

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 4, 2022

STATES

- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar - inaugurated the 23rd edition of Nagaland's Hornbill Festival at Naga Heritage Village, Kisama near Kohima on December 1



- ✓ The Hornbill Festival, named after a common forest bird in the state, coincides with the 60th Nagaland statehood day celebrations
- ✓ Organised by the Nagaland government's Tourism and Art and Culture department, the Hornbill Festival showcases Nagaland's deep-rooted traditions and its rich cultural heritage in all its ethnicity, diversity, and grandeur.
- ✓ The festival is also a tribute to the great Hornbill, which is an admired and revered bird by the Naga people, for its qualities of alertness and grandeur
- ✓ The Hornbill Festival of Nagaland is a cultural extravaganza to revive, protect and preserve the richness and uniqueness of the Naga heritage
- ✓ The 10-day annual festival showcases the rich and diverse Naga ethnicity through folk dances, traditional music, local cuisine, handicrafts, art and other craft workshops
- ✓ During the festival, a total of 132 stalls will be set up in Kisama wherein, 100 stalls will be taken up by the Micro Small & Medium Enterprises and 32 temporary stalls.

- ✓ Besides, a host of activities such as Hornbill Music Festival, photo fest, cultural events, fashion shows, adventure sports, Night carnival, Hortiscape etc are lined up during the festival
- ✓ As part of the festival, a multimedia exhibition celebrating 75 Years of India's Independence in commemoration of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" was inaugurated by Chief Minister, Neiphiu Rio.
- **About 98.13 lakh members of 24.75 lakh Antyodaya families in Haryana - would be given free intensive health check-up in the first phase of Nirogi Haryana scheme**



- ✓ The Nirogi Haryana scheme was launched by President Droupadi Murmu recently on November 29.
- ✓ Under this scheme, comprehensive health check-ups of Antyodaya families will be done by the state 'free of cost'.
- ✓ In the first phase, families having an income of less than Rs. 1.80 lakh will be covered, while the rest of the population will be covered in subsequent phases.
- ✓ Under the scheme, comprehensive health check-up and other tests will be done to rule out or screen communicable and non-communicable diseases
- ✓ The departments of medical education and research, Ayush, women and child development, education, panchayat and urban local bodies have tied up to successfully implement the scheme.
- ✓ The beneficiaries have been divided into six categories as per their age – 0 to 6 months, 6 to 59 months, 6 to 18 years, 18 to 40 years, 40 to 60 years, and above 80 years.
- ✓ The enlisted beneficiaries will be approached by an auxiliary nurse midwife (ANM) or accredited social health activist (ASHA) of the health department, and handed over an invitation to visit the health facilities on a particular date.
- ✓ The health check up includes a complete general and physical examination, including physical measurements, height, weight, pulse, BP, dental and eye examination.

- ✓ Initially, the project has been launched at the district hospital in Sector 6, Panchkula, where the urban Antyodaya population will be covered
 - ✓ President Murmu was on a two-day visit to Haryana to attend various programmes during November 29-30
 - ✓ During the visit, the President inaugurated the International Gita Festival -2022 organised on the banks of Brahma Sarovar in Kurukshetra and also participated in the International Gita Seminar held in Kurukshetra University
 - ✓ Further, the President launched the “Open Loop Ticketing System” for the Haryana State Transport Corporation
 - ✓ This makes Haryana the first state in the country to introduce the open-loop ticketing system for roadways buses.
 - ✓ The new system includes the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) issued by AU Small Finance Bank, Electronic Tickets Issuing Machines (ETIMs), a GPS System, and Online Reservation System for advance booking of tickets.
 - ✓ It will play a major role in making road transport in Haryana cashless, contactless and environmentally friendly
- **West Bengal environment department – has recently announced a 10-point ‘Graded Response Action Plan’ (GRAP) to combat rising pollution in Kolkata and other non-attainment cities in the state**
- ✓ Non-attainment cities are those that are critically polluted and have fallen short of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for over five years.
 - ✓ The Air Quality Index (AQI) of Kolkata was higher than Delhi on two days during the last week of November
 - ✓ The GRAP was subsequently launched on November 26 in all the target cities.
 - ✓ Since July 2022, a three-day forecasting-based GRAP has been implemented in the National Capital Region of Delhi
 - ✓ GRAP is a set of emergency measures that are imposed to prevent further deterioration of air quality after reaching a certain threshold
 - ✓ The System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) is a national initiative introduced by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) to measure the air quality of a metropolitan city.

NATIONAL

- **President Droupadi Murmu - conferred the National Awards for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for the year 2021 and 2022**
- ✓ President Murmu was the Chief Guest at a ceremony to celebrate the ‘International Day of Persons with Disabilities’ in New Delhi on 3rd December 2022.
 - ✓ The President felicitated 52 people for their outstanding contributions in various fields towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities



- ✓ The event was organized by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- ✓ Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar presided over the function
- ✓ Union Ministers of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale and Pratima Bhoumik were also present on the occasion.
- ✓ The National Awards for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities are being given under various categories including Sarvshresth Divyangjan, Shresth Divyangjan and Shresth Divyang Bal/Balika.
- ✓ **In Tamil Nadu, Chief Minister M K Stalin announced an increase in pension for the differently-abled, including the visually challenged people, from Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,500 a month**
- ✓ According to the CM, the move will benefit 4.40 lakh disabled who draw pension from the revenue department and the Tamil Nadu government will incur an expenditure of Rs.263. 58 crore.
- ✓ Further, the Tamil Nadu government has formed an expert committee and a high level committee to advise the government and to identify employment opportunities for the differently-abled population
 - ✓ The committees will also stress on getting the differently-abled persons suitable positions in new and emerging industrial or technological sectors.
- ✓ Further, on the eve of the World Disability Day, the school education department introduced Tamil invocation song in sign language
- ✓ School education minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi also launched a video of Tamil invocation in sign language to train more students in future.
- **On December 3, the government - approved issuance of the 24th tranche of electoral bonds that will open for sale on December 5.**
- ✓ The sale of bonds coincides with the second phase of the Gujarat assembly elections scheduled on December 5.
- ✓ Electoral bonds were launched as an alternative to cash donations made to political parties as part of efforts to bring transparency in political funding.

- ✓ State Bank of India (SBI) has been authorised to issue and encash electoral bonds through 29 authorised branches from December 5 to 12.
- ✓ The last phase of electoral bonds (23rd tranche) was open for subscription between November 9 -15, 2022.
- ✓ Usually, electoral bond tranches are open for sale from 1-10 of a designated month.
- ✓ The sale of the first batch of electoral bonds took place from March 1-10, 2018.
- ✓ The authorised SBI branches include those in Lucknow, Shimla, Dehradun, Kolkata, Guwahati, Chennai, Patna, New Delhi, Chandigarh, Srinagar, Gandhinagar, Bhopal, Raipur, and Mumbai.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The United States - has designated 12 countries as “countries of particular concern” for the current status of religious freedom in these nations.**
- ✓ The 12 countries include Burma (Myanmar), the People’s Republic of China, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, the DPRK, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan
- ✓ These countries are designated as Countries of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 for having engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom.
- ✓ The US also placed Algeria, the Central African Republic, Comoros and Vietnam on the Special Watch List for engaging in or tolerating severe violations of religious freedom.
- ✓ The US also designated al-Shabab, Boko Haram, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, the Houthis, ISIS-Greater Sahara, ISIS-West Africa, Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin, the Taliban, and the Wagner Group based on its actions in the Central African Republic as “Entities of Particular Concern”.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **India and Australia – have jointly proposed to launch the Australia-India Centre for Energy (AICE) during the two-day Energy Summit 2022 that will be hosted by IIT Madras in December 2022.**
- ✓ The Australia-India Centre for Energy (AICE) will be a virtual centre that will promote collaboration among universities, research institutes and industry from India and Australia in the energy domain.
- ✓ IIT Madras and Deakin University in Australia are taking the lead in coordinating and driving the proposed AICE to work on the 2030 SDGs
- ✓ The key mission of the Centre will be to enable deep collaborations between Australia and India in the energy sector through transformative research, technology development, and deployment.

- ✓ The immediate focus of the AICE will be to develop joint educational programmes, online MTech courses, and capacity building through certification programmes and diplomas, extension centers, and training.
- ✓ The AICE will also seek to promote seamless research and development and facilitate mobility of research faculty, Young International Fellows (YIF) and Global Research Fellows (GRF) between the two countries.

COMMITTEES

- **The Kirit Parikh committee on gas pricing – has recently submitted its report to the petroleum ministry on November 30**



- ✓ The committee has recommended a floor and ceiling price for legacy fields and complete pricing freedom starting January 1, 2026.
- ✓ State run ONGC and OIL largely operate legacy fields in the country and the government controls its price.
 - ✓ Such fields account for about 80% of annual gas output of about 91 billion cubic metres in the country
- ✓ The panel has recommended the prices of domestic gas should be linked to the international prices.
- ✓ The panel also suggested including natural gas in the one-nation-one-tax regime of GST by subsuming excise duty charged by the central government and varying rates of VAT levied by state governments.
- ✓ Under the current mechanism, prices are reviewed every six months —1 April and 1 October —based on prices in gas surplus nations such as the US, Canada and Russia in a year with a lag of one quarter.
- ✓ The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas will now consider the recommendations of the panel.
- ✓ The Kirit Parikh committee was set up in September to review the gas pricing formula to ensure fair prices to consumers after state-set prices of gas from old fields and a ceiling price for output from difficult blocks rose to a record high.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The 7th edition of the Global Technology Summit - was held from November 29 to December 1, 2022 in New Delhi in hybrid format.**



- ✓ The theme for this year's Summit is 'Geopolitics of Technology'.
- ✓ The Global Technology Summit is India's annual flagship event on Geotechnology, co-hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs and Carnegie India, and held annually since 2016.
- ✓ More than 5000 participants from the U.S., Singapore, Japan, Nigeria, Brazil, Bhutan, the EU, and other countries have attended the Summit this year.
- ✓ External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar spoke on geo-digital and its effects during the inaugural session of the Summit

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Japan's space agency, JAXA - has successfully used steam to propel its EQUULEUS spacecraft**
- ✓ This is the world's first successful orbit control beyond low-Earth orbit using a water propellant propulsion system
- ✓ After flying past the Moon, EQUULEUS used an engine named AQUARIUS that uses water as fuel to get to the second Earth-Moon Lagrange point (EML2).
- ✓ EQUULEUS spacecraft was one of the 10 CubeSats that were launched as part of the Artemis I mission on the maiden flight of the Space Launch System (SLS).
- ✓ EQUilibriUm Lunar-Earth point 6U Spacecraft (EQUULEUS) is a nanosatellite of the 6U CubeSat format that will measure the distribution of plasma surrounding the Earth to help scientists understand the region's radiation environment.

DEFENCE

- **The government - has approved the National Maritime Domain Awareness (NMDA) project for the Indian Navy**
- ✓ The NMDA project will provide "actionable intelligence" for tackling maritime threats
- ✓ The 250 crore NMDA project was recently cleared by the PM-led Cabinet Committee on Security
- ✓ It will basically be an integrated intelligence grid to detect and thwart threats emanating from sea in real-time.

- ✓ The NMDA project will subsume the naval Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) at Gurgaon
 - ✓ The IMAC takes feeds from multiple sources ranging from coastal radars to satellites to assess threats in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- ✓ The NMDA will bolster India's overall maritime security in association with the Gurugram-based 'Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region' (IFC-IOR)
 - ✓ The IFC-IOR is a collaborative naval venture with like-minded nations that currently has 11 foreign liaison officers
- **The bilateral training exercise "Austra Hind 22" between contingents of the Indian Army and the Australian Army – is currently being held in Mahajan Field Firing Ranges (Rajasthan).**



- ✓ According to the Ministry of Defence, this is the first exercise in the series of Austra Hind with the participation of all arms and services contingent from both armies, with a focus on peacekeeping operations under the UN mandate
- ✓ The Indian Army is represented by troops from the DOGRA Regiment, while the Australian Army is represented by soldiers from the 13th Brigade of the 2nd Division
- ✓ The exercise, scheduled from November 28 to December 11, aims to build positive military ties, imbibe each other's best practices and promote the ability to operate together.
- ✓ The 'Austra Hind' will be held as a yearly event that will be conducted alternatively in India and Australia.
- ✓ The two countries recently took part in the multi-nation Malabar exercise alongside the navies of the US and Japan.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

- **Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan – has recently released a book titled "India: Mother of Democracy"**

- ✓ Compiled by the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), the academic book has 30 articles written by 30 different authors
- ✓ The book showcases the democratic ethos of the country since the ancient times.
- ✓ It traces the democratic history of India from the times of Harappan civilization.
- ✓ The authors of the book include the renowned archaeologist Vasant Shinde, Professor Rajiv Lochan of Panjab University, Professor Jigar Mohammad of Jammu University and Professor Veenu Pant of Sikkim University.

RANKINGS

- **India - has jumped to the 48th position, its highest ever spot, in the global aviation safety ranking by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nation's aviation arm**
- ✓ Last month, the ICAO had audited the Indian Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to check its effective implementation (EI) of critical safety elements.
- ✓ The audit was conducted from November 9 to 16 in the areas of – Legislation, Organization, Personal Licensing, Operations, Airworthiness and Aerodromes
- ✓ The Indian aviation safety has scored the highest ever EI score of 85.49% which puts India in the 48th spot, ahead of China (49), Israel (50) and Turkey (54).
- ✓ In 2018, India scored 69.95% and was placed at the 102nd rank.
- ✓ The improved safety ranking will make it easier for Indian carriers to expand their operations abroad

NATIONAL DAY

- **Indian Navy Day – December 4**



- ✓ India celebrates Navy Day every year to acknowledge the role of the Indian Navy and commemorate its achievements in 'Operation Trident' during the 1971 Indo-Pak War
- ✓ During the operation, the Indian navy successfully caused heavy damage to several Pakistan vessels by bombing Karachi harbour on December 4.

- ✓ It was also the first time when anti-ship missile boats - Nirghat, Veer, and Nipat - were used during an operation
- ✓ The day pays homage to the 300 soldiers who lost their lives during the operation and around 700 who were injured.
- ✓ This year, the Indian Navy is all set to demonstrate India's combat prowess and capability through an 'Operational Demonstration' at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh on December 04, 2022
- ✓ President of India and the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Droupadi Murmu will be the guest of honour at the event to be hosted by Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff
- ✓ The event will start with a ceremonial laying of the wreath at the war memorial 'Victory at Sea' on the Beach Road by Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command Vice-Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta
- ✓ Traditionally, the Navy Day celebrations are conducted at New Delhi in the presence of the President and other dignitaries.
 - ✓ This year, for the first time, Navy Day Celebrations are being conducted outside the National Capital.
- ✓ The Maratha Emperor, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is considered the Father of the Indian Navy.
- ✓ The Indian Navy was established by the East India Company in 1612.
- ✓ Later it was named as Royal India Navy and post-Independence, it was reconstituted as the Indian Navy in 1950
- ✓ At the Senior Naval Officers' Conference in May 1972, it was decided that Indian Navy Day would be celebrated on December 4 to recognise the efforts and achievements of the Indian Navy during the 1971 Indo-Pak war.
- ✓ The Navy celebrated the year 2021 as 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh' as a part of commemorating the 50th anniversary of the victory in the 1971 war.

