

Weekly Current Affairs 4th Week Of December Notes



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4th Week of December

1. Yogasana gets formal recognition as a competitive sport

- The **Sports Ministry** formally recognised **Yogasana** as a competitive sport, which will enable the ancient practice to avail government funding.
- Sports Minister **Kiren Rijiju** and Minister of AYUSH **Shripad Yesso Naik** formally promoted **Yogasana** as a competitive sport during an event here.
- The move was made to encourage yoga, spread awareness about its benefits and to help improve the physical and mental wellbeing of the people.

2. Raja Chari among 3 astronauts to fly in SpaceX Crew-3 mission.

- Indian-American US Air Force Colonel **Raja Chari** has been selected as the Commander of the **SpaceX Crew-3 mission** to the **International Space Station (ISS)** by **NASA** and the **European Space Agency**.
- The Indian-American will command the mission, while **Tom Marshburn** will serve as pilot and **Matthias Maurer** as a mission specialist.
- Earlier this year in January, **Chari** became one of the 11 astronauts to join **NASA's ranks**.

3. SAIL gets Golden Peacock Environment Management Award

- **Steel Authority of India Limited** has been awarded the prestigious **Golden Peacock Environment Management Award** for the year **2020** in the Steel Sector.
- The company has been the winner of this award for successive **2yrs**.
- This award is one of the most coveted awards in the category.
- Considering various environmental issues leading to global warming and climate change, this encourages corporates to enhance their environmental performance.
- SAIL Chairman: **Anil Kumar Chaudhary**

4. India ranks 111 in the Human Freedom Index 2020

- India ranked at 111th in the '**Human Freedom Index 2020: A Global Measurement of Personal, Civil, and Economic Freedom**'.
- It is the sixth **Annual Report** released by **Cato Institute of United States & Fraser Institute in Canada**.
- **New Zealand** topped the index followed by **Switzerland**.
- India was ranked **110th** in terms of personal freedom and 105 on economic freedom.
- The index put **China** at 129th, **Bangladesh** at 139th and **Pakistan** at 140th rank.

5. Ratan Tata won the 'Global Visionary of Sustainable Business & Peace Award

- The chairman emeritus of the Tata group **Ratan Tata** will be honoured with '**Global Visionary of Sustainable Business and Peace**'.
- He will be honoured by the Indo-Israel Chambers of Commerce for promoting innovation that supports sustainability and peace in the region, including with the Palestinians.



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- He will be awarded during the launch of the **Federation of Indo-Israel Chamber of Commerce's** international chapter in **Dubai**.

6. Rajnath Singh hands over DRDO systems to Armed Forces

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** handed over three systems indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation to chiefs of the three armed forces.
- The systems are **Indian Maritime Situational Awareness System (IMSAS)**, **ASTRA Mk-I Missile** and **Border Surveillance System (BOSS)**.
- All three systems--IMSAS, Astra Mk-1 and BOSS-- have been designed and developed DRDO only.
- **Astra Mk-1** is the first indigenously developed beyond visual range (BVR) missile.

7. India, Indonesia navies conducted 35th coordinated patrol

- The 35th edition of **India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT)** between the **Indian Navy** and the **Indonesian Navy** was conducted from 17-18 Dec.
- As part of Government of India's vision of SAGAR (**S**ecurity **A**nd **G**rowth for **A**ll in the **R**egion), the Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with countries in the Indian Ocean Region.
- The CORPAT being conducted since 2002 to ensure the safety and security of shipping and international trade in the region.

8. World Bank comes out with corrected Doing Business rankings

- The **World Bank** has come out with a corrected **Doing Business** ranking following review of data irregularities.
- The WB has lowers **China's** ranking by 7 notches.
- The WB also corrected the rankings of **Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates** and **Azerbaijan**.
- The ranking of Azerbaijan has been improved to 28 from 34.
- As per the '**Doing Business**' 2020 report, **India** had jumped 14 places to the **63rd position**.
- **WB President: David Malpass; Hqtr: Washington DC**

9. Singapore's foodie "hawker" culture given UNESCO recognition

- **Singapore's** tradition of communal dining at hawker centres has been recognised by **UNESCO** for its cultural significance.
- The **UN cultural agency** added the city-state's "hawker culture" to its **Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**.
- Singapore's hawker centres were set up to house former street vendors, or "**hawkers**" in an effort to clean up the island in the 1970s
- **UNESCO Hqtr: Paris, France**

10. Robert Lewandowski and Lucy Bronze win FIFA player of the year awards

- **Bayern Munich** striker **Robert Lewandowski** was named **FIFA men's player of the year 2020**
- The 32-year-old **Lewandowski**, the top scorer in Europe and winner of the Champions League with Bayern, came out ahead of the other two nominees, Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo
- England defender **Lucy Bronze** named as **FIFA Women's player of the year 2020**



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- It is the first occasion for both Lewandowski and Bronze to win the award, with the Pole only the second player after Luka Modric in 2018

11. Tata Group conferred with 'ASSOCHAM Enterprise of the Century Award'

- **Ratan Tata** on behalf of **TATA Group** has been conferred with '**ASSOCHAM Enterprise of the Century Award**' for his distinguished contributions to the country.
- Assocham as well as Tata group have been on the forefront in helping India's economy grow
- Award was conferred during the concluding session of '**ASSOCHAM Foundation Week 2020**' that was organized from **15-19 Dec 2020**
- Ratan Tata will also be honored with '**Global Visionary of Sustainable Business and Peace**' award.

12. Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad gets ISO certification from UK

- **Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad** has received **ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Standards Certificate** from **Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies (ASCB), UK**.
- With this, it has also become the 1st zoo in the country to get this certificate.
- Before getting certification, zoo assessment was conducted in a phased manner by **HYM International Certifications, ASCB**.
- It has been accorded as wildlife conservation hub, particularly endangered species of Deccan

13. ASSOCHAM Foundation Week 2020 concluded

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed concluding session of '**ASSOCHAM Foundation Week 2020**' virtually on 19th December 2020.
- **Associated Chambers of Commerce of India (ASSOCHAM) Foundation Week** was held from 15 to 19 December 2020.
- Theme 2020: '**India's resilience: Atmanirbhar roadmap towards \$5 trillion economy.**'
- ASSOCHAM was established in **1920** and presently has 400 Chambers and Trade Associations, and serving over 4.5 lakh members across India.

14. Odisha Govt launches Pareshram Portal for industrial development

- Odisha CM **Naveen Patnaik** has launched '**PAReSHRAM**' web portal along with **22 other online services of Labour and Employees' State Insurance (ESI) dept.**
- It will help in '**ease of doing business**' contributing significantly to industrial development of the State.
- **PAReSHRAM Portal**
 - Information regarding different labour laws for everyone
 - It will provide 52 types of services like application form for services
 - Entrepreneurs can get registration certificate, licence, etc.

15. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu gets six months extension as NHAI chairman

- Sukhbir Singh Sandhu's tenure as the Chairman of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has been extended for a period of six months by Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.
- He is a 1988-batch IAS officer of Uttarakhand cadre



- He was about to retire on January 21, 2021 and will now serve till July 21, 2021.
- NHA: Autonomous agency of Government, set up in 1988.
- NHA HQs: Delhi

16. ADB & India sign \$300 million loan to upgrade power distribution in UP

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has signed **\$300 million loan agreement** with **India** to upgrade rural power distribution networks in Uttar Pradesh, providing reliable electricity supply to consumers.
- It is the first tranche of the loan for **UP Power Distribution Network Rehabilitation Project**
- **Aim:** conversion of 65,000 km of rural low-voltage distribution lines from bare conductors to aerial bundle conductors (ABC) benefitting 70 million people in 46,000 villages.

17. RBI extends restrictions on PMC Bank for 3 months till 31 March 2020

- **RBI** has further extended the restrictions **Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank** by 3 months till 31 March, 2021.
- PMC Bank has also received **4 Expression of Interest (EoI)** for its revival.
- These proposals will be examined by the bank for their viability and feasibility taking into account the best interest of the depositors.
- PMC bank was placed under Directions by RBI with effect from the close of its business on September 23, 2019

18. Vidyut Mohan among UNEP's 'Young Champions of the Earth' for 2020

- **Vidyut Mohan (29 years)** has been recognized as one of the 7 winners of **'Young Champions of the Earth' 2020 award**
- The award is being conferred by **UN Environment Programme (UNEP)** annually
- Vidyut is the co-founder of **'Takachar'**, social enterprise that prevent open burning by farmers and convert farmers waste into value-added chemicals
- **Other Winners**
 - Nzambi Matee (Kenya)
 - Xiaoyuan Ren (China)
 - Lefteris Arapakis (Greece)
 - Niria Alicia Garcia
 - Max Hidalgo Quinto
 - Fatemah Alzelzela

19. International Human Solidarity Day: 20 December

- **International Human Solidarity Day** is being observed every year on **December 20** to celebrate the unity in diversity and raise awareness about the importance of solidarity.
- This day was proclaimed by **UN General Assembly** on **December 22, 2005**.
- According to **United Nations Millennium Declaration**, solidarity is among the fundamental values that are essential to international relations.
- **World Solidarity Fund** was set up in Feb 2003 as a trust fund of UN Development Programme

20. Veteran Journalist and first RSS ideologue MG Vaidya passes away



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- Senior Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) ideologue **MG Vaidya (97 years)** passed away after a brief illness.
- He was a veteran journalist, Sanskrit scholar and the **first official spokesperson of RSS** (RSS is the ideological mentor of Bharatiya Janata Party).
- He became a member of the RSS in 1943
- He was also a member of Maharashtra's Legislative Council as the Governor's nominee between 1978 and 1984.
- He was a prolific writer in Marathi and Hindi.

21. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Telecom Skill Excellence Awards presented

- Union Minister, **Ravi Shankar Prasad** along with **Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre** presented '**Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Telecom Skill Excellence Awards**' for the year 2018
- **Winners:**
 - First Prize: **Sreenivas Karanam** of Bangalore (Rs 50,000)
 - Second Prize: **Subrat Kar** of New Delhi (Rs 30,000)
- This Award scheme was launched in **2017** by DoT.
- **Purpose:** To reward the successful telecom skilled people for their special contributions in the areas of Telecom Skilling, Services, Manufacturing, etc.

22. Sports Ministry includes 4 indigenous games in Khelo India Youth Games 2021

- **Sports Ministry** has approved the **insertion of 4 Indigenous Games into Khelo India Youth Games 2021**, scheduled to take place in Haryana.
- **These 4 Games includes:**
 - **Kalaripayattu** has its origin from Kerala
 - **Mallakhamba:** Traditional sport of India that denotes a wrestler and khamba (pole)
 - **Gatka:** It originated in Punjab and this traditional fighting style of Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defense as well as a sport.
 - **Thang-Ta:** Manipur marital art

23. Skill India Establishes 1st Skill Development COE in Power Sector

- Minister of State for Skill Development, **Raj Kumar Singh** has inaugurated **1st Centre of Excellence (CoE) for 'skill development in the power sector'** in National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurugram.
- CoE has been set up by **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**, in collaboration with **Ministry of National Education and Youth, France** and **Schneider Electric**.
- It has high-end modern labs and will design and deliver Training in power and solar sector

24. UP launches 'Varasat' campaign to curb property & land-related disputes

- **Uttar Pradesh govt** has launched special campaign titled as '**Varasat**' (**natural succession**) to curb property & land-related disputes in rural areas.



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- This is a first of its kind campaign in UP which aims to end the land-related issues in the rural areas and eradicate the exploitation of the villagers over succession rights by land mafias, who generally target disputed properties.
- It is a **2-month-long special drive** and will continue till 15th February 2020.

25. Singapore's 'Hawker' Culture gets UNESCO recognition

- **Hawker Culture of street food in Singapore** has been inducted in UNESCO's '**Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**'.
- It is a popular Singaporean style of street dining and culinary practices in a multicultural urban environment that are naturally-ventilated premises with stalls selling food from various cultures
- **Hawkers of Singapore** are known to master a variety of cuisines which they serve at the '**community dining rooms**'.

26. Advance Hypersonic Wind Tunnel test facility inaugurated in Hyderabad

- Defence minister **Rajnath Singh** has inaugurated advanced **Hypersonic Wind Tunnel test facility in Hyderabad**.
- It is a **pressure vacuum driven** enclosed free jet facility with nozzle exit of one-meter diameter.
- This will simulate **Mach 5 to 12** (Mach represent the multiplication factor to the speed of sound), making India the 3rd country after the US and Russia to have such a facility.
- Two anti-drone technologies were also demonstrated by DRDO labs on the occasion.

27. World Bank approves projects to support development initiatives in India

- **World Bank** has approved projects for India, to support various development initiatives
- **Projects are**
 - **Chhattisgarh Inclusive Rural and Accelerated Agriculture Growth Project (CHIRAAAG):** To promote nutrition-supportive agriculture for tribal household
 - **Nagaland: Enhancing Classroom Teaching and Resources Project:** Professional development of teachers and education
 - **Second Dam Improvement and Rehabilitation Project (DRIP-2):** Improve safety and performance of existing dams

28. Mohammad Amir announces retirement from international cricket

- Pakistani fast bowler **Mohammad Amir (28 years)** has announced his retirement from international cricket.
- He had already announced retirement from Test cricket in 2019.
- He played **30 Tests, 61 ODIs, and 50 T20Is** in his international career, during which he took 119, 81, and 59 wickets in the three formats respectively.
- His last appearance for Pakistan was in the T20I series against England in August 2020

29. Mauritius badminton player Kate Foo Kune banned for 2 years in doping case

- Mauritian badminton player **Kate Jessica Foo Kune (27 years)** has been banned by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) for two years for an anti-doping violation.
- The ban period will apply from 15 December 2020.



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- She has been tested positive for a banned steroid during **2019 African Badminton World Championships** in Port Harcourt, Nigeria
- She was the **flag bearer for Mauritius at the opening ceremony for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics**.

30. Defence minister hands over 3 DRDO high-tech systems to armed forces

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** handed over **indigenously DRDO developed high technology systems** to chiefs of 3 armed forces
- **Three systems:**
 - **Border Surveillance System (BOSS):** All weather electronic system for army
 - **Indian Maritime Situational Awareness System (IMSAS):** Provides picture, marine planning tools and analytical capabilities for Indian Navy
 - **ASTRA Mk-I Missile:** Beyond visual range (BVR) missile that can be launched from Sukhoi-30, LAC, Mig-29 etc

31. S. Jaishankar addresses 5th Annual Global Technology Summit

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar addressed **5th edition of the annual Global Technology Summit (GTS)**
- GTS 2020 was organised virtually from December 14 to 18, 2020, by **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), India** in collaboration with **Carnegie India (CI)**.
- Theme of 2020 GTS: **The Geopolitics of Technology**
- **It had 5 sub-themes:**
 - Geopolitics of Technology
 - Data: Linking the World
 - Digital Payments
 - Digital Inclusion
 - Transforming Healthcare for Post-COVID World

32. PM Modi to inaugurate India International Science Festival 2020 today

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will deliver the inaugural address at the **India International Science Festival (IISF) 2020** today through video conferencing. Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan will also be present on the occasion.
- To promote scientific temper in society, **Ministries of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences in association with Vijnana Bharati conceptualized the IISF**. Launched in 2015, IISF is a celebration to promote science and technology.
- The **aim is to engage the public with science, celebrate the joy of science and show how Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics can provide solutions to improve lives**. The goal of the IISF 2020 is to help youth develop 21st century skills, with a focus on scientific knowledge, creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork. A long-term objective is to encourage students to study and work in scientific fields.

Source:- Newsonair



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33. COVAXIN clinical trials cross 13,000 subjects, half way mark and forges ahead, India's largest Phase III trials

- **Bharat Biotech has announced successful recruitment of 13,000 volunteers**, and continued progress towards achieving the goal of **26,000 participants for Phase-3 clinical trial of COVAXIN across multiple sites in India.**
- The Phase III human clinical trials of **COVAXIN™** began mid-November, targeted to be done in 26,000 volunteers across India, this is India's first and only Phase III efficacy study for a COVID-19 vaccine, and the largest phase III efficacy trial ever conducted for any vaccine in India. **COVAXIN™** has been evaluated in approximately 1000 subjects in Phase I and Phase II clinical trials, with promising safety and immunogenicity results, with acceptance in international peer reviewed scientific journals.
- **COVAXIN™**, India's indigenous COVID-19 vaccine by Bharat Biotech is developed in collaboration with the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) - National Institute of Virology (NIV)**. This indigenous, inactivated vaccine is developed and manufactured in Bharat Biotech's BSL-3 (Bio-Safety Level 3) bio-containment facility, one of its kind in the world.
- **COVAXIN™** is a highly purified and inactivated 2 dose SARS-CoV2 vaccine, manufactured in a Vero cell manufacturing platform with an excellent safety track record of more than 300 million doses.

Source:- DDNEWS

34. New electricity rules give consumers across India the right to 24x7 supply

- Consumers across the country will now have the right to a minimum standard of service for supply of electricity. This will also include the right to round-the-clock electricity supplies, unless stated otherwise for a specific category, such as an agricultural connection.
- Announcing the notification of the Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and New and Renewable Energy R K Singh said, "Power distribution companies (discoms) across the country are monopolies — whether government or private — and the consumer has no alternative. Therefore, it was necessary that consumer rights be laid down in rules and a system for enforcement of these rights be put in place."
- These rules provide for rights of consumers and obligations of distribution licensees, release of new connection and modification in existing connection, metering arrangement, billing and payment, among others.

Source:- [BS: Read in Detail](#)

35. Lewis Hamilton wins BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2020 award

- Formula 1 world champion **Lewis Hamilton** has been conferred with **BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2020.**
- He won this award for the first time in 2014.
- **Other winners**
 - Helen Rollason Award: **Captain Sir Tom Moore**
 - Expert Special Panel Award: **Marcus Rashford**
 - Coach of the Year: **Jurgen Klopp**



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- Team of the Year: **Liverpool FC**
- Unsung Hero: **Matt Ratana**
- Captain Tom Young Unsung Hero: **Tobias Weller**
- Young Sports Personality of the Year: **Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix**.

36. Union Minister releases 'Status of Leopards in India 2018' report

- Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has released '**Status of Leopards in India 2018' report**.
- The report shows an **increase of 60% leopards in 4 years** using camera trapping method.
- Leopards population increased from **7910 in 2014 to 12,852 leopards in 2018**
- Highest concentration of leopard in India: **Madhya Pradesh (3,421)** followed by **Karnataka (1,783)** and **Maharashtra (1,690)**.
- Report shows 48–67% leopard range loss for African species and 83–87% in Asia.

37. India-Vietnam Leaders' Virtual Summit held

- India's PM Narendra Modi held **Virtual Summit** with PM of Vietnam, **H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc**.
- **Key highlights:**
 - 'Joint Vision for Peace, Prosperity and People' document was adopted.
 - Implementation of High Speed Guard Boat (HSGB) Manufacturing Project
 - Completion and handing over of seven Development Projects with Indian 'Grant-in-Aid' Assistance of US\$ 1.5 million
 - Heritage conservation project in Vietnam
 - India-Vietnam Civilizational Relations Encyclopedia.

38. Govt notifies new 'Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020'

- Union Power Ministry has framed new **Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020** to empower consumers with **right to get reliable services and 24×7 power quality electricity**.
- This will provide for Rights of consumers and Obligations of Distribution licensees.
- **Key areas of the rule:** Release of new connection, modification in existing connection, metering arrangement, Billing and Payment, etc.
- Commission may specify lower hours of supply to specified consumers.

39. IMD releases 'End of the Season-Southwest Monsoon 2020' report

- **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** released '**End of the Season-Southwest Monsoon 2020' report**.
- **Features of report:**
 - **Seasonal rainfall:** 109% of its Long Period Average (LPA). It was the 3rd highest after 1994 and 2019.
 - **Southwest monsoon current:** Reached south A&N Islands on 17th May 2020 (5 days ahead), but hits Kerala on 1st June and entire country on 26th June, 12 days before its normal date
 - Severe Cyclonic Storm '**NISARGA**' was also formed during 1st to 4th June.



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40. US President presents 'Legion of Merit' award to PM Modi

- US President **Donald Trump** has presented prestigious '**Legion of Merit**' award to Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** for his leadership in elevating strategic partnership of US-India and emergence of India as a global power.
- Modi was presented with highest degree Chief Commander of the Legion of Merit which is given only to the Head of State or Government.
- Legion of Merit award was also presented to **Australian PM Scott Morrison** and former **Japanese PM Shinzo Abe**.

41. Central Bank of India to launch 'RuPay Select' Contactless Debit Card

- **Central Bank of India** in collaboration with **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has launched contactless debit card titled '**RuPay Select**'
- **Features of RuPay Select:**
 - Complimentary membership and concessional access to golf courses, gyms, spas.
 - Airport lounge access to over 20 domestic and more than 500 international lounges
 - Offline transactions in both transits as well as retail purchases.
 - Discounted health check-ups
 - Accidental, permanent disability insurance

42. National Mathematics Day: December 22

- **National Mathematics Day** is observed every year on **22 December** to commemorate birth anniversary of Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan
- It was first introduced in **2012** on the occasion of 125th birth anniversary of Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan and 2012 was also observed as National Mathematics Year.
- **2020 marks 133rd birth anniversary of Ramanujan.**
- **Ramanujan:** He was a self-taught genius mathematician who compiled over 3900 mathematical results and equations

43. PM Narendra Modi addresses 6th Indo-Japan SAMVAD Conference

- PM Narendra Modi has addressed **6th edition of India-Japan SAMVAD conference** via virtual conferencing.
- During this, PM proposed to create a library of traditional Buddhist literature and scriptures in India.
- The library will collect digital copies of Buddhist literature from across the world and will then translate these works.
- **First India-Japan conference, Samvad-I in 2015 at Bodh Gaya.**
- **Aim:** To encourage dialogue and debate on the need to build the future of Asia

44. UAE hosted 20th IORA Council of Ministers Meeting

- **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** virtually hosted **20th IORA Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting**



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- Theme: **Promoting a Shared Destiny and Path to Prosperity in the Indian Ocean**
- UAE assumed the position of IORA Chair in November 2019 during 19th COM, for the period 2019-2021.
- Indian delegation was led by **V. Muraleedharan**, Ministry of External Affairs
- 22 Member States, 10 Dialogue Partners participated
- **Sri Lanka** has assumed the charge of **Vice Chair of IORA for the period 2021-23**

45. Indian Boxers bags 3 Gold at Cologne Boxing World Cup Championship

- Indian pugilists have bagged **9 medals including 3 gold, 2 silver and 4 bronze at the Cologne Boxing World Cup 2020**, held in Germany.
- List of Medal Winners
 - **Gold:** Amit Panghal (52kg), Manisha Moun (57kg) and Simranjit Kaur (60kg)
 - **Silver:** Sakshi Choudhary (57kg) and Satish Kumar (91kg).
 - **Bronze:** Sonia Lather (57kg), Pooja Rani (75kg) Gaurav Solanki (57kg) and Mohamed Hussamudin (57kg)
 - 5 women and 8 men boxers were registered for the Cologne Boxing World Cup 2020.

46. Senior-most Congress veteran Motilal Vora passes away

- Veteran Congress leader **Motilal Vora (93 years)** passed away in Delhi following post-COVID-19 complications.
- He began his career as a journalist
- He was among the senior-most Congress leaders and served as the chief minister of Madhya Pradesh twice, once from 1985 to 1988 and then again in 1989 for 11 months.
- He also held the office of **Governor of UP between 1993 and 1996**.
- He served as a Rajya Sabha member four times and as a Lok Sabha member once from Chhattisgarh.

47. CBI court sentences both the accused in the Abhaya murder case to life imprisonment

- **CBI court in Thiruvananthapuram** has sentenced **Father Thomas Kottur and Sister Sephy** in connection with the murder of **Sister Abhaya, an inmate of the Kottayam Pius Tenth Convent**.
- Judge K Sanalkumar delivered the sentence in the case where **charges against the accused include murder and destruction of evidence**.
- Yesterday, the court had convicted them for the crime which happened **28 years back**.
- The case which didn't have any eye witnesses **relied completely on scientific and circumstantial evidences**. In the long pending trial, the case had seen many witnesses turning hostile.
- **Parents of Sister Abhaya who had been fighting for justice are no longer alive to see the verdict today**.
- Sister Abhaya, a member of the convent and a student in the adjoining college was found dead in the well inside the convent compound. After local police and Crime Branch termed the incident suicide, public uproar had caused the case to be taken over by CBI in 1993. One of the accused was a teaching faculty in the same college. The case had undergone quite much twists attracting public attention, prolonging for 28 years without any logical conclusion.



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48. Cabinet approves merger of Films Division, Directorate of Film Festivals, NFAI, and Children's Film Society with NFDC

- The Cabinet today approved merger of **Films Division, Directorate of Film Festivals, National Film Archives of India, and Children's Film Society, India with National Film Development Corporation**. Briefing media in New Delhi after the Cabinet Meeting, **Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar** informed about it.
- Mr Javadekar said, Cabinet has **approved revision in guidelines for providing DTH services in India**. He said, **DTH license will be issued for 20 years**, license fee will be collected quarterly and there will be sharing of Infrastructure between DTH operators. The Minister said, guidelines have been amended to allow 100 per cent FDI in DTH services.
- **Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawarchand Gehlot** said, Cabinet has approved **Rs 59 thousand Crore post matric scholarship scheme for more than 4 Crore Scheduled Castes students in 5 years**. He said, **Central Government will spend Rs 35,534 Crore for it which is 60 per cent and the balance 40 per cent will be spent by the State Governments**.
- It is estimated that **1.36 Crore such poorest students, who are currently not continuing their education beyond 10th standards would be brought into the higher education system in the next 5 years**. Central share in the scheme would be released in DBT mode into the bank accounts of the students. Central Assistance of Rs 1100 crore annually during 2017-18 to 2019-20 would be increased more than 5 times to be around Rs 6000 crore annually during 2020-21 to 2025-26.

Source:- Newsonair

49. National Farmer's Day: December 23

- **National Farmer's Day (Kisan Diwas)** in India is observed every year on **December 23** to remember the role of Indian farmers in boosting the economy.
- The day also marked the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh, who served as PM from 28 July 1979 to 14 January 1980.
- Chaudhary Charan Singh brought several farmer-friendly policies and worked towards the welfare of the farmers
- The day was first celebrated in **2001**.

50. India's first indigenous digital asset management platform launched

- NITI Aayog's CEO **Amitabh Kant** has virtually launched India's first digital asset management platform titled as **'DigiBoxx'**.
- Amitabh Kant also signed up for an account, becoming the first user of an Indian digital file storage, sharing and management SaaS product that provides storage options for business as well as individual users.
- It provides an easy and secure way to store all the files in one centralised location.

51. ICICI Bank launches 'Infinite India' portal for foreign firms expanding



- **ICICI Bank** has rolled out an online platform titled as '**Infinite India**' supporting foreign companies to establish or expand business in India.
- It is a one-stop portal that will offer **banking solutions** as well as **value-added services** like incorporation of business entity, corporate filings, licences and registrations, HR services, compliances and taxation among others.
- The move will strengthen ICICI's position in the multinational corporations (MNC) segment.

52. Dharmendra Pradhan dedicates West Bengal's first oil and gas reserve

- Union Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister, **Dharmendra Pradhan** has dedicated West Bengal's first oil and gas reserve, titled as '**Bengal Basin**' to the nation.
- Bengal Basin is explored and owned by **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)**.
- It is the eight-producing basin of India by ONGC.
- Other basins: Krishna-Godavari (KG), Mumbai Offshore, Assam Shelf, Rajasthan, Cauvery, Assam-Arakan Fold Belt and Cambay.
- ONGC Chairman: **Shashi Shanker**

53. Kerala and UN Women ties-up to establish India's first Gender Data Hub

- **UN Women** has signed MoU with **Kerala Govt** to establish **India's first Gender Data Hub** at the Gender Park at Kozhikode campus, where International Institute for Gender and Development is also present.
- **Gender Hub** is based on the goals established through **International Conference on Gender Equality** held in November 2015
- It will collect, analyse and use more nuanced data and inform policy formulation in a manner that centre-stages women's rights.

54. 6th edition of India International Science Festival (IISF) begins

- The **6th edition of India International Science Festival (IISF)** has been inaugurated on the virtual platform marking the birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan
- It is a **4-day program** that will be held from 22 to 25 December
- It is jointly organised by **CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources, Ministry of Earth Sciences** and **Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA)**
- Theme 2020: **Science for Self-Reliant India and Global Welfare**
- It was 1st organised in 2015

55. Govt to constitutes High Level Committee for Netaji's Birth Anniversary

- **Union Govt** has decided to constitute **High-Level Committee (HLC)** to commemorate **125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** on 23rd December 2020.
- The Committee will be headed by **Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah**.
- It will decide on the activities that has to be performed for 1 year long commemoration beginning 23 January, 2021, as a tribute and mark of gratitude to Netaji's contribution in India's freedom struggle.



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56. Indian Army and Bank of Baroda signs MoU for Baroda Military Salary Package

- **Indian Army** have entered into an MoU with **Bank of Baroda** for **Baroda Military Salary Package**.
- **Features:**
 - Free Personal Accidental Insurance cover
 - Permanent Total Disability cover
 - Higher Education Cover and Girl Child Marriage Cover on death in case of serving personnel.
 - Unlimited free ATM transactions at all bank ATMs
 - Waivers or concessions on various service charges in retail loans, free remittance facility through RTGS or NEFT, free Demand Draft or Banker's Cheque

57. Environment minister rolls out 'Firefly bird diverter' initiative

- **Ministry of Environment** along with **Wildlife Conservation Society, India**, has launched a unique initiative '**firefly bird diverter**' for overhead power lines in areas where **Great Indian Bustard (GIB)** populations are found in the wild.
- **GIB:** It is listed as **Critically Endangered in IUCN Red List** with less than 150 birds left in the wild.
- Firefly bird diverters are flaps installed on power lines that can be spotted by birds from a distance of about 50 metres.

58. ADB announces Rs 2100 crore loan to Tripura for urban & tourism development

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has announced to provide **Rs 2,100 crore loan to Tripura govt** for the development of urban areas and tourism in the northeastern state.
- Out of the total fund, Rs 1600 crore will be for urban development and Rs 500 crore will be for the tourism sector.
- Under this, all 20 urban local bodies, tourism destinations, roads leading to them and tourist facilities in Tripura would be covered
- Tripura's Capital: **Agartala**
- CM: **Biplab Kumar Deb**

59. HelpAge India awarded UN Population Award for 2020

- **HelpAge India** has been awarded with **UN Population Award for 2020 (institutional category)**, according to a release issued by UNFPA
- It is the first institution to be awarded with UN Population Award
- **HelpAge India:** works for 'the cause and care of disadvantaged older persons to improve their quality of life' for over four decades.
- The award was established by **UN General Assembly in 1981** to recognise contributions in the fields of population and reproductive health.

60. Good Governance Day: 25 December



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- **Good Governance Day (Sushasan Divas)** in India is observed every year on **December 25** to commemorate the **birth anniversary of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee**.
- Good Governance Day was introduced in 2014 by the newly elected administration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to foster awareness among the Indian people of accountability in government.
- **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**: He served 3 terms as the Prime Minister of India in 1996 (13 days), 1998 to 1999, from 1999 to 2004.

61. Union Minister launches Swachhata Abhiyan mobile app

- Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment **Thaawar Chand Gehlot** has rolled out mobile app '**Swachhata Abhiyan**' to identify and geotag insanitary latrines and manual scavengers
- The app will provide the authorities with insanitary latrine or manual scavenger
- This will help in rehabilitating all manual scavengers and replace insanitary latrines with sanitary ones.
- As per the 2011 census, **insanitary latrines is the main reason for manual scavenging**.

62. HDFC Bank bags top rank among 100 BFSI Firms in India

- HDFC Bank bags top rank among **100 Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI)** companies in the country for its customer service, monetary management, and innovative offerings
- The ranking has been released by **Wizikey's BFSI Movers and Shakers 2020 report**
- It is followed by **ICICI Bank, SBI, Yes Bank, PNB, HSBC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, and BoB**
- Other rankers:
 - Wallet and UPI segment: **Google Pay**
 - Neo Banks segment: **YONO**
 - Payments bank category: **Airtel Payments Bank**

63. Vice President Venkaiah Naidu inaugurates book titled 'Oh Mizoram'

- Vice-President of India, **M. Venkaiah Naidu** has released a book titled '**Oh Mizoram**' through video conferencing during an event organised at India International Centre, New Delhi.
- '**Oh Mizoram**' book has been written by the Governor of Mizoram, **P S Sreedharan Pillai**.
- It is a collection of several English poems and has been published by the Indus Scrolls Press, Hyderabad.
- It is the 125th book written by Governor Pillai.

64. RBI cancels the Licence of Subhadra Local Area Bank, Maharashtra

- **RBI** has cancelled banking license of **Subhadra Local Area Bank**, Kolhapur, Maharashtra with effect from December 24, 2020.
- Subhadra Local Area Bank's license has been cancelled as it had breached the minimum net worth requirement for 2 quarters in 2019-20
- Bank affairs were conducted in a manner detrimental to its present and future depositors interest



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- After this, there are only 2 Local Area Banks operational in India: **Coastal Local Area Bank and Krishna Bhima Samruddhi**

65. India's largest hockey stadium to be set up at Rourkela in Odisha

- Odisha Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** has announced the establishment of **India's largest hockey stadium in Rourkela, Odisha**
- It will be constructed in **Biju Patnaik University of Technology campus, Rourkela.**
- It will have sitting capacity of around 20,000 people and will spread over 15 acres of land.
- This stadium will be developed as a benchmark for other hockey stadiums around the world.
- Odisha will be hosting **FIH Men's Hockey World Cup in 2023.**

66. FASTag to be mandatory for all vehicles in country from new year

- Road Transport & Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari has made announcement for all vehicles to have mandatory FASTag from new year.
- FASTag will be enforced from 1st of January, 2021 and it will be useful for the commuters as they will not need to stop at toll plazas for cash payments.
- It will also save time and fuel.
- FASTag was launched for the first time issued in 2016.

67. DGT inks pact with MICROSOFT and NASSCOM for digital skilling

- **Directorate General of Training (DGT)** under Skill Development Ministry has partnered with **Microsoft** and **NASSCOM Foundation** to provide a digital content for ITI students.
- This will benefit **1,20,000 students** in around 3000 ITIs across India via Bharatskills portal
- **Bharatskills portal:** Central Repository for skills providing easy access for trainees and trainers of the ITI ecosystem
- It also presents unique access to centralized, scalable and thriving support ecosystem

68. Malayalam poet Sugathakumari passes away

- Eminent Malayalam poet, conservationist and women's activist, **Sugathakumari (86 years)** passed away
- She began her literary life in 1957 with '**Sreekumar**' poem.
- She led successful nationwide movement, known as Save Silent Valley in 1970s and her poem 'Marathinu Stuthi' (Ode to a Tree) became a symbol for the protest
- She was the founder secretary of **Prakrithi Samrakshana Samithi** and **Abhaya**
- **Awards: Padma Shree (2006)**, Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award, and Vayalar Award

69. India adds Tso Kar Wetland Complex in Ladakh as its 42nd Ramsar site

- India has added **Tso Kar Wetland Complex** situated in the Changthang region of Ladakh as 42nd Ramsar site of the country
- **Tso Kar Basin:** High-altitude wetland complex, consisting of Startsapuk Tso (freshwater lake of about 438 hectares) and Tso Kar (hypersaline lake of 1800 hectares)
- **Tso Kar** means **white lake** as white salt efflorescence is found on its margins due to the evaporation of highly saline water.



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- Tso Moriri or Lake Moriri or 'Mountain Lake' is another Ramsar site.

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