

National and International Weekly Current Affairs 11 to 17 December 2023

National News

Centre announces ₹1,500-cr. aid to T.N. and A.P. after cyclone

- The Union government released **₹493.60 crore to Andhra Pradesh and ₹450 crore to Tamil Nadu** in the wake of the damage inflicted by severe cyclonic storm Michaung
- Centre also approved another tranche of **₹561.29 crore** for Chennai for flood mitigation efforts for **'Integrated Urban Flood Management activities for Chennai Basin Project'** under the **National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF)**.

India Art, Architecture, and Design Biennale

- Prime Minister recently highlighted that **India's re-emergence to a pre-eminent position** in the field of art and architecture would benefit all of humanity
- It was done at the inauguration of the maiden **India Art, Architecture, and Design Biennale at the Red Fort**.

Key points

- India is working to develop a modern system on the lines of similar cultural events in cities like **Venice, London, and Sao Paulo**
- The cultural spaces which are being built in **Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, and Varanasi** would enrich the cities culturally
- The biennale has exhibitions on seven themes — **Doors of India, Gardens of India, Baolis (stepwells) of India, Temples of India, Architectural Wonders of Independent India, Indigenous Design, and Women in Architecture and Design**.
- The exhibitions have been designed in both physical and digital forms accompanied by interactive installations.

SC upholds repeal of J&K's special status

- A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court **unanimously upheld the power of the President to abrogate special status of Jammu and Kashmir**.
- This was done under Article 370 of the Constitution, leading to the reorganization of

the **full-fledged State to two Union Territories** and the removal of its privileges.

About special status of J&K

- On **5th August 2019**, the **President of India in the exercise of the powers conferred by Article 370(1)** of the Constitution issued the **Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019**.
- Through this, the Government of India has made modifications to Article 370 itself (not revoked it).
- The **Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019** has replaced the **Presidential Order of 1954**.
- Subsequently, the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, 2019**, passed by Parliament divides the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two new Union Territories (UTs): **Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh**.
- This was further challenged in the supreme court.

Important articles: -

- Article 370 under Part XXI **empowers Jammu & Kashmir to have its own constitution**.
- It grants autonomous status to J&K.
- It restricts Parliament's legislative powers in respect of J&K.
- Article 35A, incorporated into the Constitution in 1954, **provides special rights and privileges to the citizens of the state**.
- Article 35A gives the Jammu & Kashmir Legislature full discretionary power to decide who the **'permanent residents' of the state are**.

Logistics costs in India

- A report has been released by the **National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER)** commissioned by the **Commerce and Industry Ministry**.
- It highlighted that India's logistics costs had **reduced from a range of 8.6% to 9.8% in 2013-14 to 7.8%-8.9% of GDP in 2021-22**
- The estimate dispels earlier estimates that pegged the country's logistics costs as high as **14% of GDP**.
- The data is relied on National Accounts Statistics for data such as the **output of**

transport services, storage and warehousing sectors.

Maharashtra State News

NAINA scheme

- The **opposition to the NAINA scheme of CIDCO** by Panvel villagers has now taken the shape of an indefinite fast and villagers are ready to die unless withdrawal of this scheme
- The **Navi Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area (NAINA) project** within **25 km radius of the Navi Mumbai airport** is spread over 371 sq km comprising 174 villages.
- It **does not entail the traditional land acquisition** process.
- The scheme proposes **land pooling by villagers wherein CIDCO**, the Special Planning Authority for the project, **gets to keep 60% of the land for infrastructure** development and the PAPs get the **remaining 40% with 2.5 FSI**. **CIDCO does not have to pay any monetary compensation** to the villagers.

Homelessness a violation of human rights

- The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHRA)** has termed **homelessness as a global human rights violation**.
- It was in view of **World Human Rights Day observed on December 10**
- It was also suggested to **take the steps that need to be taken by the state in addressing homelessness** in the city.

Did you Know?

- The **regulated theme** to celebrate Human Rights Day 2023 is **'Freedom, Equality and Justice for All**.

Kolhapur airport gets IFR license for next 5 yrs

- The **airport in Kolhapur city** has now got the **IFR (Instrument Flights rules) license** for a period of five years.
- This **license is crucial for aircraft take-offs and landings in low-visibility conditions**,
- It will help the Kolhapur airport offer smooth and efficient air services in every weather condition.

Betting, Gaming in 28 percent GST

- **Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar introduced** a proposed amendment bill to bring betting and gaming in purview of GST
- The **bill aims to categorize online gaming, betting, casinos, horse racing, and lottery under the highest GST bracket of 28 percent**.
- The bill, if accepted, will amend the **Maharashtra Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017**.

Rising traffic violations in MH

- There has been a massive increase in traffic violations in MH.
- In view of this, the **District Legal Services Authority, Mumbai, has issued notices to a total of 17,10,519 motorists**, urging them to promptly clear their pending fines.

About:

- **District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) is a statutory body constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**.
- Aim is to **provide free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of society**.

Goods train derails in Thane's Kasara

- **Two coaches** of a goods train derailed near **Thane's Kasara**
- **Kalyan station road ART** (accident relief train) and **Igatpuri station rail ART** (accident relief train) were ordered and moved to the accident site.

Demand to scrap of govt's 'Love Jihad' committee

- **Samajwadi Party MLA Rais Shaikh** demands to scrap **Maharashtra 'Interfaith Marriage Family Coordination Committee'**.
- He stated that it has **received only 402 complaints** since its formation a year ago.
- The **committee was established on December 13, 2022 by former state Women and Child Development (WCD) minister Manga Prabhat Lodha**
- It was aimed to **track cases of 'Love Jihad'**.

Bade Miya, Papa Pancho's are open after FDA action

- The two restaurants which top Mumbai's culinary landscape- Bade Miya and Papa Pāncho da Dhaba have recently reopened after an FDA (Food and Drug Administration) raid in April

About:

- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a federal agency responsible for protecting public health by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, medical devices, and our food supply.
- It also regulates cosmetics, tobacco products, and products that emit radiation.

56 % surge in cybercrime incidents

- With the rapid advancement of technology, the incidence of cybercrime in the Navi Mumbai region has increased by 56%
- There is a significant increase in the conversion of applications into First Information Reports (FIRs), thereby enhancing the detection of cybercrimes in the area.

Unique expedition Tracing Lord Rama's footprints

- To strike a balance between spirituality and physical fitness, three ex-service men from Maharashtra embarked on a unique international bicycle expedition titled 'Ram Van Gaman Path'.
- It is to trace out the footprints of Lord Rama wherever they were available.
- The trio, Subedar Ullas Kulkarni, Colonel Shivanarayan Mishra and Dr. Sahebrao Kasav set out on the expedition on November 24 from Ram Janmabhoomi at Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh.

National Seed Congress

- A three-day 12th National Seed Congress will be hosted by the Parbhani-based Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Agricultural University.
- Over 300 agricultural scientists, field experts, and top government officials will be taking part.

- The event will witness discussions themed on innovation and challenges in quality seed availability under the changing climate.
- "The principle of "3As"—Availability, Access, and Affordability—needs to be followed in the seed sector while providing quality seeds
- Millet cultivation will be one of the subjects of discussion during the event.

Mumbai Air Quality improved

- The Bombay High Court observed that Mumbai's air quality had improved since its last directions in a suo motu PIL on air pollution
- The Air Quality Index(AQI) data submitted by the state has largely shown "moderate" levels.
- HC said that a collective effort is needed to bring the AQI below 50, the "satisfactory" level.

Assured maize procurement for ethanol production

- In response to the expected decrease in sugar production in Maharashtra and Karnataka, the government plans to focus on grain-based ethanol production, particularly from maize.
- The scheme involves the registration and procurement of maize from farmers at MSP by government agri-cooperatives NAFED and NCCF
- The maize will then be supplied to grain-based distilleries.
- The food ministry will bear the incidental costs to ensure farmers receive MSP and promote maize cultivation.

Separate state university for Latur in Marathwada

- Different civil society groups have raised the demand for setting up a separate state university for Latur in Marathwada.
- Latur has established an identity as an educational hub of Maharashtra over the years.
- These groups have sought bifurcation of the Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada (SRTM) University, Nanded, to carve out a new varsity.

Ayushman Bharat

- Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar has witnessed the enrollment of over **23.3 lakh beneficiaries** of **Ayushman health cards** but **only 19%** of the mandatory **e-KYC** of these cards has been done so far.

About:

- The **Ayushman Bharat** is a **flagship scheme** of the **Government of India** that offers a defined benefit cover of **Rs 5 lakh per family per year**.
- Launched as **recommended by the National Health Policy 2017**, it aims to achieve the vision of **universal health coverage (UHC)**.

Namo Maharojgar Yojana

- **Namo Maharojgar Yojana** is an **initiative by the Maharashtra government** to address **unemployment** in the state.
- It primarily **focuses on organizing large-scale job fairs** called "**Namo Maharojgar Melava**" where companies and potential employees can connect directly.
- The initiative **collaborates with the private sector** to bring in job opportunities.

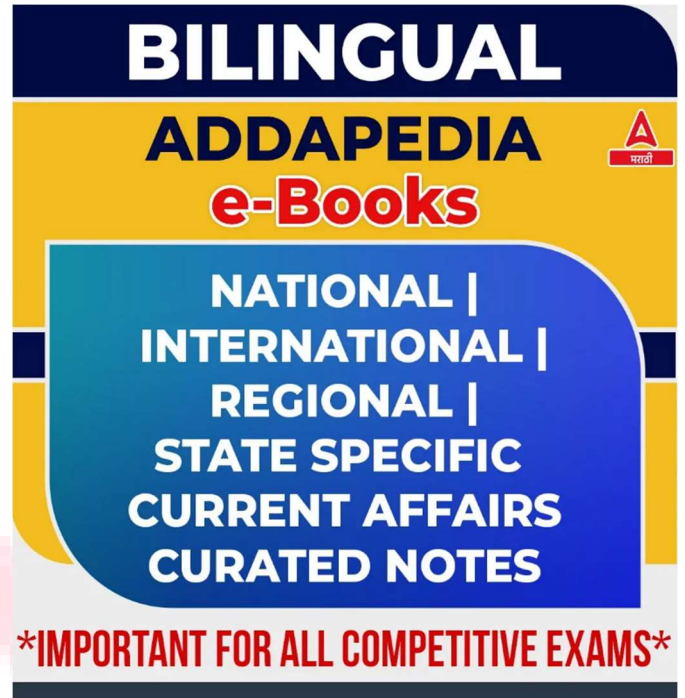
Indian Coast Guard plans to increase fleet to 200 ships, 100 aircraft

- The **Indian Coast Guard** are planning to increase the fleet to **200 ships, 100 aircraft** by the **end of 2025 or 2026**.
- Presently the **Indian Coast Guard** has around **157 ships** and about **78 aircrafts**.
- The **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** is a **multi-mission, armed paramilitary force** in India
- It was headed by the **Director General**, with headquarters in **New Delhi**.

Dalai Lama to attend 'Dhamma Diksha'

- The **Dalai Lama** will attend an **international conference on Buddhism**, '**Dhamma Diksha**', to be held at the **Mahalaxmi Race Course**.
- **Dhamma Diksha**, meaning "**initiation into the Dharma**," will be a **landmark international conference on Buddhism** to be held on **December 15-16, 2023**, in **Mumbai**.
- It will be a **historic event fulfilling the vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, who planned to

organize such a conference after his conversion to Buddhism in 1956.



Integrated cyber platform to tackle online crime

- The **Maharashtra government** is going to establish a **dedicated cyber platform** aimed at **detecting and combating cybercrime**.
- It will be a **very dynamic platform** with all **financial institutions including banks, NBFCs, all social media sites** etc to be brought together on this platform.
- It will be **integrated with the latest software** which will create a very fast response time

Entire BEST fleet to have clean energy-powered buses by 2027

- **Entire BEST fleet** to have **clean energy-powered buses by 2027**
- It has **already completed tender work for 3,000 electric buses and 200 buses that run on compressed natural gas (CNG)**
- Of these **3,000 e-buses, 900 will be double-deckers**

Amruta Pujari wins Women's Maharashtra Kesari wrestling title

- **Amruta Shashikant Pujari** of Shirol won the prestigious **Maharashtra Kesari** title at the **Maharashtra Kesari Wrestling Championship** held in Chandrapur
- The competition witnessed the participation of over **600** wrestlers from across the state.

CIDCO to undertake expansion of Ulwe River

- To **mitigate and avert flood-like situations** in villages surrounding the **Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA)**, the **City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO)** has undertaken the **expansion and de-siltation of the Ulwe riverbed**
- A portion of the **river passing from the state Highway (SH)-54 to National Highway (NH) - 4B** is to be re-sectioned to avert flooding in five villages, namely **Paragoan, Dungi, Dapoli, Bhangarpada, and Khalche Ovale**.

Govt to rejuvenate Matheran's Charlotte Lake

- The state government has decided to **rejuvenate Charlotte Lake** in Matheran, which is the **only source of potable water to the hill station**
- It will be carried out under the **Centre's Amrut 2.0 Abhiyan**
- The project also includes **development of infrastructure for tourists** by **developing the dam wall, the approach and setting up plazas**.

State News

Lalduhoma sworn in as Mizoram Chief Minister

- **Zoram People's Movement (ZPM)** leader **Lalduhoma** was sworn in as the **Chief Minister of Mizoram**
- Mr. Lalduhoma **announced 12 programmes** of his new government to be implemented in the next 100 days.
- Mr. Lalduhoma had served as the security in-charge of former **Prime Minister Indira Gandhi**
- He is a **former IPS**

Pakadwa vivah practice of Bihar

Recently, the **Patna High Court** has nullified a forced marriage, commonly referred to as "**pakadwa vivah**," which occurred a decade ago.

About

- It is a **traditional practice in the state of Bihar**.
- In 'Pakadwa Vivah', neither the consent of the boy nor the girl is taken for marriage. **Boys are taken hostage by kidnapping or coaxing** and then married to a girl as per customs and traditions.
- In this, the wishes of the boy and girl, who become bride and groom, have no importance.

New Chhattisgarh CM

- **Vishnu Deo Sai** has been chosen as new Chhattisgarh CM
- He will be the **first tribal leader** to hold the post.
- He is also the **first to hail from a region beyond the Other Backward Class** dominated central plains in Chhattisgarh's 23year old history.

New Madhya Pradesh CM

- **Mohan Yadav** was sworn in as the **19th Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh**
- He is a three-term MLA from Ujjain-Dakshin (South) and a prominent **Other Backward Class (OBC) leader**
- **Jagdish Devda and Rajendra Shukla** took oath as **Deputy Chief Ministers**.

New Rajasthan CM

- **Bhajan Lal Sharma** will be sworn in as the **14th Chief Minister of Rajasthan**
- **Deputy Chief Ministers** will be **Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa**

Aerodrome license for Ayodhya Airport

- The **Directorate General of Civil Aviation** has granted **aerodrome licence for the Ayodhya Airport**
- The Airports Authority of India has developed the airport at a **cost of ₹350 crore**.
- The DGCA permit comes **ahead of the Ram Mandir inauguration**.

International News

India's vote on Gaza-Israel conflict

- India voted in favour of a **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution** that called on **Israel for an immediate ceasefire**, the protection of civilians in accordance with international law and the release of all hostages.
- **India was among 153 countries who voted in favour** of the resolution, where only **10 countries, including the U.S. and Israel, voted against the resolution**, and 23 abstained.

India and U.S. combat financial crimes

- India and the U.S had a bilateral dialogue on **anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism**.

Key points

- The countries agreed about the pressing **need to accelerate global implementation of standards for virtual assets** like crypto currencies.
- The countries also discussed steps to **enhance transparency in beneficial ownership**.

Economy News

RBI enhances UPI payment limits

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) **enhanced the UPI payment limits** for healthcare and education to ₹5 lakh from ₹1 lakh, and the limit on recurring e-payment mandates for credit card and insurance premia payments as well as mutual fund investments to ₹1 lakh from the current limit of ₹15,000.
- It has also decided to lay down a **regulatory framework for web-aggregation of loan products**.
- This is expected to result in enhanced customer centricity and transparency in digital lending.

Net direct tax receipts

India's net direct tax collections had grown **23.4% to hit ₹10.64 lakh crore** by November 30, attaining 58.34% of the Budget estimates for the year

- The gross direct tax kitty by the end of last month had reached **₹12.67 lakh crore, a 17.7% rise** over the same period of the earlier year.
- Refunds paid out to income tax payers had reached **₹2.03 lakh crore**.

Award news

Messi named Time's 'Athlete of the Year'

- Lionel Messi has been named Time magazine's **'Athlete of the Year' for 2023**
- He got an **eighth Ballon d'Or award** recently.

Documentary on 'Naatu Naatu' lyricist wins award

- A documentary on Oscar award winning lyricist Subhash Chandrabose has won an award at **12th Mumbai Shorts International Film Festival**.
- He is famous for the **'Naatu Naatu' song from the Telugu movie RRR**

Key points

- The documentary, produced and directed by **senior journalist Chilkuri Sushil Rao** was given a **special mention award at the festival**
- **Mr. Chandrabose won the Oscar for Best Original Song at the 95th Academy Awards**.

Summits & Conferences News

New climate draft on global stocktake

- The latest draft of the Global Stocktake has linked **the tripling of renewable energy capacity with a "phase-out"**, or a time-bound ending, of the use of fossil fuels.
- It is one of the key documents being negotiated at the **UN's climate summit in Dubai** recently.

Key points

- It is ensuring that the increase in **renewable energy capacity is strategically implemented to displace fossil fuel-based energy**, thereby significantly reducing global

reliance on non-renewable and high-emission energy sources

- The latest draft also does away with the clause calling for a **“just and orderly phase-out of fossil fuel”**
- This has now been replaced with four pointed options demanding that fossil fuels — **responsible for 80% of greenhouse gas emissions** — be phased out in such a way that global temperatures do not rise **more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2100**, and energy companies become fossil fuel-free by mid-century.
- Unchanged from an earlier version of the text is the clause on a **“rapid phase-out of unabated coal power”**.

Did you know?

At the COP-26 in Glasgow two years ago, **on the insistence of India and backed by the United States and China**, the world had agreed to **“phase down”** but not **“phase out”** coal.

Dubai Consensus

- The COP-28 countries adopted for **transitioning away from fossil fuels** in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner.
- They named it the **Dubai Consensus**.
- The aim is to achieve **net zero by 2050**.

New Delhi Declaration

- Representatives from 28 countries and the European Union adopted the **“New Delhi Declaration”** of the **Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence**.
- India is hosting the summit, and will chair the GPAI grouping in 2024.

Key points

- It **affirms the countries’ commitment to principles for responsible stewardship of trustworthy AI** rooted in democratic values and human rights and promoting trustworthy, responsible, sustainable and human-centred use of AI.
- GPAI is a grouping of countries in North and South America, Europe, and East Asia, which strive to work towards trustworthy development, deployment, and use of AI.

Agreement News

Tata Power EV, IOCL to jointly set up over 500 charging points

- **Tata Power EV Charging Solutions Ltd. and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL)** have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU)
- It is to **roll out fast and ultrafast electric vehicle (EV) charging points** across the country.

Key points

- Tata Power would **install more than 500 EV charging points** across multiple IOCL retail outlets to help alleviate range anxiety for EV owners travelling between cities.
- This will **contribute to accessibility and inclusivity** for a sustainable electric mobility future

Ranks & Reports News

New study on fixed dose combination’ problem

A group of academics from India, Qatar and the United Kingdom recently published a worrying **new study in the Journal of Pharmaceutical Policy and Practice** on the volume of unapproved and even banned **fixed dose combination (FDC)** of antibiotics that are being sold in India.

Key points

- Using sales data of the pharmaceutical industry, the study documents that in the year 2020, **60.5% FDCs of antibiotics (comprising 239 formulations) were unapproved and another 9.9% (comprising 39 formulations) were being sold** despite being banned in the country.
- Many of these unapproved or banned FDCs contain antibiotics is alarming because of the increasing prevalence of antibacterial microbial resistance (AMR) in India.

Fixed dose combination (FDC)

- Fixed dose combination (FDC) are **combinations of one or more known drugs** and can be useful in the treatment of some diseases since the combination can improve patient compliance.

- For instance, if a patient has to take three different medications for a particular treatment, she may forget to take one.
- But if all three medications are combined into one tablet or one syrup, the chance of her forgetting to take one or two of the drugs is reduced.
- For **diseases such as AIDS**, it is well documented that FDCs have proven to be very useful in improving patient compliance, which at the end of day improves treatment outcomes.

Issues with the FDC

- All drugs have side effects and when formulated together, **there is a possibility that the active ingredient or even the excipients** (inactive ingredients) may affect the way that each drug functions
- One such law is the **Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO)**, under which the government fixes the prices of individual drugs.
- Since drug combinations were traditionally not covered under the DPCO, the pharmaceutical industry decided that making FDCs provided an easy way to escape the remit of the DPCO.
- **Pharmaceutical companies in India use these FDCs to escape liability** under multiple laws without much concern for public health.

A report on Road fatalities by WHO

A World Health Organization (WHO) report - '**Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023**' stated that **Road traffic deaths fell by 5% to 1.19 million annually** worldwide between 2010 and 2021, with 108 United Nations member countries reporting a drop.

Key facts

- India registered a **15% increase in fatalities**.
- The total number of road traffic fatalities in India went up to **1.54 lakh in 2021 from 1.34 lakh in 2010**.
- The global motor vehicle fleet grew 160% and annual fatality rates per 1 lakh vehicles fell from 79 deaths to 47 deaths, which is a **41% reduction**.
- **28% of global road traffic deaths occurred in the WHO's South-East Asia Region**, 25% in the Western Pacific Region, 19% in the

African Region, 12% in the Region of the Americas, 11% in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, and 5% in the European Region.

- **Nine in 10 deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.**

WHO on use of e-cigarettes

- According to the **World Health Organization**, E-cigarettes as consumer products are not shown to be effective for quitting tobacco use at the population level.
- There is alarming evidence on its adverse population health effects

Key points

- Children in the age group of **13-15 years are using e-cigarettes at rates higher than that among adults** in all WHO regions
- E-cigarettes with nicotine are **highly addictive** and are harmful to health.
- They generate toxic substances, some of which are **known to cause cancer** and some that increase the risk of **heart and lung disorders**.
- It can also affect brain development and lead to learning disorders for young people.
- Foetal exposure to e-cigarettes can adversely **affect the development of the foetus in pregnant women**.
- Exposure to emissions from e-cigarettes also **poses risks to bystanders**.

Did you know?

- In India, the possession of e-cigarettes and similar devices is a violation of the **Prohibition of Electronic Cigarette Act, 2019**.
- Studies consistently show that young people who use e-cigarettes are **almost three times** more likely to use cigarettes later in life.

Sports News

UWW Rising Star of the Year

- **Antim Panghal (53kg)** has been named **United World Wrestling (UWW) Rising Star of the Year 2023** in women's section.
- Antim **won a silver** in her senior Asian championships debut, defended her U-20 World title and then won bronze at the World championships.

- She has been a **two-time World under-20 champion and senior Worlds bronze medallist**

Khelo India Para Games

- Tokyo Olympics champion **Manish Narwal claimed gold in the 10m air pistol SH1** category of the Khelo India Para Games.
- In table tennis, **Paralympics and Para Asiad medallist Bhavina Patel** won 3-0 over Gujarat state mate **Shamim Chawda** in the Class 4 category.
- The **Khelo India Para Games (KIPG)** are an annual sports event under the Khelo India initiative for disabled athletes.

Science and Technology News

Google unveils 'Gemini,' AI tech trained to behave like humans

Google launched **project Gemini, an AI model trained to behave in human-like ways** that's likely to intensify the debate about the technology's potential promise and perils.

Key points

- The rollout will unfold in phases, with less sophisticated versions of Gemini called '**Nano**' and '**Pro**' being immediately incorporated into Google's AI-powered chatbot Bard and its Pixel 8 Pro smartphone.
- Gemini will be able to **quickly summarise recordings made on the device** and provide automatic replies on messaging services, starting with WhatsApp
- Based on a demonstration of Gemini for a group of reporters, Google's '**Bard Advanced**' might be capable of unprecedented AI multitasking by simultaneously recognising and understanding presentations involving text, photos and video.

U.S. FDA approves pair of gene therapies for sickle cell disease

- The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** approved a pair of gene therapies for sickle cell disease, including the first treatment based on the breakthrough CRISPR gene editing technology.

- The agency approved **Lyfgenia from bluebird bio, and a separate treatment called Casgevy** by partners Vertex Pharmaceuticals and CRISPR Therapeutics for the illness.
- Both the therapies were approved for people aged **12 years and older**.

About Sickle cell disease

- It is a painful, **inherited blood disorder** that can be debilitating and lead to premature death.
- It affects an estimated 1,00,000 people in the U.S., most of whom are Black.
- In sickle cell disease, the body makes flawed, sickle-shaped hemoglobin, impairing the ability of red blood cells to properly carry oxygen to the body's tissues.
- The **sickle cells tend to stick together and can block small blood vessels**, causing intense pain. It also can lead to **strokes and organ failure**.
- The **only longer-term treatment** for sickle cell disease is a **bone marrow transplant**.

Web browsers

- **Web browsers is an application that people use to send and receive messages via the internet.**
- In other words, the browser is a **program that runs on your device**, with its purpose being to **fetch information** in different formats from the internet and show it on the device.
- It also does the reverse, receiving your input (say, a click), translating it to code, and transmitting it to some other machine across the internet.

Carbon capture and storage (CCS)

- CCS refers to technologies that can **capture carbon dioxide (CO₂) at a source of emissions** before it is released into the atmosphere.
- These **sources include the fossil fuel industry** (where coal, oil and gas are combusted to generate power) and industrial processes like steel and cement production.

Carbon-dioxide removal (CDR)

- CDR takes the forms of **both natural means like afforestation or reforestation and technologies** like direct air capture, where machines mimic trees by absorbing CO₂ from their surroundings and storing it underground.

India's fastest solar-electric boat launched

- **Barracuda-** India's fastest solar-electric boat was launched at the yard of **Navalt Solar and Electric Boats**, located off **Aroor** in **Alappuzha**.
- It is an example of **eco-friendly maritime transportation**

Key points

- It is named after the **swift, long fish, Barracuda**
- It was **designed by Navalt** and can be deployed even in the rough seas as a workboat **to ferry up to 12 passengers and cargo**.
- The **14-metre-long, 4.4-metre-wide vessel** can attain a top speed of **12.5 knots (23 kmph)** and has a range of seven hours on a single charge.
- It has twin **50 kW electric motors**, a marine-grade **LFP battery**, and **6 kW solar power**.

Adda247

Maharashtra ka mahapack

Live classes, Test series
Recorded videos, E-books

MPSC (राज्यसेवा) MPSC (संयुक्त) महाराष्ट्र पोलीस
तलाठी, वनरक्षक, कृषी विभाग महानगर पालिका नगर
परिषद, जिल्हा परिषद, SSC & ALL OTHER STATE
EXAM

Miscellaneous News

World Human Rights Day

- **World Human Rights Day** is celebrated annually on **December 10th**
- It commemorates the adoption of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** by the **United Nations General Assembly** in **1948**.

- This day is significant as it **Raises awareness** about **human rights issues** and encourages action to protect them.
- This **landmark document** outlines the **fundamental rights and freedoms inherent to every human being, regardless of race, sex, nationality, religion, or any other status**.
- Even Though it is a **Non-binding declaration**, it **serves as a foundational document** for international human rights law.
- **Theme for 2023: "Dignity, freedom, and justice for all."**
- This theme **emphasizes the universality of human rights** and the need to continue working towards a world where everyone's rights are respected and protected.

International Universal Health Coverage Day

- The United Nations proclaimed **12 December** as **International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day)**
- 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.
- The theme for this year's Universal Health Coverage Day 2023 is - **Health For All: Time for action**.
- This is basically to call for specific actions that focus on health systems resilience.

Loss of green cover in Cauvery basin

- A paper published by scientists and researchers at the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru** highlighted that natural vegetation on nearly **12,850 sq. km of land in the Cauvery basin** was lost in the **50 years from 1965 to 2016**.

Key points

- **Karnataka** has lost much more than any other State in the basin.
- It accounts for **three fourths of the lost cover**, while **Tamil Nadu's share is around one fifth**.
- The natural vegetation **cover went down by around 46%**
- The quantum of reduction of dense vegetation was **35%** and that of degraded vegetation, **63%**

- Areas that suffered adverse changes in the extent of forest cover include the **Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Bandipur National Park, Nagarhole National Park and the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary.**

Dal Lake

- It is a **lake in Srinagar**, the summer **capital of Jammu and Kashmir.**
- It is surrounded by the **Pir Panjal mountains.**
- It is integral to tourism and recreation in Kashmir and is named the **“Jewel in the crown of Kashmir” or “Srinagar’s Jewel”.**
- Spread across an area of around 26 square kilometers, it is **the second-largest lake in Jammu & Kashmir.**
- The wetland is divided by causeways into four basins; **Gagribal, Lokut Dal, Bod Dal and Nagin .**
- Dal Lake is also popular for the **floating market (known as Raad)** where vendors have their own **Shikaras** and approach tourists.

Iran set to remove visa requirement for Indians

- Iran is expected to **remove visa requirement for Indian travellers.**
- This is aimed at boosting the flow of tourists into Iran.
- This is the **first time** that Tehran has included ordinary Indian passport holders on the list.
- India has recently been placed on similar visa-exemption lists of countries such as **Malaysia and Sri Lanka.**

Vijay Diwas

- Vijay Diwas is observed on **16th December** every year **to mark India’s victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war.**
- The Government of India decided on 3rd December 1971, that India would go for war with Pakistan to save Bengali Muslims and Hindus.
- This war was fought between India and Pakistan for 13 days.
- On 16th December 1971, the chief of the Pakistani forces with **93,000 soldiers** had surrendered unconditionally to the allied forces consisting of Indian Army and Mukti Bahini in Dhaka.

- **Mukti Bahini** refers to the armed organizations that fought against the Pakistan Army during the Bangladesh Liberation War. **It was a guerrilla resistance movement.**
- **Bangladesh** was born on this day. Hence, Bangladesh celebrates **its independence day (Bijoy Dibos)** on 16th December every year.

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

- **Classical pianist Daniel Barenboim and peace activist Ali Abu Awwad** have been named the winners of the **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2023**
- It is given for their **efforts in bringing together the youth and people of Israel and the Arab world** for a non-violent resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

About

- The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development is a **prestigious award presented annually to individuals or organizations** that have made outstanding contributions to the promotion of international peace, disarmament, and development.
- The award is named after the late **Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi**, and was established in **1986 by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.**

Ethanol production

- The Government has allowed the **use of cane juice, B-molasses** to make ethanol
- It is a reversed decision as initially the decision was to ban the use of sugarcane juice for making ethanol as it allowed utilisation of the juice as well as B-heavy molasses to produce the green fuel but capped the **diversion of sugar at 17 lakh tonnes.**