

GENERAL AWARENESS

Bharat Ratna

Pranab Mukherjee, the ex president of India and one of the Congress tallest leaders for decades, has been awarded the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour.

The social activist and one of the BJP's senior-most leaders Nanaji Deshmukh and music maestro Bhupen Hazarika, also have been awarded Bharat Ratna posthumously.

Pranab Mukherjee also served as the Finance Minister, Defence Minister and also the Foreign Minister. He was President of India from 2012 and 2017.

Nanaji Deshmukh played a crucial role in the social restructuring programme in 500 villages in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

Referred as the "Bard of Brahmaputra", Bhupen Hazarika was a famous Indian playback singer, lyricist, musician, singer, poet and film-maker conferred with Bharat Ratna.

Republic Day

On 26th January 2019, 70th Republic Day celebrated. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa is the chief guest for the event. He was chosen for this occasion because India is celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi who had very close links with the people of South Africa.

This year, the overall theme for the Republic Day celebrations was the 150th birth anniversary of Mahathma Gandhi and tableaux of many states, themed on him.

Padma Awards

Padma Awards - one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

This year the President of India has approved conferment of 112 Padma Awards including one duo case (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one).

In this entire list of Awards, there are 4 Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan and 94 Padma Shri Awards.

21 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 11 persons from the category of Foreigners/ NRI/ PIO/ OCI, 3 posthumous awardees and 1 transgender person.

Padma Vibhushan conferred on Ms. Teejan Bai (Art-Vocals-Folk), Anilkumar Manibhai Naik (Trade-industry-Infrastructure), Balwant Moreswar Purandare (Art-Acting-Theatre) and Ismail Omar Guelleh (Public Affairs)

PSLV C44

On 25th January 2019, ISRO launched PSLV C44 from Sathish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. PSLV stands for Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle.

It carried Kalamsat V2 and Microsat R. Kalamsat is a communication satellite, the lightest ever satellite launched by India. Space Kidz India- a group of college students and the members of a Chennai based organization built Kalamsat. Imaging satellite Microsat R will be used for military purposes. It is a small Indian earth observation satellite.

National Voters Day

India celebrated its 9th National Voters Day (NVD) across the country on 25th January 2019 for enhanced participation of citizens in the electoral process by encouraging the newly eligible voters.

The theme of this year's NVD is 'No voter to be left behind'.

To mark the Foundation day of Election Commission of India, which was established on 25th January 1950, the National Voters Day is celebrated all over the country on January 25 every year since 2011. A quarterly magazine named 'My Vote Matters' was launched by Election commission of India on this occasion.

PBD convention

On 21st January 2019, the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention was commenced in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

PM Modi inaugurated the convention. Prime Minister of Mauritius, Mr. Pravind Jugnauth was the chief Guest of Convention. The theme of this year's Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas (PBD) convention was "Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India".

Himanshu Gulati who is a Member of Parliament of Norway was the Special Guest whereas Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi, Member of Parliament of New Zealand was the Guest of Honor in the 15th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. The PM of India and Mauritius discussed ways to expand further co-operation in areas of blue economy. The day commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9th January 1915.

MODEL QUESTIONS

1. Bhupen Hazarika belongs to which state?
1) Uttar Pradesh 2) Assam 3) Nagaland 4) Meghalaya
5) Jammu and Kashmir
2. Dholā-Sadiya Bridge, also referred to as the Bhupen Hazarika Setu is a beam bridge connecting the northeast states of Assam and?
1) Nagaland 2) Meghalaya 3) Manipur 4) Arunachal Pradesh
5) Tripura
3. First recipients of Bharat Ratna are C. Raja Gopalachari, Dr. C.V. Raman and?
1) Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan 2) M. Visvesvaraya
3) Jawahar Lal Nehru 4) Govind Ballabh Pant
5) Dhondo Keshav Karve
4. Highest civilian award of the nation, Bharat Ratna instituted in.....?
1) 1964 2) 1947 3) 1954 4) 1997
5) 1981
5. An all-woman contingent of the Assam Rifles led by whom in the 70th Republic Day parade, created history by walking down Rajpath for the first time?
1) Major Khushboo Kanwar 2) Major Bachendra Pal
3) Major Arunima Sinha 4) Major Mithali Raj
5) Major Smrithi Mandhani
6. SWAT women commandos, mobile hit teams, snipers are among the varied layers of security under which the national capital has been placed for the Republic Day. In this context, SWAT stands for.....?
1) Sword Weapons and Tactics 2) Special Ware and Tactics
3) Special Weapons and Totals 4) Special Weapons and Tactics
5) Standard Weapons and Tactics

ANSWERS: 1-2; 2-4; 3-1; 4-3; 5-1; 6-4.

Writer: Amara Veeraswamy