

Cross And Climb Academy

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ICRA Projects India's GDP at 9% in FY22 and FY23



Domestic credit rating agency **ICRA Ltd.** has projected the real gross domestic product (GDP) of India at **9 percent for fiscal 2022-2023**, amid rising Omicron variant of COVID-19 cases in the country. For **FY2021-2022** as well, ICRA has maintained its forecast of a **9 percent** GDP expansion.

SBI acquires 9.95% stake in India International Clearing Corporation (IICC)



India's largest public-sector lender, **State Bank of India (SBI)** has announced the acquisition of **9.95 percent** stake in India International Clearing Corporation (**IICC**) Ltd. This 9.95 percent stake will be subjected to a maximum investment of **Rs. 34.03 crore**. IICC is the first international clearing corporation set up at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City's International Financial Services Centre (**GIFT IFSC**).

Prime Minister Modi inaugurates and lays foundation stone of 23 projects worth over Rs 17500 crore in Haldwani



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid foundation stones of 23 projects worth over **Rs 17,500 crore in Haldwani in Uttarakhand** on December 30, 2021. PM also announced a new scheme worth Rs. 2,000 crore to be introduced for the overall development of the water, sewage, road, parking, and street lights infrastructure of Haldwani. One of the project whose foundation stone was laid is the Lakhwar Multipurpose Project. This project was first conceived in 1976 and was pending for many years. It is to be built at a cost of about Rs. 5,750 crore. The plant will produce 300 MW hydro power to supply drinking water to the six states which are Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan. Apart from this,

multiple road projects were also inaugurated or foundation stones were laid, including inauguration of three different stretches of the Chardham all-weather road which have been widened. The foundation stone of AIIMS Rishikesh satellite centre was laid at Udham Singh Nagar and Jagjivan Ram Government Medical College at Pithoragarh. Other foundation stone included Aroma Park at Kashipur and Plastic Industrial Park at Sitarganj. Several other projects related to housing, sanitation and drinking water supply across the state were also inaugurated.

UP Govt renames Jhansi Railway station as Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station

The Uttar Pradesh Government has renamed the **Jhansi Railway Station** in Jhansi as 'Veerangana Laxmibai Railway Station' on December 29, 2021, as a tribute to Rani Laxmibai, the queen of Jhansi. With the renaming the new code of the railway station will be 'VJLB'. Earlier the code for Jhansi railway station was 'JHS'.

Egypt added as fourth new member of BRICS New Development Bank

Egypt has been inducted as the **fourth new member** of the **BRICS New Development Bank (NDB)** on December 29, 2021. Earlier in September 2021 **Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Uruguay** were admitted as the new member of the

Shanghai-based NDB. The NDB was established by BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) six years ago in July 2015.

V S Pathania Takes Charge As Director General of Indian Coast Guard



Virender Singh (VS) Pathania took charge as the **Director-General of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** on December 31, 2021. He is the 24th Chief of Indian Coast Guard. Pathania replaces K Natarajan, who served as the Chief of the ICG from July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2021.

ITBP DG Sanjay Arora gets additional charge of SSB DG



The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has named **ITBP Director General (DG) Sanjay Arora** to hold the **additional charge as DG of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**.

He has been appointed in place of **Kumar Rajesh Chandra**, a 1985-batch IPS officer of the Bihar cadre, who had taken over as the SSB DG in January, 2019 and superannuated on December 31, 2021. The Indian Police Service officer, Arora will hold the additional charge of SSB till the appointment and joining of the regular incumbent or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Arora is a 1988-batch officer of Tamil Nadu cadre and serving as the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) DG since August 2021.

South Africa's Quinton de Kock announces retirement from Test cricket



The star wicketkeeper-batsman of **South Africa, Quinton de Kock** has announced his retirement from **Test cricket** with immediate effect on December 30, 2021. The 29-year-old former Test captain, De Kock made his Proteas Test debut against Australia in Gqeberha in 2014. Proteas is South Africa's national cricket team. He played total 54 test matches played, and scored

3300 runs with highest score of 141 not out, at an average of 38.82 and strike rate of 70.93.

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launches 100 days reading campaign 'Padhe Bharat'

The Union Education Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan has launched **'Padhe Bharat', a 100 days (14 weeks) reading campaign**. The campaign has been organised from **January 01, 2022 to April 10, 2022**. Padhe Bharat is in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It will emphasise on promotion of joyful reading culture for children as well as ensure availability of age appropriate reading books for children in local/mother tongue/regional/tribal Language. The International Mother Tongue Day (21 February) has also been integrated with this campaign to encourage children to read in their mother tongue/local language. An activity named Kahani Padho Apni Bhasa Main (Reading story in own language) will be organised on this day across the country to promote local language and culture of our society.

PM Modi lays foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University in UP's Meerut district

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of **Major Dhyan Chand Sports University in Meerut** district of Uttar Pradesh on January 02, 2022. This will be the **first sports university in Uttar Pradesh**. The university are being established at Salawa and Kaili villages of Sardhana town in Meerut. The estimated cost of setting up the University is about **Rs.700 crore**.

IIT Madras Tops Atal Rankings (ARIIA) 2021 for third straight year



The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras** has retained the top position in the ‘**Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements,**’ (ARIIA) 2021 for being the best centrally funded institution in India. The premier institute has topped in the list of top centrally funded innovative educational institutes in India for the **third consecutive year**. IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Kanpur, and IIT Roorkee are among the top five centrally funded institutions in the list respectively. The 2021 ‘Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)’ was released by Minister of State for Education Subhas Sarkar on December 29, 2021.

e interest rates on the small savings schemes will remain the same for the fourth Government keeps interest rates on Small Savings Schemes unchanged for Quarter-4 of 2021-22

The quarter of 2021-2022 (**January – February – March 2022**) as they were in the third quarter of 2021-22 (October-November-December 2021). It must be noted that the Government notifies the Interest rates for small savings schemes on a quarterly basis.

West Bengal is the **highest contributor to the small saving schemes** while Uttar Pradesh is the second top contributor.

SEBI reconstitutes advisory committee on market data; Head- S Sahoo

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (**Sebi**) has restructured its advisory committee on market data. The **20-member** committee recommends policy measures pertaining to areas like securities market data access and privacy. **S Sahoo**, former chairperson of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) and Professor at National Law University, Delhi is the new head of the panel. Earlier this panel was headed by Madhabi Puri Buch, ex-whole time member of Sebi.

India chairs UNSCs Counter-Terrorism Committee for one year from January 2022

India has assumed the chairmanship of the **United Nations Security Council’s Counter-Terrorism Committee** for **one year**, beginning from **January 01, 2022**.

India is chairing this committee after a gap of 10 years. Prior to this, India held the chairmanship of the committee in 2011-12. In addition to this, India has also voted in favour of the UNSC resolution to renew the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

France takes over EU Presidency for six months from January 2022

France has assumed the rotating presidency of the **Council of the European Union** with effect from January 01, 2022. The country will continue to hold the EU presidency for the next **six months** till June 30, 2022. This is the **13th time** that France has taken over the rotating presidency. The motto of France as EU President is “recovery, strength, belonging.” France will work to place the continent’s digitization and climate protection at the forefront. The presidency of EU rotates every six months among the member states of the **27-nation bloc**. Upon the completion of six months presidency, France will be replaced by the **Czech Republic**.

Sushmita Dev lone Woman in 31-member Panel to examine bill on raising legal age of marriage

The parliamentary standing committee constituted to examine “**The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021**” comprise of total **31 members**, including only one women representative. Out of the total 31 members, TMC MP **Sushmita Dev** is the sole woman representative in the committee. The Bill seeks to raise the legal age of marriage for women in India from 18 to 21 to bring it at par with men.

The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill 2021 seeks to amend the “Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006” and seven personal laws, which are:

Indian Christian Marriage Act; the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act; the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act; the Special Marriage Act; the Hindu Marriage Act; and the Foreign Marriage Act.

IRDAI selects LIC, GIC Re and New India Assurance as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (**IRDAI**) has chosen the following insurers as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) for 2021-22:**Life Insurance Corporation of India;General Insurance Corporation of India; andThe New India Assurance Co. Ltd.**

Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) are the insurance companies that are considered “Too Big to Fail”. i.e its failure will impact the economy and insurance sector to a great extent. IRDAI has chosen these three insurers on the basis of their size, market importance and domestic and global interconnectedness whose distress or failure would cause significant dislocation in the domestic financial system.

ACC appoints Vinay Kumar Tripathi as new Chairman & CEO of Railway Board



The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of **Vinay Kumar Tripathi** as the **Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Railway Board**, Ministry of Railways. Currently Tripathi serves as the General Manager, North Eastern Railway. He will replace Suneet Sharma, a 1982 batch IRSME officer. Tripathi is an Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE) officer from 1983 batch. He has been appointed for a period of six-months from January 01, 2022, and has been granted a six-month extension as well, upto December 2022.

Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui Bags RedInk Journalist of the Year 2020 Award Posthumously

Photojournalist **Danish Siddiqui**, who was killed in July 2021 during a clash while reporting fight between Afghan troops and the Taliban in Afghanistan, has been honoured with the prestigious **RedInk Award for ‘Journalist of the Year’ ,2020** posthumously. The award was received by his wife Frederike Siddiqui.

The tenth edition of the award was presented by the Chief Justice of India N. V. Ramana. The **lifetime achievement award** was given to 83-year-old senior journalist **Prem Shankar Jha** “for his long and distinguished career of incisive and analytical writing”. **National RedInk Awards for Excellence in Journalism** has been instituted by **Mumbai Press Club** to encourage good quality reporting and analysis, fair play and high ethical standards in Indian journalism. The awards are presented across **12 categories** to journalists working in print, television and digital media.


It carries a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh, a trophy, and a citation.

Pakistan all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez announces retirement from international cricket

Pakistani all-rounder **Mohammad Hafeez** has announced his retirement from **international cricket** on January 03, 2022, to end his career spanning more than 18 years. He is nicknamed “The Professor”. The 41-year-old Hafeez retired from Test cricket in December 2018. Hafeez has played 55 Tests, 218 ODIs and 119 T20Is for Pakistan, scoring 12,780 runs across formats.

World Braille Day: 04 January

The World Braille Day is observed every year on **January 04** to commemorate the **birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the inventor of Braille. The day aims** to recognize the right of access to braille by blind people and raise awareness of importance of braille as



a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people. The day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in November 2018. The first World Braille Day was celebrated on **January 4, 2019**.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launches NEAT 3.0

The Union Minister of Education **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan** launched **National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT 3.0)**, and regional language textbooks prescribed by AICTE, on January 03, 2022. NEAT 3.0 aims to provide the best-developed ed-tech solutions and courses to students on a single platform. It will be beneficial especially among the economically disadvantaged students. It is a Public-Private partnership model between the **Government (through its implementing agency AICTE)** and the **Education Technology companies**. 58 global and Indian ed-tech startup companies have come together for this solution and are offering 100 courses and e-resources to enhance learning outcomes, developing employable skills as well as overcome learning loss. The collaboration of global ed-tech companies and Indian startups by way of NEAT will help to build on the digital education bedrock of India.

Indian Navy invites 46 nation navies to participate in multilateral Ex-Milan 2022 in Visakhapatnam

The **Indian Navy** will host its largest ever **biennial** multinational naval **exercise Milan in Visakhapatnam** in February 2022. India has invited total **46** friendly foreign countries to participate Exercise Milan. The theme of the exercise in 2022 is **camaraderie, cohesion and collaboration**. The Harbour Phase of Milan 2022 will take place from February 25 till February 28, 2022. Meanwhile, the Sea Phase is planned to be held from March 01 to 04 2022. Indian Navy is organizing Ex- Milan biennially since **1995** to bring together Navies of all the countries in the region.

So far the exercise has been held at Port Blair but has been shifted to Visakhapatnam in 2022 to offer more space and infrastructure.

Apple becomes world's first company to hit \$3 trillion market value

The stock market value of **Apple Inc.** hit **\$3 trillion (£2.2tn)** briefly on January 03, 2022, becoming the world's first company to do so. The market cap of Apple hit \$182.86 per share, which made it the **world's first company to touch \$3 trillion mark**. However shortly after hitting the mark, the share value dipped below it and did not rise again until the market closed. The iPhone maker passed \$2 trillion (£1.4tn) in 2020 and over \$1 trillion (£740,000m) in 2018.

RBI Retains SBI, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)

Reserve Bank of India has retained **State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)**. These three banks have continued to be on the D-SIBs list published by RBI, since Sep 04, 2017. Domestic Systemically Important Banks are those banks which if fail would have a significant impact on the economy. The **D-SIBs banks are classified into 5 buckets**. Bucket 1, Bucket 2, Bucket 3, Bucket 4 and Bucket 5. With Bucket 5 being the most important followed by rest in decreasing order. State Bank of India is in Bucket 3, while ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank are in Bucket 1. The updated list is based on the data collected from banks as on March 31, 2021

GST Collection in December 2021 stands at over Rs 1.29 crore: FinMin



As per the data released by the Ministry of Finance, the **gross GST (Goods and Services Tax) revenue** collected in **December 2021 stood at Rs.1,29,780 crore**.The revenues collected in December 2021 is **13 percent higher** than the GST revenues in December 2020 (Rs 1.15 lakh-crore) and 26 percent higher than December 2019.However, the collection is slightly lower than the revenue collected in November 2021, which stood at Rs.1.31 lakh crore.

Alka Mittal becomes first women head of ONGC



Alka Mittal, Director (HR), ONGC, has been given the additional charge as the new interim **chairman and managing director (CMD) of Oil and Natural Gas orporation (ONGC)**, the largest oil and gas producer in India.She is the **first woman** to head the top post at the Maharatna company.Mittal replaces **Subhash Kumar** who superannuated on December 31. He was also serving as an interim head.

She has been appointed for a period of six months with effect from January 1, 2022, or till the appointment of a regular incumbent to the post, or until further order, whichever is the earliest.

Vistara Airlines ropes in Vinod Kannan as new CEO

Vistara Airlines has appointed Vinod Kannan as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with effect from January 01, 2022.Kannan replaces Leslie Thng, who was the CEO from July 16, 2017 to December 31, 2021.Prior to this, Kannan was the Chief Commercial Officer of the airlines since January 2020, before joining Vistara as Chief Strategy Officer in June 2019.Vistara is a 51:49 joint venture between Tata Sons Private Limited and Singapore Airlines (SIA). Its headquarter is based at **Gurugram**.

Sudan Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok resigns

The **Prime Minister of Sudan Abdalla Hamdok** has announced his resignation on January 02, 2022.The decision follows a military coup that caused political deadlock and widespread pro-democracy protests in the country.The 66-year-old Hamdok served as the 15th Prime Minister of Sudan from 2019 to 2022.

•**Sudan Capital: Khartoum; Currency: Sudanese pound**

Legendary Kenyan Conservationist and Fossil-hunter Richard Leakey passes away at 77

World-renowned **Kenyan politician, conservationist and fossil hunter Richard Leakey** has passed away. He was 77.The legendary **paleoanthropologist** is credited for the discovery of '**Turkana Boy**' in 1984 which led to groundbreaking discoveries proving that humankind evolved in Africa.Turkana boy is the most complete fossil Skelton of a human ancestor ever found.Paleoanthropology is the study of human evolution through the fossil and archaeological records.Leakey is also known to spearhead campaigns against the ivory trade to save the population of African elephants.