

# Monthly Current Affairs December 2022 English



## India reports its first case of XBB.1.5 Covid variant: Report

**Why in news:** The new variant is more immune evasive and better at infecting than BQ and XBB.



1. India has reported its first case of Omicron variant 'XBB.1.5' which is responsible for the surge in coronavirus cases in New York. The first case of XBB.1.5 has been confirmed in Gujarat.
2. More than 40% of Covid-19 cases in the United States are now caused by Omicron XBB.1.5.
3. XBB.1.5 is a sub-variant that international scientists have flagged for being responsible for a surge in Covid cases and hospitalisations in New York. XBB itself is a recombinant of two different BA.2 sub-variants of Omicron. But its descendant, XBB.1.5, is believed to have a tighter bind to the ACE2 receptor, which would explain its higher level of transmissibility.
4. XBB.1.5 variant is much worse in transmission R value and infection rate than previous variants.
5. Omicron was a new coronavirus variant B.1.1.529. It was identified in Southern Africa in November 2021.

(SOURCE – HINDUSTAN TIMES)

## Indian rupee ends 2022 as worst-performing Asian currency

**Why in news:** The rupee finished the year at 82.72 to the U.S. currency, down from 74.33 at the end of 2021, while the dollar index was headed for its biggest yearly gain since 2015.



1. The Indian rupee ended 2022 as the worst-performing Asian currency with a fall of 11.3%, its biggest annual decline since 2013, as the dollar rocketed on the U.S. Federal Reserve's aggressive monetary policy stance to tame inflation.
2. The rupee was also a victim of a rally in oil prices sparked by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which pushed India's current account deficit to a record high in the September quarter in absolute terms.
3. The rupee finished the year at 82.72 to the U.S. currency, down from 74.33 at the end of 2021, while the dollar index was headed for its biggest yearly gain since 2015.
4. Heading into 2023, market participants believe the rupee would trade with an appreciation bias, finding relief from easing commodity prices and hopeful of foreign investors continuing to buy Indian equities.



5. The current account also includes net income, such as interest and dividends, and transfers from abroad such as foreign aid, which are usually a small fraction of the total, according to the IMF.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Government to launch the Digital India Innovation Fund for Catalyzing deep tech start-ups

**Why in news:** 'India at the moment is going through an inflection point; the coming decade is going to be the country's Techade'.



1. Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Rajeev Chandrasekhar has said that the Centre will soon launch a Digital India Innovation Fund that will support deep tech start-ups in the country.
2. The Minister made these remarks during his address to over 1000 college students as part of the New India for Young India: Techade of Opportunities program at the Catholic Bishop House Campus, Thamarassery, Kerala.
3. Deep technology (deep tech) or hard tech is a classification of organisations, or more typically startup company, with the expressed objective of providing technology solutions based on substantial scientific or engineering challenges.
4. Techade is a portmanteau of technology and decade, which means a decade powered by technology.

(SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES)

## Ministry of Rural Development launches Prajjwala Challenge inviting ideas, solutions and actions to transform rural economy

**Why in news:** DAY-NRLM is one of the flagship poverty alleviation programs of the Ministry of Rural Development, which aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor, enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihoods enhancements and improved access to financial services.



1. With an aim to invite ideas, solutions and actions that can transform rural economy, the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) has launched the Prajjwala Challenge.



2. It is one of the platforms where ideas are invited from individuals, Social Enterprises, Start up, Private Sector, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Academic Institution, Start-ups, Incubation centres, Investors etc having potential to transform the rural economy.
3. The Mission is looking for ideas and solutions around - Focus on Women and Marginalized section of community, Localised Models, Sustainability, Cost Effective solutions and Multi sectoral ideas and solutions etc.
4. Shortlisted ideas will be acknowledged by the Mission and will be provided mentorship support from an expert panel and incubation support to scale up. The top 5 ideas will be rewarded with Rs. 2 Lakh each. Applicants can visit the website [www.prajwalachallenge.com](http://www.prajwalachallenge.com) and apply.
5. The Mission so far has mobilised more than 87 Million women in to the Self Help Groups and their federations.

(SOURCE –PIB)

## Stage set for commercial production of goat pox vaccine Lumpi-ProVac

**Why in news:** The indigenously developed vaccine is going to be a game changer in ongoing effort of government to control and eradicate the Lumpy Skin Disease.



1. ICAR has developed indigenous live-attenuated vaccine Lumpi-ProVac for Lumpy Skin Disease.
2. Lumpi-ProVacind is safe in animals and induces LSDV-specific antibody-and cell-mediated immune response, besides providing complete protection against lethal LSDV challenge. Lumpi-ProVacind is used for the prophylactic immunization of animals against Lumpy Skin.
3. At present Goat Pox vaccine is used for controlling Lumpy Skin Disease in animals and this has been proven effective against Lumpy.
4. The vaccine is stored at 4°C. The vaccine must be shipped on ice and must be used within a few hours after reconstitution. The patent has been filed by the ICAR for the technology.
5. The Lumpy Skin Disease has been reported in India from 2019 while first case was reported in the state of Odisha. Considering the heavy production losses and mortality of sizable number of cattle, ICAR initiated research on development of indigenous homologous vaccine against Lumpy Skin Disease.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)





## Uttar Pradesh: Bundelkhand to become hub of wildlife tourism with zoo in Jhansi and Bear Reserve in Lalitpur

**Why in news:** UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's government is making all efforts to promote wildlife tourism in Bundelkhand, which will likely increase the chances of employment and development in the state.



1. Bundelkhand region is located in central part of the country, there is a lot of potential to develop wildlife tourism in this region.
2. The project to make Chitrakoot-based Ranipur Wildlife Sanctuary a tiger reserve has been approved by the UP cabinet, it is to be developed in an area of about 529 sq km. The tiger reserve is expected to be ready in two years and develop into a major centre of wildlife tourism in Bundelkhand.
3. In order to conserve bears and badgers, the government is ready to set up a bear conservation centre in Lalitpur
4. Steps are also taken to build a zoo in Jhansi's Garhmau, which will be the biggest zoo in Uttar Pradesh. It will be spread across 125 acres in Jhansi.

(SOURCE –TIMES OF INDIA )

## Centre approves Kalasa-Banduri project in Karnataka

**Why in news:** Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday announced in the Assembly that the union government has approved Karnataka's detailed project report (DPR) on the Kalasa-Banduri (Mahadayi) project, which was opposed by Goa.



1. The project proposes to divert water from two tributaries of the Mahadayi river (also known as Mandovi): Kalasa and Banduri to the Malaprabha river (Mandovi flows through Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra).
2. The entire project aims to construct several dams on the river Mandovi in order to facilitate drinking water for towns in drought-hit northern Karnataka.
3. The Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal, which was formed in 2010, had cleared the project in 2018 but with a lower amount of water than sought by Karnataka.
4. The plan is aimed at facilitating drinking water for 13 towns in drought-hit northern Karnataka. These areas together make up the country's second most arid region after Rajasthan.

(SOURCE –TIMES OF INDIA)



## RBI Financial Stability Report: Gross NPAs of Indian banks fall to seven-year low in September

**Why in news:** Macro stress tests for credit risk reveal that banks would be able to comply with the minimum capital requirements even under severe stress scenarios, the RBI report said.



1. Gross non-performing asset (GNPA) ratio of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) fell to a seven-year low of 5.0% and net NPA have dropped to ten-year low of 1.3% in September 2022.
2. The Buoyant demand for bank credit and early signs of a revival in investment cycle are benefiting from improved asset quality, return to profitability and strong capital and liquidity buffers of banks.
3. Financial Stability Report (FSR) is a biannual report released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The FSR reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on risks to financial stability, as also the resilience of the financial system.
4. NPA: In most cases, debt is classified as non-performing, when the loan payments have not been made for a minimum period of 90 days.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## India Australia Economic and Cooperation Trade Agreement comes into force

**Why in news:** This is the first major trade agreement with a western country under the Narendra Modi government.

1. The India-Australia Economic and Cooperation Trade Agreement (Ind-Aus ECTA ), which is expected to double trade between the two countries to \$50 billion, came into effect on Thursday.
2. The Ind-Aus ECTA provides an institutional mechanism to encourage and improve trade between the two countries. It covers almost all the tariff lines dealt by India and Australia.
3. India will benefit from preferential market access provided by Australia on 100% of its tariff lines, including all the labor-intensive sectors of export interest to India, such as Gems and Jewellery, Textiles, leather, footwear, furniture among others.
4. On the other hand, India will be offering preferential access to Australia on over 70% of its tariff lines, including lines of export interest to Australia, which are primarily raw materials and intermediaries such as coal, mineral ores and wines.



5. Australia is an important strategic partner of India. They are also part of the four nation QUAD, Trilateral Supply Chain Initiative and the Indo-Pacific Economic Forum.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## At 4.4% of GDP, current account deficit hits 9 year high.

**Why in news:** According to RBI, net external commercial borrowings by India recorded an outflow of \$0.4 billion in Q2 of 2022-23, compared to an inflow of \$4.3 billion a year ago.



1. India's current account deficit (CAD) widened to a nine-year high of 4.4% of gross domestic product (GDP) in the three months to September, up from 2.2% in the June quarter, primarily due to a widening goods trade deficit and an increase in net outgo under investment income.
2. The negative surprises in the merchandise trade deficit and primary income outweighed the higher-than-expected services surplus and secondary income flows.
3. The current account balance is the difference between the value of exports of goods and services and the value of imports of goods and services, according to International Monetary Fund (IMF).
4. The current account also includes net income, such as interest and dividends, and transfers from abroad such as foreign aid, which are usually a small fraction of the total, according to the IMF.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## What is triple test survey, which UP is to carry out for OBC quota in urban local bodies

**Why in news:** The Allahabad HC recently ordered the Uttar Pradesh government to hold urban local body elections without reservation for OBCs as the 'triple test' requirement for it had not been met.



1. The Allahabad High Court said simply granting reservation on the basis of population misses a very crucial factor for determination of backwardness, and that factor is political representation of the class or group concerned.
2. The five-member commission will conduct a survey to ensure that the OBCs are provided reservation on the basis of the triple test, as mandated by the Supreme Court. This is the first time that the triple test exercise will be carried out in Uttar Pradesh.



3. The triple test requires the government to complete three tasks for finalisation of reservation to OBCs in the local bodies. These include:
  - To set up a dedicated commission to conduct a rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of the backwardness in local bodies;
  - To specify the proportion of reservation required in local bodies in light of recommendations of the commission, so as not to fall foul of overbreadth;
  - To ensure reservation for SCs/STs/OBCs taken together does not exceed an aggregate of 50 per cent of the total seats.
4. These triple test/conditions were outlined by the Supreme Court in the case of *Vikas Kishanrao Gawali vs. State of Maharashtra and others*, decided on March 4, 2021.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## India is all set to go for its first waste-to-hydrogen project

**Why in news:** Hydrogen generated at a facility in Pune will be utilised locally to help the city lower its emissions, manage waste optimally



1. Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has collaborated with business management consultant The Green Billions (TGBL) to manage its waste and generate it into useable green hydrogen.
2. The new facility will solve two major problems: Inefficient waste management and carbon emissions. Waste management is one of the prime issues in the country, which is blamed for generating the pollution in the surroundings.
3. With this project, Pune city can reduce up to 2.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, over 3.8 million tonnes of waste would be diverted from the landfill/dumping site and more than 180,000 estimated households will be served directly.
4. The waste would be segregated using optical sensor technology. The Refuse-Derived Fuel (RDF) from the waste would later be utilised to generate hydrogen using plasma gasification technology. The technology has been developed while closely working with the Bhabha Atomic Research Institute (BARC) and the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.
5. Green hydrogen is hydrogen produced by splitting water by electrolysis using power from renewable energy sources.

(SOURCE –DOWN TO EARTH)





## India's First Underwater Train and Deepest Metro Station To Be Operational By 2023

**Why in news:** This is a one-of-a-kind underwater metro train which is built in India and is being compared to Eurostar which joins London and Paris



1. India's first underwater train in Kolkata is all set to be fully completed by 2023. The Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC) has made a way to pass under the Hooghly River. The East and West corridor will be connected via this twin tunnel over 500 metres. The train will be 13 metres below the Hooghly River.
2. The train will be running at a depth equal to a 10-story structure while underwater.
3. The tunnel is will be built with 1.4 m-wide concrete rings, which will be part of the metro station. The tunnel will have hydrophilic gaskets to prevent water from entering the tunnels.
4. The cost of this project is Rs 8,600 crore, roughly.
5. The train will help in reducing the duration as well as the time taken for travelling. The Kolkata Green Line at present runs between Phoolbagan and Sector V in just 6.97 kilometres. This train will help in reducing the travel duration between Sector V to Howrah.
6. At present, Hauz Khas in Delhi is one of the deepest metro stations. It has a depth of 29 metres.

(SOURCE –OUTLOOK INDIA )

## Tamil Nadu launches project to protect Nilgiri Tahr, its State Animal

**Why in news:** Under the project, the government plans to develop a better understanding of the Nilgiri Tahr population through surveys and reintroduce them to their historical habitat.



1. Tamil Nadu is set to implement Project Nilgiri Tahr, aimed at developing a better understanding of its population.
2. The project, to be set up at a cost of ₹ 25.1 crore, will be implemented during the 2022-27 period.
3. Nilgiri Tahr is the only mountain ungulate (animal with hooves) in southern India amongst the 12 species present in India.
4. It is the state animal of Tamil Nadu.
5. It is endemic to the Western ghats and locally known as 'Varaiaadu'.



6. IUCN status: Endangered.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## India, Kazakhstan carry out joint military drill in Meghalaya

**Why in news:** The 14-day-long joint training exercise culminated with a validation exercise witnessed by the visiting dignitaries.



1. With aim to further strengthen positive military relations between India and Kazakhstan, the nations conducted their 6th edition of Army Joint Exercise KazInd 2022 in Meghalaya's Umroi.
2. Joint annual training exercise with the Kazakhstan Army was instituted in 2016 as Exercise Prabal Dostyk, which was later upgraded to a company level exercise and renamed as Ex Kazind in 2018.
3. This joint exercise will enable the two armies to train, plan and execute a series of combined tactical drills for neutralising of likely threats that may be encountered in UN peace keeping operations.
4. The scope of this exercise involves a Command Post Exercise (CPX) at the Battalion level and Company level Field Training Exercise (FTX) on sub-conventional operations.

(SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS)

## Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah launched the Border Security Force (BSF) mobile app 'Prahari'

**Why in news:** This BSF 'Prahari' app is a great example of Proactive Governance, now Jawans can get personal and service related information, housing, Ayushman-CAPF and leave related information on their mobile.



1. Now jawans can get personal information and information related to accommodation, Ayushmann-CAPF and leaves on their mobiles.
2. The Jawans can get all this information through the app and this app will also connect them with the portal of the Ministry of Home Affairs, be it GPF, Bio Data or grievance redressal on "Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System" (CP-GRAMS) or information on various welfare schemes.
3. These new initiatives will bring ease and convenience in the work of BSF.



4. Border Security Force is India's border guarding organisation on its border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It is one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) of India, and was raised in the wake of the 1965 war on 1 December 1965.
5. It comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Launches 'Stay Safe Online' Campaign And 'G20 Digital Innovation Alliance'

**Why in news:** As part of India's G20 presidency, the Minister for Electronics & Information Technology, Communications and Railways, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw has launched the "Stay Safe Online" campaign and the "G20 Digital Innovation Alliance" (G20-DIA).



1. The event was graced by Shri Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa, dignitaries from Union Ministries and Departments, representatives of Embassies and Consulates, invited guests from the Government, Industry associations, social media platforms, start-ups, and civil society organisations.
2. The objective of the 'Stay Safe Online Campaign' is to raise awareness among citizens to stay safe in the online world due to the widespread use of social media platforms and the rapid adoption of digital payments.
3. The objective of the G20 Digital Innovation Alliance (G20-DIA) is to identify, recognize, and enable the adoption of innovative and impactful digital technologies developed by startups, from G20 nations as well as the invited non-member nations, which can address the needs of humanity in the critically important sectors of Agri-tech, Health-tech, Ed-tech, Fin-tech, Secured Digital Infrastructure, and Circular Economy.
4. The G20 Digital Innovation Alliance (G20-DIA) summit which will be held in Bangalore will bring together the key players in the innovation ecosystem order to recognise and support startups creating cutting-edge digital solutions in the six themes.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Government Owned WAPCOS Ranked as Top Consulting Firm by the Asian Development Bank

**Why in news:** a Government of India Enterprise under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in its report released on Annual Procurement, ranked WAPCOS as



Top amongst Consulting Services Firm in Water.

1. In a major breakthrough for WAPCOS, a Government of India Enterprise under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in its report released on Annual Procurement, ranked WAPCOS as Top amongst Consulting Services Firm in Water and other Infrastructure Sectors, with highest sanctioned financed amount.
2. Established in 1969 under aegis of Ministry of Water Resources, WAPCOS has become a leading technology driven Consultancy and Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) organization in the fields of Water Resources, Power and Infrastructure Development.
3. The Company has successfully completed/on-going consultancy assignments in more than 51 Countries covering Asia, Africa, CIS, Pacific Islands and South America
4. In another report on its Members' Fact Sheet - 2022 released by the ADB, WAPCOS figured amongst the Top 3 Consultants from India involved in Consulting Services Contracts under ADB Loan, Grant and Technical Assistance Projects in Energy, Transport and Water & other Urban Infrastructure Sectors.
5. WAPCOS is the only Indian Public Sector featuring in the above categories.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## Government research body transfers vaccine tech for H9N2 avian influenza virus to four companies

**Why in news:** This vaccine technology has been transferred to Secunderabad-based Globion India, Pune-based Venkateshwara Hatcheries, Gurugram-based Indovax Pvt Ltd and Ahmedabad-based Hester Biosciences.



1. The government research body Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (ICAR-NIHSAD) has transferred the first indigenous vaccine technology for the H9N2 avian influenza virus in chickens to four private companies
2. H9N2 is a subtype of influenza A virus, which causes human influenza as well as bird flu.
3. H9N2 has been found in more than 50 species of wild birds and other mammals including humans, cats, dogs, pigs, etc. Transmission of virus infection is due to direct or indirect contact with infected live or dead poultry.
4. Vaccines will increase income of poultry farmers by reducing economic loss due to disease.





5. The ICAR director general Himanshu Pathak, ICAR-NIHSAD director Aniket Sanyal and Agrinnovate India CEO Praveen Malik were among other senior officials present at the event.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## President of India lays the Foundation Stone for the Development of Pilgrimage Infrastructure at Bhadrachalam group of temples and Ramappa Temple.

**Why in news:** Smt Droupadi Murmu laid the foundation stone for the development of pilgrimage facilities at Bhadrachalam Group of Temples under PRASHAD scheme at Bhadrachalam.



1. Smt. Droupadi Murmu has laid the foundation stone of the project 'Development of Pilgrimage Facilities at Bhadrachalam Group of Temples' at Sri Seetha Ramachandra Swamivari Devasthanam, Bhadrachalam in Telangana.
2. The Sri Sita Ramachandraswamy temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to Rama, a prominent avatar of the god Vishnu. It is located on the banks of the Godavari River in the town of Bhadrachalam in east Telangana, India.
3. The 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive' (PRASAD) was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in the year 2014-15 with the objective of holistic development of identified pilgrimage destinations.
4. Ramappa Temple, also known as the Rudreshwara temple, is a Kakatiya style Hindu temple dedicated to the god Shiva, located in Telangana.
5. The medieval Deccan Ramappa Temple which dates back to 1213 AD, was built by the patronage of the Kakatiya ruler Kakati Ganapathi Deva under the authority of his Chief Commander Rudra Samani.
6. In 2021, the temple was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as "Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana".

(SOURCE – PIB)

## Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launches 2 key initiatives to take India's Urban Rejuvenation journey to next level

**Why in news:** Recently, the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs launched this City Finance Rankings, 2022 to evaluate, recognize and reward India's Urban Local Bodies.



1. City Finance Rankings 2022' aims to evaluate, recognize and





reward ULBs on the basis of their strength across three financial parameters viz. resource mobilization, expenditure performance and fiscal governance systems

2. City Finance Rankings are an effort to analyse and help the ULBs in identifying areas in their financial performance where they can make further improvements, to be able to deliver quality infrastructure and services to its citizens. The rankings will serve as a constant motivation for city/state officials to continue to implement municipal finance reforms.
3. The ministry also launched 'City Beauty Competition' aims to encourage and recognize the transformational efforts made by cities and wards in India to create beautiful, innovative and inclusive public spaces.
4. Wards and public places of cities would be judged against the five broad pillars (i) accessibility (ii) amenities (iii) activities (iv) aesthetics and (v) ecology. The City Beauty Competition would felicitate most beautiful wards and beautiful public places at the city level.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## Dhanu Yatra celebrations

**Why in news:** The 'Dhanu Yatra' festival began after a gap of two years, in Bargarh at the Odisha.

1. The 'Dhanu Yatra' festival, the largest open-air theatre festival, associated with the culture of Odisha.
2. Dhanu Yatra, the eleven day long annual extravaganza places Bargarh in the Cultural Map of India. It is at par with the standard of Odishan Heritage and culture. It is an open-air theatre festival stretching more than 5 square K.M and comprising a village and a town in between.
3. The 'Dhanu Yatra' which marks the victory of good over evil, came into existence in Bargarh in 1947-48 as part of the celebration of the country's Independence and is held annually.
4. Theme: The plays in the festival start with the dethroning of Emperor Ugrasen of Mathura by angry Kansa over the marriage of his sister Devaki with Vasudev. The festival will conclude with the death of demon king Kansa and restoration of the throne to Ugrasen.



(SOURCE –NEWS ON AIR)



## The INDIAN ARMY INAUGURATES FIRST EVER TWO STOREY 3-D PRINTED DWELLING UNIT AT AHMEDABAD.

**Why in news:** The Army inaugurated such a unit in Ahmedabad. It is the first 3D Printed House for Indian soldiers and located at Ahmedabad Cantt.



1. The Indian Army now has a 3D Printed House Dwelling Unit, which is a disaster-resilient structure that complies with Zone-3 earthquake specifications and green building norms.
2. The technique utilises a concrete 3D printer that accepts a computerised three-dimensional design and fabricates a 3D structure in a layer-by-layer manner by extruding a specialised type of concrete specifically designed for the purpose.
3. This unique house has ground plus one configuration. The dwelling unit has been constructed by the Military Engineering Services (MES) in collaboration with MiCoB Pvt Ltd incorporating the latest 3D Rapid Construction Technology
4. The 3D printed houses are symbolic of the modern-day rapid construction efforts to cater for growing accommodation requirements of the Armed Forces personnel. This structure also stands testament to the commitment of the Indian Army in fostering the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan'.

(SOURCE – THE ECONOMIC TIMES)

## RESERVE BANK OF INDIA (RBI) RELEASED REPORT ON TREND AND PROGRESS OF BANKING

**Why in news:** The central bank said this is the first time it is seeing double-digit growth in banks' balance sheets after seven years.



1. Report is a statutory publication in compliance with Banking Regulation Act, 1949. It presents performance of banking sector, including co-operative banks and non-banking financial institutions.
2. The Consolidated balance sheet of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) registered double digit growth in 2021-22, after a gap of seven years.
3. Gross non-performing assets (GNPA) ratio of SCBs has declined from its peak at around 9 percent in 2017-18 to reach 5.8 percent at the end of March 2022.
4. The report highlights that the financial performance of urban co-operative banks showed improvement, characterised by augmented capital buffers, decline in GNPA ratio and improved profitability indicators.

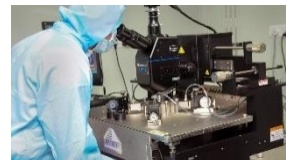


5. The reasons for declining NPA are reduced share of large borrowings, upgradation of loans in private banks and loan write off by PSBs.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)

## Researchers from India, Israel, and US are trying to develop a drug to treat the rare disease 'GNB1 Encephalopathy'

**Why in news:** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, Tel Aviv University and Columbia University are studying a rare genetic brain disease called “GNB1 Encephalopathy” and trying to develop a drug to treat it effectively.



1. GNB1 Encephalopathy is a rare genetic brain disease caused due to mutations in the GNB1 gene.
2. This genetic disorder affects individuals in the foetus stage, with the earliest symptoms being delayed physical and mental development, intellectual disabilities, epilepsy (abnormal brain activity), movement problems and frequent epileptic seizures.
3. Individuals having this genetic disorder will experience seizures due to the abnormal activity of ion channels or neurotransmitter receptors.
4. It is caused by the mutation of a single nucleotide in the GNB1 gene that makes one of the G-proteins called Gβ1 protein.
5. Less than 100 cases of GNB1 Encephalopathy have been recorded worldwide. However, the actual number of affected children is probably higher since diagnosis of this genetic disorder is not widely available due to the requirement of sophisticated and expensive procedures.

(SOURCE – THE PRINT)

## ADB approves \$125 million loan to improve urban services in Tamil Nadu

**Why in news:** The financing is the third and the last tranche of the USD 500 million multi-tranche financing facility (MFF) for the Programme approved by ADB in 2018 to build priority water supply, sewerage, and drainage infrastructure in strategic industrial corridors across 10 cities in the state.



1. The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$125 million loan to develop climate-resilient sewage collection and treatment, and drainage and water supply systems in three cities in the state of Tamil Nadu.



2. The financing is the third and the last tranche of the \$500 million multi-tranche financing facility (MFF) for the Program approved by ADB in 2018 to build priority water supply, sewerage, and drainage infrastructure in strategic industrial corridors across 10 cities in the state. The tranche 3 loan covers Coimbatore, Madurai, and Thoothukudi.
3. ADB is a regional development bank established on 19th December 1966. It has its Headquarters in Manila, Philippines. It has 68 members, 49 from within Asia.
4. Japan holds the largest proportion of shares in ADB, followed by the USA, because Japan is one of the largest shareholders of the bank, and the president has always been Japanese.
5. ADB is an official United Nations Observer.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## Centre makes digitally capturing MGNREGA attendance universal from January 1

**Why in news:** The directive comes even as many complaints and loopholes pointed out earlier by users of the pilot app-based project have not been plugged yet.



1. The Centre has made digitally capturing of MGNREGA attendance universal from January 1, 2023, through 'The National Mobile Monitoring System' (NMMS).
2. Capturing of attendance through NMMS is compulsory at worksites where 20 or more workers under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) are employed.
3. NMMS, a mobile application, was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development in 2021. It aims to bring more transparency, and ensure proper monitoring of schemes. It permits taking real-time attendance of workers at MGNREGA worksites along with geo-tagged photographs.
4. MGNREGA is one of the largest work guarantee programmes in the world launched in 2005 by the Ministry of Rural development.
5. The primary objective of the scheme is to guarantee 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work.

(SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES)



## NTPC partners with Tecnimont for the commercial production of green methanol

**Why in news:** Green methanol is used as a base material for the chemical industry and it's also used as a transport fuel.



1. State-owned power generation company NTPC has recently partnered with Tecnimont to explore green methanol production on a commercial scale.
2. The green methanol project involves capturing carbon from NTPC power plants and converting it into green fuel.
3. The objective of the partnership was to demonstrate technologies for firing a higher percentage of Torrefied Biomass in NTPC's coal-fired units, Methanol Firing, and Ammonia Firing.
4. Green methanol is methanol that is produced renewably and without polluting emissions, one of its variants being generated from green hydrogen.
5. It is a low-carbon fuel that can be made from either biomass gasification or renewable electricity and captured carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).

(SOURCE –CNBC)

## MeitY appointed as nodal ministry for online gaming to 'bring clarity'

**Why in news:** "The decision is in line with the government's initiative to push for growth of AVGC sector and make India a hub for online gaming.



1. Recently, India has officially recognised Esports as a part of 'multisport event'. E-Sports, short for electronic sports, is a form of competition using video games.
2. The President of India, amended the regulations governing eSports in accordance with the authority "conferred by clause (3) of Article 77 of the Constitution" and requested the Sports Ministry and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to include "Esports as part of multi-sports events."
3. E-Sports will be taken care of by Department of Sports under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
4. 'Online Gaming' will be under MEITY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology). The appointment of MeitY as the central regulatory authority will provide clarity and certainty to investors, industry and consumers.

(SOURCE – PIB)





## Home Ministry gives nod to name change request for 2 places in Uttar Pradesh

**Why in news:** The 'no-objection' certificates were issued by the ministry to change the name of the municipal council 'Mundera Baazar' in Gorakhpur district to 'Chauri-Chaura' and that of 'Telia Afghan' village in Deoria district to 'Telia Shukla'.



1. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has given its consent to change the names of two places - Mundera Baazar municipal council in Gorakhpur and Telia Afghan village in Deoria district - in Uttar Pradesh, following recommendations from the state government.
2. The home ministry considers proposals for name change according to the existing guidelines, in consultations with the agencies concerned.
3. It gives a 'no-objection' certificate to change the name of any place after taking consent from the Ministry of Railways, Department of Posts and the Survey of India.
4. For changing the name of a village, town or city, an executive order is needed.
5. Renaming of a state requires an amendment of the Constitution with a simple majority in Parliament.

(SOURCE -LIVEMINT)

## The Governemnt inks peace pact with Manipur insurgent group.

**Why in news:** The agreement was signed by officials in the home ministry, Manipur government and ZUF representatives under the guidance of Union home minister Amit Shah and in the presence of chief minister N Biren Singh.



1. The tripartite agreement was signed by the central and Manipur governments and the Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF) rebel group which mostly operated in Manipur.
2. The Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF) was established in 2011. It is a Naga group which is active in Manipur.
3. The group claims its objective is to safeguard the interest of 'Zeliangrong Naga tribes in Manipur, Assam and Nagaland. It aimed to create a 'Zeliangrong' state within the Indian Union comprising the Zeliangrong Naga tribe's area in Manipur, Assam and Nagaland.
4. The representatives of the armed Group agreed to abjure violence and join the peaceful democratic process as established by law of the land.

(SOURCE - THE INDIAN EXPRESS)



## Project Vaani scales decibels as it maps the language landscape of India.

**Why in news:** The collaborative project of IISc, Google and ARTPark aims to capture the diversity of spoken Indian languages by capturing the speech of a million Indians.

1. Project Vaani will be implemented jointly by the Indian Institute of Sciences (IISc), ARTPARK (AI and Robotics Technology Park), and Google to gather speech data from across India for the creation of an AI-based language model that can understand diverse Indian languages and dialects.
2. Under Project Vaani, diverse languages used across India will be mapped by collecting speech sets of around 1 million people from 773 districts over 3 years.
3. This project uses a district-anchored approach, which involves recording local speeches by randomly selecting over 1,000 people from each district.
4. The greater objective is to create a technological solution that will eliminate the linguistic barriers that currently exist in technology and increase accessibility for a wider range of people.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU BUSINESS LINE)



## Scientists freeze Great Barrier Reef coral in world-first trial.

**Why in news:** Cryogenically frozen coral reefs can be stored and later reintroduced to the wild to protect them against rising ocean temperatures



1. The newly developed “cryomesh” technology enables the storage of the coral larvae at  $-196^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-320.8^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).
2. This novel mech technology can be manufactured at a lower cost. This is significant since the preceding methods require cutting-edge equipment, including lasers.
3. It is lightweight and ensures better preservation of corals.
4. The technology was initially tested with smaller and larger varieties of Hawaiian corals. The larger varieties of corals failed in the trials.
5. The Great Barrier Reef stretches across 2,300 km area down Australia’s northeast coast, covering an area equal to the size of Italy. Due to its ecological significance, it was declared a World Heritage Area by UNESCO.
6. It is suffering major bleaching events because of the rising ocean temperatures caused by climate change. Corals are marine animals that get their color and most of their food from the algae living within them. The increased temperature stresses algae on the coral. This causes the corals to expel the algae and then starve to death.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)



## US to send Patriot missile battery to Ukraine

**Why in news:** US officials have confirmed the agreement, and an official announcement is expected soon. A look at what the Patriot system is and what it does.



1. The Patriot, which stands for Phased Array Tracking Radar for Intercept on Target, is a theater-wide surface-to-air missile defense system built by Raytheon Technologies Corp (RTX.N) and considered one of the most advanced air defense systems in the U.S. arsenal.
2. The Patriot is a surface-to-air guided missile system that was first deployed in the 1980s and can target aircraft, cruise missiles and shorter-range ballistic missiles.
3. Each Patriot battery consists of a truck-mounted launching system with eight launchers that can hold up to four missile interceptors each, a ground radar, a control station and a generator.
4. The system was first used in combat during the 1991 Gulf War, with batteries protecting Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Israel, and later used during the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.
5. A Patriot battery can need as many as 90 troops to operate and maintain it, and for months the U.S. was reluctant to provide the complex system because sending forces into Ukraine to operate it is a non-starter for the Biden administration.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## UN Security Council Adopts Rare Resolution on Myanmar

**Why in news:** UNSC 2669 expressed the council's "deep concern" about the actions of the country's military government, and called for an immediate cessation of violence.



1. The U.N. Security Council has adopted its first ever resolution on Myanmar in 74 years to demand an end to violence and urge the military junta to release all political prisoners, including ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi.
2. The resolution was adopted with 12 of the 15 members of the UNSC in favor, while India, China, and Russia abstained. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) coordinates the annual celebration of the Day to foster greater awareness of mountain issues.
3. It also urges "concrete and immediate actions" to implement a peace plan agreed upon by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and calls for the military administration to "uphold democratic institutions and processes and



to pursue constructive dialogue and reconciliation in accordance with the will and interests of the people”.

4. On 1st December, India assumed the monthly rotating presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the second time in its two-year tenure as an elected member of the Council in 2021-22.
5. The Security Council was established by the UN Charter in 1945. It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. United Nations Security Council Headquarters: New York, United States.

SOURCE – BUSINESS STANDARD

## Railways plans to modernise 1,000 small stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

**Why in news:** The aim is to identify developing cities with potential and envisage railway stations as city centres that would link not just various parts of the city but also between different cities in the future.



1. The railways are planning to modernize 1,000 small yet important stations under the new "Amrit Bharat Station Scheme". This is apart from the ambitious plan to revamp 200 big stations under a separate redevelopment programme.
2. These stations will be redeveloped under what is being internally called the "Khurda model of redevelopment". Khurda station in Odisha was modernised for Rs 4 crore with all contemporary amenities for passengers. The main structure was renovated, the facade was redone and the number of railway tracks was also increased.
3. Modernisation of these stations would include improved station approaches to ensure smooth access by widening roads, removal of unwanted structures, properly designed signage, dedicated pedestrian pathways, well-planned parking areas, and improved lighting, among others.
4. According to need, the divisional railway managers will take a call on modernization works in a phased manner.

(SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES)

## Indian cuisine is among the best in the world, ranking fifth overall

**Why in news:** TasteAtlast's list of the World's best dishes of 2022: Only Shahi Paneer from India made it under the top 50, finishing at 28<sup>th</sup> spot.





1. Indian cuisine has ranked 5th in TasteAtlas' World's Best Cuisine Awards 2022, receiving 4.54 out of five-star ratings. The Bulgaria-based food website rated "garam masala, ghee, malai, butter garlic naan, keema and 460 more" as the best-rated food in India.
2. India is ranked fifth on the global list of the best cuisines for 2022, according to Taste Atlas. The ranking is based on audience votes for ingredients, dishes, and beverages.
3. Italian cuisine topped the list of the world's best cuisines, followed by Greek cuisine (2nd), Spanish cuisine (3rd), and Japanese cuisine (4th), respectively.
4. Furthermore, the best restaurants to try Indian cuisine are Shree Thaker Bhojanalay (Mumbai), Karavalli (Bengaluru), Bukhara (New Delhi), Dum Pukht (New Delhi), Comorin (Gurugram) and 450 others, according to the list.
5. The top 5 "Best Traditional Dishes" in the world by TasteAtlas' list of 2022 are- Kare (Japan), Picanha (Brazil), Ameijoas a Bulhao Pato (Portugal), Tangbao (China), and Guotie (China), respectively.

(SOURCE –LIVEMINT)

## Assam Grants Industry Status to Its Tourism Sector

**Why in news:** The Assam State Cabinet led by CM Himanta Biswa Sarma approved the proposal for grant of industrial status to the tourism sector in the state.



1. As the growth in the tourism sector is vital for socio-economic development in a state, the Assam State Cabinet led by CM Himanta Biswa Sarma approved the proposal for grant of industrial status to the tourism sector in the state.
2. The newly-implemented policy aims for sustainable and environmentally friendly investment besides capital formation and the creation of gainful employment.
3. Assam has now become a nationally and internationally acclaimed all-season tourist destination for its unique wildlife, bio-diversity and experience of an unexploited wonderland.

(Source – Economic Times)

## India to become \$10-trillion economy by 2035: CEBR

**Why in news:** Its latest edition of the report released on Monday also warned that the world is moving toward recession.





1. India will become the third economic superpower by 2037 and a \$10-trillion economy by 2035, as per the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), a leading London-based consultancy.
2. It is reported that this growth trajectory will see India rise from fifth place in the World Economic League Table in 2022 to third in the global rankings by 2037.
3. However, the annual rate of GDP growth in India is expected to average 6.4 per cent over the next five years, followed by an average of 6.5 per cent over the next nine years.
4. The report found that the pandemic had a particularly devastating effect in absolute terms, with India having the world's third-highest death toll, but the economy recovered.
5. China is expected to overtake the United States as the world's largest economy in 2036, six years later than previously predicted. This reflects China's zero-covid policy and rising trade tensions with the West, both of which have slowed its growth.

(SOURCE – BUSINESS WORLD)

## International Day of Epidemic Preparedness observed at PVP Siddhartha College

**Why in news:** The International Day of Epidemic Preparedness reminds us what we went through during the two years of peak-COVID infections.

1. In its 75th session and 36th plenary meeting on December 7, 2020, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution which declared December 27 as the International Day of Epidemic Preparedness.
2. The decision is part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. The declaration recognised the “devastating impacts of major infectious diseases and epidemics,” especially of the current COVID-19 pandemic, on people’s lives and the long-term damage to social and economic development.

(SOURCE – THE HINDU)



## Sitiveni Rabuka elected as new Prime Minister of Fiji

**Why in news:** Fiji Sitiveni Rabuka was confirmed as Fiji’s next Prime Minister more than two decades after the former military commander first held the office in a term lasting nearly seven years.



1. Sitiveni Rabuka was confirmed as Fiji's next Prime Minister more than two decades after the former military commander first held the office in a term lasting nearly seven years.
2. The 74-year-old won the nomination by one vote over incumbent Frank Bainimarama at a sitting of the Fijian Parliament in Suva. It also signals the end of former Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama's 16 years in power.
3. Mr. Sitiveni Rabuka, the head of the People's Alliance Party, was elevated to the position after forming a majority coalition with two other parties following last week's close and contentious election.
4. He was democratically elected as Prime Minister of Fiji, serving from 1992 to 1999, and again in 2022 leading a three-party coalition.
5. Fiji Capital is Suva, Fiji President is Wiliame Katonivere.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## 'Bomb Cyclone' Winter Storm hits US with Life Threating Extremely Cold Climate

**Why in news:** Bomb Cyclone: Bomb Cyclone has thrashed US and Canada with extreme climate and has trapped the residents inside their houses with snow and power outages.



6. Bomb Cyclone has thrashed US and Canada with extreme climate and has trapped the residents inside their houses with snow and power outages. During the Christmas season, the bomb cyclone occurred due to a low temperature of -40 degrees Fahrenheit. Thousands of flights have been canceled and several highways have been blocked. People are advised not to step outside their homes as it can be life-threatening.
7. Due to Artic Blast, the US has been experiencing an extremely cold climate, heavy snow, and intense wind. The authorities have ordered to put a halt on traveling during the Christmas season because of the Bomb Cyclone.
8. Bomb Cyclone is created when the air of different masses whether cold or dry comes together. The warm air rises and makes a cloud system which lowers the air pressure.
9. These cloud system forms storms and circulates counterclockwise in the low-pressure area. A bomb Cyclone is a mid-latitude storm in which the central pressure drops fast at one millibar per hour for 24 hours.

SOURCE –THE GUARDIAN



## In riveting political drama in Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' named Prime Minister

**Why in news:** Seven parties and three independent MPs led by former Prime Minister Sharma Oli come together in a dramatic move for a post-poll alliance.



1. In a swift move, CPN-Maoist Centre chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal, also known as Prachanda, mustered the support of 168 parliamentarians, way above the magic mark of 138 in the House of Representatives, clearing the way for his third stint in the Nepal Prime Minister's Office in the last 14 years.
2. President Bidya Devi Bhandari appointed Prachanda as the prime minister as per Article 76 (2) of the constitution.
3. Nepal has seen 10 government changes since 2008 when the 239-year-old monarchy was abolished.

SOURCE – THE HINDU

## Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh to launch revamped Probity Portal, e-HRMS 2.0 Portal to mark Good Governance Day.

**Why in news:** The revamped portal will provide the services like transfers, deputation, private foreign visits, vigilance status, deputation opportunities, service books and other basic HR services like leave, tours, reimbursements among others, in digital mode to the employees



1. Union minister Jitendra Singh is set to launch revamped probity portal and e-HRMS 2.0 portal for central government employees.
2. The revamped e-HRMS 2.0 Portal will provide the services like transfers (rotation or mutual), deputation, private foreign visits, vigilance status, deputation opportunities, service books and other basic HR services like leave, tours, reimbursements among others, in digital mode to the employees.
3. The revamped portal is the first digital system in the government of India to provide end-to-end HR services. Presently, no other government service cadre system in India is as advanced in its reach and applications, as the revamped e-HRMS 2.0
4. The Minister will also launch Mobile Application of iGoTKarmayogi Portal by Karmayogi Bharat (SPV) with an aim to create professional, well trained and future ready civil service for India, Mission Karmayogi was launched by the Govt. of India. The iGOTKarmayogi platform is envisaged as a democratised,



competency driven solution space that all of the government can access to enhance their execution capabilities.

5. Revamped Probity Portal for Government Employees will demand the right attitude towards public service with 'integrity' and 'probity'.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## Consumer Affairs Minister Goyal unveils 'right to repair' portal

**Why in news:** Minister Piyush Goyal launched many new initiatives including the 'right to repair' portal and opened new premises of the National Consumer Helpline centre in Delhi.



1. On this portal manufacturer will share the manual of product details with customers so that they can either repair it by themselves, or by third parties, rather than depend on the original manufacturers.
2. Stupa Analytics, a homegrown sports analytics firm, will be the tournament host with active support from the Goa government.
3. World Table Tennis (WTT) was created by the International Table Tennis Federation in 2019 to create and manage professional men's and women's Table Tennis events around the world. The WTT organizes a series of events around the year and the highest ranked tournament being the four Grand Smashes.
4. The six Star Contender events pit 48 men and women in the respective singles main draws, with the top 30 world ranks eligible to play, four among whom will compulsorily have to be in the world top 20.

(Source – Times of India)

## PV Sindhu world's 12th highest paid female athlete in 2022: Forbes

**Why in news:** The 27-year-old is the only shuttler and Indian in the list of top 25 female athletes released by the American business magazine.



1. India's badminton star, PV Sindhu is the only Indian sportsperson to feature in the top 25 of Forbes' annual list of the world's highest-paid female athletes. Sindhu, the 2016 Tokyo Olympics silver medallist, occupies the 12th spot in the list.
2. Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka tops the list. For the third straight year, Osaka tops Forbes' annual list of the World's highest-paid female athletes.



3. Sindhu, in 2022, won her maiden Commonwealth Games women's singles gold and Singapore Open Super 500 title.
4. Forbes considered earnings from on-court - salaries, bonuses, stipends, and prize money- and off-court - sponsorships and endorsement deals. It was the earnings from the sponsorship deals that stood out.
5. Americans also dominated the list, with 10 of the top 25 coming from the United States.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## Losar Festival Celebrated to Mark Ladakhi New Year in Ladakh

**Why in news:** Ladakh celebrated Losar Festival to mark the Ladakhi New Year. Losar Festival is celebrated in Ladakh on 24th December 2022.



1. The Losar Festival will continue for nine days from the new year. People will celebrate by offering prayers in the name of God and goddess. They will also dance and sing in honor of Ibex and the pilgrimage of Mount Kailash.
2. Ladakh celebrated Losar Festival to mark the Ladakhi New Year. Losar Festival is celebrated in Ladakh on 24th December 2022. The Losar Festival or the Ladakhi New year is a major socio-religious festival of Ladakh celebrated during winter.
3. The celebrations begin with offering prayers to God and goddesses common to a group of families known as Faspun.
4. In the evening, family ancestors are remembered by offering goods and lighting traditional lamps in the graveyards.
5. During the Losar Festival, Lardaak is responsible for offering prayers to the village God and goddess. The Lardaak carries out all the rituals to purify the individuals.

Source – News On Air

## Good Governance Day 2022 celebrates on 25 December

**Why in news:** Good Governance Day 2022: Every year, in honour of former Indian Prime Minister Atal Vihari Vajpayee's birthday, India observes "Good Governance Day".



1. Every year, in honour of former Indian Prime Minister Atal Vihari Vajpayee's birthday, India observes "Good Governance Day".





2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi 2014 announced that “Good Governance Day” will be observed annually on December 25 in memory of the former PM.
3. The purpose of Good Governance Day is to increase public access to various government programmes and services via good governance. It was established with the slogan “Good Governance through e-Governance.
4. Atal Vihari Vajpayee, the former prime minister was born on December 25, 1924, in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. He was elected three times as the nation's prime minister. In 1996, he was elected as the nation's Prime Minister for the first time.

(SOURCE – Economic Times)

## India joins other nations in criticising Taliban's 'ban on women' in universities

**Why in news:** The Taliban set up in Kabul 'suspended' university education for all girls in Afghanistan, the latest measure in a brutal clampdown on the rights and freedoms of women



1. The Indian side said it will work with international partners to counter terrorism in line with the UN (United Nations) Security Council Resolution 2593, which demands Afghan soil shouldn't be used to threaten or attack any country or to shelter or train terrorists, including UN-designated terrorists and groups.
2. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2593 was adopted on 30 August 2021, following the Fall of Kabul and subsequent Taliban takeover in Afghanistan.
3. According to the resolution, the Security Council demands that Afghan territory not be used to threaten or attack any other country or to shelter and train terrorists.
4. It reaffirms importance of upholding human rights including those of women.
5. The system was first used in combat during the 1991 Gulf War, with batteries protecting Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Israel, and later used during the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.
6. A Patriot battery can need as many as 90 troops to operate and maintain it, and for months the U.S. was reluctant to provide the complex system because sending forces into Ukraine to operate it is a non-starter for the Biden administration.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)



## 'Veer Guardian 23': India, Japan to conduct first-ever air combat exercise

Why in news Veer Guardian 2023 is to strengthen defence cooperation between the forces, say representatives.



1. Veer Guardian 23: Indian Air Force (IAF) and Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) are set to hold their maiden bilateral air exercise, "Veer Guardian 23", from January 16 to 26 at Hyakuri air base and Iruma air base in Japan.
2. The focus of the first ever air exercise is going to be on interoperability between the forces of both India and Japan.
3. In 2022, for the first time Japan had participated in the multilateral 'MILAN' which was hosted by the Indian Navy. Also the two countries have in March operationalised the Reciprocal Provision of Supply and Services Agreement and Logistics Support Agreement.
4. The two countries carry out bilateral and multilateral Army and Navy level exercises. In February for "EX DHARMA GUARDIAN-2022" which took place in Belagavi, Karnataka, the armies of both countries came together.

SOURCE – THE HINDU

## Newly launched Khelo India dashboard to provide information in real time

**Why in news:** The digital platform will have statistical data on athletes, coaches, venues and schemes related to the Khelo India programme



1. The Khelo India Dashboard will be updated on real-time and aims to be a unique one-stop platform through which every citizen of the country will have access to all the information regarding the various offerings of the Khelo India Scheme introduced to revive the sports culture in India at the grass-root level by building a strong framework for all sports.
2. The unique platform also has a database regarding Khelo India Centres (KICs), Khelo India Academies, SAI Training Centres & National Centre of Excellence (NCOEs) which in turn will help athletes find the closest centre where sports training is available in various disciplines.
3. The centres are geo-tagged on the map of India to help any athlete pursuing a certain sport find the centre of their choice across India.



4. Khelo India Programme is a national yojana/scheme for the development of sports in India. It was launched in the year 2018 by the then Sports Minister Col. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore in Delhi.
5. The Union Cabinet approved the execution of the revamped 'Khelo India' program by consolidating the 'Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan' (formerly called the 'Yuva Krida & Khel Abhiyan'), the 'Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme' and the National Sports Talent Search System Programme'. The program strives to promote "Sports for Excellence" as well as "Sports for All".

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## Goa to Host First Ever World Table Tennis (WTT) Series Event in India

**Why in news:** The top tier WTT Star Contender Goa 2023 will be staged at the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor stadium, located at the Goa University Campus in Panaji.



1. Goa will host India's first ever World Table Tennis (WTT) series event from February 27 to March 5.
2. Stupa Analytics, a homegrown sports analytics firm, will be the tournament host with active support from the Goa government.
3. World Table Tennis (WTT) was created by the International Table Tennis Federation in 2019 to create and manage professional men's and women's Table Tennis events around the world. The WTT organizes a series of events around the year and the highest ranked tournament being the four Grand Smashes.
4. The six Star Contender events pit 48 men and women in the respective singles main draws, with the top 30 world ranks eligible to play, four among whom will compulsorily have to be in the world top 20.

(Source – Times of India)

## Sam Curran Breaks IPL Auction Records and Become Most Expensive Cricketer

**Why in news:** IPL 2023 Auction Highlights: Three players break the all time IPL bidding record with Sam Curran becoming highest ever buy in history.



1. Sam Curran breaks all the records and became the most expensive cricketer ever to be bought by any franchise of the Indian Premier League (IPL).



2. Sam Curran is a 24-year-old English Cricketer who was bought by Punjab Kings on the first day of the IPL auction for ₹18.5 crores. The IPL auctions for the 2023 season are being held in Kerala.
3. Other big auction buys included Australian cricketer Cameron Green, who joined the Mumbai Indians franchise for 17.5 crore (approximately \$2.1 million) and England men's Test captain Ben Stokes, who was bought by the Chennai Super Kings franchise for 16.25 crore (approximately \$1.95 million).
4. Launched in 2007, the IPL is one of the world's most valuable sports properties – attracting the best cricketers on big-money contracts.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## UIDAI HQ Building wins top Green Building Award

**Why in news:** The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) Headquarter in New Delhi has won the prestigious GRIHA Exemplary Performance Award 2022, a top national level Green Building Award.



1. GRIHA (Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment) is a national rating system for green buildings in India. UIDAI HQ has been declared a winner among the existing highest rated building category.
2. UIDAI believes and promotes the idea of recycle and reuse to reduce carbon footprint. It has been harnessing solar power to meet a portion of its energy consumption.
3. It is recycling and reusing water and has been adhering to sustainable waste management practices.
4. GRIHA - It was jointly set up by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. It's objective is to help design green buildings and help evaluate the 'greenness' of the buildings.
5. **Parameters used in Rating:**
  - Site selection and planning
  - Conservation and efficient utilization of resources
  - Building operation and maintenance
  - Innovation points

Source – PIB

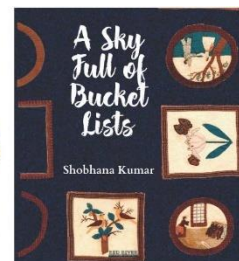




## Sudeep & Shobhana won Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2021-22

**Why in news:** The annual prize founded in 1918 recognises literary and social accomplishment.

1. The Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize has been jointly won by Sudeep Sen for his genre and formbender *Anthropocene: Climate Change, Contagion, Consolation* (Pippa Rann Books & Media, 2021) and Shobhana Kumar for her haibun collection *A Sky Full of Bucket Lists* (Red River, 2021).
2. The winners, awarded \$10,000 and a Rabindranath Tagore statuette, were picked from a shortlist of 11 at India International Centre, with the Tagore Prize for social achievement going to Sanjoy K Roy, producer of the Jaipur Literature Festival.
3. The Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize was started in 1918 to annually recognise literary and social accomplishments.
4. In 2020, the award was won by Raj Kamal Jha, Chief Editor, *The Indian Express*, for *The City and The Sea* (2019, Penguin Books), and in 2019, it was awarded posthumously to Kabir for *One Hundred Poems of Kabir*, translated by Rabindranath Tagore.



SOURCE –INDIAN EXPRESS

## National Consumer Rights Day 2022: 24 December

**Why in news:** National Consumer Rights Day: Every year on December 24, India observed the National Consumer Day or Bharatiya Grahak Diwas.



1. Every year on December 24, India observed the National Consumer Day or Bharatiya Grahak Diwas. This day is used to make all consumers aware of their powers and rights. This day was made under the Consumer Protection Act, which came to power in 1986 to create awareness and save consumers from market exploitation like defective products or expensive pricing.
2. World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on March 15 every year.
3. The exploitation of consumers has been quite common in India. The problems were only aggravated by inflation and poor technology. Taking the repercussions in the account, the Consumer Protection Bill was passed in 1986.

(SOURCE – CNBC)



## Russian State-owned nuclear energy corporation, Rosatom has offered a more advanced fuel option to Kudankulam Nuclear power plant

**Why in news:** Rosatom's nuclear fuel division, TVEL Fuel Company, is the current supplier of TVS-2 M fuel for the two VVER 1,000 MWe reactors generating power in the Kudankulam power plant.



1. Russia has offered a more advanced fuel viz. TVS-2M type in place of UTVS type fuel for use in reactors at Unit 1 and 2 at Kudankulam
2. The use of TVS-2M fuel assemblies in KKNPP reactors will allow 18-month operating cycles as against 12-month operating cycle with UTVS Fuel Assemblies presently in use in Unit-2.
3. It will ensure more efficiency, additional power generation due to prolonged operation of the reactor and sizable savings of the foreign exchange needed to buy fresh fuel assemblies from Russia.
4. Presently, India has 22 operating nuclear power reactors, with an installed capacity of 6780 MegaWatt electric (MWe). Some major power plants are:
  - Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS), in Maharashtra
  - Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS), in Rajasthan
  - Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS), in Tamil Nadu
  - Kaiga Generating Station (KGS), in Karnataka
  - Kudankulam Nuclear Power Station (KKNPS), in Tamil Nadu
  - Narora Atomic Power Station (NAPS), in Uttar Pradesh
  - Kakrapar Atomic Power Station (KAPS), in Gujarat

Among these, 18 reactors are Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) and 4 are Light Water Reactors (LWRs).

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## US to send Patriot missile battery to Ukraine

**Why in news:** US officials have confirmed the agreement, and an official announcement is expected soon. A look at what the Patriot system is and what it does.



1. The Patriot, which stands for Phased Array Tracking Radar for Intercept on Target, is a theater-wide surface-



to-air missile defense system built by Raytheon Technologies Corp (RTX.N) and considered one of the most advanced air defense systems in the U.S. arsenal.

2. The Patriot is a surface-to-air guided missile system that was first deployed in the 1980s and can target aircraft, cruise missiles and shorter-range ballistic missiles.
3. Each Patriot battery consists of a truck-mounted launching system with eight launchers that can hold up to four missile interceptors each, a ground radar, a control station and a generator.
4. The system was first used in combat during the 1991 Gulf War, with batteries protecting Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Israel, and later used during the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003.
5. A Patriot battery can need as many as 90 troops to operate and maintain it, and for months the U.S. was reluctant to provide the complex system because sending forces into Ukraine to operate it is a non-starter for the Biden administration.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## UN Security Council Adopts Rare Resolution on Myanmar

**Why in news:** UNSC 2669 expressed the council's "deep concern" about the actions of the country's military government, and called for an immediate cessation of violence.



1. The U.N. Security Council has adopted its first ever resolution on Myanmar in 74 years to demand an end to violence and urge the military junta to release all political prisoners, including ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi.
2. The resolution was adopted with 12 of the 15 members of the UNSC in favor, while India, China, and Russia abstained. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) coordinates the annual celebration of the Day to foster greater awareness of mountain issues.
3. It also urges "concrete and immediate actions" to implement a peace plan agreed upon by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and calls for the military administration to "uphold democratic institutions and processes and to pursue constructive dialogue and reconciliation in accordance with the will and interests of the people".
4. On 1st December, India assumed the monthly rotating presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the second time in its two-year tenure as an elected member of the Council in 2021-22.



5. The Security Council was established by the UN Charter in 1945. It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. United Nations Security Council Headquarters: New York, United States.

SOURCE – BUSINESS STANDARD

## Lion @ 47: Vision for Amrutkal” to secure and restore lions’ habitats

**Why in news:** Project Lion envisages landscape ecology based conservation of the Asiatic Lion in Gujarat



1. Lion @ 47: Vision for Amrutkal” has been prepared with the following objectives to secure & restore lions’ habitats for managing its growing population; scale up livelihood generation and participation of local communities; become a global hub of knowledge on big cat disease diagnostics and treatment and create inclusive biodiversity conservation through project lion initiative.
2. Project Lion envisages landscape ecology based conservation of the Asiatic Lion in Gujarat by integrating conservation and eco-development. The Project is being implemented in the Gir landscape in Gujarat which is the last home of the Asiatic lion.
3. Protection Status – IUCN listed it under Endangered species, Appendix I of CITES and under Schedule 1 of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

(SOURCE – PIB)

## PMFBY number one crop insurance scheme globally in terms of farmers enrollment: Tomar

**Why in news:** The scheme has already become the number one crop insurance scheme in the world in terms of farmer applications enrolled. In terms of gross premium, the scheme is the 3rd largest in the world," Tomar said.



1. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has become the world's number one crop insurance scheme in terms of farmer applications enrolled, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar informed Parliament.
2. The PMFBY is also the world's third-largest crop insurance scheme in terms of gross premium.





3. Launched in 2016, the PMFBY provides for comprehensive risk insurance against crop damage due to non-preventable natural risks from pre-sowing to post-harvest for the crops/areas notified by the concerned state government.
4. As per the provisions of the scheme, the actuarial/bid premium rate is charged by the insurance companies. But the farmer has to pay only a maximum premium of 1.5 per cent and 2 per cent for Rabi and Kharif food and oilseed crops, respectively and 5 per cent for commercial/horticultural crops.
5. The remaining part of the actuarial/bid premium is shared on 50:50 basis by the central and concerned state government except in North Eastern States where it is shared in the ratio of 90:10.
6. It is administered by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

(SOURCE – The Hindustan Times)

## Assam Grants Industry Status to Its Tourism Sector

**Why in news:** The Assam State Cabinet led by CM Himanta Biswa Sarma approved the proposal for grant of industrial status to the tourism sector in the state.



1. As the growth in the tourism sector is vital for socio-economic development in a state, the Assam State Cabinet led by CM Himanta Biswa Sarma approved the proposal for grant of industrial status to the tourism sector in the state.
2. The newly-implemented policy aims for sustainable and environmentally friendly investment besides capital formation and the creation of gainful employment.
3. Assam has now become a nationally and internationally acclaimed all-season tourist destination for its unique wildlife, bio-diversity and experience of an unexploited wonderland.

(Source – Economic Times)

## Sahitya Akademi Awards announced, Anuradha Roy among 23 winners

**Why in news:** The awards in 23 languages included seven books of poetry, six of novel, two of short stories, three dramas, two literary criticism and one each of autobiographical essays, collection of articles and literary history.

1. The author of 'All The Lives We Never Lived ' Anruadha Roy was felicitated along with 22 other authors for their exemplary contribution in the field of literature. The book revolves around the life and times of a horticulturalist Myshkin, who narrates his life story,



and his unending wait for letters from the mother who abandoned him, for greener pastures in another country.

2. The award has been given by the central government for the best literature of every year.
3. The Awards, recommended by distinguished Jury members in 23 Indian languages, were approved by the Executive Board of the Sahitya Akademi, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Chandrashekhar Kambar, President, Sahitya Akademi.
4. The Awards relate to books first published during the five years immediately preceding the year of Award (i.e. between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2020). The Award contains an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and an amount of Rs. 1,00,000/-.
5. Sahitya Akademi has recognised English and Rajasthani apart from the 22 languages enumerated in the Indian Constitution.
6. The Government of India established the Sahitya Akademi on 12 March 1954.

Source – The Hindu

## National Farmers Day 2022: Why is December 23 celebrated as Farmer's Day or Kisan Diwas?

**Why in news:** Kisan Diwas is celebrated to honour and remember our fifth Prime Minister, Chaudhary Charan Singh, who was born on this day in 1902.

1. National Farmers Day, also known as Kisan Diwas, is celebrated on December 23 to commemorate and recognise farmers as the country's backbone.
2. This day was chosen to commemorate the birth anniversary of Choudhary Charan Singh, India's fifth Prime Minister.
3. Charan Singh saw how affluent landowners, or zamindars, exploited farmers, and how this harmed the rural economy. He was elected to the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly in 1937 and resolved to demolish such exploitative structures.

(SOURCE – THE ECONOMIC TIMES)



## SRK only Indian to feature on British magazine's list of 50 greatest actors

**Why in news-** Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has become the only Indian to be named in an international list of 50 greatest actors of all time by a prominent British magazine



1. Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has become the only Indian to be named in an international list of 50 greatest actors of all time by a prominent British magazine –Empire.
2. The 57-year-old actor is included in Empire magazine's list which also recognises Hollywood giants like Denzel Washington, Tom Hanks, Anthony Marlon Brando, Meryl Streep, Jack Nicholson and many others.
3. The actor will be next seen in the actioner "Pathaan", set to be released worldwide on January 25, 2023. Directed by Siddharth Anand, the movie also stars John Abraham and Deepika Padukone.

SOURCE – TIMES of INDIA

## Stellar discoveries of the 40-inch telescope at the Vainu Bappu Observatory in Kavalur highlighted at 50-year celebration

**Why in news :** On the celebrations of 50 years of operations of the Vainu Bappu 40-inch telescope, several stellar discoveries of the telescope were highlighted.



### KEY POINTS

1. Vainu Bappu Observatory is considered one of the most renowned observatories in India it is Located on Javadi Hills at Kavalur, Tamilnadu
2. The telescope set up by Professor Vainu Bappu has played a significant role in astronomy with major discoveries like the presence of rings around the planet Uranus, a new satellite of Uranus, the presence of an atmosphere around Ganymede which is a satellite of Jupiter
3. The telescope in the observatory is under the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), an institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
4. Vainu Bappu - He was an Indian astronomer who helped to establish several astronomical institutions in India including the Vainu Bappu Observatory which is named after him.
5. **Other Observatories in India:**



- Solar Observatory in Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu
- Indian Astronomical Observatory in Hanle, Ladakh
- Udaipur Solar Observatory in Udaipur, Rajasthan
- Gauribidanur Radio Observatory in Bangalore, Karnataka

(Source – Economic Times)

## UI ranks MAHE as most sustainable university in India

**Why in news:** The UI Green Metric World University Ranking is a ranking on green campus and environmental sustainability initiated by Universitas Indonesia in 2010.



### KEY POINTS

1. Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) has been ranked No. 1 in India and 121 st worldwide for being the most sustainable university by UI Green Metric World University Rankings.
2. This year, 1050 universities from 85 countries participated.
3. MAHE's total score for this year was 8,050 with six criteria: Setting and Infrastructure, Education and Research, Energy and Climate Change, Waste, Water, and Transportation. The UI Green Metric World University Ranking is a ranking on green campus and environmental sustainability initiated by Universitas Indonesia in 2010
4. Wageningen University & Research of Netherlands topped the list followed by the UK's Nottingham Trent University and University of Nottingham in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place respectively.

(SOURCE – The Print)

## Palm-leaf manuscript museum opens window to little-known history

**Why in news :** Set up by the Archives Department, the ₹3-crore museum has eight theme-based galleries where select manuscripts from one of the biggest palm-leaf collections in the country will be displayed.



### KEY POINTS

1. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugurate a palm-leaf manuscript museum with modern audio-visual technology at the renovated Central Archives, Fort. It was set up by the Department of Archives, Kerala Government.





2. The ₹3-crore museum has eight theme-based galleries where select manuscripts from one of the biggest palm-leaf collections in the country will be displayed.
3. As many as 187 old and rare manuscripts stored at Central Archives and the department's regional offices in Ernakulam and Kozhikode will be housed in the museum.
4. The manuscripts in ancient scripts such as Vattezhuthu, Kolezhuthu, Malayanma, and ancient Tamil and Malayalam are present in the museum.
5. The manuscripts which delve into aspects as diverse as tax, administration, and trade to education, prisons, and festivals in the erstwhile Travancore, Kochi, and Malabar provide a fascinating glimpse of history that is rarely accessible to the common man.
6. Besides palm-leaf manuscripts, scrolls, bamboo splints, and copper plates are included in the collection.

(Source – The Hindu)

## Madhya Pradesh: Indore gets the Country's First Infantry Museum

**Why in news :** The country's first Infantry Museum has been opened for the general public at Mhow, Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

### KEY POINTS

1. The museum will showcase Infantry Corps' history from 1747 to 2020, in which the sacrifice of valour and valiant soldiers has been preserved in statues, murals and photo galleries.
2. This museum is the first in the country and second in the world. Before this, such a museum has been built in America. The Army inaugurated to celebrate the Victory Day and the eve of the 75th year of the establishment of the Infantry School.
3. The construction of this museum has been in the works for a decade. This three-story building of the museum has been built on two acres of land. It has 17 different rooms covering the history and development of the Indian Infantry since 1747 in chronological order in 30 subject areas. In this museum, along with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Subhash Chandra Bose, and Maharaja Ranjit, the history of many great men will be seen.
4. The world's first National Infantry Museum and Soldier Centre is located outside the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning in Columbus Georgia.

(Source – Economic Times)



## Vadnagar town, Modhera Sun Temple, Unakoti sculptures added to UNESCO's tentative list of World Heritage Sites

**Why in news :** India now has 52 sites on UNESCO's tentative list, an inventory of properties which each state party intends to consider for nomination



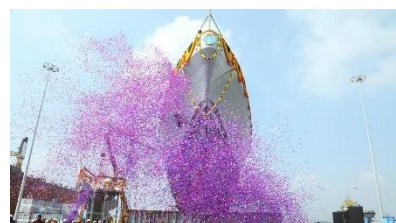
### KEY POINTS

1. Three new cultural sites in India, including the iconic Sun Temple at Modhera, historic Vadnagar town in Gujarat, and rock-cut relief sculptures of Unakoti in Tripura, have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO world heritage sites.
2. The UNESCO website describes a tentative list as an “inventory of those properties which each State Party intends to consider for nomination”.
3. Vadnagar is a municipality in Mehsana district of Gujarat. It is a multi-layered historic town that has been inhabited continuously for more than 2,700 years, dating back nearly to the 8th century BCE (Before Common Era).
4. Unakoti, the chiselled “Angkor Wat of the North-East,” is a series of Shaivite rock sculptures found in the northern region of Tripura. It is renowned as an ancient holy site associated with Shaiva worship.
5. The Sun Temple in Modhera, Gujarat, is dedicated to Surya Dev and is situated on the left bank of the Pushpavati River, a tributary of the River Rupan. It is the earliest of such temples, setting trends in architectural and decorative features and perfectly illustrating the Solanki style
6. The 52 “Sites on the Tentative List,” as defined by UNESCO, also include Temples in Bishnupur, West Bengal (added to the list in 1998), Mattanchery Palace in Kerala (added in 1998), Wild Ass Sanctuary, and Little Rann of Kutch in Gujarat (added in 2006). So far in 2022, 6 Indian sites have been included to the tentative list.

SOURCE – PIB

## Indian Navy Launches INS Arnala: Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft

**Why in news :** Arnala' is the first of the eight anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft ((ASW-SWC)) being built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers, Kolkata.



### KEY POINTS



1. Indian Navy Ship (INS) Arnala, the first of 16 anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASW-SWC) being built in India for the Indian Navy, was launched on Tuesday at Larsen & Toubro's (L&T's) Kattupalli shipyard near Chennai.
2. The ship has been named 'Arnala' to signify the strategic maritime importance accorded to the island of Arnala, located about 13 kilometres north of Vasai, Maharashtra, by Maratha warrior king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.
3. Purpose: To undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal waters and Low-Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO) including subsurface surveillance in littoral waters.
4. Replaces: Arnala class of ships will replace the Abhay class ASW Ships of the Indian Navy.

**Features:** The ships have a displacement of 900 tonnes with a maximum speed of 25 knots and endurance of 1800 nautical miles(NM).

It will also have over 80% indigenous content, ensuring that large-scale defence production is executed by Indian manufacturing units.

(Source – Indian Express)

## Why December 22nd is designated as Mathematics Day?

**Why in news :** Born on December 22, 1887, eminent mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan made significant contributions to the field that helped to solve a number of challenging theorems.

### KEY POINTS

1. National Mathematics Day is observed annually on December 22nd to mark the anniversary of the eminent mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan's birth. He was born in Erode, Tamil Nadu, in 1887 to a humble Iyengar Brahmin family.
2. His work on Riemann series, continued fractions, hypergeometric series, elliptic integrals, and functional equations belonging to the zeta function are well recognised.
3. In 2012, former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh paid tribute to the mathematician during a ceremony in Chennai to commemorate Ramanujan's birth anniversary and declared December 22 as National Mathematics Day.
4. Srinivasa Ramanujan was also seen on the 2012 India stamp. The Ramanujan Math Park located in Kuppam, of Andhra Pradesh, was inaugurated on this day in 2017.

(Source – Economic Times)



## Jyotiraditya Scindia launched country's first Green Steel Brand "KALYANI FeRRESTA"

**Why in news :** The steel minister indicated the country may be looking at making it compulsory for steelmakers to dedicate a certain percentage of their capacity to green steel as well as encouraging its usage in government projects.



### KEY POINTS

1. Green steel is the manufacturing of steel without the use of fossil fuels. This new phenomenon is about producing steel by using low-carbon energy sources such as hydrogen, coal gasification, or electricity instead of the traditional carbon-intensive manufacturing route of coal-fired plants.
2. This first-of-its-kind steel has been manufactured by a Pune-based Steel company, Kalyani group by using renewable energy resources, leaving zero carbon footprints in the environment.
3. The steel industry produces 7 per cent of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions internationally, while the Indian steel industry accounts for 12 per cent of such emissions.
4. Sweden has become the first country in the world to manufacture fossil-free steel which is also known as green steel. Green steel has been developed by HYBRIT Technology and the first delivery was done to Volvo AB as a trial run.

(Source – PIB)

## Puducherry acs social progress index, Lakshadweep & Goa among top 3

**Why in news :** The report, titled 'Social Progress Index: States and Districts of India', released by EAC-PM chairman Bibek Debroy.



### KEY POINTS

1. SPI is a comprehensive tool that can serve as a holistic measure of a country's social progress at the national and sub-national levels. The index assesses states and districts based on 12 components across three critical dimensions of social progress - Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing, and Opportunity.
2. Based on the SPI scores, states and districts have been ranked under six tiers of social progress. The tiers are Tier 1: Very High Social Progress; Tier 2: High Social Progress; Tier 3: Upper Middle Social Progress; Tier 4: Lower Middle Social Progress; Tier 5: Low Social Progress; and Tier 6: Very Low Social Progress.



3. It is made by the Institute for Competitiveness and Social Progress Imperative and was submitted to Economic Advisory Council- Prime Minister.
4. Puducherry has the highest SPI score of 65.9 followed by Lakshadweep and Goa. Jharkhand and Bihar scored the lowest, 43.95 and 44.47, respectively.
5. Aizawl (Mizoram), Solan (Himachal Pradesh), and Shimla (Himachal Pradesh) are the top 3 best-performing districts.
6. Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, and Goa have emerged as the best-performing states for the Foundations of Wellbeing. For the dimension of Basic Human Needs, Goa, Puducherry, Lakshadweep, and Chandigarh are the top four states with the best performance.
7. Lastly, Tamil Nadu has achieved the highest component score of 72.00 for the Opportunity dimension

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## J&K's Bandipora hosts the first-ever Tribal Winter Festival

**Why in news :** Tribal Winter Festival: A first-of-its-kind Tribal Winter Festival was held in the Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir.



### KEY POINTS

1. A first-of-its-kind Tribal Winter Festival was held in the Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir. The festival is organised by the district administration in collaboration with various departments at Ketson, the festival witnessed huge public participation.
2. The festival witnessed music, dance, and cultural events that left the people enthralled.
3. The 'gatka' was another attraction performed by two tribal communities portraying the fighting spirit of the Gujjars amid all geographic, social and political odds.
4. People from the Kashmiri community, Gujjars and Bakerwals danced together to the beats of dhol (drum) in a unique portrayal of cultural unity in diversity.
5. Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor: Manoj Sinha.

(Source – Hindustan Times)





**COP15: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted**

**Why in news :** The 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

**KEY POINTS**

1. The 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) December 19, 2022. The framework has 23 targets that the world needs to achieve by 2030.
2. Countries committed to protecting 30% of land and 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030, fulfilling the deal's highest-profile goal, known as 30-by-30.
3. Signatories aim to ensure \$200 billion per year is channelled to conservation initiatives, from public and private sources.
4. Wealthier countries should contribute at least \$20 billion of this every year by 2025, and at least \$30 billion a year by 2030.
5. One of the deal's more controversial targets sought to reduce the use of pesticides by up to two-thirds.
6. China — the world's biggest polluter — pledged to inject \$233 million into the Kunming biodiversity fund to protect biodiversity in developing countries during a key UN conservation summit.
7. The Global Environment Facility has been requested to establish a Special Trust Fund to support the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework ("GBF Fund").

(Source – Down to Earth)

**AYURSWASTHYA Yojana**

**Why in news :** Currently, the Ministry of Ayush is running a Scheme namely, AYURSWASTHYA Yojana.

**KEY POINTS**

1. The scheme is central sector scheme and comprises of mainly two components –
  - (i) AYUSH and Public Health (PHI) and
  - (ii) Centre of Excellence (CoE)



from the Financial Year 2021-22 by merging two erstwhile schemes of this Ministry namely – (i) Central Sector Scheme of Grant-in-Aid for Promotion of AYUSH Intervention in Public Health Initiatives (PHI) and (ii) Central Sector Scheme for assistance to AYUSH organizations (Government / Non-Government Non-Profit) engaged in AYUSH Education/ Drug Development & Research / Clinical Research etc. for upgradation to Centre of Excellence (CoE).

2. Under the Centre of Excellence component of AYURSWASTHYA Yojana, financial assistance is provided to eligible individual organizations/institutes for establishing and upgrading their functions & facilities and/or for research & development activities in AYUSH. The objective –
  - To support establishment of advanced/ specialized AYUSH medical health unit in reputed AYUSH and Allopathic institutions.
  - To support creative and innovative proposals for establishment and upgradation of both functions and facilities of reputed.
  - To support creative and innovative proposals for prestigious organizations which have well-established buildings and infrastructure, and wish to work for AYUSH systems to the level of Centre of Excellence.
3. The maximum admissible financial assistance under the Centre of Excellence component of AYURSWASTHYA Yojana, to an organization/institute is Rs.10.00 crores for maximum period of three years.

SOURCE – PIB

## IICA launches ESG Impact Leader Programme to mainstream climate, social and gender agendas into corporate policies

**Why in news :** Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs, an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India has launched today a programme to create Impact Leaders in the areas of Environmental-Social-Governance (ESG).



1. ESG (Environmental, social, and corporate governance) is a term that has been coined to refer to specific data designed to be used by investors for evaluating the material risk that the organization is taking on based on the externalities it is generating.
2. ESG reporting in India commenced in 2009 with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) issuing the Voluntary Guidelines on Corporate Social Responsibility.
3. Impact Leader Programme' is first of its kind in India designed specifically for creating most needed ESG professionals. The impact leaders of the IICA certified



ESG professional programme will have the responsibility to balance the purpose, people, planet and profit.

4. IICA has also formed a 'National Association of Impact Leaders' which is a membership-based association only for ESG professionals. The association will provide a platform for further professional advancement and engagement to its members.

SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES

## India's Smart Cities Mission wins the Platinum Icon in Digital India Awards 2022

**Why in news-** The Smart Cities Mission recently won the Platinum Icon in the Digital India Awards 2022 for their initiative "Data Smart Cities: Empowering Cities through Data".



### KEY POINTS

1. The Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs won the Platinum Icon in the Digital India Awards 2022 for their initiative "DataSmart Cities: Empowering Cities through Data" under the 'Data Sharing and Use for Socio Economic Development' category.
2. The Digital India Awards (DIA) is a prestigious National competition that seeks to encourage and honour innovative digital solutions by government entities in realising the Digital India vision. The category 'Data Sharing and Use for Socio Economic Development' emphasizes on sharing of Government Data by Ministries/Departments/Organizations, States, Cities and ULBs to create a vibrant data ecosystem in the country for analysis, decision-making, innovation, services, economic development and public good.
3. The Awards instituted in 2009 are one of a kind, these are conducted by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY). The seventh edition of Digital India Awards (DIA) is being held in 2022.
4. Data smart Cities Initiative aims to harnesses the power of data for better governance in India's 100 Smart Cities. Based on a 'People, Platform, Process' strategy, this initiative is leading to convergence of Ministry's efforts for performance management, empowerment of communities, and research, co-creation & open innovation.

(SOURCE – Business standard)



## Fifth Scorpene Submarine 'Vagir' Delivered to Indian Navy

**Why in news :** The fifth Scorpène submarine, Vagir of Project – 75 Kalvari Class submarines has been delivered to the Indian Navy by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai.



### KEY POINTS

1. The fifth submarine of the Project – 75, Kalvari Class submarines, Yard 11879, which when commissioned will be christened INS Vagir, was delivered to the Navy by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai on December 20.
2. Project-75 includes the indigenous construction of six submarines of Scorpene design. These submarines are being constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, under collaboration with Naval Group, France.
3. Launched on the 12th of November 2020, Vagir commenced the sea trials on the 1st of February 2022 and it has completed all major trials including the weapon and sensor trials in the shortest time in comparison to the earlier submarines.
4. Project 75 (I), approved in 2007, is part of the Indian Navy's 30 year Plan for indigenous submarine construction.
5. Other submarines of the Kalvari class are INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj, and INS Vela which have already been commissioned into the Navy and INS Vagsheer, which was launched in April earlier this year.

(Source – LiveMint)

## Gati Shakti University: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw appointed as first Chancellor

**Why in news :** Union Minister of Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw has been appointed as the Chancellor of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara.



### KEY POINTS

1. Ashwini Vaishnaw was appointed as Vice Chancellor of Gati Shakti University by the Indian President Smt. Draupadi Murmu. The President has also appointed Dr. Manoj Chaudhary, as the first Vice Chancellor of Gati Shakti University, Vadodara
2. Gati Shakti University was granted the central status by the Union Cabinet in July 2022. The Central Government introduced a bill in the Lok Sabha in August 2022 to convert the National Rail and Transportation Institute, into Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, an autonomous central university to cover the entire transport sector to support the ambitious growth and modernisation in the field.





3. Pradhan Mantri Gati Shakti Yojana was announced by PM Modi on 15th August 2021 on the 75th Independence Day. The objective of the scheme is to cut logistics costs, increase cargo handling capacity, reduce costs and reduce turnaround time at ports to promote trade.
- a. **Gati Shakti Digital Platform:** Build and impact basic infrastructure projects through coordination between 16 ministries through its platform to be implemented in the same manner.

(Source – PIB)

## Shri Nitin Gadkari launches first-ever 'Surety Bond Insurance' for infrastructure projects

**Why in news :** A surety bond is a risk transfer tool for the Principal and shields the Principal from the losses that may arise in case the contractor fails to perform their contractual obligation.



### KEY POINTS

1. Surety bond can be defined in its simplest form as a written agreement to guarantee compliance, payment, or performance of an act. Surety is a unique type of insurance because it involves a three-party agreement. The three parties in a surety agreement are:
  - a. **Principal:** The party that purchases the bond and undertakes an obligation to perform an act as promised.
  - b. **Surety:** The insurance company or surety company that guarantees the obligation will be performed. If the principal fails to perform the act as promised, the surety is contractually liable for losses sustained.
  - c. **Obligee:** The party who requires, and often receives the benefit of the surety bond. For most surety bonds, the obligee is a local, state or federal government organization.
2. With this new instrument of Surety Bonds, the availability of both liquidity and capacity will definitely be boosted; such products stand to strengthen the sector.
3. The product gives the principal a contract of guarantee that contractual terms and other business deals will be concluded in accordance with the mutually agreed terms. In case the contractor doesn't fulfil the contractual terms, the Principal can raise a claim on the surety bond and recover the losses they have incurred.
4. Unlike a bank guarantee, the Surety Bond Insurance does not require large collateral from the contractor thus freeing up significant funds for the contractor,



which they can utilize for the growth of the business. The product will also help in reducing the contractors' debts to a large extent thus addressing their financial worries.

5. It will be launched by Bajaj Allianz Company.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

### International Human Solidarity Day 2022: December 20

**Why in news :** International Human Solidarity Day 2022: International Human Solidarity Day (IHSD) is observed annually on December 20 across the globe to celebrate the ideal of unity in diversity.



#### KEY POINTS

1. International Human Solidarity Day (IHSD) is observed annually on December 20 across the globe to celebrate the ideal of unity in diversity. IHSD highlights the goal of the United Nations and its member states to create awareness about poverty and the need to reduce poverty in independent nations.
2. As per the United Nations Millennium Declaration published on September 18, 2000, the word 'solidarity' was added to the UN as one of the fundamental values that are to be essential for international relations.
3. On December 20, 2002, the UN General Assembly introduced a World Solidarity Fund to help counter global poverty. This got included in the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) trust fund in February 2003. To commemorate the above day, the UN declared December 20 as International Human Solidarity Day.
4. Every year theme is same - To promote the culture of cooperation, equality and social justice.

(Source – The Quint)

### EU Adopts Global Minimum 15% Tax on Big Business

**Why in news :** The EU has adopted a plan for a global minimum 15% tax on big business. The landmark deal between nearly 140 countries aims to stop governments racing to cut taxes in a bid to attract companies.



#### KEY POINTS



1. The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located mostly in Europe formed in 1993. Most of the member countries (19 of them) use Euro as their official currency, while 8 of them do not.
2. Members of the European Union agreed in principle to implement a minimum tax of 15% on big businesses. Companies like Apple, Facebook, Google and other tech giants profit enormously from the domestic markets while they make minimal contributions to public coffers.
3. To address this issue, almost 140 countries started negotiation under the auspices of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). The deal has two main elements –
  - a. Pillar One, which calls for the redistribution of profits generated by the largest companies to the domicile markets where they actually make their sales instead of simply where they are headquartered.
  - b. Pillar Two, which establishes a global minimum effective tax rate of 15 percent determined on a country-by-country basis.
4. EU members have agreed to implement a minimum tax rate of 15% on big businesses in accordance with Pillar 2 of the global tax agreement framed by the OECD last year. This deal will cover firms with global sales above 20 billion Euros (\$23 billion) and profit margins above 10%.
5. European Union members include - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

(Source – Indian Express)

## India ranked 3rd globally in the publication of scientific papers

**Why in news :** Union Minister for Science and Technology, Jitendra Singh has revealed that India had jumped from 7th to 3rd in global scientific publications and scholarly output, according to a report by America's



### KEY POINTS

1. As per the National Science Foundation (NSF)'s Science & Engineering Indicators 2022 report of the United States, India's position globally in scientific publications, has improved from 7th position in 2010 to 3rd position in 2020. India's scholarly output increased from 60,555 papers in 2010 to 1,49,213 papers in 2020.
2. The Centre accounts for 45.4 (forty five point four) per cent of the total spending on research in the country, according to the National Science and Technology



Management Information System under the Department of Science and Technology.

- Overall, the research contribution of centrally funded institutions increased from 62.46% in 2001–2006 to 72.7% in 2016–2020.
- The report reflects that the IITs, NITs, Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research and Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) showed “rapid growth” in their research output, with a two-fold increase in the number of publications between 2011–2015 and 2016–2020.
- China leads the world in the publication of the maximum number of scientific papers followed by The United States of America.

SOURCE – Business Standard

## India jumps 2 spots higher, and now ranks 8th as per Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI, 2023)

**Why in news-** India amongst top 5 best performing countries on Climate Change.



- India has been ranked amongst top 5 countries in the world, and the best among the G20 countries, based on its Climate Change performance. India jumps 2 spots higher, and is now ranked 8<sup>th</sup> amongst 59 nations as per Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI, 2023) published by German Watch, New Climate Institute and Climate Action Network International based in Germany.
- Parameters:** CCPI assesses each country's performance in four categories: GHG Emissions (40% of the overall ranking), Renewable Energy (20%), Energy Use (20%) and Climate Policy (20%).
- Denmark, Sweden, Chile and Morocco were the only four small countries that were ranked above India as 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> respectively. The first, second and third ranks were not awarded to any country.
- Observations: India earned a high rating in the GHG Emissions and Energy Use categories, while a medium for Climate Policy and Renewable Energy.

SOURCE - LIVEMINT

## Union Sports Minister Shri Anurag Singh Thakur felicitates the T20 World Cup 2022 winning Indian Blind Cricket team

**Why in news-** The team won the T20 World Cup for the Blind for the 3rd consecutive time last Saturday.





## KEY POINTS

1. Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Anurag Singh Thakur felicitated the Indian Blind Cricket Team following their arrival in the national capital on Monday. The team won the T20 World Cup for the Blind for the 3rd consecutive time last Saturday after getting past Bangladesh emphatically at the Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru.
2. Indian Blind cricket team captain Ajay Kumar Reddy, whose team beat Bangladesh in the final on Saturday by 120 runs.
3. In blind cricket, every team has eleven players which comprise 4 fully-blind players, 3 partially-blind players, and 4 partially-sighted players. As per the rules, the players use a plastic ball instead of a standard cricket ball. It is fitted with ball bearings so that it makes a noise on throwing. The wickets on the ground are made of metal tubes where all three are attached together.
4. The Indian national blind cricket team which won the T20 World Cup 2022 consisted of 17 players from 10 States. Among them, 6 players are from B1 category (fully blind), 5 players from B2 category (partially blind) and 6 from B3 category (eye vision upto 6 metres). The Indian team beat Pakistan for the T20 World Cup titles in 2012 and 2017.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)



## OCEAN SAILING EXPEDITION ON INDIAN NAVAL SAILING VESSEL (INSV) TARINI FOR CAPE TO RIO RACE – 23

**Why in news :** Indian Navy's sailboat INSV Tarini has set sail for an expedition to Cape Town, South Africa for participating in the 50th edition of Cape to Rio Race 2023.

## KEY POINTS

1. Indian Navy's sailboat INSV Tarini has set sail for an expedition to Cape Town, South Africa for participating in the 50th edition of Cape to Rio Race 2023. This ocean sailing race will be flagged off from Cape Town on 2 January 2023 and will culminate at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The race is one of the most prestigious Trans-Atlantic ocean races. The expedition is being undertaken by an Indian Navy crew of five officers including two women officers.
2. The expedition aims to train the crew onboard, in essential seamanship skills including Navigation, Communication, Technical, Planning, etc.
3. The Cape Town – Rio de Janeiro is one of the most prestigious Trans-Atlantic ocean races. The crew, over a period of 5-6 months in this trans-oceanic voyage is



expected to face extreme weather and rough sea conditions of the Indian, Atlantic and the Southern

4. oceans. During this expedition whilst transiting from Goa to Rio de Janeiro via Cape Town and back, INSV Tarini would be covering a distance of almost 17000nm (approx. 30000 km)
5. INSV Tarini is known for circumnavigating the globe with an all-women officer crew in the historic expedition titled 'Navika Sagar Parikrama' in 2017. It is the second sailboat of Indian Navy after INSV Mhedhi.

(Source – The Print)

### Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh to inaugurate Good Governance Week 2022, “Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore” a Nationwide Campaign

**Why in news :** As many as 3,120 new services identified by district collectors across the country will be added for online service delivery during the five-day 'Prashasan Gaon ki Ore' campaign.



#### KEY POINTS

1. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions is celebrating Good Governance Week during 19th -25th December 2022. During the week, DARPG is organizing the Sushasan Saptah 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore' 2022 a Nation-wide campaign.
2. The campaign seeks to focus on improving service delivery and redressal of public grievances across all the Tehsils/Districts of India and progress will be reported by the District Collectors on a dedicated campaign portal [www.pgportal.gov.in/GGW22](http://www.pgportal.gov.in/GGW22).
3. This is the second time in Amrit Kaal Period, that the Government of India will be conducting a National Campaign at Tehsil level to address Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery.
4. The Sushasan Saptah will witness the Nation's Grievance Redressal Platforms functioning in unison – Grievances received on CPGRAMS will be redressed along with Grievances received on State portals.
5. During the Preparatory Phase of the Good Governance Week 2022 held from December 10-18, 2022, District Collectors have also identified 81,27,944 applications for Service Delivery to be disposed, along with 19,48,122 Public Grievances to be redressed in State Grievance Portals.

(Source – Indian Express)



## India Announced Candidature for UNSC Membership for 2028-29 Term

**Why in news :** India looks forward to being back in the UN Security Council, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said, as he declared the country's candidature as non-permanent member for the 2028-29 term.



### KEY POINTS

1. The previous eight terms that India has been in the Council are 1950-1951, 1967-1968, 1972-1973, 1977-1978, 1984-1985, 1991-1992 and 2011-2012.
2. On December 1, India assumed the monthly rotating Presidency of the Security Council, the second time after August 2021 that India is presiding over the Council during its two year tenure as elected UNSC member.
3. India, whose 2021-2022 term on the Council ends December 31, has been at the forefront of efforts calling for urgent reform of the Security Council, which has remained deeply divisive in dealing with current challenges.
4. India has asserted that the Council, in its current form, does not reflect today's geo-political realities and its credibility is at risk if nations such as developing powers like India do not have a permanent seat at the horse-shoe table.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## PM Modi launches "Grih Pravesh" programme in Agartala

**Why in news :** Prime Minister of India recently launched Grih Pravesh programme for over 2 lakh beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban, Rural in Tripura.



### KEY POINTS

1. Under it over two lakhs of people would enter their allocated houses maximum of which are owned by women members of each family.
2. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U)-
  - a. Under it, central assistance will be provided to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and other implementing agencies through States/UTs for:
    - i. In-situ Rehabilitation of existing slum dwellers using land as a resource through private participation
    - ii. Credit Linked Subsidy
    - iii. Affordable Housing in Partnership
    - iv. Subsidy for Beneficiary-led individual house construction/enhancement.



- b. Credit linked subsidy component will be implemented as a Central Sector Scheme while other three components will be implemented as Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS).
  - c. All statutory towns as per Census 2011 and towns notified subsequently would be eligible for coverage under the Mission. It is implemented by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
3. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G): it is implemented by Rural Development Ministry. This scheme is meant for people who do not own a house and people who live in kutcha houses or houses which are severely damaged. The main aim of the scheme is to provide pucca house with some of the basic amenities.

(Source – PIB)

## International Migrants Day 2022: 18 December

**Why in news :** International Migrants Day 2022: International Migrants Day is observed annually on December 18 to bring attention to the social and economic realities of migrants around the world.



### KEY POINTS

1. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed December 18 as International Migrants Day on December 4, 2000. This special day came into existence after considering the enormous and rising number of migrants around the world.
2. On this day in 1990, the UNGA adopted the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
3. In 2020 over 281 million people were international migrants while over 59 million people were internally displaced by the end of 2021.
4. During the Intergovernmental Conference in December 2018, it was decided to adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration – it is an effective tool for States to discuss how best to address challenges to human mobility without compromising the human rights of people and states' sovereignty.

(Source – ThePrint)





## Harvard University named Claudine Gay as first black president

**Why in news :** Harvard University named Claudine Gay, a dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, as its new president, the first African American to hold the post at the prestigious university.



### KEY POINTS

1. Harvard University named Claudine Gay, a dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, as its new president, the first African American to hold the post at the prestigious university.
2. Gay, 52, is just the second woman to be elected to head the school in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Gay, the daughter of Haitian immigrants, will take over as the university's 30th president on July 1, 2023.
3. She will be succeeding current Harvard President Lawrence S. Bacow, who announced he was retiring in June after five years at the helm. His predecessor, historian Drew Gilpin Faust, was the first woman to serve as Harvard president since its founding in 1636.

SOURCE – The Hindu

## FIFA World Cup 2022 Final, Argentina vs France Highlights: Lionel Messi and Argentina crowned world champions

**Why in news :** Argentina vs France, FIFA World Cup 2022 Highlights: After a 3-3 thriller across 120 minutes, Argentina bested France 4-2 on penalties to win their third World Cup, after 36 years.



### KEY POINTS

1. Messi's Argentina clinched their 3rd World Cup trophy from six final appearances in history, seeing off France 4-2 on penalties (3-3 after extra time) to win the biggest prize in men's football at the Lusail Stadium in Lusail, Qatar. It had won two in 1978 and 1986 under Diego Maradona.
2. He became the first player to win two World Cup Golden Balls.
3. The 22nd edition of the World Cup just ended and for another 4 years for the next World Cup. Also, The 2026 World Cup will be held across three different countries, the United States, Canada and Mexico.
4. This will be the first World Cup to be held in the Arab world, and the second World Cup to be held fully in Asia, following the 2002 tournament in South Korea and Japan.



5. This tournament was the last with 32 participating teams, It was held over a reduced time frame of 29 days with 64 matches played in eight venues across five cities.
6. Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) is the international governing body of association football, beach football and futsal. It is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. Giovanni Vincenzo Infantino is a Swiss-Italian football administrator and the current president of FIFA.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## Khelo India Women's Track Cycling tournament scheduled in Patiala, Ludhiana and Amritsar

**Why in news-** The tournament, scheduled to take place across 4 Zones, has been sanctioned for a total Rs 1.15 crore by the Department of Sports.



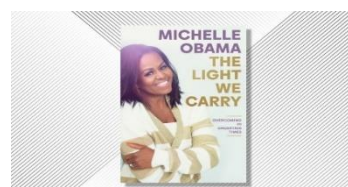
### KEY POINTS

1. For the 1st time, the Khelo India Women's tournament will feature Track Cycling.
2. SAI NSNIS Patiala will play host to the first phase for the North Zone Amritsar leg while the 1st phase of the South Zone will also be held this year with SAI LNIPE Trivandrum.
3. The Cycling Federation of India, with assistance from the Union Sports Ministry, is organizing this tournament, which will take place across the Sprint, Keirin, 500m Individual Time Trial, Individual Pursuit and Scratch Race.
4. Khelo India Scheme was introduced during the 2017-18 fiscal year. Khelo India was formed by merging three schemes namely Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA), Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme (USIS), and National Sports Talent Search Scheme (NSTSS).
5. The Khelo India Scheme is the flagship Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. It seeks to instil a culture of sports and achieve sporting greatness throughout the nation, enabling the general public to tap into sports' transformative power.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## A book titled "The Light We Carry: Overcoming In Uncertain Times" by Michelle Obama

**Why in news :** The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times is a nonfiction book written by Michelle Obama and published, by Crown Publishing.



## KEY POINTS

1. The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times is a nonfiction book written by Michelle Obama and published, by Crown Publishing. The Light We Carry will inspire readers to examine their own lives, identify their sources of gladness, and connect meaningfully in a turbulent world.
2. In 2018, Obama released her memoir Becoming which sold more than 14 million copies worldwide.
3. The Light We Carry deals with uncertainty in the world such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

(Source – Business Standard)

## First transgender judge seeks reservation in government jobs for her community

**Why in news :** India's first transgender judge, Joyita Mondal, sought reservation in government jobs for her community.

## KEY POINTS

1. Mondal was appointed a judge in the Lok Adalat of Islampur in West Bengal in 2017, becoming the first person from her community to hold such a post in the country.
2. In early 2018, transgender activist Vidya Kamble was appointed a member judge in a Lok Adalat in Nagpur in Maharashtra.
3. The country got the third transgender judge, Swati Bidhan Baruah, who hails from Guwahati.
4. The Maharashtra government told the Bombay High Court that members of the third gender can apply for the post of police constables and that it would frame rules setting standards for their physical tests by February 2023.

(Source – Indian Express)



## Minority Rights Day celebrated at the National Commission for Minorities

**Why in news :** Minority Rights Day which is observed on December 18th every year was celebrated at the National Commission for Minorities on December 16, 2022.

## KEY POINTS



1. The United Nations on December 18, 1992 adopted and broadcast the Statement on the individual's Rights belonging to Religious or Linguistic National or Ethnic Minorities.
2. Minority Rights Day upholds the right to freedom and equal opportunities for the minorities in India and creates awareness about their rights.
3. The chairman of National Commission for Minorities is Shri Iqbal Singh Lalpura. The commission is mandated to have one chairperson, a vice-chairperson and 5 members.
4. The National Commission for Minorities is a statutory body that was originally titled Minorities Commission. With the enactment of National Commission for Minorities Act 1992, the Minorities Commission (a non-statutory body) was renamed as National Commission for Minorities.. The first National Commission for Minorities was set up on 17th May 1993.

(Source – PIB)

## NASA to conduct first global water survey from space

**Why in news :** NASA's SWOT, short for Surface Water and Ocean Topography, the advanced radar satellite is designed to give scientists an unprecedented view of the life-giving fluid covering 70% of the planet.



### KEY POINTS

1. **SpaceX launched NASA's water-monitoring satellite** - SWOT to conduct first global water survey from space. Surface Water and Ocean Topography (SWOT) is an advanced radar satellite designed to give an unprecedented view of water.
2. It is developed by NASA in collaboration with its French and Canadian counterparts.
3. **Significance** – The precise data gathered by SWOT will help researchers in
  - Understanding ocean-circulation models.
  - Bolster weather and climate forecasts.
  - Aid in managing scarce freshwater supplies in drought-stricken regions.
  - Predict storm-surge flooding penetration inland
  - Predict the extent of saltwater intrusion into estuaries, wetlands and underground aquifers.





- 4. Radar Technology** - The advanced microwave radar technology enables to collect height-surface measurements of water bodies in high-definition detail over 90% of the globe.
- 5.** The radar instrument operates at the Ka-band frequency of the microwave spectrum. The Ka-band frequency allows scans to penetrate cloud cover and darkness over wide swaths (120km wide) of the Earth.

(Source – CNN)

**The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) (Divyangjan), Government of India , is going to organise "DIVYAKALSHAKTI" - 2022 at Guwahati**

**Why in news :** Divya Kala Shakti is a cultural event which provides a wider and unique platform to showcase the potential of Persons with Differently Abled in the field of performing art, music, dance, acrobatics.



## KEY POINTS

1. A special cultural program, the “Divya Kala Shakti- Witnessing Ability in Disability” will be organized by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
2. In this regional "Divya Kala Shakti" event Divyangjan across North Eastern region are going to perform and show case their talents in the field of dance, song, fine arts etc. In fact almost 25 items will be presented by 102 numbers of divyangjan artists.
3. It will be hosted by the DEPwD's Swami Vivekananda National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (SVNIRTAR) at Odisha.

(SOURCE – PIB)

**Atal Innovation Mission and UNDP India launch 5th edition of Youth Co:Lab for Young Entrepreneurs**

**Why in news:** The 5th edition of Youth Co:Lab, Asia Pacific's largest youth innovation movement was jointly launched by Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and UNDP India on Thursday December 15th 2022.



## KEY POINTS

1. Youth Co:Lab is an initiative launched in 2019 by UNDP India in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog and aims to establish a common agenda for



Asia-Pacific countries to invest in and empower youth to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation, and entrepreneurship.

2. Youth Co:Lab was co-created in 2017 by UNDP and the Citi Foundation, Youth Co:Lab.
3. The Youth Co:Lab initiative, till date, has been implemented in 28 countries and territories, reaching over 200,000 participants, benefitting more than 11,000 young social entrepreneurs and supporting over 1,240 social enterprises.
4. Passionate young founders with solutions that solve real problems and/or create meaningful co-innovation opportunities aged 18-29 can apply and will be supported throughout the programme.
5. Through Youth Co: Lab, 30 early-stage start-ups would be supported by the springboard programme, and the best would be provided a seed grant for scaling up their start-up.
6. AIM is the Government of India's endeavor to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. Its objective is to serve as a platform for the promotion of world-class innovation hubs, grand challenges, start-up businesses, and other self-employment activities, particularly in technology-driven areas.

(SOURCE – LIVEMINT)

## Gautam Adani, Asia's Busiest Dealmaker

**Why in news :** The Indian tycoon's wealth has surged more than anyone else's this year

### KEY POINTS

1. Gautam Adani has topped the list of people whose wealth witnessed the maximum rise globally during this year.
2. In the 'Sixth Bloomberg 50' report, which looks at those in business, politics, science and technology, finance and entertainment whose accomplishments deserve recognition has found Adani, who is already the third richest person in the world.
3. Gautam Adani, 60, is the world's third-richest person, with an estimated net worth of \$134 billion and interests ranging from Australian coal mines to India's busiest ports.

Thus, making him the world's third-richest person behind Bernard Arnault and Elon Musk.

(Source – Business Standard)



## The Wheebox India Skills Report 2023

**Why in news :** The Wheebox India Skills Report 2023, which was released recently, found an increase in the employability of Indians over the past one year..



### KEY POINTS

1. The Wheebox India Skills Report 2023 was compiled by trade bodies, companies, educational institutions, and others.
2. The report came as a result of the evaluation of 3.75 lakh candidates or freshers who took the Wheebox National Employability Test (WNET) across India and the participation in the Early Career Edition of the India Hiring Intent Survey by 150 corporations from 15 different industries.
3. The last one year witnessed an increase in the employability of Indians. The evaluation found that 50.3 percent of the candidates were employable – a significant increase from the last year's 46.2 percent. The 52.8 percent of women workforce are employable. This is higher than the 47.2 percent of employable men.
4. The current share of women in Indian workforce is 33 percent. This is lesser than the of males at 67 percent. Rajasthan has the highest percentage of employable females who are prepared for the workforce (53.5 percent).
5. Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Delhi are expected to have the most employable talent in 2023.
6. Among the domains, B Com, MBA and B Pharm graduates were the most employable. Graduates in the fields of Polytechnic and MCA were the least employable.

SOURCE – Business Standard

## 2022 Global Food Security Index (GFSI) Report

**Why in news :** The 2022 Global Food Security Index (GFSI) report was released by the British weekly The Economist. In this report, South Africa overtook Tunisia to become the most food-secure country in Africa.



### KEY POINTS

1. Democratic republic of Congo(DRC) also ranks among weakest performers while Finland is the most food secure country followed by Ireland, Norway and France in that order.



2. The Global Food Security Index (GFSI) considers food affordability, availability, quality and safety, and sustainability and adaptation across 113 countries. The index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model constructed from 68 unique indicators that measure the drivers of food security across both developing and developed countries.
3. Significant progress was made in global food security from 2012 to 2015, with the overall GFSI score increasing by 6 percent. However, structural challenges have caused the growth of the global food system to slow down. The past 3 years witnessed a reversal in the global trend of the overall food security environment.
4. South Africa, at the 59th position, was recognized as the most food-secure country in Africa.
5. In 2022, the GFSI suffered because of the plummeting of two of its strongest pillars – affordability, and quality and safety. The weakness in the other two pillars (availability, and sustainability and adaptation) continued during this year.

(SOURCE – Indian Express)

## Russia replaces Iraq as top oil supplier to India in Nov with 23% share

**Why in news :** India's oil imports from Russia rose for the fifth straight month, totaling 908,000 barrels per day (bpd) in November, up 4% from October, the data showed



### KEY POINTS

1. Russia has for the first time emerged as top oil supplier to India replacing Iraq as refiners last month snapped up oil from Moscow fearing a price cap from Dec. 5 could hit supplies and choke payment avenues, data obtained from trade sources showed.
2. India's oil imports from Russia rose for the fifth straight month, totaling 908,000 barrels per day (bpd) in November, up 4% from October.
3. The Group of Seven nations(G-7), Australia, and the 27 European Union countries have imposed a price cap of \$60 a barrel on Russian seaborne oil from Dec. 5 as the West tries to limit Moscow's ability to finance its war in Ukraine.

(Source – PIB)





## Singapore's cost of living is shooting up and here's how Indians there are coping with it

**Why in news :** The Group of Seven leading economies have created an open, international climate club for countries that want to cooperate in the fight against global warming



### KEY POINTS

1. The latest Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Worldwide Cost of Living (WCOL) Index released earlier this month declared Singapore and New York City (US) as joint "most expensive cities in the world".
2. Tel Aviv (Israel) which topped the ranking in 2021 fell to third place. Tel Aviv gained the "most expensive city" tag last year mainly because of the strength of the shekel which rose almost 20 per cent against the US dollar.
3. The main reason for the rise is the war between Russia and Ukraine which has driven up among other things energy, food and commodity costs. The price of a litre of petrol has shot up 22 per cent in the last one year on average in local-currency terms amid higher global oil prices.
4. The WCOL is a twice-yearly survey conducted by EIU that compares more than 400 individual prices across more than 200 products and services in 172 cities. In 2021, the number of cities covered increased to 173 when Kyiv was included.

(Source – CNN)

## Bosnia and Herzegovina set for EU candidate status

**Why in news :** EU leaders are expected to endorse the move on Thursday.

### KEY POINTS

1. EU countries agreed to grant Bosnia and Herzegovina candidate status — a major early milestone on the long road to joining the bloc. The decision is expected to be formalized on Thursday when EU leaders descend on Brussels for a summit.
2. Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for EU membership in 2016, but its bid has languished amid enlargement fatigue that has stalled EU aspirations across the Western Balkans.
3. In June, EU leaders granted Ukraine and Moldova candidate status.
4. The Czech Republic currently holds the EU's rotating presidency.



5. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen is a German politician who has been serving as the president of the European Commission since 2019

(SOURCE – POLITICO)

### Tamil Nadu releases climate change mission document: 13 goals set for 2030

**Why in news :** Tamil Nadu is the first state to launch its own climate change mission to make it a 'climate smart state'.

#### KEY POINTS

1. Tamil Nadu is the first state to launch its own climate change mission to make it a 'climate smart state'. The state has proposed 13 goals for the mission, along with 11 focal areas for climate action as part of the Tamil Nadu State Action Plan on Climate Change 2.0 (TNSAPCC 2.0).
2. TNSAPCC was first implemented in the state in 2015 based on the National Action Plan for Climate Change for 2015-2020.
3. The Climate Change Mission also underlines the fact that Tamil Nadu accounts for 172.83 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e) out of the 2953 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e emissions at the national level, with the power sector contributing the maximum (67%).
4. The mission also proposes following a 'one health approach' to climate change to bring a better understanding of its impacts on environmental, animal, and human health.

(Source – lastminute news)



### United Nations Recognizes Namami Gange Initiative As One Of The Top 10 World Restoration Flagships To Revive The Natural World

**Why in news :** DG, NMCG Receives Award At A Function In 15th Conference Of Parties To The Convention On Biodiversity In Montreal, Canada

#### KEY POINTS

1. The United Nations (UN) has recognized Namami Gange initiative to rejuvenate India's sacred River Ganga as one of the top 10 World Restoration Flagships to revive the natural world.
2. The Award was received by Shri G. Asok Kumar, Director General, Namami Gange at a function in the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the Convention on



Biodiversity (CBD) in Montreal, Canada on 14th December 2022, the World Restoration Day.

3. Namami Gange selected from over 150 such initiatives from 70 countries across the globe.
4. They were selected under the banner of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, a global movement coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
5. It is designed to prevent and reverse the degradation of natural spaces across the planet. The recognized initiatives, Namami Gange, will now be eligible to receive UN support, funding or technical expertise.
6. Namami Gange Programme was started in 2014 after Shri Narendra Modi took over as the Prime Minister after recognizing the need to rejuvenate River Ganga and committed over 5 billion dollars to ensure that the river gets clean.

(SOURCE – PIB)

### Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Ko Kaam Karyakram (PMKKK) now named as Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) Scheme

**Why in news-** The integrated scheme converges five erstwhile schemes of the Ministry viz. Seekho aur Kamao, USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni and Nai Manzil.



#### KEY POINTS

1. The Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) seeks to facilitate opportunities for minority communities in education, skilling, and employment to ensure their inclusive development in the national fabric.
2. The integrated scheme converges five erstwhile schemes of the Ministry viz. Seekho aur Kamao, USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni and Nai Manzil. The scheme has been approved by the Cabinet for the period of 15th Finance Commission.
3. PM VIKAS aims to improve livelihoods of the minorities, particularly the artisan communities, using the components of skill development, education, women leadership & entrepreneurship.
4. These components compliment each other in the ultimate objective of the scheme to increase the incomes of the beneficiaries and provide support by facilitating credit and market linkages.

(SOURCE – PIB)



## Nepal, India to hold joint military training exercise

**Why in news :** Indian Army chief General Manoj Pande visited Nepal in September.

### KEY POINTS

1. The 16th Edition of Indo-Nepal joint training Exercise "SURYA KIRAN-XVI" between India and Nepal will be conducted at Nepal Army Battle School, Saljhandi (Nepal), from 16 - 29 December 2022.
2. Exercise "SURYA KIRAN" is conducted annually between India and Nepal with the aim to enhance interoperability in jungle warfare & counter terrorism operations in mountainous terrain and HADR under UN mandate.
3. During the exercise, participants will be training together to develop inter-operability and share their experience including Counter Insurgency and Counter Terrorist operations and also on Humanitarian Relief operations. (SOURCE – The Hindu).
4. The joint exercise would focus on evolution of combined drills for planning and conduct of tactical operations at unit level in counter terrorism operations and disaster response mechanism in general and role of armed forces in management of disaster.



## India-Kazakhstan joint military exercise "KAZIND – 2022" begins in Umroi, Meghalaya

**Why in news** The 6th Edition of Indo - Kazakhstan joint training exercise "KAZIND-22" is conducted at Umroi (Meghalaya) from 15 to 28 December 2022.

### KEY POINTS

1. The 6th Edition of Indo – Kazakhstan joint training exercise "KAZIND-22" is conducted at Umroi (Meghalaya) from 15 to 28 December 2022.
2. The scope of this exercise involves a Command Post Exercise (CPX) at the Battalion level and Company level Field Training Exercise (FTX) on sub-conventional operations.
3. During the exercise, participants will engage in variety of missions ranging from joint planning, joint tactical drills, basics of special arms skills, HADR and raiding a hostile target.
4. Joint annual training exercise with the Kazakhstan Army was instituted in 2016 as Exercise Prabal Dostyk, which was later upgraded to a company level exercise and renamed as Ex Kazind in 2018.

(SOURCE – livemint)





### WHO-GCTM to be emerge as a centre of global wellness

**Why in news :** The Ministry of Ayush and the World Health Organization (WHO) are establishing world's first and only Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (WHO-GCTM) in Jamnagar, Gujarat.



#### KEY POINTS

1. The WHO-GCTM would emerge as a centre of global wellness which will promote the development of medicines and research related to Traditional Medicines and will strengthen evidence-based research, training and awareness about Traditional Medicines.
2. WHO-GCTM is an outpost centre of WHO-HQ (Geneva) funded by the Government of India.
3. The centre will act as a mentor for the development and shaping health research agenda, setting international norms and standards, providing technical support to countries, and monitoring & assessing health trends of traditional medicine.
4. It will establish research methodology standards and develop standards for clinical practice and protocols in traditional medicine. The center's objectives include developing specific capacity building and training programs in campus, residential, or web-based, and through partnerships with the WHO Academy.

(Source – PIB)

### G7 nations establish international climate club to fight global warming

**Why in news :** The Group of Seven leading economies have created an open, international climate club for countries that want to cooperate in the fight against global warming



#### KEY POINTS

1. The climate club aims to support the rapid and ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement, which seeks to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).
2. The club will work to help accelerate the industrial transition to cleaner forms of energy and to further develop emission-reduction measures.
3. The Group of Seven leading economies have created an open, international climate club for countries that want to cooperate in the fight against global warming. Germany holds the presidency of the G-7 until the end of the year and then passes it on to Japan. The G7 is an informal grouping of seven of the world's



advanced economies, including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as the European Union.

4. It was formed in 1975 and does not have a formal charter or a secretariat.

(Source – CNN)

## Kerala seed farm declared as first carbon neutral farm in the country

**Why in news :** A significant reduction in carbon emission has helped the seed farm, under the Agricultural Department, achieve carbon neutral status.



### KEY POINTS

1. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday declared a seed farm, located in Aluva, as the first carbon neutral farm in the country.
2. As many as 30 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions come from agriculture and this can be prevented and climate change can be regulated through carbon neutral agricultural practices.
3. Compared to the emission rate, as many as 170 tons of more carbon have been procured at the farm, which helped it to be declared as the first carbon neutral seed farm in the country

(Source – Indian Express)

## Chief Justice of India Inaugurates Digitisation Hubs in 10 districts of Odisha

**Why in news :** Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud virtually inaugurated 10 district court digitisation hubs (DCDH) in Odisha.



### KEY POINTS

1. Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud virtually inaugurated 10 district court digitisation hubs (DCDH) in Odisha, and said that modernisation of judiciary is the need of the hour.
2. With this inauguration, a total of 15 DCDHs have now become functional in the state, with each catering to a neighbouring district, thus covering all 30 district courts. Each DCDH will be assigned the task of digitizing the surrounding districts.
3. Initially, four District Court Digitization Centres (DCDC) were set up on a pilot basis in Cuttack, Ganjam, Sambalpur and Balasore districts on April 30, 2021.



4. Orissa High Court, with its digitisation initiatives, is now a “role model” for all other high courts of the country. Very soon, the Orissa High Court would be mentoring the entire judiciary of the nation in the field of digitisation.

(SOURCE – Business Standard)

## Ex-Vice President Venkaiah Naidu receives SIES award for public leadership

**Why in news :** Former vice president Venkaiah Naidu has been conferred with the 25th Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award (SIES).



### KEY POINTS

1. Former vice president Venkaiah Naidu has been conferred with the 25th Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award (SIES).
2. The Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award was instituted by SIES in 1998 in memory of late seer of Kanchi, Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi. This award is given annually in the field of Public eminence, Community leadership, Science and Technology, Social thinkers and the International category.
3. The SEIS was set up in 1932 by M.V. Venkateshwaran in Mumbai.

(SOURCE – the print)

## UIDAI tops Grievance Redressal Index in Nov, fourth month in a row

**Why in news-** UIDAI is constantly working to facilitate “ease of living” for residents and is further committed to strengthen its Grievance Redressal Mechanism towards an even more efficient service delivery.



### KEY POINTS

1. Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has once again awarded first rank amongst all Group A Ministries, Departments and Autonomous Bodies for resolution of public grievances in the rankings report published by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) for November 2022.
2. UIDAI's new Open-Source CRM (customer relationship management) system is enhancing user experience and improving service delivery to the residents.
3. Through this new CRM system, UIDAI has moved towards centralized grievance handling mechanism. The UIDAI head quarter and its regional offices (ROs) are



using common platform for CRM case creation and resolution through various channels.

4. UIDAI's newly launched Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI-ML) based Chatbot, 'Aadhaar Mitra' is also becoming popular among residents and has even featured in a popular TV quiz show hosted by a famous film star.
5. The new Chatbot comes with enhanced features like - check Aadhaar enrollment/update status, tracking of Aadhaar PVC card status, information on enrollment centre location etc. Residents can even register their grievances and track them using Aadhaar Mitra. "Aadhaar Mitra" is available in both English and Hindi languages.

(SOURCE – PIB)

### Divya TS won gold in women's air pistol National Shooting Championship 2022

**Why in news :** Karnataka shooter Divya T.S has secured her first women's 10m air pistol national title at the 65th National Shooting Championship Competitions.



#### KEY POINTS

1. Karnataka shooter **Divya T.S** has secured her first women's 10m air pistol national title at the **65th National Shooting Championship Competitions** in Pistol events held in Bhopal.
2. She defeated Sanskriti Bana from Uttar Pradesh by 16-14 in the gold medal match and Rhythm Sangwan from Haryana settled for bronze.
3. The 27-year-old Divya as she topped the second stage with 254.2, ahead of a string of top shooters like Rhythm Sangwan, Esha Singh and Manu Bhaker.

(SOURCE – The Hindu)

### Memorandum of Understanding signed on developing Krishi-Decision Support System using RISAT and VEDAS

**Why in news** Union Minister Shri Narendra Singh Tomar and Minister of State Dr. Jitendra Singh formally released the data products and services of RISAT-1A satellite for the user community



#### KEY POINTS

1. MoU was signed between the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Department of Space to develop the Krishi-Decision Support System (Krishi-DSS)





using geospatial technologies and related databases for enhancing evidence based decision making capability of all the stakeholders in the agriculture sector.

2. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is developing Krishi-DSS, a decision support system, on the lines of Gati Shakti, using RISAT-1A and VEDAS of Department of Space.
3. This will enhance the evidence-based decision-making capability of all the stakeholders in the agriculture sector by way of integration with MOSDAC and BHUVAN (Geo-platform) of ISRO and systems of ICAR.
4. If this knowledge reaches the farmers, their production and productivity will increase. The quality of production will increase and export opportunities will also increase.
5. RISAT-1A is India's first Radar Imaging Satellite, which was launched on 14th February 2022. RISAT-1A is an all-weather satellite and can penetrate deep into vegetation. It can take high resolution geospatial images regardless of lighting conditions

(SOURCE – PIB)

## International Universal Health Coverage Day 2022: 12th December

**Why in news:** International Universal Health Coverage Day is celebrated annually on 12th December. The day is marked to promote the importance of building robust, resilient, world-class healthcare systems globally.



1. On 12 December 2012, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed a resolution urging countries to accelerate progress toward universal health coverage (UHC) – the idea that everyone, everywhere should have access to quality, affordable health care.
2. The United Nations declared December 12th as International Universal Health Coverage Day in 2017.
3. According to the UN, this year's theme, "Build the world we want: A healthy future for all," emphasises the importance of equity, trust, healthy surroundings, investments, and accountability in order to build strong health systems.
4. International Universal Health Coverage Day aims to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage with multi-stakeholder partners.



## International Mountain Day 2022: Theme, History, Significance

**Why in news:** to create awareness about the importance of mountains to life, to highlight the opportunities and constraints in mountain development



1. The UN General Assembly declared 2002 the UN International Year of Mountains, and on this occasion, it designated 11 December, from 2003 onwards, as International Mountain Day.
2. International Mountain Day is celebrated annually on 11 December to create awareness about the importance of mountains to life, to highlight the opportunities and constraints in mountain development, and to build alliances that will bring positive change to mountain peoples and environments around the world.
3. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) coordinates the annual celebration of the Day to foster greater awareness of mountain issues.
4. Their conservation is a key factor for sustainable development and is part of Goal 15 of the SDGs.
5. The theme of this year's International Mountain Day (IMD) on 11 December will be Women move mountains.
6. The first international day was celebrated for the first time the following year, 2003. Its roots date back to 1992, when the document "Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development" (called Chapter 13), was adopted as part of the action plan Agenda 21 of the Conference on Environment and Development.
7. Most recently, the UN proclaimed 2022 the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development.

## GHAR-GO Home and Re-Unite portal developed and launched by NCPCR

**Why in news:** National Commission for Protection of Child Rights aims to digitally monitor and track the restoration and repatriation of children.

1. The GHAR portal has been developed to digitally monitor and track the restoration and repatriation of children according to the protocol.
2. It allows for Digital tracking and monitoring of children who are in the Juvenile Justice system and have to be repatriated to another Country/State/District.



3. It will help in speedy repatriation of children by Digital transfer of cases of children to the concerned Juvenile Justice Board/Child Welfare Committee of the State.
4. Child Welfare Committees and District Child Protection Officers can ensure proper restoration and rehabilitation of children by digitally monitoring the progress of the case of the child.
5. List of Government implemented schemes will be provided, so that at the time of restoration the Child Welfare Committees can link the child with the schemes to strengthen the family and ensure that child remains with his/her family.
6. The Ministry of Women and Child Development is administering the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015) (as amended in 2021) and Rules thereunder, for ensuring safety, security, dignity and well-being of children.
7. Under the JJ Act, 2015 (Sections 27-30), the Child Welfare Committees have been empowered to take decisions with regard to the children in need of care and protection for the best interest of the children.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Finance & Central Bank Deputies Meeting under the G20 Presidency of India scheduled in Bengaluru on Tuesday

**Why in news:** The meeting, which will mark the start of discussions on the Finance Track agenda under the Indian G20 Presidency, will be hosted jointly by the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India.



1. The upcoming meeting of G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies will be co-chaired by Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs and Dr Michael D. Patra, Deputy Governor of RBI.
2. The G20 Finance Track, led by Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of G20 countries, focuses on economic and financial issues
3. The G20 Finance Track discusses key issues of relevance for the global economy, encompassing the global economic outlook, the international financial architecture, infrastructure development and financing, sustainable finance, global health, international taxation and financial sector issues, including financial inclusion.
4. The Indian G20 Presidency's theme of 'One Earth One Family, One Future' will guide the G20 Finance Track discussions..
5. The G20 was formed in 1999 in the backdrop of the financial crisis of the late 1990s that hit East Asia and Southeast Asia in particular.



6. Members of G20 - Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the EU.

## Kerala CM inaugurates India's biggest business jet terminal in Kochi

**Why in news:** Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday inaugurated a new Business Jet Terminal at Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL)



1. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday inaugurated a new Business Jet Terminal at Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL).
2. With this, Cochin airport has become the fourth airport in the country to operate a private jet terminal. With two majestic domestic and international travel terminals, Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) is now home to the country's biggest Business Jet Terminal.
3. The new facility at the airport will boost tourism as well as the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) sector in the state.
4. The business jet terminal inaugurated was built at a cost of 40 crore rupees by renovating the old domestic terminal. It covers an area of 40,000 sq ft with comfortable lounges, customs and immigration counters, a business centre and other modern facilities.

## New Himachal CM and Gujarat CM takes charge

**Why in news:** Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu took oath as the 15th Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh while Patel was administered oath as the 18th Chief Minister of Gujarat.



1. Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu took oath as the 15th Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday. Soon after he was sworn in, Mukesh Agnihotri, leader of the Opposition in the outgoing Assembly, also took oath, as the Deputy Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh.
2. Meanwhile, in Gujarat, the second state where Assembly elections were held recently, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel will take oath for the second consecutive term





## DARE TO DREAM' SCHEME FOR PROMOTING START-UPS

**Why in news:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has launched an innovation contest 'Dare to Dream 2.0' on the 5th death anniversary of former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam in 2019.



1. The 'Dare to Dream 2.0' is an open challenge to promote the innovators and startups of the country, for innovation in defence and aerospace technologies in the country after the call of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
2. Award money, up to Rs.10 lakh for startup and Rs. 5 lakh to individual category, will be given to the winners.
3. It brings together innovators, entrepreneurs, individuals above 18 years and startups (recognised by DPIIT and with Indian founders) for innovative ideas in the field of Defence and Aerospace.
4. The selected individual/company are getting benefitted as DRDO supports them to realise awarded ideas into Prototype through Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme.
5. He was the 11th President of India (from 2002-2007).

## 39TH EDITION OF INDIA-INDONESIA COORDINATED PATROL

**Why in news:** The 39th edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy is being conducted from 08 – 19 December 2022



1. As part of Government of India's vision SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region), Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) to enhance maritime security in the region.
2. India and Indonesia have been carrying out CORPATs twice a year since 2002, with an aim of keeping this vital part of the IOR safe and secure for commercial shipping, international trade and conduct of legitimate maritime activities
3. Indian Naval Ship (INS) Karmuk, an indigenously built Missile Corvette participated in the pre-deployment briefing at Belawan, Indonesia.
4. The CORPAT will be executed along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) from 15 to 16 December 2022 and will conclude with a debrief at Port Blair.



5. CORPATs help build understanding and interoperability between navies, and facilitate institution of measures to prevent and suppress Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism, armed robbery and piracy.

## Japanese dengue vaccine QDENG A approved by European Union

1. The European Union has approved Takeda's dengue vaccine, making it the second such vaccine to receive approval from the bloc. Takeda is a Japanese pharmaceutical company.
2. According to the WHO, mosquito-borne dengue infects between 100 and 400 million people annually and can result in hemorrhagic fever, though more than 80 percent of cases are mild or asymptomatic.
3. Dengvaxia, the first dengue vaccine in the world, is already available in the European Union, but it is only for people who have already had a confirmed infection.
4. QDENG A (TAK-003) is a dengue vaccine that is based on a live-attenuated dengue serotype 2 virus, which provides the genetic "backbone" for all four dengue virus serotypes and is designed to protect against any of these serotypes.



## NASA's Perseverance rover collects first dust samples on Mars

1. NASA's Perseverance rover bottled up two samples of the Martian surface on December 2 and December 6, according to the agency's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).
2. Scientists will study Martian samples returned to Earth with powerful scientific equipment to look for signs of ancient microbial life.
3. While most of the samples collected will be rock, researchers also want to study Martian regolith (dust) to learn about geological processes on the red planet and help mitigate against challenges that astronauts will face when we send a mission to Mars.
4. The Martian surface is known to contain perchlorate, a toxic chemical that could threaten astronauts' health if large amounts are inhaled or ingested.



## 535 railway stations covered One Station One Product scheme

1. Railways minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Friday said that 535 railway stations are covered under the One Station One Product (OSOP) scheme
2. Ministry of Railways has launched 'One Station One Product' (OSOP) scheme over Indian Railways with objectives to promote 'Vocal for Local' vision of the Government of India, provide a market for local/indigenous products and create additional income opportunities for the marginalised sections of society
3. The Product categories, under this scheme, include the following
  - i. Handicrafts/ Artefacts
  - ii. Textiles and Handlooms
  - iii. Traditional Garments
  - iv. Local agricultural produce/ Processed/semi processed foods.
4. The pilot of the scheme was started on 25.03.2022 and presently 535 stations are covered with 572 OSOP outlets.



## Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela to be held on December 12

1. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship announced that the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela (PMNAM) will be conducted on December 12. Interested people can register for the event at the official website — [apprenticeshipindia.gov.in](https://apprenticeshipindia.gov.in)
2. PMNAM will be conducted across 197 locations in 25 states and union territories this year. The event will see participation of several local businesses that will provide local youth the opportunity to shape their careers through apprenticeship training
3. Through this initiative and platform, the government is aiming to train 1 million youth per annum.
4. Through this fair, candidates will also earn National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)-recognised certifications post the training session, which will help improve their employability rate.
5. To be eligible for this event, interested candidates should have successfully cleared class 5 to class 12 and must have skill training certificates, or ITI diploma holders or graduates.



## 58 airports covered under Krishi Udan Scheme 2.0

1. Krishi Udan Scheme 2.0 was announced on 27 October 2021 enhancing the existing provisions, mainly focusing on transporting perishable food products from the hilly areas, North-Eastern States and tribal areas.
2. For facilitating and incentivising movement of agri-produce by air transportation, Airports Authority of India (AAI) provides full waiver of Landing, Parking, Terminal Navigational Landing Charges (TNLC) and Route Navigation Facility Charges (RNFC) for Indian freighters and P2C (Passenger-to-Cargo) Aircraft.
3. 58 airports have been included under Krishi Udan 2.0.
4. Krishi Udan Scheme is a convergence scheme where eight Ministries/Departments namely Ministry of Civil Aviation, Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region would leverage their existing schemes to strengthen the logistics for transportation of Agri-produce.
5. The Scheme aims to ensure seamless, cost-effective, time bound, air transportation and associated logistics for all Agri-produce originating especially from North-East, hilly and tribal regions of the country



## Cyclone Mandous ranked 'severe': IMD issues red alert in 13 Tamil Nadu districts

1. India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday said the cyclonic storm 'Mandous' has hit the southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts and is likely to cause severe damages.
2. Fishermen have been advised not to venture out in the sea.
3. Fearing heavy rains, all the schools and colleges will be closed on Friday in Puducherry and Karaikal.
4. Under its influence, the states are likely to witness very heavy rains and squally weather with a wind speed of 65-75 kmph gusting to 85 kmph from midnight of today to the early hours of tomorrow.





## Ministry of Tribal Affairs organised One Day Mega Health Camp 'Abua Bugin Hodmo-Our Better Health' at Saraikela Kharsawan, Jharkhand

1. The Mega Health Camp was jointly organised by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Ayush, Tata Steel Foundation and the District Administration, envisaging better health and related facilities for the tribal society.
2. This is the second successful mega health camp to offer improved healthcare services to tribals of Jharkhand
3. This health camp's primary objective has been to reduce the burden of three groups of diseases that seriously impair the health of the members of tribal group. TB, leprosy, HIV, hepatitis, and other contagious diseases fall under the first category. Breast and uterine cancer, sickle cell disease, heart disease, skin conditions, nervous system disorders, and dental problems fall under the second category. The third category includes malnutrition and adolescent health, including maternal and child health nutrition (MCHN+A).
4. In the health camp, screening for these diseases and taking action to diagnose and prevent them were undertaken.



## BEE organizes "National Conclave on Accelerating Energy Efficiency in Micro, Small and Medium Sector Enterprises"

1. Bureau of Energy Efficiency, under Ministry of Power organised the "National Conclave on Accelerating Energy Efficiency in MSMEs"
2. The National Conclave will contribute to strengthening the operationalization and implementation of the current portfolio as well as a future program to scale up towards an inclusive and sustainable approach to energy efficiency in MSMEs.
3. Launch of UNNATEE tool for faster adoption of energy efficiency projects in MSME Sectors, which is jointly developed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency and SIDBI and Draft concept note on Perform Achieve and Earn (PAE) Scheme, a voluntary market-based mechanism for MSMEs for consultation.
4. The conclave was graced by the participation of more than 200 participants comprising of Government, multilateral/bilateral agencies, industries, industrial associations, technology providers, and consultants among others.

