

3 January, 2022 Current Affairs

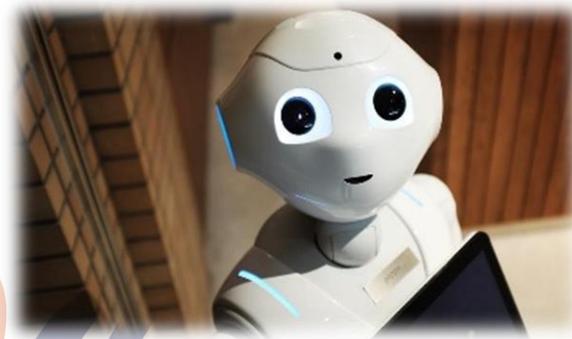
1. Government sets up multiple task forces for 6G development



- In a notification the department mandated immediate deliverables by March 31, 2022 that included mapping of 6G activities and capabilities worldwide, and a white paper on India's competencies, including research and pre-standardisation activities.
- The department has empowered the chairpersons of newly-created task forces to rope in global experts for mentorship whenever necessary.
- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) formed as many as six academia-driven task forces under the Technology Innovation Group (TIG) on sixth-generation or 6G technology, making industry representation only symbolic.
- In a notification dated December 30, the department mandated immediate deliverables by March 31, 2022 that included mapping of 6G activities and capabilities worldwide, and a white paper on India's competencies, including research and pre-standardisation activities.
- The new task groups are headed by Bhaskar Ramamurthy, director, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Chennai, Abhay Karandikar, director, IIT-Kanpur, Bharadwaj Amrutur, director, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore, Kiran Kumar Kuchi, director, IIT-Hyderabad on multi platform for next generation networks, spectrum policy, multi-disciplinary innovative solutions and devices respectively.

- Group for financing research and development is headed by Ashok Kumar Tiwari, Member (Technology), Digital Communications Commission (DCC), and a task force on international standards is headed by NG Subramaniam, chairman of the Telecommunications Standards Development Society India (TSDSI).

2. China launches 5-year plan to become a hub of world robotics innovation



- China has announced a five-year roadmap to achieve its goal of becoming a global robotics innovation hub by the year 2025.
- China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology revealed operating income from the country's robotics industry is expected to grow by around 20% per year between 2021 and 2025.
- From 2016 to 2020, the sector expanded with an average growth rate of 15%. Last year, operating income surpassed 100 billion yuan (\$15.69 billion) for the first time.
- To achieve its goal by 2025 of becoming a worldwide robotics innovation centre, China has proposed a strategy concentrating on improvements to essential components such as servo motors and control panels.
- As per the 2021 World Robot Report, South Korea, Singapore, and Japan were the top three most automated countries in Asia-Pacific.

3. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has set up the Energy Transition Advisory Committee (ETAC)



- The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has set up the Energy Transition Advisory Committee (ETAC) headed by the former petroleum secretary Tarun Kapoor, who resigned from the office, to draft the strategy. The Government of India has been planning to come up with an energy transition roadmap for the oil and gas sector to enhance India's efforts to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.
- The committee tasked to prepare a step-by-step plan for complete transitioning from fossil fuels to clean energy has been given 6 months (middle of 2022) time to prepare and submit the roadmap.

Members:

- i. The advisory committee will consist of Joint Secretary level officers from MoPNG and representatives of all public-sector oil and gas companies
- ii. The nominee from IOCL shall function as Member-Secretary of the Committee and secretarial assistance.
- iii. The Committee may co-opt experts in the areas of the energy transition as members or to provide assistance as invitees.

Functions of the Advisory Committee:

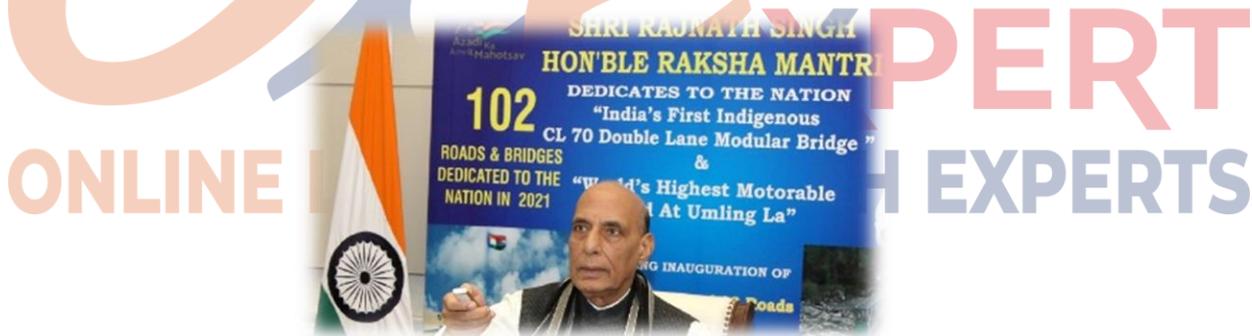
- i. The committee will work on the harmonised transition plans for the oil companies and will also prepare the transition away from fossil fuels in the Transport sector.

- ii. The committee will also focus on scaling up infrastructure for biofuels based on a sustainable biomass supply chain. This will play a major role in the transition away from fossil fuels in the Transport sector.
- iii. The focus area of the committee includes Green Hydrogen, which has been identified as the priority.
- iv. The committee will also focus on value chain development for green hydrogen infrastructure.

Additional info:

- i. The oil companies have been preparing their respective plans to increase their clean energy portfolio and set net-zero targets.
- ii. The committee will review and consider the existing initiatives while developing an action plan.

4. Defence Minister dedicates strategically important 24 bridges & three roads built by BRO



- In yet another shot in the arm to improve border road connectivity in India, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dedicated 24 bridges and three roads built by Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in four States and two Union Territories across the country through a virtual event from New Delhi.
- Of the 24 bridges, 9 bridges are in Jammu & Kashmir, 5 each in Ladakh & Himachal Pradesh, 3 in Uttarakhand and 1 each in Sikkim & Arunachal

Pradesh. Additionally, two roads were also inaugurated in Ladakh and one in West Bengal.

- It is noteworthy that, India's first indigenous Class 70 140-foot Double-Lane Modular Bridge, built at the height of 11,000 feet at Flag Hill Dokala, Sikkim was inaugurated.
- Besides, Chisumle-Demchok road at Umling La Pass at over 19,000 feet in Ladakh was also e-inaugurated by the Defence Minister, which also holds the Guinness World Record of world's highest motorable road.
- Notably, the projects e-inaugurated by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh have been completed on important road axis and laterals along the Northern and Eastern borders of the country.

5. PM Modi laid foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University at Meerut in UP



- Addressed the gathering after laying the foundation stone of Major Dhyan Chand Sports University in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh 2 January 2022.
- The youth should have faith in sports and should be encouraged to take up sports as a profession.
- According to the Prime Minister, schemes like "Target Olympics Podium" (TOPS) are providing all support to top sports persons to compete at the highest level.
- "Khelo India Abhiyan" is recognizing talent very early and all support is being given to groom them for international level.

- Mr. Modi remembered Major Dhyan Chand who was active in Meerut. He said, a few months back, the central government had named the country's biggest sports award after the sporting icon.
- Talking about the sporting culture of Meerut, Mr. Modi pointed out that the city exports sporting goods to more than 100 countries.
- Meerut is not only "vocal for local" but also turning "local into global".

6. "Skill hub initiative" launched in J&K



- The 'Skill Hub Initiative' programme was formally launched in Jammu and Kashmir under "the Samagra Shiksha project".
- Project Director-Samagra Shiksha, Deep Raj Kanethia said 40 schools have been identified and designated as 'skill hubs' in the Union Territory but initially the programme is being launched in nine government schools as a pilot project.
- The "Skill Hub Initiative" is part of "Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna" (PMKVY) 3.0 and was launched across the country on January 1. It will be executed through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
- The scheme, envisioned by the Union ministries of education, and skill development and entrepreneurship, aims to provide NSDC certified skill courses for out of school children and youth, and dropouts.
- It also aims at preparing them for placements as well as self-entrepreneurships. The scheme shall also be supported by the State Skill Development Missions.

- The nine schools selected under the pilot project would be imparting training in NSDC recognised courses and eventually the programme will be extended to cover other schools.
- The government schools that have been designated as 'skill hubs' are located in different districts including Reasi, Budgam, Anantnag, Poonch, Srinagar, Kishtwar, Pulwama, and Jammu, he said.
- Vocational trainers deployed in these schools with their efforts did extensive counselling of candidates before enrolment for certified courses.
- The training has been launched in all the schools simultaneously.

Capital: Srinagar (May–October) and Jammu (Nov-April)

Lieutenant Governor: Manoj Sinha

Districts: 20