

Current Affairs: 22.03.2021

PM Modi launches 'Catch the Rain' campaign to be funded by MGNREGA



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain' campaign on March 22, 2021, on the occasion of World Water Day for conserving water. PM urged that every penny of MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) funds be spent on rain water conservation till the monsoon arrives. The 'Catch the Rain' campaign will be implemented across the country, in both rural and urban areas from March

22 to November 30, 2021 (the pre-monsoon and monsoon period in the country). The main aim of the campaign is to take water conservation at grass-root level through people's participation and urge stakeholders to create rainwater harvesting structures suitable to the climatic conditions and subsoil strata, to ensure proper storage of rainwater.

Centre launches 'Gram Ujala Scheme' to offer LED bulbs at Rs 10/piece in rural areas



The Government of India has launched an ambitious scheme called "Gram Ujala" under which high quality energy efficient LED bulbs will be given for just Rs 10 per piece in rural areas. This scheme is in line with the government's climate change strategy and further strengthening its self-reliance credentials. The Gram

Ujala programme was launched by Power & New and Renewable Energy Minister R K Singh in Bihar. The scheme will be implemented in **phased manner**. In the first phase, **15 million LED bulbs** will be distributed across certain villages of **5 states**.

These include: Arrah (Bihar), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh), Nagpur (Maharashtra), and western Gujarat.

Bihar becomes first state to have Ethanol Promotion Policy



Bihar has become the **first state of the country to have its own ethanol policy called Ethanol Production Promotion Policy, 2021**. The Policy was approved by the Central government in December 2020 in consonance with **National Policy of Biofuels, 2018** and subsequently by National Biofuel Co-ordination Committee.

The ethanol promotion policy would pave the way for making Bihar an ethanol hub and investors' coveted destination. The policy would allow investors to directly make ethanol from maize, molasses, broken rice and rotten grains, which was restricted to sugarcane till now.

Indian Navy undertakes PASSEX with Royal Bahrain Naval Force in Persian Gulf



The Indian Navy undertook Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with Royal Bahrain Naval Force Corvette Al Muharraq in the Persian Gulf under Operation Sankalp on March 17, 2021. INS Talwar participated in the exercise.

The PASSEXs are conducted regularly by the Indian Navy with units of friendly foreign navies, whilst visiting each other's ports or during a rendezvous at sea.

The main aim of the exercise is to foster interoperability and reflect the commitments of both, India and Bahrain, to build cooperative partnerships to meet emergent maritime challenges. The Operation Sankalp is a Maritime Security Operations, was first initiated in the Gulf region on **June 19, 2019**, in the aftermath of the attacks on merchant ships in the Gulf of Oman.

India Placed Last at 56th Rank in Global Home Price Index Q4 2020, Turkey Tops: Knight Frank



India has slipped by 13 spots, to rank at 56th place in the 'Global House Price Index Q4 2020' released by property consultant Knight Frank. The country reported a decline of **3.6 percent year-on-year (YoY) in home prices**, to finish last in the fourth and last quarter ending December 2020. It ranked 43rd in the same quarter of the previous fiscal. **India was the**

weakest-performing country in the fourth quarter of the fiscal 2020. **Turkey was the leading country** in the global ranking with home prices up by 30.3 percent year-on-year. New Zealand stood second (18.6 percent year-on-year) followed by Slovakia at 16.0 percent year-on-year.

The global house price index tracks the movement in the mainstream residential prices across 56 countries or territories using official data.

Globally, the mainstream residential prices across 56 countries and territories worldwide rose at an annual rate change of 5.6% on average in 2020, compared to 5.3% in 2019.

67th National Film Awards Announced



The winner of 67th National Film Awards was announced on 22 March 2021 in New Delhi to honour best of Indian cinema in 2019.

Most Film Friendly State Award – Sikkim

Award for Best Book on Cinema – A Gandhian Affair:

India's Curious Portrayal of Love in Cinema, by Sanjay Suri

- Best Feature Film: **Marakkar: Lion of the Arabian Sea** (Malayalam)

Best Actor (shared): **Manoj Bajpayee** for Bhonsle (Hindi), and Dhanush for Asuran (Tamil)

Best Actress: **Kangana Ranaut** for Panga (Hindi) and Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi (Hindi)

Best Director: **Sanjay Puran Singh Chauhan** for Bahattar Hoorain (Hindi)

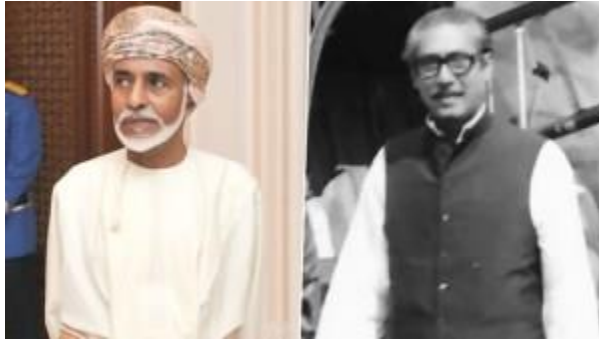
Best Non-Feature Film: **An Engineered Dream** (Hindi)

Best Hindi Film: **Chhichhore**

Gandhi Peace Prize for 2019 and 2020 announced

The Gandhi Peace Prize for the years 2019 and 2020 has been conferred on the following:

Year	Winner	Contribution
2019	(Late) His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman	strengthening relations between India and Oman, and his efforts to promote peace and non-violence in the Gulf region.
2020	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman of Bangladesh	inspiring the liberation of Bangladesh, laying the foundation for the close and fraternal relations between India and Bangladesh, and promoting peace and non-violence in the Indian subcontinent.



Ministry of Sports Decides to Extend “Khelo India” scheme from 2021-22 to 2025-26



The Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports Shri **Kiren Rijiju** has announced that the Sports Ministry has decided to extend the **Khelo India** scheme for a period of **five years, from 2021-22 to 2025-26**. An amount of **Rs. 8750 crore** has been estimated as financial implication of the new Khelo India Scheme (2021-22 to 2025-26) by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). It must be noted that an amount of

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RS. 657.71 crore has been allocated in the Budget Estimate (B.E.) for the year 2021-22 under the Khelo India Scheme. The scheme was launched in 2016-17, to improve India's sports culture at the grass-root level through organized talent identification, structured sporting competitions and infrastructure development.



India Legends beat Sri Lanka Legends to win 2020-21 Road Safety World Series T-20

In Cricket, **India Legends** defeated **Sri Lanka Legends** by 14 runs to clinch the **Road Safety World Series final** title, held at **Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium in Raipur, Chhattisgarh** on March 21, 2021. Sachin Tendulkar was the captain of the India Legends.

Player of the Match – Yusuf Pathan (India Legends)

Player of the Series – Tillakaratne Dilshan (Sri Lanka Legends)

Most Runs – Tillakaratne Dilshan

Most Wickets – Tillakaratne Dilshan

India Legends put up a total of 181/4 but Sri Lanka Legends could manage 167/7.

Japan's Nozomi Okuhara wins All England Badminton C'ships Women's title, Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia clinches Men's title

Men's singles	Lee Zii Jia (Malaysia)
Women's singles	Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)
Men's doubles	Hiroyuki Endo Yuta Watanabe
Women's doubles	Mayu Matsumoto Wakana Nagahara
Mixed doubles	Yuta Watanabe Arisa Higashino

World Water Day: 22 March



The UN recognised **World Water Day** is held annually on **March 22**. The day highlights the importance of freshwater and to advocate for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. World Water Day Theme 2021: **Valuing Water**. The UN World Water Development Report (WWDR) is released each year around World Water Day.

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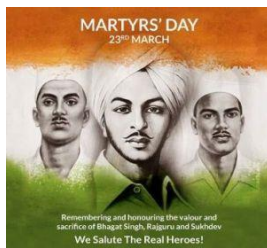
World Meteorological Day: 23 March



The **World Meteorological Day** is celebrated every year on **23 March** to commemorate the date of the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization in 23 March 1950. The day also highlights the contribution that the National Meteorological and Hydro-logical Services make to the safety and well-being of society. The theme for 2021

World Meteorological Day is '**The ocean, our climate and weather**'.

Martyrs Day (Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru): 23 March



Every year, **March 23** is observed as **Martyrs Day** (Shaheed Diwas or Sarvodaya Day) to pay tribute on death anniversary of the freedom fighters **Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru**, who laid their lives for the freedom of India. It was on March 23 in 1931, in Lahore (Pakistan), that these three were hanged to death for assassinating John Saunders, a British police officer in 1928. They had mistook him for British police

superintendent James Scott, who had ordered lathi charge, which eventually led to the death of Lala Lajpat Rai.