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The High Commission of India, Ottawa celebrated the 72<sup>nd</sup> Republic Day virtually with the citizens and friends of India. We webcasted the flag-hoisting and High Commissioner's speech and hosted a virtually coordinated cultural show viewed by more than 5k fellow Indians and friends of India on Facebook, YouTube and through a special Webex meet.

Watch the full event here:

[Morning Event](#) | [Evening Program](#)

# NEWS ROUND-UP

## “Made in India” Vaccines

Indian Scientists have developed two “Made in India” vaccines. Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI) granted approval to vaccines of Serum Institute’s Covishield of India and Bharat Biotech’s Covaxin. Covishield I said to have an efficiency of 70.42% . India plans to inoculate 300 million people in the first phase, beginning with 10 million healthcare personnel, followed by 20 million frontline corona warriors such as police and sanitation workers. The balance 270 million will be people above the age of 50 and those with co-morbidities. Watch video [here](#)



## India begins its tenure at the UN Security Council (UNSC)



On 4 January 2021, India began its tenure at the UNSC. India will sit in the 15-nation UNSC for the 2021-22 term as a non-permanent member — the eighth time that the country has had a seat on the powerful horseshoe table, with a commitment to promote responsible & inclusive solutions to international peace & security, a New Orientation for a Reformed Multilateral System (NORMS) & a world view anchored in our ethos ‘the world is one family’. [Read more](#)

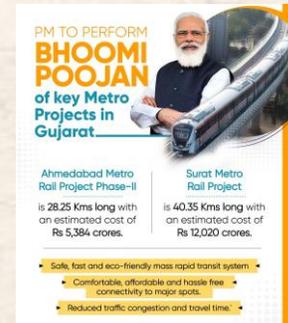
## PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on January 9

On January 9, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas(PBD) convention which was held in a virtual format on Saturday. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention is the flagship event of ministry of external affairs and provides an important to engage and connect with overseas Indians. The theme of the convention, aimed at encouraging Indian diaspora to be part of socio-economic development in India, is “Contributing to Aatma Nirbhar Bharat”, Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) said in a statement. [Read more](#)



## Work underway on over 1,000 km metro network in 27 cities: PM Modi

On January 18, 2021, PM Narendra Modi addressed the media after performing the ground breaking ceremony of the Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project Phase-II and Surat Metro Rail Project via video conferencing. Stating that the metro network in Ahmedabad and Surat will further strengthen the connectivity in major business centres of the country, Modi said the government is developing an integrated urban transporting system. [Read more](#)



## PM Modi addresses 'Startup India International Summit'



On January 16, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed "Parambith: Startup India International Summit" on 16 January where he interacted with startups via video conferencing. This summit took place on 15&16 January, organized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry. More than 25 countries participated in the Summit with 200 global speakers. [Read more](#)

## India participated in the 17th Asia Cooperation Dialogue Ministerial Meeting

On 21 January 2021, the 17th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) under the theme, "The New Normal and Safe and Healthy Tourism" was held virtually. Ms. Riva Ganguly Das, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs represented India at the meeting. Recognising the strong need to revive and rebuild the Tourism sector in order to ensure jobs as well as for the protection of cultural and natural heritage, Secretary (East) highlighted that India is focusing on tourism promotion as a part of 3T's strategy which includes "Trade, Tourism and Technology". [Read more](#)



## India at Climate Adaptation Summit 2021



On January 25, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Climate Adaptation Summit 2021 and said that India is targeting 450 gigawatt of renewable energy capacity by the year 2030.

PM Narendra Modi noted that the 'Climate Adaptation' is more significant today than ever before and that it is a key element of India's developmental efforts. He stated that India is promoting LED lights and is saving 38 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually. [Read more](#)



High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria gave keynote speech in virtual celebration of World Hindi Divas organised by Hindi Much on January 17, 2021. Poets from Canada, US and India recited poems and literature based on 9 emotions (Navrasa). There was also a short on education of Hindi in North America and its challenges.



Indian Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank was honoured by the Hindi Writers Guild, Canada for his literary work on January 16, 2021. He was conferred with the “Sahitya Gaurav Samman” in the presence of the Governor through a virtual program. High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria and Consul General Apoorva Srivastav were guest of honour.

On January 20, 2021, High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria participated in the 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Dissemination and Orientation virtual session (3-day event) organised by the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, wherein past awardees share with new awardees about the work done by them during their fellowship tenure in India and Canada. They also discussed bilateral cooperation in the education corridor with focus on technology, innovation and start-ups.



High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria interacted with Hon. Sameer Zuberi, Member of Parliament from Quebec’s Pierrefonds – Dollard on January 25, 2021. They discussed the vast economic potential in the India-Canada corridor and the role of the young leaders in harnessing that potential.

On 28 January, 2021, High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria had a brainstorming session with the IIT Madras Bioincubator team led by Dr MS Narayanan, on ways to enhance their bilateral collaborations with Canadian institutions. Various topics were discussed such as convergence of engineering and biotech, opportunities for joint India-Canada projects, particularly in the field of biotech.



# INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

## Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Seychelles, Myanmar and Brazil receives doses of India-made COVID-19

India is world's largest vaccine producer. As pharmacy of the World, India is committed to its responsibility as a global supplier even in times of crises. India has informed the UN Security Council that it will gradually supply vaccines to the COVAX facility of the World Health Organisation and undertake contractual supplies to various countries in a phased manner, as more than six million doses have been airlifted to nine countries – Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Brazil, Maldives and Morocco, under New Delhi's 'vaccine diplomacy'.



## ARTS & CULTURE

### Rann Utsav



Set against the surreal backdrop of Kutch's white salt desert, the Rann Utsav showcases the region's culture and heritage (although it has unfortunately become rather commercial and overcrowded). Activities include folk dances and music, food stalls, ATV rides, camel cart excursions, para-motoring, meditation, yoga, and trips to surrounding destinations. A luxury tent village is constructed on the fringe of the salt desert to accommodate visitors.

When: Ongoing until February 28, 2021. It's best on full moon nights (December 30, 2020) to see the moon shining on the salt.

Where: Great Rann of Kutch salt desert, Dhordo, Gujarat. Nadu.

Source: <https://www.tripsavvy.com/december-india-festivals-and-events->

# ECONOMY

## India investments by Brookfield and Blackstone hit \$20 bn mark

Canada's Brookfield Asset Management Inc. and New York-based Blackstone Group Lp have both reached the \$20-billion investment milestone in India, as they continue to take long-term bets on real estate and other sectors. Of the \$20 billion that Brookfield has invested in India over the past decade, around \$7 billion went into real estate, as the firm placed large bets on acquiring assets of property developers. [Read more](#)



## India becomes second largest manufacturer of PPE kits and suits, says Smriti Irani



Union Minister for textile and women and child development Smriti Irani has said that India has become the second largest manufacturer of PPE kits and suits in the world in record three months' time during the coronavirus induced lockdown in March 2020. She was speaking after inaugurating - Surat International Textile Expo -SITEX at Surat ,the Gujarat's first physical exhibition after Covid19. [Read more](#)

## Cabinet approves Procurement of 83 Light Combat Aircrafts (LCA) 'Tejas' from HAL for IAF

On January 13, 2021, under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the cabinet has approved procurement of 73 LCA Tejas Mk-1A fighter aircrafts and 10 LCA Tejas Mk-1 Trainer aircrafts at the cost of Rs. 45,696 Crore along with Design and Development of Infrastructure sanctions worth Rs.1,202 Crore. Light Combat Aircraft Mk-1A variant is an indigenously designed, developed and manufactured state-of-the-art modern 4+ generation fighter aircraft. The Cabinet has also approved infrastructure development by IAF under the project to enable them handle repairs or servicing at their base depot. [Read more.](#)



## IMF projects 11.5% growth rate for India in 2021, only economy to record double digit growth



The IMF projected an impressive 11.5 per cent growth rate for India in 2021, making the country the only major economy of the world to register a double-digit growth this year amidst the coronavirus pandemic. The International Monetary Fund's growth projections for India in its latest World Economic Outlook Update reflected a strong rebound in the economy, which is estimated to have contracted by eight per cent in 2020 due to the pandemic. [Read more](#)



## MEA Performance Smart Board

an initiative aimed at putting performance indicators of the ministry at the disposal of the people



## EDUCATION

The National Board of Examinations shall be conducting Fellowship Entrance Test (FET) – 2021 on 14th March 2021 for International students for admissions to various Fellowship (FNB) courses. The Fellowship courses of NBE shall be offered to International Students under FPIS (Fellowship Programme for International Students). Applicants from countries other than India shall be eligible for admission to FNB seats ear-marked for FPIS. The Examination shall be conducted as a Computer Based Test (CBT) at International test centres. [Read more](#)

## COMMUNITY VIBES

Indo-Canadian Community Centre (ICCC) organised Community Celebration – Virtual Event on January 29, 2021 to celebrate and honour Dr. Jagmohan Humar's recognition and recent appointment as **Member of the Order of Canada (C.M.)**, one of the highest awards by the Government of Canada, in presence of many VIP's and dignitaries. Dr. Jagmohan Humar is a Distinguished Research Professor in Carleton University, Ottawa.



**COMMITTEE ON FARM LAWS**  
Appointed by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India  
vide Judgement dated 12.01.2021



**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Invitation for Comments, Views and Suggestions  
on the three Farm Reform Acts, 2020**

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has appointed a Committee of Experts to make recommendations and submit Report on the following three Farm Reform Acts, 2020:

1. The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020.
2. The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020.
3. The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020.

The Committee intends to invite comments, views and suggestions on the aforesaid Acts from the stakeholders so that it can be compiled for submitting to the Hon'ble Supreme Court to protect the interest of Indian farmers. All the concerned are requested to share their comments, views and suggestions on this matter. The Committee seeks the opinion of Farmer Unions, Farmer Associations, Farmer Producer Organizations and other stakeholders engaged in agriculture related activities, to consider their views on the said Farm Reform Acts.

Comments, views and suggestions may be given on the portal [www.farmer.gov.in/sccommittee](http://www.farmer.gov.in/sccommittee) or by email to : [sc.committee-agri@gov.in](mailto:sc.committee-agri@gov.in) by 20th February, 2021.

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| <b>Dr. Pramod Joshi</b><br>Agricultural Economist &<br>Former Director for South Asia,<br>International Food Policy<br>Research Institute | <b>Dr. Ashok Gulati</b><br>Agricultural Economist &<br>Former Chairman of the<br>Commission for Agricultural<br>Costs & Prices | <b>Shri Anil Ghanwat</b><br>President<br>Shetkari Sanghatana |
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Image: 01/01/2021/008/2021

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