

Ram Temple tableau of Uttar Pradesh on Republic Day wins first prize



The **Ram Temple tableau of Uttar Pradesh** that was on display during the Republic Day 2021 has bagged the **first prize among all tableaux**.

The tableau showcased Maharishi Valmiki composing the Ramayana, followed by a model replica of the Ram temple, that is being built in Ayodhya, that showed how it would look after its construction.

The **Tripura** tableau won the second prize for the Republic Day parade.

The third prize was received by **Uttarakhand's** tableau which was themed around Kedarkhand.

Interest Rates on Small Savings Schemes for Q4 of FY 2020-21 (Jan-March)



The government has kept the **interest rates on small savings schemes unchanged** for the **fourth quarter (Q4)** of the financial year **2020-21**, i.e. **January- March 2021**. This means that the rate of interest will be same as notified in the Q3 of FY 2020-21.

Interest rates for small savings schemes are notified by the **Finance Ministry on a quarterly basis** in every financial year.

India pledges \$150,000 for UN Peacebuilding Fund for 2021



India has announced a pledge of **USD 150,000** to the **United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)** for the year **2021** to support the activities and programs this year..

The Peacebuilding Fund has put forth its **five year** strategy, which requires **1.5 billion dollars** for **2020-2024**.

Permanent representative of India to the United Nations – **TS Tirumurti**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Inaugurates NCLAT Chennai bench



Union Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman has inaugurated the **new Bench of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)** at **Chennai** through virtual mode.

The newly constituted Chennai Bench of the NCLAT is first such bench to be launched outside **New Delhi**.

The New Delhi Bench of NCLAT is the Principal Bench of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal established in 2016.

The Chennai benches of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) will have jurisdiction over NCLT of **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Lakshwadeep and Puducherry**.



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The Principal bench at the NCLAT New Delhi will hear appeals other than those in the jurisdiction of Chennai bench of the NCLAT, including cases from the Andaman and Nicobar, which is considered to be part of South.

Two Members of NCLAT, New Delhi, namely **Balvinder Singh**, Member (Technical), and Justice **Venugopal M** have been appointed as the incharge of the newly constituted Chennai Bench of the NCLAT.

The new bench would be helpful for southern states, which need an accessible appellate body for company related matter, but face great difficulty in travelling to Delhi for work pertaining to filing and arguing of appeals in the NCLAT.

PM Modi Chairs 35th PRAGATI Meet



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the **35th PRAGATI meeting** on 27 January 2021 to review multiple projects, grievances and programmes.

PRAGATI stands for **Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation**.

In the meeting ten agenda items were taken for review worth **Rs. 54,675 crore, related to 15 states**. These included nine projects and one programme.

Of the total 9 projects, 3 projects were from the **Ministry of Railways**, 3 from **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** and 1 project each from **Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**, **Power Ministry** and **Ministry of External Affairs**.

The States are Odisha, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Jharkhand, Bihar, Telangana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, West Bengal, Haryana, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh.

Prime Minister also reviewed the **Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana**.

India Secures 86th Rank in Corruption Perception Index 2020; New Zealand and Denmark tops

India has been ranked **86th among 180 countries** in **Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2020**, released by **Transparency International (Headquarter – Berlin, Germany)** on 28 January 2021.



This year, India's rank has slipped six places compared to 2019, when it was ranked at 80th spot.

The CPI score for India in 2020 is **40**.

CPI Index: The CPI index ranks 180 countries and

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territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people. The index uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

Top Country: New Zealand and Denmark have jointly secured first position with scores of 88.

Lowest Country: Somalia and South Sudan rank lowest at 179th position with scores of 12.

India is sharing its position jointly with **Burkina Faso, Morocco, East Timor, Trinidad and Tobago and Turkey**

India Ranks 86 among 98 Countries in Lowy Institute's Covid-19 Response Index, New Zealand Tops List

India has been ranked at **86th position among 98 countries** in the new **Coronavirus Performance Index** released by **Australia-based Lowy Institute**. **New Zealand**, Vietnam and Taiwan are the **top three countries** respectively in the index. **Brazil** was ranked at the bottom of the list for **worst** handling of the pandemic than any other country.

Countries were ranked based on the publicly available and comparable data on Covid-19 response. China was excluded from the list due to lack of publicly available data.

The Lowy Institute is an independent **international policy think tank, located in Sydney**.

TCS ranks third most valued IT services brand globally; IBM leads: Brand Finance



India's **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** has been ranked **third most-valued IT services brand globally**, according to a report by **Brand Finance**. The brand value of **HDFC Bank** is recorded at **USD 15 billion**.

Four Indian IT services companies have secured spots in the top-10 globally, namely, **TCS (3), Infosys (4), HCL (7) and Wipro (9)**.

Accenture has retained the title of world's most valuable and strongest IT services brand with brand value of **\$26 billion**.

IBM is at the second place with brand value of **\$16.1 billion**

What is Brand Value? The present value of earnings, specifically related to brand reputation.

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India Inks Strategic Partnership Agreement with International Energy Agency



India has inked a strategic partnership agreement with the International Energy Agency (IEA), the world's premier energy monitor, on 27 January 2021.

Objective of the MoU: To strengthen cooperation in global energy security, stability and sustainability as well as strengthen mutual trust and cooperation between IEA members and the Government of India.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Power Secretary Sanjiv Nandan Sahai and IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol.

This deal will help India to gain full membership of IEA.

Lt Gen Chandi Prasad Mohanty appointed as new Army Vice-Chief, succeeding Lt Gen SK Saini



Lieutenant General Chandi Prasad Mohanty has been appointed as the new Vice-chief of Army staff.

He would assume the office on **February 1, 2021** from Lt General SK Saini, who is superannuating on 31 January 2021.

Lt Gen Mohanty is a June 1982 batch Infantry Officer from the Rajput Regiment and is presently the Southern Army Commander.

Swaminathan Janakiraman and Aswini Kumar Tewari appointed as MDs of State Bank of India



The appointments committee (ACC) of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of **Swaminathan Janakiraman and Ashwini Kumar Tewari** as new Managing Directors (MDs) of State Bank of India (SBI) for a period of three years.

Prior to this, Swaminthan Janakiraman was the deputy managing director (Finance) at SBI and Ashwini Kumar Tewari was serving as MD & CEO of SBI Card, a subsidiary of SBI. The two posts were vacant since October 2020. SBI is headed by a **Chairman** and **four managing directors**.

Dinesh Kumar Khara is the current Chairman of the bank. The other two MDs of the bank are **C.S. Setty and Ashwani Bhatia**.

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Kaja Kallas sworn in as first woman Prime Minister of Estonia



Kaja Kallas, the leader of the Reform Party in Estonia has been elected as the **new Prime Minister of the country**.

Kallas is the **first female** prime minister of the country.

With this, Estonia is currently the only country in the world where both the president (Kersti Kaljulaid) and the prime minister are women.

Kallas succeeds Juri Ratas who resigned recently for being accused in corruption scandal.