

Date : 26th Dec 2023

Weekly Current Affairs

English

## National

### 1. 3 sub-schemes launched under RAMP programme



Union Minister Narayan Rane launched 3 sub schemes namely MSME GIFT scheme, MSE SPICE scheme and MSE scheme on Online Dispute Resolution for delayed payments scheme. These schemes are a part of the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) programme assisted by the World Bank.

### 2. CISF to provide Parliament security

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) provides comprehensive security to the New Parliament Building. The step was taken due to a security breach in the Parliament on December 13, 2023. CISF is a federal police organisation founded on March 10, 1969.

### 3. Two day Tribal Orientation Programme Adi Vyakhyan

The National Tribal Research Institute (NTRI) organised "Adi Vyakhyan", a two day Tribal Orientation programme. The initiative aims to explore Tribal identity and Tribal contribution to cultural diversity of the nation. The programme was inaugurated by Union Tribal Affairs Minister Shri Arjun Munda.

### 4. Paat Mitro Application

The Ministry of Textiles launched the Paat Mitro mobile

application. The application is developed by The Jute Corporation of India Limited (JCI). The application aims to provide information about MSP and agronomy to Jute Farmers.

### 5. National Workshop on Cactus for Green Economy in Watershed Projects

Union Minister Giriraj Singh addressed a one day National workshop on "Cactus for Green Economy in Watershed Projects" held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The workshop was organised by the Department of Land Resources(DoLR). The aim of the workshop is to derive ways for Promotion of Cactus cultivation.

### 6. Indus Food

The Trade Promotion Council of India in collaboration with the Department of commerce is set to organise an Indus Food event from January 8th to 10th 2024. The event will be held at India Expo Centre, Greater Noida, Noida.

### 7. Redevelopment Plan for Sitamarhi

The Bihar Government announced a 72 crore plan for redevelopment of Punourdhama in Sitamarhi. The place is believed to be the birthplace of Hindu Deity Sita. Sitamarhi is a part of 15 tourist cum religious places on the Ramayana Circuit under Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

### 8. Card on File Tokenization

Card on File(CoF) Tokenization Facility has been introduced by The Reserve Bank of India through Banks. It will help cardholders in creating and linking tokens to their existing accounts through e-commerce applications.

### 9. Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023 Winners announced

The Sahitya Akademi Awards 2023 were announced by Sahitya Akademi on December

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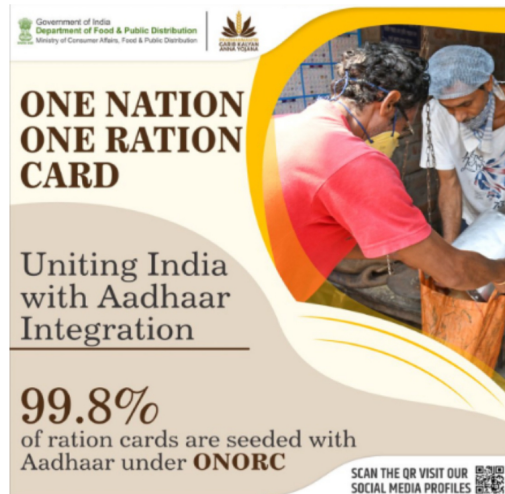
English

20th 2023. The awards were announced in 24 languages. A total of 9 books of poetry, 3 essays, 5 short stories, 6 novels and 1 literary study have been awarded.

### 10. Union Minister Bhupender Yadav launched NITI AAYOG report

Union Minister Bhupender Yadav launched a NITI AAYOG report titled "A Green and Sustainable Growth Agenda for the Economy" in New Delhi. Ambassador of Brazil to India Kenneth Felix also participated in the launch event.

### 11. 99.8 percent Ration Cards seeded with AADHAR



Under One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Scheme 99.8 percent Ration Cards have been seeded with Aadhaar Card. The initiative will help in rightful targeting of PDS beneficiaries in the country. The One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Scheme was launched on 9th August 2019.

### 12. First Foundational Day of AIIA Goa

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal marked the first foundation day of All India Institute of Ayurveda, Goa. He released a commemorative postal stamp on the occasion. AIIA is a premier

institution with aim to provide high quality Healthcare services.

### 13. Late Blight Disease attack on Potato crop

Researchers at Punjab Agricultural University warned the farmers against the attack of Late Blight Disease on potato crops. The disease is caused by the fungus *Phytophthora Infestans*.

### 14. Centre allows extra borrowing of 60,000 crores to states

The Union Government has allowed 22 states to borrow an additional 60,000 crore in Financial Year 2024 above their net borrowing ceiling. The States are being granted this extra borrowings for their contribution to the National Pension Scheme (NPS).

### 15. Surat Diamond Bourse World's Largest Corporate Office

The Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the World's largest meditation centre "The Swarved Mahamandir" in Varanasi's Umaraha area. It is a seven floor temple with a seating capacity of 20,000 individuals.

### 16. India top recipient of Global Remittances

The World Bank's latest report titled Migration and Development Brief stated that India will be the top recipient of remittances globally in 2023. The amount of remittances can reach upto USD 125 Billion by the end of 2023. The USA is the largest source of remittances.

### 17. Alleviating Heat Stress by Enhancing Production of Affordable Cooling Devices (AHEAD)

The Consultation workshop on Alleviating Heat Stress by Enhancing Production of Affordable Cooling Devices (AHEAD) was successfully hosted by DPIIT. The event was conducted by DPIIT in collaboration with the World Bank,

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MoefCC and Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE). It was the first ever industry-led workshop focusing on recognizing cooling as a climate adaptation issue.

### 18. Kakrapar Atomic Power Project Unit-4 achieves first criticality

The Kakrapar Atomic Power Project Unit 4 achieved Criticality for the first time on December 17, 2023. Criticality means the start of controlled fission chain reaction. Kakrapar Atomic Power Project Unit 4 is the second indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR) of 700 MW being set up in the country.

### 19. Establishment of Manipur State Beverages Corporation Limited

The Manipur State Beverages Corporation Limited (MSBCL) was established after approval by the Manipur Cabinet. Its establishment legalises the production, sale and consumption of alcohol in specific regions of the state. It ends the 30 year long period of prohibition of alcohol in the state.

### 20. Successful Crash Tests under BHARAT NCAP

Successful completion of the first round of Crash testing of the cars took place under Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (BHARAT NCA). Cars tested are from Original Equipment manufacturers like Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors and Kia India. BHARAT NCAP is a indigenous star rating system for Crash testing cars. The Control and Command Centre for BHARAT NCAP is located at Central Institute of Road Transport (CIRT) in Pune.

### 21. 68th Railway Week Central Function

The Ati Vishisht Rail Seva Puraskar (AVRSP) was conferred to 100 railway employees from all over the country for their outstanding services. The awards was conferred by Union Minister of Railways Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw at the 68th

Railway Week Central Function.

### 22. 2nd phase of Kashi Tamil Samagam



The Prime Minister of India in line with his vision of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat inaugurated Kashi Tamil Samagam 2023 at Namoo Ghat. He also launched Kanyakumari-Varanasi Tamil Sangamam train on the occasion. The event will commence from 17th December 2023 till 30th December 2023 at Kashi (Varanasi).

### 23. Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2023

Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal launched the 5th edition of Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2023 report. The report provides information into improvement of logistics performance at State/UT level.

### 24. Swarved Mahamandir

The Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the World's largest Corporate office hub, The Surat Diamond Bourse at Khajod Village, Surat. The Bourse overtook USAs Pentagon Building who held the record for the last 80 years of the World's Largest building.

### 25. 4th edition of RATS SCO Practical Seminar organised

The National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) under Government of India organised the 4th edition of RATS SCO Practical seminar. It was organised on the theme "Countering the Misuse

of Internet and New Information Technologies for Terrorist, separatist and Extremist purposes”.

## 26. Diamond Jubilee celebration of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan attended the Diamond jubilee celebration of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan at New Delhi. The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan was established on 15th December 1963 with 20 regimental schools.

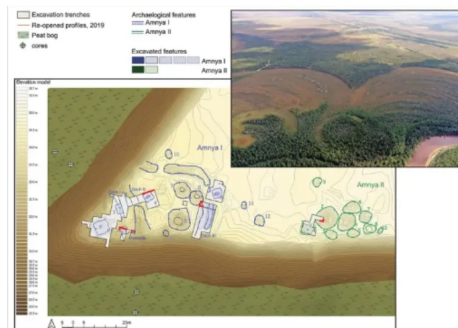
## 27. MoU between India and Tanzania on Digital Solutions



A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between India and Tanzania on cooperation in the field of Digital Solutions. The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi approved the MoU. The collaboration in the field of Digital Solutions implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformations will lead to employment opportunities in the IT sector.

International

### 1. The World's Oldest Known Fort discovered



Archaeologists have discovered The World's Oldest Known Fort along the Amnya River in Western Siberia. The fort dates back to 8000 years indicating that hunter gatherers made complex defence structures. The findings were published in the Journal Antiquity.

### 2. North Korea test fires ICBM powered by Solid fuel

The Republic of North Korea test fired an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) powered by Solid fuel. Solid fuel consists of a mixture of fuel (Metallic powders like Aluminum) and Oxidiser (Salt of Perchloric Acid and Ammonia).

### 3. WHO released Global Safety Report on Road Safety 2023

The Global Safety Report on Road Safety 2023 was released by The Department of Transportation (DOTR), the World Health Organisation and Road Safety partners together. The report was released in the Philippines. The report stated that Road traffic deaths fell slightly to 1.19 million per year.

### 4. Gelephu Smart City Project

The Gelephu Smart City Project was recently announced by Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk. It will be a Mega International City situated near the Indian border. The aim of the city is to act as an economic corridor connecting South Asia with Southeast Asia via Indian Northeastern states.

## 5. 2024 declared as Year of Camelids

2024 has been declared as the Year of Camelids by the United Nations. The Camelids as a group includes Bactrian Camels, Dromedaries, Guanacos, llamas, Vicunas etc. The Camelids have a significant importance in the lives of people worldwide.

## 6. Ukraine puts Patriarch Kirill on Wanted List

Patriarch Kirill, the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church has been put on the Wanted list by Ukraine. He is a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin and has backed the Kremlin's war against Ukraine.

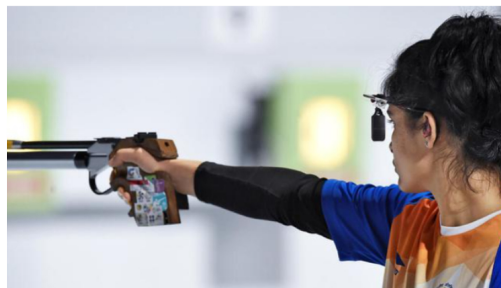
## 7. First People reached North America by sea ice highway

Study conducted by US scientists states that the first people reached North America via "Sea Ice Highway" around 24000 years ago. The study was presented at the American Geophysical Union Annual Meeting (AGU23).

**8. Saint Lucia's TIWB programme launched** Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB) programme was launched in partnership with India at Saint Lucia. TIWB is a joint initiative between UNDP and OECD. India will provide Tax experts for the programme as it has been chosen as the Partner Administration.

## Sports

### 1. Indian Shooting Team to not compete at Cairo World Cup



India will not compete in the ISSF World Cup 2024 to be held at Cairo. The decision has been taken by the National federation to give rest to Shooters and not exhaust them. The Paris Olympic qualification events will also take place in 2024.

### 2. Bengaluru Mavericks clinch Tennis Premier League Title

The Bengaluru SG Mavericks won the fifth edition of Tennis Premier League beating Bengal Wizards in the final. Bengaluru's Arina Rodionova was declared as the Player of the Match.

### 3. Mitchell Starc becomes costliest buy in IPL history

England's women Football Team Goalkeeper Mary Earps has been crowned as the BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2023. Mary helped England to the World Cup Final in Australia.

### 4. The correct answer is option 1 i.e. Mitchell Starc

Australian Pacer Mitchell Starc becomes the most costliest buy in the IPL Auction history. He was bought by Kolkata Knight Riders for a whopping 24.75 crores. Australia's World Cup winning captain Pat Cummins also made history by becoming the second costliest buy in IPL History for 20.50 crores by Sunrisers Hyderabad.

### 5. Australian Spinner Nathan Lyon achieved 500 wicket landmark

Australian Off Spinner Nathan Lyon achieved the milestone of 500 Test Wickets during Australia's 360 run victory over Pakistan.

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Faheem Ashraf was Lyons' 500th wicket.

## 6. Bangladesh won U-19 Asia Cup



Bangladesh crushed UAE by 195 runs to win the Under 19 Asia Cup, Dubai. UAE won the toss and chose to field and let Bangladesh score a massive 282 runs in first innings.

## 7. India breaks record with 347 run win against England

Indian Women's Cricket Team breaks record with 347 run win against England in a test match held at DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai. India won within 3 days and seven sessions.

### Person In news

## 1. Abdul Fattah El Sisi won Egypt Presidential Elections



Abdul Fattah El Sisi wins the third term as Egypt's President after amending the constitution. He won the elections with a staggering 89.6% of the vote, facing no serious challengers. The

announcement was made by the National Election Authority on December 18.

## 2. Shaikh Hassan Khan climbed Mount Vinson

Kerala Government Employee Shaikh Hassan Khan has created history by climbing the highest peak in Antarctica, The Mount Vinson. The aim of the summit was to spread awareness about climate change taking place in Antarctica. It is his fifth summit.

## 3. Abdoulaye Diabate awarded 2023 Falling Walls Prize

African Scientist from Burkina Faso Abdoulaye Diabate was conferred with the 2023 Falling Walls Prize for Science and Innovation Management. The Scientist has been given the award for his groundbreaking research on gene drive technology that can eradicate Malaria and its carriers.

## 4. Professor Savita Ladage received Nyholm Prize



Professor Savita Ladage received the Royal Society of Chemistry's Nyholm Prize for education. She is a professor at Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai. She won the award for her contribution to chemistry education.

## 5. Uma Sekhar elected to governing council of UNIDROIT

India's Uma Shekhar was elected to the governing council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) in the first round of elections held at Rome. It is an

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independent Intergovernmental organisation established in 1926.

Science and tech/Space/Defence

### 1. Rotating Detonation Rocket Engine (RDRE)



The American Space AGENCY NASA has achieved a new milestone by developing an innovative propulsion system called Rotating Detonation Rocket Engine (RDRE). It was successfully tested by engineers at NASAs Marshall Space Flight Center in Alabama for 251 seconds.

### 2. Volcanic Activity spotted on Mars

Scientists spotted signs of Volcanic activity on a plain of Mars called Elysium Planitia. The estimated time of the occurrence of the Volcanic activity is 120 million years. Elysium Planitia is the youngest Volcanic terrain on the planet.

### 3. The First Marshal of Air Force Arjan Singh Annual Lecture conducted

The Indian Air Force in collaboration with the United Services Institution of India (USI) jointly conducted the First Marshal of Air Force Arjan Singh Annual Lecture. The event was conducted AT USI, Shankar Vihar. Arjan Singh is the first and only five star rank officer with Indian Air Force.

### 4. INS Kochi evacuates sailor aboard hijacked Vessel MV Ruen

The INS Kochi has evacuated one of the 18

sailors who was injured in firing by pirates. He was evacuated from the hijacked Commercial Vessel MV Ruen for urgent medical attention. He was evacuated off the coast of Somalia.

### 5. Successful trial of SAMAR



The Indian Air Force has successfully test fired the Surface to Air Missile for Assured Retaliation (SAMAR) air defence missile system. The trials took place during Exercise Astrashakti. It is an indigenous air defence missile system.

### 6. Scientist have found Hydrogen Cyanide on Enceladus

Data from the NASAs Cassini Spacecraft reveals the presence of Hydrogen Cyanide on Saturn's Icy moon Enceladus. The Spacecraft reveals the icy moon has more chemical energy and could support complex organic compounds. The study was published in the weekly journal Nature Astronomy.

### 7. India's Akash Missile System creates history



India has become the first country in the world to showcase capability of engaging 4 Aerial targets simultaneously with Akash Surface-to-air weapon

system. The demonstration took place at Suryalanka Air Force Station during Exercise AstraShakti 2023.

### 8. Indian Navy received 6th MH-60R "ROMEO" helicopter

The Indian Navy received the 6th MH-60R "ROMEO" helicopter from US based Defence organisation Lockheed Martin. The first two MH60R were received in 2021 at a ceremony held at US Naval airbase in San Diego.

### 9. Successful flight trial of autonomous Flying Wing UAV

Successful flight trial of autonomous Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator was carried out by DRDO at Aeronautical Test Range, Chitradurga in Karnataka. It is an indigenous high speed flying wing Unmanned Aerial Vehicle.

#### Miscellaneous

#### 1. International Monitoring Station Day 2023



The International Monitoring Station Day 2023 was observed on December 19 by the Wireless Planning and Coordination Wing (WPC) and Wireless Monitoring Organisation (WMO). The day is dedicated to all personnel involved in ensuring interference free spectrum for Public telecom services and Wireless users in India.

#### 2. 52nd Vijay Diwas commemorated

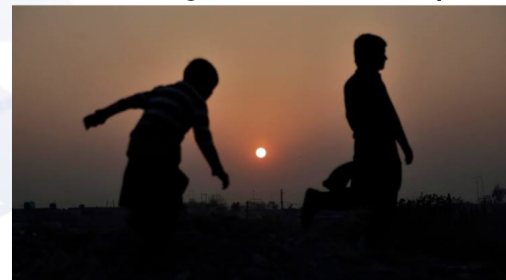
52nd Vijay Diwas was commemorated by PM Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Home Minister Amit Shah honouring the Jawans. Vijay Diwas is observed every year on December 16 to honour the victory of the Indian Armed Forces over Pakistan in the 1971 war.

#### Health/Agriculture/Environment

#### 1. India to witness shortest day on December 22

India is set to witness the shortest day of the year on December 22, 2023 due to a phenomenon known as Winter Solstice. The phenomenon is observed every year on December 21 or December 22 and the event marks seasonal transition.

#### 2. Sea Turning Red in Puducherry



The

principal bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has appointed a three member committee to inspect Kuruchikuppam drain and beach. The Committee will look after the cause behind the recent phenomenon of the sea turning red in Puducherry. The Red tide is a term used for Algal bloom.

#### 3. Indian Government launched Forest Certification Scheme

The Government of India has launched its own Forest Certification Scheme namely "The Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme (IFWCS)" to counter foreign agencies. The Scheme aims to validate entities that follow sustainable practices



in management of Forest and its products.

#### 4. New Endangered Bat Specie named Nustrale discovered

Researchers have found a new species of Bat under Endangered category, named "Nustrale" on the French Island of Corsica. The island is located in the Mediterranean Sea. The species is named Nustrale in Corsican Dialect meaning "Ours".

#### 5. Radon a silent killer in US

The reports from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) reveals that more than 21000 deaths per year happen due to lung cancer caused by Radon. It becomes the second leading cause of death in the United States. Radon is a radioactive gas formed when Uranium, Thorium or Radium break down in Rocks, Soil and Groundwater.

#### 6. NOMA disease included in NTD list

The World Health Organisation announced the inclusion of Noma disease in the list of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs). Its scientific name is Cancrum Oris or Gangrenous Stomatitis. The decision was taken at the 17th meeting of Strategic and Technical Advisory Group of Neglected Tropical Diseases (STAG-NTD).

#### 7. India's maiden Winter Scientific Arctic Expedition launched

Union Minister Shri Kiren Rijuju launched India's first winter Scientific expedition to the Arctic. It was launched from the Ministry of Earth Sciences Headquarters in New Delhi. The expedition from November to March will allow researchers to conduct unique scientific observations during Polar nights.

#### 8. Army Hospital successfully conducts Bone

#### Marrow Transplant

Doctors at the Army Hospital R&R in Delhi Cantt in an extraordinary medical achievement have conducted for the first time a successful life saving Bone Marrow Transplant for a seven year old child. The Child was diagnosed with a rare primary immunodeficiency disorder.

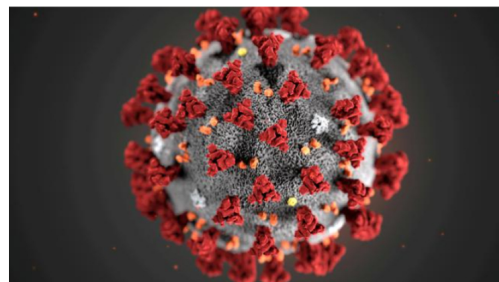
#### 9. First ever Tiger sighting at Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary

A tiger was spotted for the first time in the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttarakhand. The Sanctuary covers an area of 46 square kilometres and is located at an altitude of 2250 metres. It is a rare and significant event as Tigers are usually found at low altitudes.

#### 10. Endangering European Wood Bison

Study titled "Millennial Processes of Population Decline, Range Contraction and Near Extinction of the European Bison" stated that war in Ukraine could hamper the efforts to save the last remnant of European Wood Bison also called as Wisent. Its IUCN status is Near Threatened.

#### 11. Case of JN.1 subvariant of Covid 19 found in Kerala



As a part of the ongoing routine surveillance activity by INSACOG (Indian SARS-COV-2 Genomics Consortium), a case of JN.1 subvariant of Covid 19 was detected in Kerala. INSACOG has been monitoring Covid 19 from a genomic perspective.

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## 12. New Sea Spider specie *Austropallene Halanychi* discovered

Scientists have discovered a new species of Sea Spider named *Austropallene Halanychi* off the Antarctic Ocean. Strange Yellow body with boxing glove-like claws are some of the features of the new species found. More than 1000 species of sea spiders have been discovered by Scientists around the world.

