



# CURRENT AFFAIRS

≡ 17 JANUARY, 2022 ≡

## 1. THIRUVALLUVAR DAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 15 paid tributes to Thiruvalluvar on the occasion of Thiruvalluvar Day.

### About:

- Thiruvalluvar is regarded as a cultural icon. His most popular work is a collection of couplets on politics, ethics, economy, and love, called "Thirukkuaaa".
- To honour his contribution, Thiruvalluvar Day is observed either on January 15 or 16 as a part of the Pongal celebrations.

## 2. China's Artificial Moon

Chinese scientists have built an "artificial moon" research facility that will enable them to simulate low-gravity environments using magnetism.

### About:

- The artificial moon research

facility is scheduled for official launch in the year 2022.

- It will use powerful magnetic fields inside a vacuum chamber of 2-foot-diameter, for making gravity disappear.
- The research facility will be filled with rocks and dust to resemble it with the lunar surface.

## 3. Volcanic eruption in Tonga

An underwater volcano erupted in Tonga (a country in the Pacific Ocean) recently. It is called the "Hunga Tonga Hunga Haapai" volcano.

### About Hunga Tonga

It is a volcanic island. It is located in Tonga. Tonga is a Polynesian country. It is an archipelago. It consists of 169 islands. It is surrounded by New Caledonia and Vanuatu in the west, Fiji, Futuna and Wallis in the north west, Niue in the east and Kermadec (New

Zealand) in the south west.

#### 4. **WEF Davos Agenda**

On January 17, 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to deliver a special address at the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Davos Agenda.

Objective:- WEF virtual meeting will be aligned with the objective of “orienting global leaders on the imperatives of the year ahead”.

##### **Key Points :**

- WEF Davos Agenda event is being held in virtual mode, amid the covid-19 pandemic, from January 17 to 21.
- Event will be addressed by several heads of state, including Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, and EU Commission's chief Ursula von der Leyen.
- It will also be participated by top industry leaders, international organisations and civil society. They will deliberate on critical

challenges that the world is facing today and also discuss ways to address them.

**Venue of summit :-** The WEF has been holding its annual meeting “Davos Agenda Summit” in Swiss ski resort of Davos every year. However, it has been deferred this year, and will be held in virtual mode, amid covid-19 pandemic.

#### 5. **China's Record low Birth Rate**

As per official data, birth rate in China declined to a record low in 2021, as analysts are warning over faster-than-expected ageing in the country.

##### **Imp points :**

- According to analysts, faster-than-expected ageing would deepen economic growth concerns.
- China has already been grappling with a threatening demographic crisis with rapidly ageing workforce, weakest population growth in decades and slowing economy.

##### **Birth Rate in China**

The birth rate in China in 2021 declined to 7.52 births per 1,000 people. In 2020, it was 8.52. It

marks the lowest figure in China's annual Statistical Yearbook data since 1978. It is also the lowest data, since Communist China was founded in 1949.

## 6. Mandatory Airbags

Union government has started the process of making six airbags mandatory from October 1, 2022. Airbags will be made mandatory for all cars being sold in India.

### About :

Union government has started the process of making six airbags mandatory from October 1, 2022. Airbags will be made mandatory for all cars being sold in India.

### Key Points :

- Government issued a draft notification and asked for public comments and stakeholders' comments on the proposed rule.
- This notification is a follow-up to appeal made by Union transport minister Nitin Gadkari on August 3, 2021, to car manufacturers for providing 2 airbags across all variants of vehicles, one for the driver and other for co-passenger in front seat.

- Rule for airbags for driver's seat was made mandatory from July 1, 2019. Rule for one airbag for co-passenger came into effect from January 1, 2022.

## 7. CHINA-IRAN AGREEMENT

China would begin implementing a strategic agreement with Iran, strengthening economic and political cooperation between the two countries as Beijing blasted Washington's sanctions on Tehran.

### About :

- China and Iran signed the agreement last year after years of talks, with the wide-ranging partnership set to span areas including energy, security, infrastructure and communications.
- Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian announced the start of the partnership's implementation at a meeting in east China's Wuxi.
- Few details of the secretive deal have been published, but the New York Times reported in 2020 that it would secure a regular supply of oil for China.

- China is Iran's leading trade partner and was one of the biggest buyers of the country's oil before then-U.S. President Donald Trump reimposed sweeping unilateral sanctions in 2018.
- China has officially stopped importing oil from Iran, but analysts say Iranian crude is continuing to enter the country disguised as imports from other countries.
- Beijing has long sought to boost ties with Tehran, with Chinese president Xi Jinping describing Iran as “China's major partner in the Middle East” on a rare visit to the country in 2016.

