



## CURRENT AFFAIRS

21 January 2021

### Today's Important News

Joe Biden takes over as President,  
Kamala Harris as Vice President of US

#### 1. Joe Biden takes over as President, Kamala Harris as Vice President of US

- Joe Biden took oath as the 46th President of the United States of America at a scaled-back ceremony in the US Capitol building in Washington last night that was largely stripped of its usual pomp due to the Coronavirus and security concerns.
- He spoke of unifying the country and pledged that he will be the President for all Americans. He said, America has been tested and they have come out stronger for it. Mr. Biden said, they will repair their alliances and engage once again. 78-year-old Biden has become the oldest US President in history. His deputy Kamala Harris was also sworn in as 49th Vice-President of the country. The daughter of immigrants from Jamaica and India, Kamala Harris made history as America's first woman and first person with south Asian roots to take the office of the Vice President.



#### Foot Notes:

#### About US:

**President:** Joe Biden

**Capital:** Washington, D.C.

**Currency:** United States Dollar

## 2. Sri Lanka reopens to tourists after 10 months

- Sri Lanka reopened to foreign tourists on Thursday after a nearly 10-month pandemic closure that cut deeply into the Indian Ocean island nation's lucrative travel industry.
- Full operations also resumed Thursday at the island's two international airports, accommodating the commercial flights.
- Under new protocols to prevent the spread of Covid-19, tourists must be tested for the virus in their country 72 hours prior to their flight, when they arrive at their hotel in Sri Lanka and again seven days later. They must stay in a “travel bubble” designated in 14 tourism zones without mixing with the local population. About 180 hotels have been earmarked for tourist accommodations.
- The resumption of tourism follows a pilot project that began December 26 in which 1,500 tourists from Ukraine visited Sri Lanka in such a travel bubble.



### Foot Notes:

#### About Sri Lanka:

**Capitals:** Colombo, Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte

**President:** Gotabaya Rajapaksa

**Currency:** Sri Lankan rupee

## 3. NITI Aayog releases 2nd edition of India Innovation Index-2020

- NITI Aayog today released the second edition of the India Innovation Index-2020 today. The index demonstrates the government's continued commitment towards transforming the country into an innovation-driven economy.
- While releasing the India Innovation Index-2020 in New Delhi, Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog Rajiv Kumar said, the index illustrates that India is on the right path and the states are endeavouring to improve their innovative ecosystem.
- In the India Innovation Index-2020, the States and Union Territories have been divided into 17 Major States, 10 North-East and Hill States and nine Union Territories and Small States for effectively comparing their performance.
- In the 2020 ranking, Karnataka retained its first position in the Major States category. Maharashtra moved one position higher and stood at 2nd spot while Tamil Nadu slid to 3rd position.



### Foot Notes:

#### About NITI Aayog:

**Formed:** 1 January 2015  
**Headquarters:** New Delhi  
**Chairperson:** Narendra Modi

#### **4. Ministry of Minority Affairs to organise 24th Hunar Haat in Lucknow from 22nd January to 4th February**

- Ministry of Minority Affairs will organise the 24th Hunar Haat at Avadh Shilpgram, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh from 22nd January to 4th February with the theme of Vocal for Local. Artisans and craftsmen from 31 States and Union Territories of the country will participate in the Hunar Haat.
- About 500 artisans, craftsmen and culinary experts from different States including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Chattisgarh, Jammu-Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal will display and sell their exquisite handmade products.
- The Ministry said, renowned artists of the country will perform cultural events on the theme of Atma Nirbhar Bharat every day at Hunar Haat.



#### **Foot Notes:**

##### **About Uttar Pradesh:**

**Capital:** Lucknow

**Governor:** Anandiben Patel

**Chief Minister:** Yogi Adityanath

#### **5. Cabinet approves MoU Between India, Uzbekistan for Cooperation In Solar Energy**

- The Union Cabinet on 20th January, 2021 approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between India and Uzbekistan for cooperation in solar energy.
- The main area of work is to identify research, demonstration and pilot projects between the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and the International Solar Energy Institute (ISEI), Uzbekistan in mutually identified areas including solar photovoltaic and storage technologies.
- The release said that based on mutual agreement, both parties would work for implementation and deployment of pilot project in International Solar Alliance (ISA) member countries.



**Foot Notes:**

**About Uzbekistan:**

**Capital:** Tashkent

**President:** Shavkat Mirziyoyev

**Currency:** Uzbekistani so‘m



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**6. ICICI Bank launches ‘InstaFX’ mobile app**

- ICICI Bank today announced the launch of a new mobile application for authorised money changers to help customers of any bank get ‘ICICI Bank Forex Prepaid Card’ swiftly. Called ‘InstaFX’, the app enables the authorised money changers, who are partners of the Bank, to complete the KYC verification and validation of customers digitally and on a real-time basis.
- This facility significantly improves customer convenience as the ‘ICICI Bank Forex Prepaid Card’ gets activated swiftly within a few hours, as against the industry practice of up to two-days. ICICI Bank is the first bank in the country to offer such facility to money changers.



**Foot Notes:**

**About ICICI:**

**CEO:** Sandeep Bakhshi

**Headquarters:** Mumbai

**Founded:** June 1994, Vadodara

## 7. Cabinet approves Rs.5,282-cr investment for 850 MW Ratle project on Chenab river

- The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a Rs.5281.94 crore investment for 850 megawatt (MW) Ratle hydropower project on Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir.
- This comes in the backdrop of India's plan to expedite strategically important hydropower projects in the union territory post its reorganization, as the National Democratic Alliance government plans to fully utilize its share of water under the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960. Chenab flows from India into Pakistan.



### Foot Notes:

#### About Jammu and Kashmir:

**Lt. Governor:** Manoj Sinha

**Capital:** Srinagar (May–October); Jammu (Nov–April)

## 8. Sensex Hits 50,000 for first Time, Nifty above 14,700, Led by Reliance Industries

- The S&P BSE Sensex moved above 50,000 mark for the first on Thursday, led by gains in Reliance Industries after the market regulator SEBI approved Reliance Industries' ₹ 24,713-crore deal to buy Future Group's retail assets, in a blow to Amazon's efforts to block the agreement.
- The BSE also granted its "no adverse observation" report after the deal clearance from the market regulator, with some riders. The Sensex rose as much as 335 points to hit an all-time high of 50,126.73 and Nifty 50 index also moved 14,700 mark for the first time.



### Foot Notes:

#### About BSE:

**Founded:** 9 July 1875

**Chairman:** Just. Vikramajit Sen

**MD & CEO :** Ashishkumar Chauhan

## 9. JSW Sports signs Rishabh Pant, to manage commercial interests and marketing rights

- JSW Sports, the sports arm of the JSW Group conglomerate, on Wednesday announced the addition of India's star wicket-keeper Rishabh Pant to its growing talent management roster.





- The multi-year association between the two parties will see JSW Sports manage all commercial interests and marketing rights of the 23-year-old cricketer, who most recently played a starring role in India's magnificent Test series win in Australia.

## 10. Former Arunachal Pradesh Governor Mata Prasad Dies At 95

- Former Arunachal Pradesh Governor Mata Prasad died following multi-organ failure at Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS). He was 95 years old.
- He was admitted to the hospital last evening after being transferred from a private hospital, an official said.
- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu deeply mourned the death of Mata Prasad.



### Foot Notes:

#### About Arunachal Pradesh:

**Capital:** Itanagar

**Chief Minister:** Pema Khandu

**Governor:** (Dr.) B.D. Mishra

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