



CURRENT AFFAIRS

1-15 January 2022



GUIDANCE
G R O U P

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US: FIRST COIN FEATURING BLACK WOMAN

- Maya Angelou becomes the first black woman to appear on the US coin. The coin was rolled out by US Mint as a part of the American Women Quarters Programme.
- Angelou, author of "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," will also be the first figure commemorated through the American Women Quarters Program, which was signed into law in January 2021.
- The US Mint "has begun shipping the first coins" with Angelou's likeness on the American quarter, a 25-cent piece, according to a press release from the agency.
- Each 2022 quarter is designed to reflect the breadth and depth of accomplishments being celebrated throughout this historic coin program. Maya Angelou, featured on the reverse of this first coin in the series, used words to inspire and uplift.

HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX 2022

- Henley Passport Index 2022 was recently released. The latest edition shows record-breaking levels of travel freedom for the top-ranking countries, Japan and Singapore.
- As per the Index, in the first quarter of 2022, India has improved its passport power. India has climbed seven places up and has been ranked at 83rd position. In 2021, it was ranked at 90th position.
- Now, India has access to 60 countries without a prior visa. In 2021, the visa-free scope was valid for just 58 countries. Oman and Armenia have been recently added to the list of the prior visa requirement.
- Japan and Singapore have been ranked 1st, with passport holders having the accessibility of 192 destinations visa-free.
- Germany and South Korea have been placed at 2nd position, with passport holders able to access 190 destinations visa-free.
- Finland, Italy, Spain, and Luxembourg shared 3rd place with a score of 189.
- Austria, Denmark, Sweden, France, and the Netherlands are in 4th place, with a visa-free score of 188.
- Passports of the US and UK regained their previous strength and are now placed at 6th place with a visa-free or visa-on-arrival score of 186. In 2020, they had slipped to 8th place, the lowest in the 17-year history of the index.
- North Korea has been ranked at the 104th spot with access to 39 destinations.

- Nepal and Palestinian territories are at the 105th spot, with a score of 37.
- Pakistan has been ranked at 108th position with a score of 31.
- Afghanistan with access to just 26 countries, emerged as the worst performer.

WORLD BANK'S 'GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROSPECTS' REPORT

- The world bank's Global Economic Prospects Report was released on January 11, 2022.
- The World Bank's latest report, Global Economic Prospects, says after a strong rebound in 2021, says the global economy will face a slowdown as the threat of new Covid variants, rising inflation, global debt, and income inequality will pose hurdles in recovery.
- The new emerging Covid-19 variants and a rise in inflation, debt, and income inequality will cause a drop in overall global GDP from 5.5 percent in 2021 to 4.1 percent in 2022.
- The World Bank on Tuesday retained its forecast for India's GDP growth for FY22 at 8.3 percent, according to its global economic prospectus report. Further, the Washington-based agency has upgraded its forecast for FY23 and FY24 at 8.7 percent and 6.8 percent respectively.
- The World Bank's projections come after India's government advance estimates projected India's GDP to grow at 9.2 percent in the current financial year ending March 2022.
- The slowdown in the second half of 2021 was already larger than the bank had expected in its June forecast due to the spread of the Omicron and Delta Covid variants. It expects a "pronounced slowdown" this year, and predicts global growth will decelerate further in 2023, to 3.2%.

THE GLOBAL RISKS REPORT 2022

- The World Economic Forum recently released the Global Risks Report 2022. Cybersecurity, pandemic, climate change, and space advancements are emerging risks to the global economy.
- Widespread youth disillusionment and digital inequality are among the top five risks for India, according to a report. The Global Risks Report 2022 released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) on Tuesday stated that apart from the aforementioned the other three risks are fracture of interstate relations, debt crisis, and failure of technology governance.
- Failure of technology governance could stem from globally accepted frameworks, institutions, or regulations for the use of critical digital networks and technology.

- The survey, part of the report, looked into five risks that could pose a critical threat to a country in the next two years. The WEF's Executive Opinion Survey (EOS) was conducted between May and September 2021 and involved 12,000 leaders who were asked to pick from a list of 35 risks in no particular order.
- According to the WEF's Global Risks Report, 2022 released ahead of the Davos Agenda, a "global risk is the possibility of the occurrence of an event or condition that, if it occurs, could cause a significant negative impact for several countries or industries".
- It stated that climate change was the number one danger, while the erosion of social cohesion, livelihood crises, and mental health deterioration was identified as risks that had increased the most since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

SCIENTISTS PULLED OFF THE FIRST PIG-TO-HUMAN HEART TRANSPLANT

- A US man has become the first person in the world to get a heart transplant from a genetically-modified pig.
- The patient is doing well three days after this highly experimental surgery.
- This marks a significant step in the decades-long debate on using animal organs for life-saving transplants. However, it is too soon to know, if the operation will work.
- As per Doctors at the University of Maryland Medical Center, transplant highlighted that heart from a genetically modified animal can function in the human body, without immediate rejection.
- The patient was David Bennett aged 57. He knew there was no guarantee of whether the experiment would work. But he was ready for the operation because he was dying and was ineligible for a human heart transplant.

AYUSH MINISTER LAYS FOUNDATION STONE OF INTERNATIONAL YOGA ACADEMY

- Union Ayush Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal has laid the foundation stone of the Heartfulness International Yoga Academy in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- He also launched 75 crores suryanamaskar initiative as part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav". The academy tries to reach all levels of society through training programmes and these will be overseen by an international team.
- This the academy has therapeutic Yoga rooms for consultation, one to one training spaces or small group classes; pre-natal Yoga rooms; a lecture hall

with 200 sitting capacity; a full-fledged recording studio with editing suites for pre-recorded wellness programs; a recording Yoga Hall fully equipped for Live online Yoga Classes; a Yoga library with books from every Yoga Institutions and access to Yoga research articles.

ABOUT THE SURYANAMASKAR INITIATIVE:

- The 75 crore Suryanamaskar project is a tribute to 75 years of India's independence. Surya Namaskar's practice of sun salutation' literally means the sun salutation and the project will continue until February 20.
- The programme is supported by some central ministries and is led by five international organizations – Patanjali Yogpeeth, Heartfulness Institute, NYSF-National Yogasana Sports Federation, Geeta Parivar, and Kreedha Bharati.
- The 75 crores Suryanamaskar challenge aims to create the largest congregational Surya Namaskar event with each participant receiving a certificate upon completion of the 21-day Suryanamaskar challenge.

HIMACHAL PRADESH BECAME 1ST LPG ENABLED & SMOKE-FREE STATE OF THE COUNTRY

Himachal Pradesh became the first LPG enables, also, smoke-free state. This milestone was achieved due to the Ujjwala Scheme and Grahini Suvidha Yojana by Centre. The Ujjwala scheme was introduced by the government to get rid of the smoke. The Grahini Suvidha Scheme was introduced to assist the women of rural areas.

Ujjwalla Yojna was started by the Centre government with the view to free the women of the country from indoor pollution. Along with this, the Himachal government also started the Grihini Suvidha Yojana to benefit as many women as possible, under the scheme.

ABOUT THE UJJWALLA YOJNA:

Under the Ujjwala yojana with an expenditure of Rs. 21.81 crore 1.36 lakh free domestic connections were given in Himachal, while under the Grihini Suvidha Yojana of the Himachal government, 3.23 lakh housewives were provided free gas cylinders at a cost of Rs. 120 crores.

ABOUT THE MUKHYA MANTRI GRIHINI SUVIDHA YOJANA:

Mukhya Mantri Grihini Suvidha Yojana was launched on 26th May 2018. With the concerted efforts of the Centre and State government, the women of the state have become free from indoor pollution. Besides this, in order to conserve the environment, free LPG connection is given to families with no gas connection.

KERALA'S HIGH COURT: INDIA'S FIRST PAPERLESS COURT

The Kerala High Court is all set to become India's first paperless court. Supreme Court judge Justice DY Chandrachud inaugurated the smart courtrooms on 1 January 2022. In the 1st phase six courtrooms, including the Chief Justice's room, will be converted into smart courts. Also, case files will be made available to the lawyers on the computer screen.

HOW DOES THIS PROCESS WORK?

Cases e-filed will be processed, verified, and cured through e-mode, stakeholders can avail the option of hearing cases in hybrid mode involving physical hearing as well as through videoconferencing, and orders and judgments will also be delivered through e-mode.

Every part of the process can be viewed, processed through the dashboard or virtual box of individual stakeholders and participants in the judicial process. All stakeholders, including litigants, could access, work and update cases from the comfort of their homes, offices, or in transit, added the communication.

'KERALA ARTS AND CRAFTS VILLAGE ORGANIZATION' WON 'INTERNATIONAL CRAFT AWARD 2021'

- Kerala Arts and Crafts Village Organization (KACV) from Kovalam, Kerala was awarded the 'International Craft Award for 2021' for the best craft village in the world by the World Crafts Council International.
- It is the only award India received in the non-individual category. The KACV was established by the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society (UL CCS) for the State Tourism Department of Kerala. In 2021, the Village of the Year award was won by 'Kraf Komuniti Ku' in Malaysia.

Category of the award	Winners
Craft Icon of the Year	Chandramali Liyangane of the National Crafts Council, Sri Lanka.
Sustainable Development & Social Inclusion in the Handicrafts Sector	Malaysian Prison Department
Craft Persons of the Year	Shahrbanoo Arabian (Iran) and Dalavayi Kullayappa (India)
Craft Designers of the Year	Zohra Said (Morocco) and Ismario Ismael (Mexico)

Next Generation Craft Designers of the year	Qiling Zhang (China) and Mubin Khatri (India)
The Master Artisans	Amita Sachdeva (India) and Mubarik Khatri (India)

HYDERABAD GETS INDIA'S FIRST OPEN ROCK MUSEUM

Union Minister of State for Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh has inaugurated India's first Open Rock Museum in Hyderabad, Telangana. Museum displays around 35 different types of rocks from different parts of India with ages ranging from 3.3 billion years to around 55 million years of the Earth's history.

ABOUT THE OPEN ROCK MUSEUM:

The Open Rock Museum, set up with the aim of educating and enlightening the masses about several lesser-known facts, displays around 35 different types of rocks from different parts of India. These rocks also represent the deepest part of the earth, up to 175 km from the surface of the earth. The rocks have been sourced from Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and others.

KVIC LAUNCHED INDIA'S FIRST "MOBILE HONEY PROCESSING VAN"

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Chairman, Vinai Kumar Saxena has launched the country's first Mobile Honey Processing Van at Village Sirora in Ghaziabad. The Mobile Van has been designed in-house by KVIC at its Multi-disciplinary Training Centre, Panjokehra, at a cost of Rs 15 lakh. This mobile honey processing unit can process up to 300 KG of honey in 8 hours. The van is also equipped with a testing laboratory, that would instantly examine the quality of honey.

ABOUT THE VAN:

- The Mobile Honey Processing Van comes as a major development under KVIC's Honey Mission which aims at training beekeepers, distributing Bee Boxes to farmers, and helping rural, educated as well as unemployed youth to earn extra income through beekeeping activities.
- In line with the Prime Minister's dream of "Sweet Kranti" (Sweet Revolution) through honey production, the KVIC has come up with this unique innovation to enable beekeepers and farmers to get a fair price for their honey production.

- KVIC has designed the innovative Mobile Honey Processing Van that will process beekeepers' honey at their doorsteps and thus save them the hassle and the cost of taking the honey to processing plants in far-off cities for processing.
- While this will make beekeeping a more profitable business for small beekeepers; this will also maintain purity and the highest quality standards of honey.

INDIA'S OLDEST SLOTH BEAR 'GULABO' PASSES AWAY AT VAN VIHAR NATIONAL PARK

- India's oldest female sloth bear, whose name was Gulabo, has passed away at the Van Vihar National Park and Zoo, located in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
- Gulabo was the oldest sloth bear of the country. She died at the age of 40.
- She was rescued from a street performer (Madaari) in May 2006, when she was 25 years. Gulabo was one of the star attractions in the park.
- The Van Vihar National Park, located on the banks of Bhopal's Upper Lake, also runs a rescue and breeding center for sloth bears.

ISFR REPORT: INDIA'S FOREST & TREE COVER ROSE BY 2,261 SQ. KM IN THE LAST 2 YEARS

Union Environment Minister, Bhupender Yadav has launched the 17th edition of the biennial 'India State of Forest Report (ISFR)' 2021. ISFR is released by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), every two years since 1987 to assess the country's forest resources. India's forest and tree cover rose by 2,261 square kilometres in ISFR 2021 as compared to the assessment of 2019. This includes an increase of 1,540 square kilometres in forest cover and a 721 sq. km increase in tree cover.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE ISFR 2021:

- The forest and tree cover in India is now 8,09,537 sq. km. Total Forest cover is 7,13,789 sq. km, (21.71 percent of the geographical area) and tree cover is 95,748 sq. km (2.91 percent of the geographical area).
- The total forest and tree cover in the country is now spread across 80.9 million hectares or 24.62% of the geographical area of the country.
- The top five states in terms of increase in forest cover are Andhra Pradesh (647 sq. km), Telangana (632 sq. km), Odisha (537 sq. km), Karnataka (155 sq. km) and Jharkhand (110 sq. km).
- Area-wise, Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover in the country followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra.

- The top five states in terms of forest cover as a percentage of total geographical area are Mizoram (84.53%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.33%), Meghalaya (76.00%), Manipur (74.34%) and Nagaland (73.90%).
- The mangrove cover in the country recorded an increase of 17 sq. km as compared to the assessment of 2019. Total mangrove cover in the country now covers 4,992 sq. km.
- The top three States in terms of increase in mangrove cover are Odisha (8 sq. km), Maharashtra (4 sq. km), and Karnataka (3 sq. km) respectively.
- The total carbon stock in forests is estimated to be 7,204 million tonnes.
- This includes an increase of 79.4 million tonnes in the carbon stock of the country in 2021 as compared to 2019.

RBI ISSUED FRAMEWORK FOR OFFLINE DIGITAL PAYMENTS

Reserve Bank of India has issued a framework for facilitating small-value digital payments in offline mode using cards, wallets, mobile devices, etc, to push digital transactions in rural and semi-urban areas. The upper limit of an offline payment transaction was fixed at Rs 200, with a total limit of Rs 2,000 at any point in time. The framework will enable the Authorised Payment System Operators (PSOs) and Payment System Participants (PSPs), Acquirers, and Issuers (banks and non-banks) to conduct small value offline digital payments.

Under the offline mode, payments can be carried out face-to-face (proximity mode) using any channel or instrument like cards, wallets, and mobile devices. These transactions will not require an additional factor of authentication (AFA), the Reserve Bank of India said, adding that since the transactions are offline, alerts (by way of SMS and/or e-mail) will be received by the customer after a time lag.

INDIA RECORDS HIGHEST-EVER MONTHLY EXPORTS AT \$37 BILLION IN DECEMBER

The preliminary data released by the commerce and industry ministry, India exported goods worth \$37.29 billion in December, the highest ever in a month, as demand for items such as engineering products, petroleum items, and gems and jewellery continued to soar. India's export has increased by 37 percent from the figures of December 2020. The import has also increased by 38 percent from last December. India's exports of goods will cross 400 billion dollars in this fiscal year.

ACCORDING TO THE DATA:

- Shipments during April-December 2021 crossed \$300 billion.
- Engineering goods export has grown by 37% over the last December while export of Gems and jewellery has increased by 15.8%.
- Readymade garments and cotton yarn export has grown by 22% and 46% over the last December respectively.
- India's export of services during April-December 2021 was \$178.81 billion.
- India will soon sign a free trade agreement (FTA) with the UAE to increase export.

'JIJAU TO SAVITRI-SANMAN MAHARASHTRA'S LEKINCHA' CAMPAIGN IN ALL SCHOOLS IN THE STATE FROM 3RD TO 12TH JANUARY

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Rajmata Jijau Maa Saheb and the birth anniversary of the first female teacher Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule, various educational programs for students and teachers will be implemented in all the schools of the state under the campaign 'Jijau to Savitri-Sanman Maharashtra Lekincha'.

The birth anniversary of Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule, the first female teacher who laid the foundation of women's education by overcoming many difficulties, is celebrated on January 3. Her birthday is also celebrated as Women's Education Day.

MAHAWAS ABHIYAN-GRAMEEN

- The Maharashtra government has decided to extend till May its 'Maha Awas Abhiyan' campaign, launched last November, to speed up the implementation of all rural housing programmes, including the Prime Minister Awas Yojana.
- The campaign was taken up by the state rural development department, which is a press release said on Wednesday that in the four months since the campaign was launched, construction of 7.41 lakh rural houses was taken up under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and state-sponsored Gharkul Yojana.
- The objectives of this Maha Awas Abhiyan are to expedite the effective implementation of rural housing schemes in the state, to increase the participation of all sections of the society along with government agencies and panchayats, to improve the quality of housing, to bring together

various schemes of government to uplift the living standards of beneficiaries.

- Emphasis will be laid on providing land to landless beneficiaries, providing financial assistance for the purchase of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Gharkul land as well as the construction of multi-story buildings and housing complexes. Similarly, 100 percent sanction will be given to the households as per the objectives, the registration process of the household beneficiaries will be completed in a short period of time and the approval letters will be distributed immediately.
- The government is working hard to ensure that the homeless and the needy get a decent and secure home. The government and its officials are taking care that no one in the state will be left homeless through Phase-II of this Mahavas Campaign.

RUSSIA'S TEST-FIRES NEW HYPERSONIC TSIRKON MISSILES 2022

Russia successfully test-fired around 10 new Tsirkon (Zircon) hypersonic cruise missiles from a frigate and other two missiles from a submarine. The Zircon missile would be capable of flying at nine times the speed of sound and have a range of 1,000 kilometers (620 miles). The Tsirkon Cruise Missile will join Avangard glide vehicles and the air-launched Kinzhal (Dagger) missiles in Russia's hypersonic arsenal.

Zircon is intended to arm Russian cruisers, frigates and submarines. It is one of several hypersonic missiles under development in Russia. The launch was the latest in a series of tests of Zircon, which is set to enter service next year.

DRDO SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRES SEA-TO-SEA VARIANT OF BRAHMOS SUPERSONIC CRUISE MISSILE

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully test-fired an advanced sea-to-sea variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.
- The missile, launched from the Navy's recently commissioned stealth guided-missile destroyer INS Visakhapatnam on January 11, apparently hit the designated target ship with pinpoint precision.
- A joint collaboration between India and Russia, BrahMos is capable of being launched from land, sea, sub-sea, and air against the surface- and sea-based targets.

- The missile flies at a speed of 2.8 Mach or almost three times the speed of sound and can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads of 300 kilograms.
- Although the supersonic cruise missile's range had been capped at 298 km in tune with stipulations of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the DRDO, following India's entry into the MTCR club in June 2016, recently extended and successfully test-fired the missile to around 450 km (to be further extended to 600 km).
- Last December the air version of BrahMos was test-fired from the Indian Air Force's Sukhoi 30 MK-I aircraft. Several Asian countries have shown a keen interest in BrahMos.

EXERCISE MILAN 2022: INDIA TO HOST 46 NATIONS MEGA NAVAL WARGAMES

India has invited a total of 46 friendly foreign countries to participate in the multinational naval exercise Milan in Visakhapatnam, scheduled from February 25, 2022. The theme of this 11th edition of exercise Milan is camaraderie, cohesion, and collaboration. This exercise was initiated in 1995 and held biennially and conducted with friendly navies.

ABOUT THE EXERCISE MILAN 2022:

- The professional competitions and conferences planned during this phase shall build the operational tempo for the Sea Phase planned from March 1-4. This Phase would be utilized to consolidate upon the lessons learned during harbour interactions and to build upon the experience of operating together at sea.
- The countries that have been extended invitations for participation include Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Israel, Iran, France, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, among others.
- As per an official, India has increased its naval engagements with friendly nations at bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral levels since 2018.

SEA DRAGON 2022 EXERCISE: INDIA JOINS 'SEA DRAGON' EXERCISE

India and its partners in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or Quad along with Canada and South Korea are participating in the multinational exercise Sea Dragon 2022 at Guam in the Western Pacific. The six nations that are

participating in the exercise are the United States, Australia, Canada, India, Japan, and South Korea.

ABOUT THE EXERCISE:

The exercise, primarily focused on anti-submarine warfare (ASW) training, will involve more than 270 hours of in-flight training and activities ranging from tracking simulated targets to tracking a US Navy submarine. Each event will be graded and the country scoring the highest points will receive the Dragon Belt award.

THE FOCUS OF THE EXERCISE:

Sea Dragon 22 focuses on anti-submarine warfare (ASW) training and excellence, which includes everything from tracking simulated targets to tracking a genuine US Navy submarine. Pilots and flight officers from all around the world develop strategies and discuss tactics in training sessions that take into account their individual countries' skills and equipment.

RAMNATH GOENKA EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The Indian Express Group has announced the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards (RNG Awards) for journalists across the country, for their work done in 2019. RNG awards are one the most prestigious awards in India in the field of journalism, held annually since 2006. The photo stories of our winners appeared in our print and digital editions between December 24, 2021, and January 4, 2022.

LIST OF WINNERS:

- Hindi (Print): Anand Choudhary, Dainik Bhaskar
- Hindi (Broadcast): Sushil Kumar Mohapatra, NDTV India
- Regional Languages (Print): Aniket Vasant Sathe, Loksatta
- Regional Languages (Broadcast): Sunil Baby, Media One TV
- Environment, Science and Technology Reporting (Print): Team Pari (People's Archive of Rural India)
- Environment, Science and Technology Reporting (Broadcast): Team Scroll
- Uncovering India Invisible (Print): Shiv Sahay Singh, The Hindu
- Uncovering India Invisible (Broadcast): Tridip K Mandal, The Quint
- Business And Economic Journalism (Print): Sumant Banerji, Business Today

- Business And Economic Journalism (Broadcast): Ayushi Jindal, India Today TV
- Reporting On Politics and Government (Digital): Dheeraj Mishra, The Wire
- Reporting On Politics and Government (Broadcast): Seemi Pasha, Thewire.in
- Sports journalism (Print): Nihal Koshie, The Indian Express
- Sports journalism (Broadcast): Team NewsX
- Investigative Reporting (Print): Kaunain Sheriff M, The Indian Express
- Investigative Reporting (Broadcast): S Mahesh Kumar, Manorama News
- Reporting On Arts, Culture and Entertainment: Uday Bhatia, Mint
- Prakash Kardaley Memorial Award for Civic Journalism: Chaitanya Marpakwar, Mumbai Mirror
- Photojournalism: Zishaan A Latif, The Caravan
- Books (Non-Fiction): Arun Mohan Sukumar

ABOUT THE AWARDS:

The award is given to honour journalists across the country from print, broadcast, and digital media who have maintained the highest standards of their profession and, despite immense challenges, produced work that sustains public trust in the media and impacts the lives of people. The award is named after Ramnath Goenka, the founder of “The Indian Express” and Indian Express Group in 1932.

JC CHAUDHRY GETS FIRST EVER GUINNESS WORLD RECORD IN NUMEROLOGY

India’s one of the top numerologists, JC Chaudhry has achieved the first-ever Guinness World Record in Numerology and the first world record of 2022 by educating about ancient science to around 6000 participants, enthusiasts of numerology joined from the United States, the United Kingdom, Middle East, and India. The Guinness World Record London office has opened a new category, “Numerology” for this achievement.

The initiative was organized by CNPL (Chaudhry Nummero Pvt Ltd) and the Indian Institute of Numerology to create awareness regarding numerology, which is prevalent across ancient cultures like Greece, Egypt, China, Chaldea, and India.

3RD NATIONAL WATER AWARDS FOR 2020 ANNOUNCED

Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has declared the winners of the third National Water Awards for the year 2020. Uttar Pradesh has been adjudged as the Best State in water conservation efforts in the National Water

Awards 2020. It is followed by Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu respectively. The award comes with a citation, trophy and cash prize. Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh received the best district award in the northern zone followed by Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar in Punjab.

Category	Winners
“Best State”	Uttar Pradesh
“Best District” – North Zone	Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh
“Best District”– South Zone	Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
“Best District”– East Zone	East Champaran, Bihar and Godda, Jharkhand
“Best District”– West Zone	Indore, Madhya Pradesh
“Best District”– North-East Zone	Goalpara, Assam
“Best Village Panchayat”– North Zone	Dhaspad, Almora, Uttarakhand
“Best Village Panchayat”– South Zone	Yelerampura Panchayat, Tumakuru District, Karnataka
“Best Village Panchayat”– East Zone	Telari Panchayat, Gaya District, Bihar
“Best Village Panchayat”– West Zone	Takhatgadh, Sabarkantha, Gujarat
“Best Village Panchayat”– North-East Zone	Sialsir, Sirchip, Mizoram
“Best Urban Local Body”	Vapi Urban Local Body, Gujarat
“Best Media (Print & Electronic)”	Mission Paani (Network 18)
“Best School”	Govt. Girls Hr. Secondary School, Kaveripattinam, Tamil Nadu

“Best Industry”	Welspun India Textile Ltd., Gujarat
“Best Water User Association”	Panchgachiya MDTW WUA, Hooghly, West Beng
“Best Industry for CSR activities”	ITC Limited, Kolkata, West Bengal

ABOUT THE AWARD:

The National Water Award was launched by the Jal Shakti Ministry in 2018 to recognize and motivate individuals and organizations doing exemplary work in the field of water resources management.

Overall, 57 awards have been announced in 11 categories. These include Best State, Best District, Best Village Panchayat, Best Urban Local Body, Best Media (Print & Electronic), Best School, Best Institution/RWA/Religious organization for Campus usage, Best Industry, Best NGO, Best Water User Association, and Best Industry for CSR Activity.

‘MOTHER OF ORPHANS’ SINDHUTAI SAPKAL

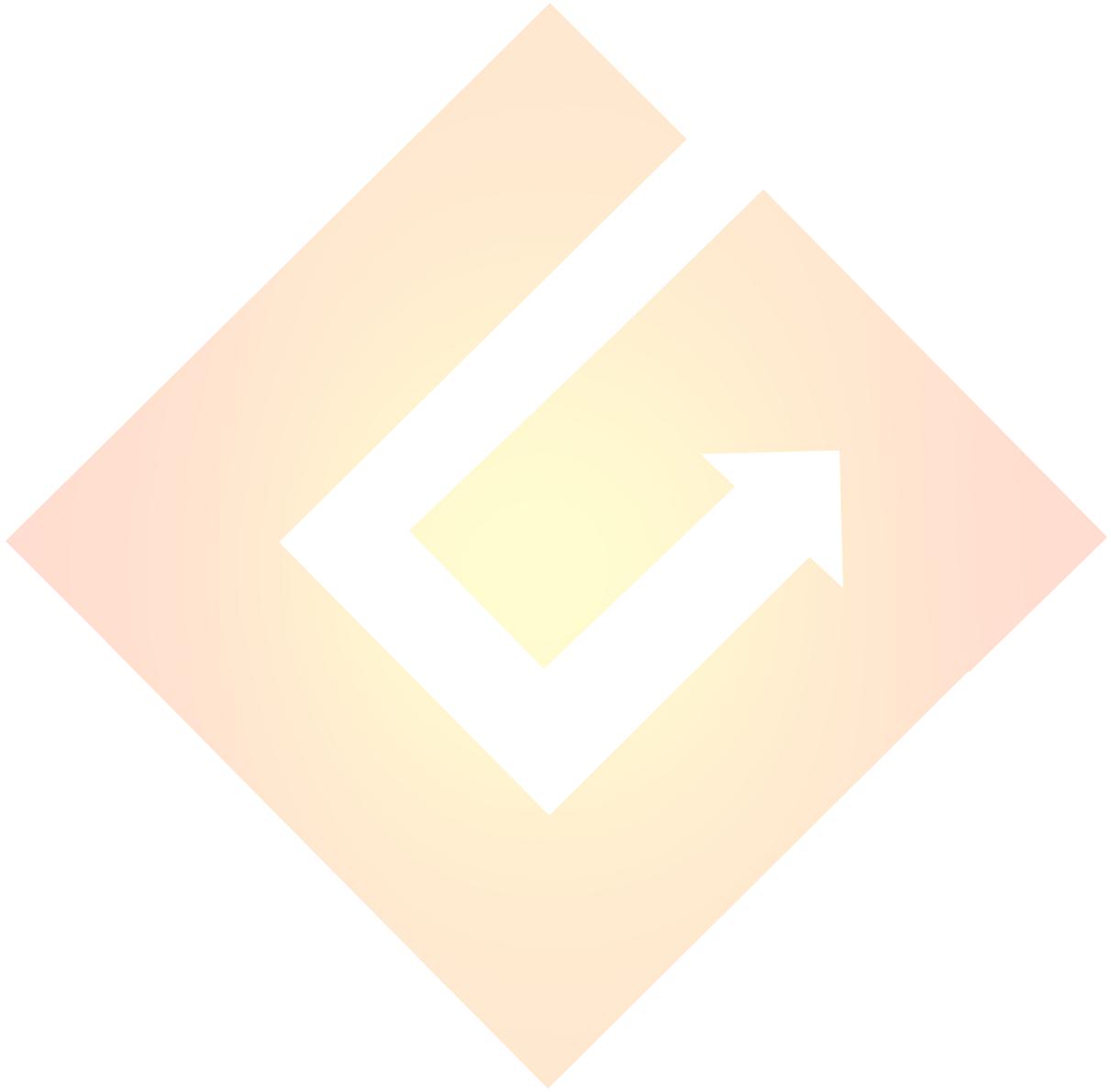
Sindhutai Sapkal, better known as ‘Anathanchi Maye’ or ‘Mother of orphans’, passed away following a heart attack at a private hospital in Pune on Tuesday. She was 74. She was known for her work in raising hundreds of orphans, abandoned and destitute children, as well as towards the rehabilitation of women. Sindhutai was born in the Wardha district of Maharashtra on November 14, 1948. She studied only up to class 4. She was married at the age of 10 to a man who was 30 years older than her.

After her marriage, she settled in the Navargaon forest area of Wardha. During her pregnancy, a local landlord spread rumours about her, following which her husband abandoned her, her own family slammed the door on her and the community boycotted her. Sindhutai then gave birth to her child in a cowshed. She made her living by singing and begging in trains. During this period of struggle, she realized that there were hundreds of children who needed a mother. It then changed the course of her life as she started adopting orphaned and abandoned children.

Sindhutai ran an orphanage – Sanmati Bal Niketan Sanstha – in the Hadapsar area of Pune.

She had received more than 750 awards for her social work. She was awarded the Padma Shri in 2021, and the Ahilyabai Holkar Award in 2010 from the Maharashtra government. She had adopted more than 1,000 orphan children.

In 2010, a Marathi biopic of Sapkal titled *Mi Sindhutai Sapkal Boltey* was released in Maharashtra. "...for me she is still alive," said Tejaswini Pandit, who played the role of Sindhutai in the biopic.



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