

The raging boundary dispute between the two States dates to the reorganisation of States along linguistic lines. In 1957, unhappy with the demarcation of boundaries, Maharashtra demanded realignment of its border with Karnataka. Karnataka has argued for the inclusion of areas in Kolhapur, Sholapur and Sangli districts (falling under Maharashtra) in its territory.

The State Information Commission of Tamil Nadu has been the worst performing in responsiveness under the Right to Information Act, furnishing only 14% of the information sought. Maharashtra was the second worst, sharing 23% of the information asked for, according to a report card on the performance of Information Commissions (ICs) in India for 2021-22 by the Satark Nagrik Sangathan. Only 10 ICs provided full information in response to the RTI applications filed as part of this assessment. These included Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Jharkhand and the north-eastern States of Sikkim, Nagaland, and Tripura.

The Election Commission (EC) on Thursday announced the development of a prototype of a multi-constituency remote electronic voting machine (RVM) to enable remote voting by migrant voters. The machines can handle multiple constituencies from one remote booth. The EC invited all recognised political parties — eight national and 57 State parties — to a demonstration of the prototype on January 16. The panel has already shared a concept note with them on the legal, operational, administrative, and technological challenges. The commission urged the parties to submit their views by January 31.

The Uttar Pradesh government on Thursday moved the Supreme Court against an Allahabad High Court direction to hold local body elections in the State without reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC). The case raises the fundamental question whether quota for political representation in urban self-government bodies can be equated with reservation in higher education and public employment for socially and economically backward classes.

The Uttar Pradesh Drug Control and the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO) are investigating Marion Biotech after Uzbekistan linked the deaths of 18 children to a “contaminated” cough syrup made by the Noida based firm, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Thursday. Samples of the syrup have been sent to the Regional Drugs Testing Laboratory in Chandigarh for further testing, Mr. Mandaviya said.

India’s current account balance recorded a deficit of \$36.4 billion — or a

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS (MOHUA) LAUNCHES TWO KEY INITIATIVES FOR URBAN REJUVENATION

1. Urban Rejuvenation (or regeneration) refers to the process of transforming the urban environment to enhance its living quality. New Initiatives for Urban Rejuvenation-
2. **City Finance Rankings-Purpose:** To evaluate, recognize and reward Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) based on the quality of their current financial health and improvement over time in financial performance. Ranking Parameters: Three financial parameters viz. resource mobilisation, expenditure performance and fiscal governance systems. Rankings: National Level ranking of cities under four categories: (i) Above 4 million (ii) Between 1-4 million (iii) 100K to 1 million (iv) Less than 100,000.
3. Top 3 cities in each category will be recognized and rewarded at the national level as well as within each state/state cluster. City Finance Rankings are an effort to analyse and help the ULBs in identifying areas in their financial performance where they can make further improvements, to be able to deliver quality infrastructure and services to its citizens.
4. **City Beauty Competition-Purpose:** To encourage and recognize the transformational efforts made by the cities and wards in India towards creating beautiful, innovative, and inclusive public spaces. Competition Parameters: Wards and public places of cities to be judged against the five broad pillars (i) accessibility (ii) amenities (iii) activities (iv) aesthetics and (v) ecology. Awards: Most beautiful wards and beautiful public places will be felicitated at the city, state, and national level from successive shortlisting. Participation in the competition is voluntary. This initiative will also encourage wards and cities to preserve their rich cultural heritage.

PRESIDENT LAYS FOUNDATION STONE FOR PRASHAD PROJECT IN BHADRACHALAM AND RUDRESHWAR TEMPLE (RAMAPPA) IN TELANGANA

1. PRASHAD, or Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive, launched in 2014-15, aims ‘to provide integrated infrastructure development to pilgrimage and heritage tourism destinations in the country.
2. **Sri Seetha ramchandra swamivari Devasthanam, Bhadrachalam-** The temple is dedicated to Lord Rama, is situated on the left bank of the River Godavari. The name derived from Bhadrachira (Mountain of Bhadra-a boon child of Meru and Menaka). Built in the 17th century, the significance of the place goes back to the Ramayana Era. It is close to Parnasala village (of Dandakaranya forest) and the place of Mata Sita abduction by Ravana. It is documented to be constructed or reconstructed by Kancharla Gopanna, also known as Bhadrachala Ramadasu revenue officer (Tehsildar) under the reign of Abul Hasan Qutub Shah, the sultan of the Golconda.
3. Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Mulugu-Rudreshwara, popularly known as Thousand Pillar Temple and Ramappa temple, is a Shiva Temple (dedicated to Ramalingeswara Swamy). It was built by Ramappa (sculptor) during the Kakatiya period (1123–1323 CE) under rulers Rudradeva and Recherla Rudra. In 2021 it was included in the UNESCO World heritage List (Cultural). This sandstone temple manifests the distinct style, technology, and decoration of the Kakatiyan such as: Decorated beams and pillars of carved granite and dolerite. Pyramidal Vimana (horizontally shaped tower) made of lightweight porous bricks etc.

ROAD ACCIDENTS IN INDIA 2021 REPORT BY THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

1. It is an annual report based on parameters of road accidents like the number of accidents, fatalities, fatal accidents, injuries, etc.
2. Key Highlights Road accidents decreased by 8.1 % and injuries decreased by 14.8 % in 2021 compared to 2019. Fatalities, however, on accounts of road accidents increased by 1.9 percent in 2021 corresponding to the same period in 2019. In 2020, there is an unprecedented decrease in accidents, fatalities, and injuries due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Uttar Pradesh accounted for the largest share of fatalities at 13.8% followed by Tamil Nadu (10%).
3. **Initiatives for road safety-**The Road Safety Programme - funded by the World Bank for capacity building of states. Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD) system for analysis of road accidents data to enhance road safety. National Road Safety Board under Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019. Scheme for District Driving Training Centres.

nine-year high of 4.4% of GDP — in the second quarter ended September, rising from \$18.2 billion (2.2% of GDP) in the previous quarter, according to Reserve Bank data released on Thursday. The RBI said a spike in merchandise trade deficit to \$83.5 billion in Q2, from \$63 billion in April-June, contributed to a wider CAD — which is the highest as a proportion of GDP since June 2013.

The Manohar Lal government in Haryana plans to hold private hospitals accountable for fulfilling their end of the healthcare deal in lieu of receiving land at concessional rates. The government has revised the maximum monthly income limit for free treatment in all private hospitals constructed on sites in Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP) sectors in any urban estate of Haryana to ₹15,000 from ₹5,000, thus extending the benefits to a much wider population.

16, 397 number of people killed in road accidents in 2021 due to not wearing seat belts, of which 8,438 were drivers and the remaining 7,959 were passengers, according to ‘Road accidents in India, 2021’, a report published by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH).

30,000 number of civilians forced to flee their homes in South Sudan, due to armed raids in the Jonglei state plagued by ethnic clashes, the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) informed. Some 5,000 people have sought shelter in Pibor town, the OCHA said.

India on Thursday received consular access to eight Indians who have been in the custody of Qatari authorities for around three months, said the official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Arindam Bagchi. The eight former Indian Navy officials were arrested in Qatar on charges that have not been made public so far. In all, Qatar has thrice provided diplomatic access to the Indians.

The government of the Maldives has taken “swift action” after an Opposition leader called for an arson attack on the Indian High Commission in Male, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

Awards for outstanding work in the field of Road Safety. India is a signatory to Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety (2015).

STAY SAFE ONLINE CAMPAIGN AND ‘G20 DIGITAL INNOVATION ALLIANCE (DIA)’ LAUNCHED BY MEITY

1. Ministry of Electronics and Information and Technology (MeitY) is the Nodal agency for the G20 Digital Economy Working Group (DEWG). During India's G20 presidency, the MeitY will focus on three priority areas, namely Digital public infrastructure (DPI), cyber security, and digital skill development.
2. DPI comprises foundational population scale technology systems on which the digital economy operates, this can include identity systems, payment systems, data exchanges, and social registries. E.g., Aadhaar and UPI digital system.
3. **About Stay Safe Online Campaign**-Its objective is to raise awareness among citizens to stay safe in the online world due to the widespread use of social media platforms and the rapid adoption of digital payments. It involves the dissemination of multilingual awareness content in the form of infographics etc.
4. **About G20-DIA**-Its objective is to identify, recognize, and enable the adoption of innovative and impactful digital technologies developed by start-ups, from G20 nations as well as the invited non-member nations. It seeks digital solutions in the six themes viz. Agri-tech, Health-tech, Ed-tech, Fin-tech, Secured Digital Infrastructure, and Circular Economy.

SPIRITUAL TOWN JOSHIMATH BATTLES A SINKING MEITY FEELING

1. Reportedly, an expert panel set up by the Uttarakhand government found that ground subsidence has induced structural defects in Joshimath. Joshimath is a town in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. It is the gateway to Badrinath temple (part of Char Dhams), Hemkund Sahib (Sikh Shrine), Auli (skiing destination) and Valley of Flowers (a UNESCO World Heritage Site).
2. **About Land Subsidence**-It is the gradual settling or sudden sinking of Earth’s surface because of underground material movement, a superimposed load or a combination of both. It can be caused by natural and human activities (see image). It can damage buildings, sewer lines, storm drainages, bridges, and highways etc. and cause accidents which can cost people lives.
3. Reasons for Land Subsidence in Joshimath Unstable Foundation of the town as it is situated in an old landslide zone. Proximity to major tectonic discontinuities. It is situated in the middle slopes of the hill bound by streams such as Karmanasa and Dhaknala along with Dhauliganga and Alaknanda rivers. Burgeoning Anthropogenic Pressure, i.e., Building of dams, numerous homes, resorts etc. with footfall higher than its carrying capacity.

NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION(NMC)

1. Recently part time members of NMC, Autonomous Boards and Search Committee were selected as per procedure under National Medical Commission (NMC) Act, 2019. Under the Act, NMC has replaced the Medical Council of India.
2. **NMC have four separate autonomous boards:** Under-graduate medical education. Post-graduate medical education. Medical assessment and rating and ethics. Medical registration.
3. **Objectives of NMC**-Improve access to quality and affordable medical education. Promote equitable and universal healthcare. Effective grievance redressal mechanism. Assess medical institutions periodically.



“YOU write your examination, not your well-wishers.”

DR. KHAN
(KSG)