

## Current Affairs: 19.02.2021

### Hyderabad Recognised as '2020 Tree City of the World' by FAO



Telangana's capital, **Hyderabad** has been recognized as a **2020 Tree City of World**, by the **United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** and the **Arbor Day Foundation**, for its commitment to growing and maintaining urban forests. 2020 Tree Cities of the world recognition is

the second year of the programme, which features **120 cities from 63 countries**. Hyderabad is the only city from India to have been recognized as a Tree City, till date. With this recognition, it has joined a network of like-minded global cities which recognise the importance of trees in building healthy, resilient and happy cities. Most of the cities were from the **United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia**.

### DRDO Carries successful user trials of indigenously-developed Anti-Tank Guided Missile Systems 'Helina' and 'Dhruvastra'



The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully carried out joint user trials of indigenously developed **Helina and Dhruvastra Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM)** from the **Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) [HAL Dhruv]** at the Pokhran

deserts in Rajasthan on February 19, 2021. Helina is the Army version and Dhruvastra is the Air Force version of the ALH. The missile systems have been designed and developed indigenously by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

### Key Features

- The Helina and Dhruvastra are third generation, "**Lock-on-Before-Launch (LOBL)**" **fire and forget ATGMs** that can engage targets both in direct hit mode as well as top attack mode.
- The missile systems has all-weather day-and-night capability.
- They can defeat battle tanks with conventional armour as well as with explosive reactive armour.
- It is one of the most-advanced anti-tank weapons in the world.

### PM Modi Address the Valedictory Function of India-Australia circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the valedictory function of the **India Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)** on February 19, 2021 via videoconferencing.

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**Circular economy** implies reusing waste back into the production cycle to make new products instead of wasting such materials with embedded resources.



The I-ACE was jointly organized by **Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, Government of India and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia.**

More than **200 participants** in 39 teams from India and 33 teams from Australia took part.

**Four key themes** for the hackathon

- Innovation in packaging reducing packaging waste
- Innovation in food supply chains avoiding waste
- Creating opportunities for plastic waste reduction
- Recycling critical energy metals and e-waste

**Objective:** to enable the students and startups/MSMEs of both the nations in fostering innovative solutions for the development of a circular economy across the food system value chain with the aim of increasing the long-term health and resilience of our planet, through innovative technology solutions.

I-ACE aims to accelerate the development of young and promising students and startups/MSMEs working towards the creation of a sustainable future.

## Indian Navy Ship Pralaya Participates in NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21 in Abu Dhabi, UAE



On February 19, 2021, the **Indian Naval Ship Pralaya** reached **Abu Dhabi in UAE** to participate in the **Naval Defence Exhibition (NAVDEX 21) and International Defence Exhibition (IDEX 21)** from **February 20 to 25, 2021.** NAVDEX 21 and IDEX 21 is one of the leading international naval and

defence exhibitions of the region. Participation of *INS Pralaya* will showcase the strengths of India's indigenous ship building, in line with Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of 'AtmaNirbhar Bharat'.

## CSIR inks MoU with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to promote health research

The **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** to support the development, conduct and promotion of **health research in India.**

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## Terms of the MoU

- to identify opportunities to initiate scientific and technological collaborations.
- focus on developing and testing new preventions, therapies and interventions that can help to solve major health concerns that affect India and other developing countries.

## Areas of research collaboration

- genetic diseases that impact infant and neonatal mortality;
- new diagnostics and devices for infectious disease and environmental surveillance;
- development of cost-effective processes for drug, vaccines, biologics, and diagnostics manufacturing;
- novel microbiome-directed foods;
- socio-economic impact of science and technological tools;
- other areas of health and development.

## Bhim Army Chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad & 5 Indian-origin persons named in TIME's 100 Emerging Leaders List



**Bhim Army Chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad and five Indian-origin personalities** have been featured in the **2021 TIME100 Next**, released on 17 february 2021. **TIME100 Next 2021** is the second edition of the annual list of Time magazine's 100 'emerging leaders who are shaping the future.' **Bhim Army** is a dalit rights organisation based in **Uttar Pradesh** to help Dalits escape poverty through education. It was founded by Satish Kumar, Vijay Ratan Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad in 2015.

## The five Indian-origin persons in Time100 Next list are:

1. Twitter lawyer **Vijaya Gadde**
2. UK's Finance Minister **Rishi Sunak**
3. Instacart founder and CEO **Apoorva Mehta**
4. Get Us PPE executive director and doctor **Shikha Gupta**
5. Founder of nonprofit Upsolve's **Rohan Pavuluri**

## Ajai Malhotra becomes first Indian Chairperson of the Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council

**Ajai Malhotra** has been elected as the **Chairperson of the Advisory Committee of the United Nations Human Rights Council** [Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland]. He is the **first Indian** to be elected to the post.

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Malhotra first joined the Indian Foreign Services in 1977 and has previously served as ambassador to Russia, Kuwait, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York and Romania.

## South Africa's Chris Morris becomes 'most expensive player' in IPL auction history



**South-African** all-rounder **Chris Morris** has broken all record as he became the costliest player in the history of **Indian Premier League (IPL) auction**, held in Chennai on February 18, 2021. IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals has bought Chris Morris for **Rs 16.25 crore**. The 33-year-old played for Royal Challengers Bangalore in IPL 2020 season. Prior to him, Yuvraj Singh was the costliest-ever buy in auction history, when he was bought for Rs 16 crore by Delhi Daredevils in IPL 2015.

## Manika Batra Wins her Second Women's Singles Title at 82nd National Table Tennis Championship



India's top-ranked table tennis player **Manika Batra** beat Reeth Rishya, 4-2, in the women's singles final, to win the **82nd Senior National Table Tennis Championship**, at the **Tau Devi Lal Sports Complex in Panchkula, Haryana** on February 18, 2021. It was Manika's **second Nationals title**. She won her maiden national title in 2015 in Hyderabad.

## 6th Soil Health Card Day Observed on 19 February 2021



Every year India observes the **Soil Health Card Day on 19 February** to commemorate the launch of the **Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme**, and create awareness about the benefits of the scheme. 2021 marks the sixth year of the launch of the SHC Scheme.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme on **19th February, 2015 at Suratgarh in Rajasthan**. The scheme aims at issuing soil health cards to farmers every two years so as to provide a basis to address nutritional deficiencies in soil. The scheme ensures additional income to farmers by an increase in yields and it also promotes sustainable farming.

## World Pangolin Day 2021: 20 February

- The **World Pangolin Day** is celebrated on the “**Third Saturday of February**” every year.
- In 2021, the annual World Pangolin Day is being celebrated on **20 February 2020**. It marks the **10th edition** of the event.