

An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road that curves through a dense, lush green forest. Several cars are visible on the road, including a white car, a blue car, and a dark car. The road has white dashed lines for lane markings. The overall scene is vibrant and scenic.

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# DAILY NEWS DECODE

18.12.21

# THIRD INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA DIALOGUE

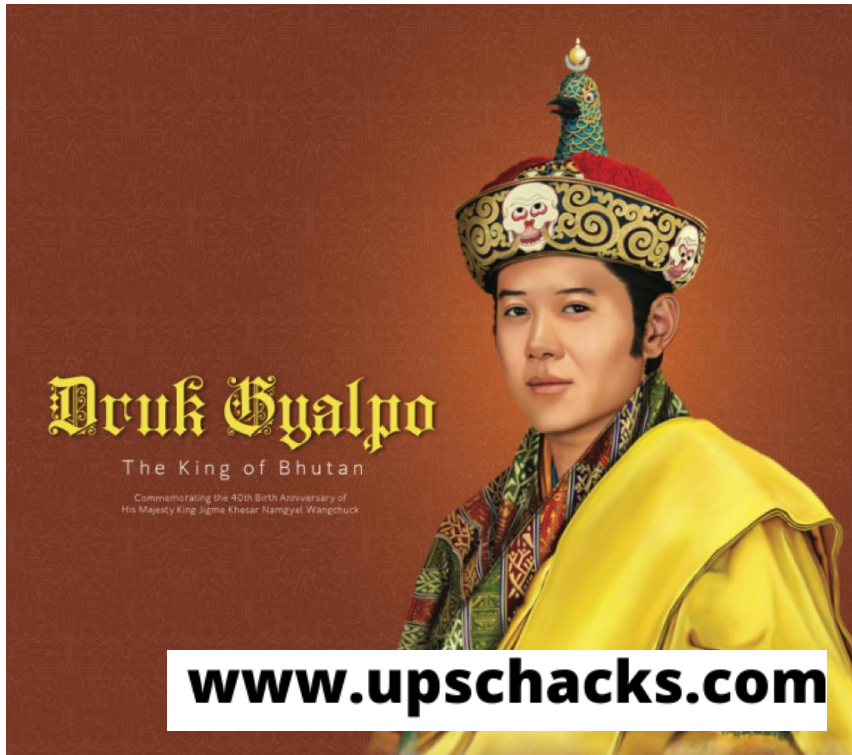


- The third India-Central Asia Dialogue will begin on Dec 18, 2021 in New Delhi. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will host the 3-day Dialogue.
- The Ministers are expected to discuss further strengthening of relations between India and Central Asian countries with particular focus on trade, connectivity and development cooperation.
- The second meeting was organised by India in October last year via video conferencing.
- There has been an ongoing engagement between India and the five Central Asian countries over the last few years. India considers Central Asia as part of its extended neighbourhood.

- **Dr Jaishankar visited Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan this year and he also met Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan in October this year.**

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# ORDER OF THE DRUK GYALPO



- The King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, conferred its highest civilian award, the Order of the Druk Gyalpo, on Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi on the occasion of the country's National Day.

- This would be the latest of awards to be conferred on Modi by other countries.
- Last year, he received the 'Legion of Merit by the US Government' award of the US Armed Forces that is given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.
- In 2019, Russia conferred its highest civilian honour 'Order of St. Andrew' award on Modi. In the same year, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) conferred him with its highest civilian honour—'Order of Zayed Award'.
- The Maldives gave him the 'Order of the Distinguished Rule of Nishan Izzuddin'the highest honour for foreign dignitaries—in 2019.

- **PM Modi also received 'King Hamad Order of the Renaissance', the top honour from Bahrain, in the same year.**
- **In 2018, the Prime Minister was conferred with the 'Grand Collar of the State of Palestine Award', Palestine's highest honour awarded to foreign dignitaries.**
- **He has also received the 'Order of Abdulaziz Al Saud', the highest honour of Saudi Arabia awarded to non-muslim dignitaries and Afghanistan's highest civilian honour 'State Order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan' in 2016.**

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# **RUSSIA DRAFTS PACT TO LIMIT NATO ROLE IN EX-SOVIET NATIONS**



- **Russia unveiled proposals to contain the U.S. and NATO in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, calling for urgent negotiations with Washington as it amasses forces near Ukraine.**
- **Russia released unfinished security documents — an unusual move in diplomacy — that call for U.S.-led NATO alliance not to bring in new members or establish bases in ex-Soviet countries.**
- **The West says Moscow has readied some 1,00,000 troops for an imminent attack on Ukraine, which has been battling a pro-Moscow insurgency in its east since 2014.**

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin denies planning an attack and blames NATO for the rise in tensions, demanding “legal guarantees” the alliance will not expand eastwards.**
- **The draft document addressed to NATO says its members should “commit themselves to refrain from further enlargement, including the accession of Ukraine as well as other states”.**
- **It also insists that alliance members not conduct military activity in Ukraine or other countries in Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia.**
- **Moscow and NATO, the document said, should limit the deployment of missiles, set up an emergency telephone hotline and also work to “prevent incidents” in the Baltics and the Black Sea.**

# TAMIL THAI VAAZHTHU

தமிழ்த்தாய் வாழ்த்து

நீராருங் கடலுடுத்த நிலமடந்தைக் கெழிவொழுகும்  
சீராரும் வதனமெனத் திகழ்பரதக் கண்டயிதில்  
தெக்கணமும் அதிர்சிறந்த திராவிடநல் திருநாடும்  
தக்கசிறு பிறைநுதலும் தரித்தநறுந் திலகமுமே!  
அத்திலக வாசனைபோல் அனைத்துலகும் இன்பமுற  
எத்திசையும் புகழ்மணக்க இருந்தபெருந் தமிழணங்கே!  
தமிழணங்கே!

உன் சீரிளமைத் திரும்வியந்து  
செயல்மறந்து வாழ்த்துதுமே!  
வாழ்த்துதுமே!  
வாழ்த்துதுமே!

"மனோன்மனியம்" பெ. சுந்தரம்பிள்ளை

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- The Tamil Nadu government has declared Tamil Thai Vaazhthu, a prayer song sung in praise of Mother Tamil, as the State Song.
- A Government Order (GO) had been issued directing that everyone who is present during the rendition of the song, barring differently abled persons, should remain standing.
- The 55-second song, which is familiar to almost everyone in Tamil Nadu, is sung, like the national anthem, at the beginning of functions in all educational institutions, government offices, public sector undertakings, and similar public events in the state.
- Government order has come less than two weeks after the Madurai Bench of Madras High Court said that "There is no statutory or executive order requiring the attendees to stand up when Tamil Thai Vaazhthu is sung."



# **BULLOCK CART RACES IN MAHARASHTRA**



- The Supreme Court allowed Maharashtra to hold bullock cart races in the state till the pendency of the matter before the constitutional Bench of the apex court.
- The races will be held in several parts of the state, especially Pune and the western Maharashtra region, where the 400-year-old tradition was prevalent.
- Bullock cart races were banned in Maharashtra after the Supreme Court declared that the race as violative of the provisions of the central act in 2014.
- After the Tamil Nadu government enacted a law to regulate jallikattu (taming of the bull), there was a demand to revive bullock races in Maharashtra.

- In April 2017, the Maharashtra assembly had passed a legislation for resumption of bullock cart races across the state.
- The Bill titled 'The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Maharashtra Amendment) Bill' was passed unanimously with the support of all parties.
- It was promulgated by the then President Pranab Mukherjee in July days before leaving office. The Bill regularised the bullock race.

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# JAYA JAITLEY COMMITTEE



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- The Union Cabinet's decision to raise the legal age of marriage for women in India is based on the recommendation of a panel led by Jaya Jaitly.
- In June 2020, the Ministry for Women and Child Development set up a task force to look into the correlation between the age of marriage with issues of women's nutrition, prevalence of anemia, IMR, MMR and other social indices.
- The committee, headed by former Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly, also had on board NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul and secretaries of several ministries.
- The committee has recommended the age of marriage be increased to 21 years.

- **The committee also asked the government to look into increasing access to schools and colleges for girls, including their transportation to these institutes from far-flung areas.**
- **Skill and business training has also been recommended, as has sex education in schools.**
- **The committee said these deliveries must come first, as, unless they are implemented and women are empowered, the law will not be as effective.**
- **The committee has further recommended that an awareness campaign be undertaken on a massive scale on the increase in age of marriage, and to encourage social acceptance of the new legislation, which they have said would be far more effective than coercive measures.**

# YouGov: PM Modi world's 8th most admired man in 2021



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has ranked 8th on the list of the world's top 20 most admired men, in a survey carried out by data analytics company YouGov. PM Modi is ahead of Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan and Virat Kohli. The list has been compiled taking feedback from 42,000 people in 38 countries.
- Apart from PM Modi, the other Indian men who, according to the survey, were the most admired in 2021 include Sachin Tendulkar, Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan and Virat Kohli. The list also includes the most admired Indian women of 2021 has Priyanka Chopra, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Sudha Murty.

## List of the world's 20 most admired women:

- 1. Michelle Obama
- 2 Angelina Jolie
- 3 Queen Elizabeth II
- 4 Oprah Winfrey
- 5 Scarlett Johansson
- 6 Emma Watson
- 7 Taylor Swift
- 8 Angela Merkel
- 9 Malala Yousafzai
- 10 Priyanka Chopra
- 11 Kamala Harris
- 12 Hillary Clinton
- 13 Aishwarya Rai Bachchan
- 14 Sudha Murty
- 15 Greta Thunberg
- 16 Melania Trump
- 17 Lisa
- 18 Liu Yifei
- 19 Yang Mi
- 20 Jacinda Ardern

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# Salar Masud-Raja Suhalddev battle



- He was known as Ghazi Mian and believed to have acquired popularity as a warrior in the 12th century.
- He was the nephew of the 11th century Turkik invader, Mahmud of Ghazni, whose invasion of India is known as the moment when Islam entered large parts of the subcontinent.
- His tomb at Bahraich in Uttar Pradesh stands as a place of pilgrimage (mainly during the Urs festival ) for a large number of Muslims as well as Hindus.
- The most comprehensive source of information about Ghazi Mian is the Mirat-e-Masaud (Mirror of Masaud), a 17th century Persian hagiography written by Abdur Rahman Chisti, a Sufi saint of the Chisti order.

- It was at Bahraich, where in the course of a battle in 1034 CE between Masud and a local king by the name Suheldev that the former was wounded by an arrow and succumbed.
- The 13th century Sufi poet and scholar Amir Khusrao is known to have mentioned him in his writings.
- The 14th century Moroccan traveller Ibn Batuta had supposedly visited his shrine at Bahraich along with Sultan Mohammad Bin Tughlaq.
- Mughal emperor Akbar is known to have made a land grant in 1571 CE for the sake of maintaining Ghazi Miyan's shrine.

#### **Salar Masud-Raja Suheldev battle-**

- There are different opinions among historians regarding this battle and it is a mix of history and myth.
- As per the Mirat-e-Masaud, Masud accompanied Mahmud Ghazni in all his campaigns, including the celebrated expedition to Somnath in Kathiawar.
- King Suheldev was deeply moved by the loot and destruction of the magnificent Somnath temple by invader Ghazni that he decided to give up the comfort of royal life as a prince.
- King Suheldev waged guerrilla warfare against Mahmud Ghazni's army.
- It is believed that in this battle, Suheldev's army completely destroyed Salar Masud's army.



# **Water-rich area 'as big as the Netherlands' found in Mars' canyon**



- A joint mission of the European Space Agency and the Russian Roscosmos agency has discovered a region inside Mars' canyon system that's packed with water.
- The Roscosmos ExoMars Trace Gas Orbiter had an instrument capable of detecting water that remained hidden before, researchers said. The water-rich area, said to be as big as the Netherlands, is inside the Valles Marineris.

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