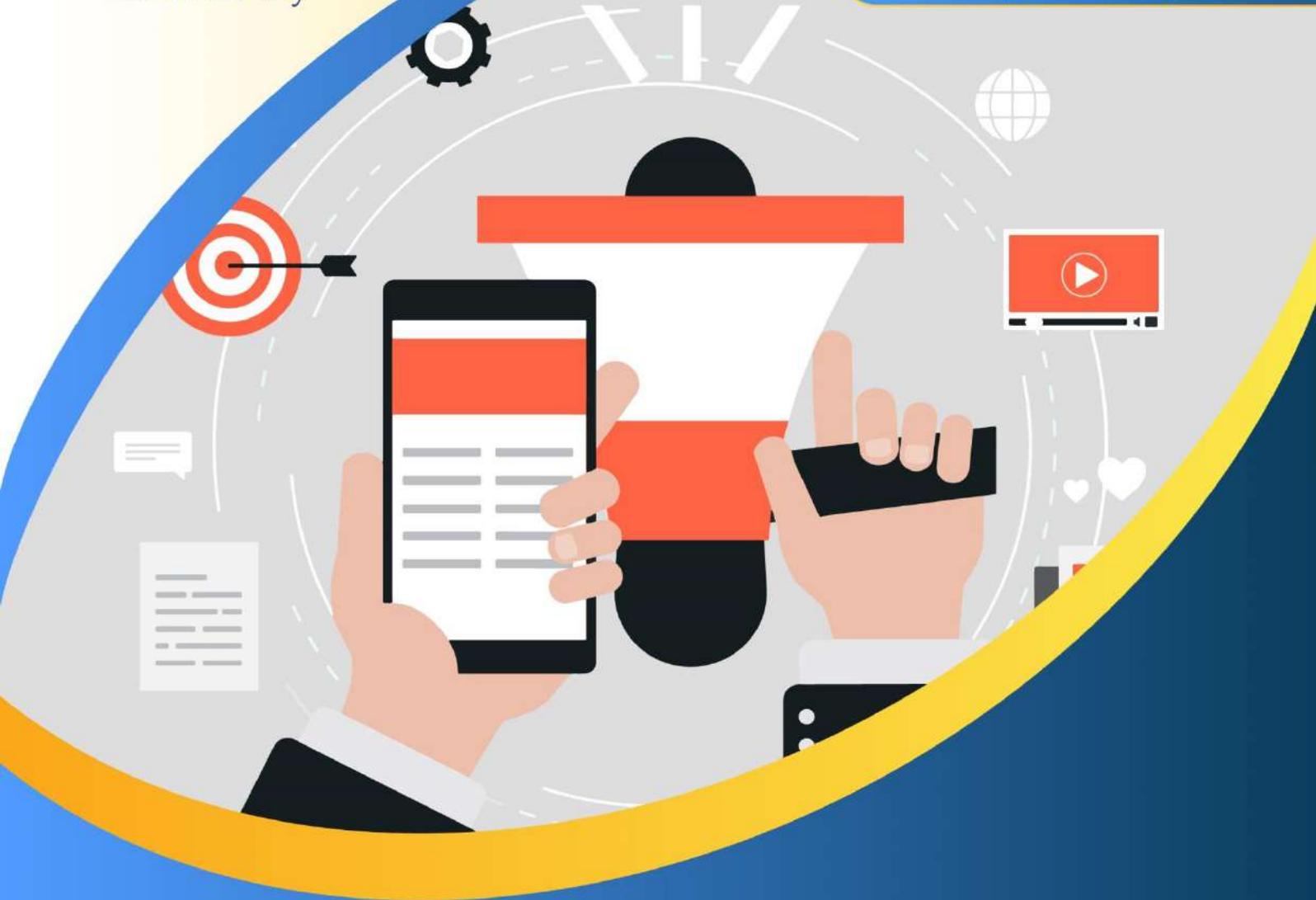


January to July 2021



# 2021 Current Affairs for Prelims 2021

## PEOPLE IN NEWS

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# PEOPLE IN NEWS

## 1. Rukmini Devi Arundale

**“I was very intuitive from an early age. I responded to people just as I responded to art – through an inner feeling which is difficult to explain. I just felt some things were right and some were not...”**

- Rukmini Devi was born on 29 February 1904 in Madurai of Tamilnadu.
- She was the first woman in Indian history to be nominated a member of the Rajya Sabha.
- The most important revivalist of Bharatanatyam from its original 'sadhir' style prevalent amongst the temple dancers, the Devadasis.
- She also worked for the re-establishment of traditional Indian arts and crafts.
- She was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1956 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship in 1967.
- In January 1936, she along with her husband established Kalakshetra, an academy of dance and music, built around the ancient Indian Gurukul system, at Adyar, at Chennai.
- Today the academy is a deemed university under the Kalakshetra Foundation.
- She also became very close to Annie Besant and helped her with her work.
- She went on to become the President of the Theosophical Society after Dr. Besant's passing.
- She gave her first performance at the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the Theosophical Society in 1935.
- Theosophists hailed her as the World Mother, to her family in Kalakshetra she is Athai (paternal aunt).
- Keenly interested in animal welfare, she as a member of the Rajya Sabha, was instrumental for the legislation for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and for later setting up of the Animal Welfare Board of India, under her chairmanship in 1962.

## 2. C V Raman

**“I would like to tell the young men and women before me not to lose hope and courage. Success can only come to you by courageous devotion to the task lying in front of you”.**

- C V Raman was born on 7 November 1888 in Tiruchirapalli in modern Tamil Nadu.
  - In 1902 aged just 13, he completed his graduation.
  - He passed out in 1904 with a Gold Medal in Physics.
  - He completed his post-graduation from the University of Madras in 1907 with distinction.
  - He joined the Indian Finance Department as Assistant Accountant General in Calcutta.
  - In 1917, he resigned from his government job and pursued his true calling when he was offered the Palit Chair of Physics at Calcutta University.
  - 'Raman Effect' - the discovery of the scattering of light was made on February 28, 1928.
  - This effect proved the quantum nature of light and **Raman Spectroscopy** was based on this phenomenon.
  - For this discovery, Raman was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1930.
  - He was the first Indian, Asian and non-white person to win a Nobel Prize for the sciences.
  - In 1933, he became the first Indian Director of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore.
  - In 1948, he founded the Raman Research Institute (RRI) in Bangalore for conducting experiments in Physics.
- Honours and awards-
- Fellow of the Royal Society – 1924
  - Knighthood – 1929

- Nobel Prize (Physics) – 1930
- Franklin Medal – 1941 (Franklin Institute, USA)
- Bharat Ratna – 1954
- Lenin Peace Prize – 1957

### 3. Sree Narayana Guru

**In news-** Recently Vice President made a virtual book launch of “Not Many, But One”, an English translation of poems of Sree Narayana Gurudev by Prof G.K. Sasidharan.

**About Sree Narayana Guru-**

- Narayana Guru (1856 – 1928) was a social reformer.
- He was born into an Ezhava family in an era when people from such communities, which were regarded as Avarna, faced much social injustice in the caste-ridden society of Kerala.
- He was a pioneer reformer who rejected the caste system and stressed the equality of man.
- He also gave the universal message, “One caste, one religion, one God.”
- Educated by his father and at a nearby school, Narayana or ‘Nanu’ as he was called was influenced by Vedanta.
- He also taught Sanskrit to students at a local school with close associate Chattampi Swami.
- Chattampi Swami introduced Guru to Thycattu Ayyaavu, a Hatha Yogi.
- He lived as a hermit in a forest at Maruthwamala for eight years.
- In 1888, he installed an idol of shiva at Aruvippuram in Kerala in his effort to show that the consecration of god’s image was not a monopoly of the brahmins. This is popularly known as Aruvippuram movement.
- In one temple he consecrated at Kalavancode, he kept mirrors instead of idols. This symbolised his message that the divine was within each individual.
- He also founded an Advaita Ashram in Kalady.
- He also lent his support to the Vaikom Satyagraha which was aimed at temple entry in Travancore for the lower castes. Mahatma Gandhi met Guru during this time.
- He contributed many important literary works, the most influential being Atmopadesa Satakam which he composed in 1897.
- In 1904, he chose Sivagiri in Varkala to pursue his spiritual deeds.
- He travelled all over Kerala and the Madras State visiting people and spreading his message of unity and ‘one God’.
- Dr Palpu, a devotee of Guru, established the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP Yogam) in 1903 to further Narayana Guru’s message.
- Sree Narayana Guru breathed his last on 20 September 1928.

### 4. Basavanna and His contributions

**In news-** In honor of Basavanna, the Karnataka government laid the foundation stone for the Anubhava Mantapa in Basavakalyan town in Bidar district.

**About Basavanna-**

- Basavanna was an Indian 12th-century statesman, philosopher, poet, Lingayat saint, born in Basavana Bagewadi, Karnataka and lived during the reign of the **Kalyani Chalukya/Kalachuri dynasty**.

- He had married Sharane Neelganaga, the daughter of his maternal uncle, and taken the position of an accountant in the palace of **King Bijjala**.
- He became the Finance Minister and then Prime Minister in the King's court.
- The **Basavaraj Devara Ragale by the Kannada poet Harihara** is the earliest available account on the life of the social reformer.
- A full account of Basava's life and ideas are narrated in a 13th-century sacred **Telugu text, the Basava Purana by Palkuriki Somanatha**.
- He spread social awareness through his poetry, popularly known as **Vachanaas**.
- He rejected gender or social discrimination, superstitions and rituals but **introduced Ishtalinga** with an image of the Shiva Linga, to every person regardless of his or her birth, to be a constant reminder of one's bhakti (devotion) to Shiva.
- He established the Anubhava Mantapa (the "hall of spiritual experience"), a place that Allamaprabhu and Akka Mahadevi became a part of.
- The new devotional movement named Veerashaiva movement or "ardent, heroic worshippers of Shiva " shared its roots in the ongoing Tamil Bhakti movement (Shaiva Nayanars traditions, 7th- 11th-century).
- However, Basava championed devotional worship that rejected temple worship and rituals led by Brahmins and replaced it with personalized direct worship of Shiva.

## 5. Saint Thiruvalluvar

**In news-** January 15th marked the birth anniversary of Saint Thiruvalluvar.

### A brief note on Saint Thiruvalluvar-

- He was revered as an ancient saint, poet, and a philosopher by Tamils, irrespective of their religion.
- Tamils are taught to learn his couplets word-for-word, and to follow his teachings in their day-to-day living.
- He is best known as the author of Tirukkural, a collection of couplets on ethics, political and economical matters, and love.
- The Shaivite Tamil Hindu text Tiruvalluva Malai contains the earliest known textual reference to the legend of Valluvar, but it remains undated
- In Thirukkural he mentioned that "Adversity is nothing sinful, but / laziness is a disgrace"; "Wine cheers only when it is quaffed, but love / intoxicates at mere sight."
- On caste system he stated that "One is not great because of one's birth in a noble family; one is not low because of one's low birth."
- Many communities worship Valluvar as the 64th Nayanmar of the Saivite tradition.
- It contains **1330 couplets**, which are divided into 133 sections of 10 couplets each.
- In the 700 couplets on porul (second section) (53% of the text), he mostly has discussed statecraft and warfare.
- In **Valluvar's theory of state**, he recommends that a well kept and well trained army (patai) led by an able commander and ready to go to war is necessary for a state.
- Valluvar presents his theory of state using **six elements**: army (patai), subjects (kuti), treasure (kul), ministers (amaiccu), allies (natpu), and forts (aran).

## 6. Sushruta and his contributions

**In news-** The Union Health Minister dedicated the newly constructed Burns and Plastic Surgery Block at the premier AIIMS, New Delhi to Sushruta, the Father of Plastic Surgery.

### About Sushruta(around 6th century BCE)-

- Sushruta was an Indian physician, who is regarded as the '**Father of Indian Medicine**' and '**Father of Plastic Surgery**.'
- The ancient surgeon **lived in the city of Kashi, now known as Varanasi** or Banaras in the northern part of India.
- For Sushruta, the concept of **shalya tantra (surgical science)** was all-encompassing.
- Examples of some of his **groundbreaking operations include rhinoplasty** (the repairing or remaking of a nose), **removal of a dead fetus**, and **lithotomy** (surgical incision into hollow organs such as the urinary bladder to remove stones, or calculi).
- He also developed many unique and practical techniques to **dissect the human body and study its structure**.
- **Sushruta Samhita** is considered the oldest text in the world on plastic surgery and is highly regarded as one of the **Great Trilogy of Ayurvedic Medicine** (the **other two** being the **Charaka Samhita**, which preceded it and the **Astanga Hridaya**, which followed it).
- It **dates back to the times before Christ** and is one of the earliest works in the field of medicine.
- This book documented more than 1,100 diseases, the use of hundreds of medicinal plants, and instructions for performing scores of surgical procedures - including three types of skin grafts and reconstruction of the nose.
- He gave an in-depth account of the treatment of 12 varieties of fracture and six types of dislocation.
- In the eighth century AD, Sushruta Samhita was translated into Arabic as 'Kitab Shah Shun al Hindi' and 'Kitab-I-Susurud.'
- The first European translation of Sushruta Samhita was published by Hessler in Latin and in German by Muller in the early 19th century.
- The complete English literature was done by Kaviraj Kunja Lal Bhishagratna in the three volumes in 1907 in Calcutta.

## 7. Biju Patnaik

**In news-** Recently, Indonesia named an embassy room in Biju Patnaik's honour and recognizes his role in Indonesia's freedom struggle in 1947.

### His role -

- Bijayananda Patnaik was an Indian politician, aviator and businessman.
- As a politician, he served twice as the Chief Minister of the State of Odisha.
- He **flew several missions in 1947 to transport Indonesian leaders** including President Sukarno, Vice-President Hatta and Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir out of Indonesia, at grave risk to himself.
- His missions involved flying in undetected to Yogyakarta where the "resistance" Republican leadership led by Sukarno was based when Dutch forces launched "**Operation Product**" on July 20, 1947 to capture the capital Jakarta.
- At Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's request, Patnaik, who had earlier served in the British Royal Air Force (RAF) and then joined the freedom movement, agreed to fly one of his Dakota planes into Indonesia, eluding Dutch air surveillance.

## 8. Muslim Uighurs

**In news:** China is facing mounting criticism from around the world over its treatment of the mostly Muslim Uighur population in the north-western region of Xinjiang.

### About Muslim Uighur-

- Uighur, Chinese (Pinyin) Weiwuer are **Turkic-speaking people of interior Asia**.
- There are about 12 million Uighurs, mostly Muslim, living in north-western China in the region of Xinjiang, officially known as the **Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR)**.
- The Uighurs speak their own language, similar to Turkish, and see themselves as culturally and ethnically close to Central Asian nations.
- In recent decades, there's been a mass migration of Han Chinese (China's ethnic majority) to Xinjiang, and the Uighurs feel their culture and livelihoods are under threat.
- A UN human rights committee in 2018 said it had credible reports the Chinese were holding up to a million people in "counter-extremism centres" in Xinjiang.

## 9. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

**In news:** Bangladesh is observing the 50th anniversary of the historic speech given by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Dhaka on 7th March 1971.

### About Sheikh Mujibur Rahman/Sheikh Mujib-

- **Sheikh Mujib** was a Bengali leader who became the first Prime Minister (1972–75) and later the President (1975) of Bangladesh.
- He is called the "Father of the Nation" in Bangladesh.
- He began his formal political career in 1949 as a **cofounder of the Awami League**.
- The Awami League advocated political autonomy for East Pakistan, the detached eastern part of Pakistan.
- He played an important role in the six-point movement and the Anti-Ayub movement.
- Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had delivered the historic speech at the then Race Course Maidan which is now known as **Suhrawardy Udyan**.
- He had declared before a huge crowd on that day that 'the struggle this time is for our freedom, the struggle this time is for our independence'.
- This was virtually a declaration of independence from Pakistan which had refused to acknowledge the victory of Awami League in the national elections held in late 1970.
- With Government of India support under then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi **a sovereign government at Dhaka was created in January 1971**.
- UNESCO recognised his speech as part of World Documentary Heritage in 2017.
- In 2020, UNESCO has decided to launch an international prize in the field of 'creative economy' in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- Starting November 2021, the dollar 50 thousand award will be given away once in two years for global economic initiatives of the youth
- UNESCO has declared 2021 as 'International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development'.

### Gandhi Peace Prize for 2019 and 2020

- The Ministry of Culture announced the Gandhi Peace prize for the year 2019 and 2020.
- **Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 has been conferred to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh** who was a champion of human rights and freedom and year 2020 marked his birth centenary.
- **Late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman**, in recognition of his vision to strengthen relations with India and his efforts to promote peace and non-violence in the Gulf region has been awarded **Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019**.
- **Gandhi Peace Prize** is an annual award instituted by the government of India since 1995, the **125th birth anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi**.

- It is given to individuals and institutions for their contributions towards social, economic and political transformation through non-violence and other Gandhian methods.
- The award is **open to all people regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.**
- An association, institution or **organization shall also be eligible for the award.**
- The award carries an amount of Rs 1 crore, a citation, plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.
- It is conferred by the **Ministry of Culture.**
- The **jury for this award is chaired by the Prime Minister of India** and it also comprises two ex-officio members, namely the Chief Justice of India and leader of the single largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha.
- Two eminent members are also part of the jury- Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and founder of Sulabh International Social Service Organisation.

## 10. Raj Kumar Shukla

**In news:** Department of Posts has issued a Commemorative Postage Stamp on Rajkumar Shukla.

### About Raj Kumar Shukla-

- He was born on 23rd August 1875 in Satwaria village of **Champan in Bihar.**
- During the 31st session of the Congress in Lucknow in 1916, **Shukla, a representative of farmers from Champan, met Gandhiji** and requested him to come and see for himself the **miseries of the indigo ryots** there.
- He rose to fame for his close association with Gandhiji during the Champan Satyagraha which was launched in **1917-18.**
- Its objective was to **create awakening among the peasants against the European planters.**
- It was during this agitation, that **first time Gandhi was called Babu (Father) by Sant raut and Mahatma (Great Soul).**

## 11. Dadasaheb Phalke award

**In news-** Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting announced the actor Shri Rajinikanth as the recipient of the **51st Dadasaheb Phalke Award** for 2019.

### About the Dadasaheb Phalke Award-

- To honour the Father of Indian Cinema, Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, the National Film Awards named the most prestigious and coveted award of Indian Cinema after him.
- He is the man who made the first Indian Feature film Raja Harishchandra in 1913.
- He then went on to make 95 films and 26 short films in a span of 19 years.
- The Award was introduced in 1969 by the government to recognise the contribution of film personalities towards the development of Indian Cinema.
- The first recipient of this award was Devika Rani.
- It is presented annually at the National film Awards Ceremony by the Directorate of Film Festivals.
- The award comprises a Swarna Kamal, a cash Prize of Rupees Ten Lakhs, certificate, silk scroll and a shawl.

Most recent recipients-

- Manoj Kumar(Hindi)-2015
- K. Vishwanath(Telugu)-2016

- Vinod Khanna(Hindi)-2017
- Amitabh Bachchan (Hindi)-2018

## 12. Fukuoka Grand Prize, 2021

**In news-** Noted journalist **P. Sainath** has been selected as one of the three recipients of the Fukuoka Prize for 2021.

### Key updates-

- He will receive the 'Grand Prize' of the Fukuoka Prize.
- The Secretariat of the Fukuoka Prize Committee noted his work for creating a new form of knowledge through his writings and commentaries on rural India and for "promoting civil cooperation".
- After establishing the People's Archive of Rural India in 2014 as a platform for digital journalism, Sainath has worked on ground-breaking projects of collecting information about the diverse cultures of rural societies.
- He was awarded the European Commission's Lorenzo Natali Prize for journalism in 1995 and the Amnesty International Global Human Rights Journalism Prize in 2000.
- He received the UN Food & Agriculture Organization's Boerma Prize in 2001 and the Ramon Magsaysay Award for outstanding contribution to Asian journalism in 2007.
- His major publications are 'Everybody loves a good drought', which is a collection of 85 articles published in The Times of India, under the series "The face of poor India".
- Besides the Grand Prize, the two more award categories are the 'Academic Prize' and the 'Prize for Arts and Culture' which went to Prof. Kishimoto Mio of Japan and filmmaker Prabda Yoon of Thailand respectively.

### About the award-

- The award was established by Japan's Fukuoka city and the Fukuoka City International Foundation.
- It is given annually to distinguished people to foster and increase awareness of Asian cultures, and to create a broad framework of exchange and mutual learning among the Asian people.
- It was first awarded in 1990.
- It is limited to East, South, and Southeast Asia.
- Eleven Indians have received the Fukuoka Prize so far including musician AR Rahman and historians Romila Thapar, Ramchandra Guha.
- There are three prize categories: Grand Prize, Academic Prize, and Arts and Culture Prize.

- Grand Prize- To be presented to an individual or an organization in either the field of academics or arts and culture. The prize is endowed with 5 million yen.
- Academic Prize- To be presented to one or two individuals or organizations that have made outstanding achievements in the field of Asian studies, such as social and human sciences. The prize is endowed with 3 million yen.
- Arts and Culture Prize- To be presented to one or two individuals or organizations who have made outstanding contributions in the diverse arts and culture of Asia like fine arts, literature, music, drama, dance, film, architecture, and so forth. The prize is endowed with 3 million yen.

## 13. Birth centenary of P.V. Narasimha Rao

**In news-** 100th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao was observed on 28th June 2021.

#### About P.V. Narasimha Rao (1921-2004)-

- Narasimha Rao was **born on June 28, 1921** in the village of Laknepally village of Narsampet mandal, in Warangal Rural district, now in Telangana.
- Rao was an active freedom fighter during the Indian Independence movement and joined full-time politics after independence as a member of the Indian National Congress.
- He served as an elected representative for Andhra Pradesh state assembly from 1957 to 1977.
- He became the **Chief minister of Andhra Pradesh in 1971** and implemented land reforms and land ceiling acts strictly
- He served as Foreign minister from 1980 to 1984 and then from 1988 to 1989.
- He served as the 9th Prime Minister of India from 1991 to 1996.
- Rao was the first leader outside the Nehru-Gandhi family to last a full-term as Prime Minister after being elected in 1991.
- He was the second holder of this office from a non-Hindi-speaking region and the first from South India.
- Rao's term also saw the **destruction of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya** in Uttar Pradesh when BJP's Kalyan Singh was Chief Minister.
- He died on December 23, 2004.

#### His contributions-

- He was personally **responsible for the dismantling of the Licence Raj**, when he headed the Ministry of Industries.
- He is often referred to as the "Father of Indian Economic Reforms".
- With Rao's mandate, Dr. Manmohan Singh launched **India's globalisation angle of the reforms that implemented the International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies** to rescue the almost bankrupt nation from economic collapse.
- His reign brought a paradigm shift from the industrialising, mixed economic model of Jawaharlal Nehru to a market driven one.
- Rao had launched what has come to be known as the country's **Look East policy** linking India to many East and Southeast Asian countries.
- He also established diplomatic relations with Israel.
- He played a major role in defeating the 1994 United Nations resolution against India.
- Under his leadership, the **ballistic missile technology programme was launched**, besides successfully testing the augmented satellite launch vehicle.

## 14. NATRAX- Longest high speed track of Asia

**In news-** The Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises inaugurated NATRAX- the High Speed Track (HST) in **Indore, Madhya Pradesh** which is the longest such track in Asia.

#### About NATRAX (National Automotive Test Tracks)-

- NATRAX, developed in an area of 1000 acres of land, is a one stop solution for all sorts of high speed performance tests for widest categories of vehicles from 2 wheelers to heavy tractor trailers.
- It is a 11.3 km High Speed Track (HST).
- HST is used for measuring the maximum speed capability of high-end cars like BMW, Mercedes, Audi, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Tesla and so forth which cannot be measured on any of the Indian test track.
- Vehicle can achieve a max speed of 375 Kmph on curves with steering control and it has less banking on ovals making it also one of the safest test tracks globally.

- The track benefits from the zero percent longitudinal slope that basically helps in improving the accuracy of the measurement of the performance of the vehicle.
- Foreign OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) will be looking at NATRAX HST for the development of prototype cars for Indian conditions .
- At present, foreign OEMs go to their respective high speed track abroad for high speed test requirements.
- The project NATRAX is being built under NATRiP (National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project) of the Heavy Industries Ministry.
- NATRAX happens to be one of the automotive testing and certification centres in the country.

#### **National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project (NATRiP)-**

- It is a **fully Government of India funded project** with a total project cost of Rs. 3727.30 crore.
- The project aims at creating core global competencies in the automotive sector in India by facilitating seamless integration of Indian Automotive industry with the world, through setting up state-of-the-art, four green field automotive testing, homologation and R&D infrastructure facilities.
- The four new centers that have been setup are:
  1. International Center For Automotive Technology (iCAT) at Manesar (Haryana) in northern India.
  2. Global Automotive Research Center (GARC) at Oragadam near Chennai (Tamil Nadu) in southern India.
  3. National Automotive Test Tracks (NATRAX) at Pithampur near Indore (Madhya Pradesh) in central India.
  4. National Institute Of Automotive Inspection, Maintenance & Training (NIAIMT) at Silchar (Assam) in northeast India.

## **15. World's first solo motorcycle expedition**

**In news-** The world's first solo motorcycle expedition undertaken by **Miss Kanchan Ugusandi** recently culminated in New Delhi.

#### **Key updates-**

- The expedition was flagged off by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh on June 11, 2021 from New Delhi.
- It covered 18 treacherous passes in Northern Himalayan ranges.
- The month-long expedition witnessed **many firsts by a solo woman rider**.
- Miss Ugusandi has become the first solo woman biker to scale the **world's highest motorable Umlingla Pass**, of Ladakh, at 19,300 feet made by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).
- She became the first woman to cover the 18 passes and also the first woman to traverse a distance of 3,187 kilometers from New Delhi-Manali-Leh -Umlingla-Delhi in one go.
- The solo motorcycle expedition also played a pivotal role in promoting road and COVID safety awareness in border areas.