsed.

4. India's first indigenous aircraft carrier begins another phase of sea trial

- India's 1st indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) Vikrant began another set of sea trials.
- It is planned to be inducted in Aug 22.
- The 40,000-tonne aircraft carrier is the largest and most complex warship to be built in India
- It successfully completed a five-day maiden sea voyage in Aug and underwent 10-day sea trials in Oct 2021.
- IAC-1 will operate the MiG-29K, Kamov-31 helicopters; Advanced Light Helicopters and the soon-to-be-inducted MH-60R multirole helicopters.

5.82nd Indian Public Schools' Conference Principals' Conclave

- Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has virtually addressed 82nd Indian Public Schools' Conference Principals' Conclave and urged all schools attending the conclave to reflect how inclusive our leading schools are.
- It is being organized by Doon School.
- IPSC started in 1939 with a few residential schools now has a strength of 81 schools including Sainik Schools and Military Schools.
- Chairperson of IPSC: Nishi Misra.

6.Koottil Variam Ajith appointed as Deputy Secretary in Ministry of Defence

- Koottil Variam Ajith (Indian Supply Service officer of 2009-batch) has been appointed as Deputy Secretary in Ministry of Defence (MoD) under Central Staffing Scheme (CSS)
- His tenure will be for a period of four years from the date of taking over charge of the post or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- MoD is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces

7. Indian Railways renames Kevadiya station as Ekta Nagar railway station

- Ministry of Railways has approved renaming of the Kevadiya railway station in Narmada district of Gujarat, as Ekta Nagar railway station.
- Statue of Unity's Kevadiya railway station falls under the Vadodara division.
- New station code of Ekta Nagar railway station will be EKNR.
- Numerical code of Ekta Nagar railway station will be 08224620.
- According to Western Railways, work has been started to change railway station name on all station boards.



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8. DRDO tests final deliverable configuration of Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the final deliverable configuration of the Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM).
- The indigenously developed anti-tank missile is a low weight, 'fire and forget' missile and is launched from a man portable launcher, integrated with thermal sight.
- During the test, which was conducted at a range in Southern India, the missile impacted the designated target with precision and destroyed it. The final impact event was captured on camera. The purpose of this particular test was to prove the consistent performance for the missile system at its minimum range.

9. Union Minister launches AI Start-Up by IIT alumni for water purification

- Union Minister Jitendra Singh has launched Artificial Intelligence-driven Start-Up by IIT alumni for water purification through innovative technology
- Aim: to provide clean drinking water at a price much lesser than the market price.
- He asked private sector to come forward with tech solutions to cover nearly 14 crore households where clean drinking water is yet to reach.
- Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana are being taken up for this latest heli-borne survey.

10. India successfully test-fires naval variant of advanced supersonic BrahMos

- Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) has successfully test-fired an extended range sea-to-sea variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile for Indian Navy
- This advanced sea to sea variant of BrahMos Supersonic Cruise missile was launched from INS Visakhapatnam, stealth guided-missile destroyer of the Indian Navy.
- Produced by: BrahMos Aerospace, an India-Russian joint venture.
- It flies at a speed of 2.8 Mach or almost three times the speed of sound

11. ISRO successfully conducts tests of Cryogenic Engine for Gaganyaan

- ISRO has successfully conducted qualification tests of Cryogenic Engine for Gaganyaan human space programme
- It is conducted by ISRO Propulsion Complex in Tamil Nadu for 720 seconds duration and met the test objectives.
- Successful test has ensured reliability and robustness of the cryogenic engine for induction into Gaganyaan
- Gaganyaan programme will use 2 cryogenic engines and will be launched by Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) Mark III launched vehicle

12. Atal Innovation Mission declares results of 'ATL Space Challenge 2021'

- NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has declared the results of 'ATL Space Challenge 2021', after successful completion and overwhelming participation from young innovators
- It was launched in collaboration with ISRO and CBSE
- The challenge was designed for all the school students, mentors and teachers across the country

- It witnessed over 2500 submissions from both ATL and Non-ATL students across the country from which 75 top innovators were selected and announced.

13.Prime Minister inaugurates MSME Technology Centre at Puducherry

- PM Modi has inaugurated Technology Centre of MSME Ministry at Puducherry on National youth day
- It is a World Class Technology Centre set up with an investment of Rs. 122 crore
- It is spread across 10 acres and will train 20,000 youth, support 2000 MSMEs and incubate 200 Start Ups, propelling local economy to great heights
- It will boost skill development and inculcate entrepreneurial spirit among youth
- It is developed under flagship Technology Centre Systems Program

BOOKS AND AWARDS

1.Dr Satish Adiga professor at KMC Manipal receives ICMR National Award

- Dr Satish Adiga has been selected by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for its national award.
- He is a professor in the clinical embryology department at Kasturba Medical College (KMC), under Manipal Academy of Higher education (MAHE).
- Adiga will receive Dr Subhas Mukherjee Award from ICMR in recognition for his outstanding contribution to the field of in-vitro fertilization (IVF)
- He has contributed significantly to both clinical IVF and fertility research

2.Book titled ‘Mamata: Beyond 2021’ to release on January 24, 2022

- A new book titled ‘Mamata Beyond 2021’, based on West Bengal CM and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee will be released on January 24, 2022.
- The book has been written by Jayanta Ghosal, a political Journalist.
- It has been translated by Arunava Sinha, a fiction and non-fiction translator.
- The book will be published by HarperCollins India.
- The book narrates how Mamata worked tirelessly for the state’s poor and disadvantaged and was successfully able to portray herself as the ‘daughter of Bengal’.

3.79th Golden Globe Awards 2022 Announced

- Golden Globe Awards 2022 ceremony has been announced to recognize excellence in film, both American and international, and American television.
- Power of the Dog, West Side Story won the most number of awards with 3 each.

4. Actress Harshaali Malhotra receives Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar Award 2022

- Actress Harshaali Malhotra has been awarded the 12th Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar Award 2022 for her performance in the 2015 film Bajrangi Bhaijaan
- She received the award from Bhagat Singh Koshiyari (Governor of Maharashtra)
- She played the role of Munni, who was mute young girl from Pakistan in Salman Khan starrer Bajrangi Bhaijaan.
- Govt of Maharashtra organized Bharat Ranta Dr Ambedkar national Awards 2022 ceremony in the memory of Dr Ambedkar
- It was first awarded in 1993

5. Subhas Sarkar launches Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22

- Minister of State for Education Subhas Sarkar has virtually launched Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) 2021-2022
- These awards recognize and inspire those schools, which have undertaken exemplary work in the field of water, sanitation, and hygiene
- At National level, 40 schools will be selected for awards.
- Award money has been enhanced from 50,000 to 60,000 per school under Samagra Shiksha scheme
- It was first instituted by Dept of School Education and Literacy in 2016-17

6. DBT-BIRAC supported start-ups receives Global Women's HealthTech Awards

- DBT-BIRAC supported start-ups, NIRAMAI Health Analytix Pvt. Ltd. and InnAccel Technologies Pvt. Ltd. have received World Bank Group and Consumer Technology Association's Global Women's Health Tech Awards
- The award recognizes innovative startups that leverage tech to improve women's health and safety
- NIRAMAI Health Analytix was selected for early-stage breast cancer medical device
- InnAccel was selected for Fetal Lite, AI-powered fetal heart rate (FHR) monitor

SPORTS

1.LLC named Jhulan Goswami as Ambassador of All Women Match Official Team

- Legends League Cricket (LLC) has appointed Jhulan Goswami as an ambassador to its All Women Match Official Team to promote Women's Empowerment initiatives of the LLC and to increase participation of women in cricket. The LLC set up an All Women Match Official Team for the League. This is the first of its all-women official teams that would officiate an entire men's league.
- Legends League Cricket (LLC) is the professional cricket league for retired cricketers. The inaugural session of LLC will be organized from January 20 2022 at Oman Cricket Stadium in Muscat, Oman. Legends League Cricket (LLC) 2022 teams: Indian Maharaja, Aisan Lions, World Giants.

2.Bharath Subramaniyam becomes India's 73rd Chess Grandmaster

- Fourteen-year-old Bharath Subramaniyam has become the 73rd Grandmaster of India.
- The Chennai-based teenager completed his final GM Norm and crossed the requisite 2500 rating at Vergani Cup Open in Italy.
- Subramaniyam finished seventh overall in the event held at Cattolica by scoring 6.5 points from nine rounds.
- To achieve the Grandmaster (GM) title, a player has to secure three GM norms and cross the live rating of 2,500 Elo points.



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3.India Skills 2021 national competition concluded

- India Skills 2021 national competition has been concluded with more than 200 participants were felicitated by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

- As many as 270 winners of Competition felicitated with 61 gold, 77 silver, 53 bronze and 79 medallions of excellence.
- Odisha topped the chart with 51 winners, followed by Maharashtra (30 winners) and Kerela (25 winners).
- More than 500 competitors from across the country participated in the competition.

4. Mary Kom, Amit Panghal added to National Coaching Camps

- Mary Kom have become part of National Coaching Camp in Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports, Patiala, and Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi
- The camp will continue till 14th March
- Three Services boxers Amit Panghal, Manish Kaushik, Satish Kumar, Vikas Krishan, and Ashish Kumar have also been included in men's camp in Patiala
- As many as 63 men boxers across different weight categories and 27 coachings and support staff have been in National Camp in Patiala.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Hindi Day 2022: 10th January

- World Hindi Day is celebrated every year on January 10 to mark the first World Hindi Conference that was held in 1975.
- It is celebrated across the world to promote the use of the Hindi language.
- The first World Hindi Conference was held in Nagpur on January 10 in 1975.
- 1st World Hindi Day was celebrated in the year 2006.
- The theme of this day is to make Hindi a part of public opinion, although it doesn't necessarily mean that one has to leave their mother tongue.

2. PM Modi to inaugurate 25th National Youth Festival on Jan 12

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be addressing and inaugurating the five-day National Youth Festival on Jan 12, 2022
- National Youth Festival will be held to celebrate the 159th birth anniversary of spiritual leader Swami Vivekananda.
- The five-day festival will be held in the Union Territory of Puducherry.
- The festival aims to ignite, unit, motivate and activate the youth of India towards nation building.
- CM of Puducherry: N. Rangaswamy

3. National Human Trafficking Awareness Day 2022: 11th January

- This year National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is observed on January 11, 2022, which is on Tuesday. The day aims at raising awareness of the plight of human trafficking victims, and promoting and protecting their rights. Though the entire month of January has already been recognized as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, this day is specifically dedicated to awareness and prevention of illegal practice.

History of the day:

- In 2007, the United States Senate ratified the resolution establishing January 11th as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. In 2010, President Obama dedicated the entire month of January to awareness and prevention of human trafficking. Today, there are over 50 established organizations that globally combat this illegal practice, and more awareness has been raised than ever before.

4.National Youth Day 2022: 12 January

- National Youth Day is celebrated every year in India on 12th January to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.
- The day was declared as Youth Day by the Government of India in 1984.
- The day was first celebrated in 1985.
- This year, we are observing 159th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand (12 January 1863).
- Theme for National Youth Day 2022: ‘YUVAAH – Utsah Naye Bharat Ka’ (Youth- Excitement of New India)’.

OBITUARIES

1.Oscar-winning composer Marilyn Bergman passed away

- Oscar-winning lyricist and composer, Marilyn Bergman (93) passed away in Los Angeles.
- Bergman and her collaborator husband Alan, was nominated for 16 Academy Awards over the course of her career, winning three.
- The song “The Way We Were” from the Barbara Streisand movie of the same name was one of those Oscar wins, which also won two Grammys.
- The collaborating team of the Bergmans also won two other Oscars for their songs.

2.India’s oldest sloth bear ‘Gulabo’ passed away at Van Vihar National Park

- India’s oldest sloth bear, named as Gulabo (40 years) passed away at the Van Vihar National Park and Zoo, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh due to failure of internal organs.


- She was the oldest sloth bear of the country and was one of the star attractions in the park
- She was rescued from a street performer (Madaari) in May 2006.
- Van Vihar National Park was declared a national park in 1979 and covers an area of about 4.45 km²



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