

### Current Affairs Today –24.12.2020

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#### **CURRENT AFFAIRS: DAYS**

##### **National Consumer Rights Day 2020: Observed on Dec 24**



- **National Consumer Rights Day** is observed on **December 24**, every year in India.
- The **Consumer Protection Act 1986** came into effect on this day.
- The **theme** of the National Consumer Day is **The Sustainable Consumer**. The theme is in view of the urgent need for action to approach the worldwide crisis, global temperature change and biodiversity loss.

##### **Aim of the act:**

- The main objective of the Consumer Protection Act is to provide consumers with effective safeguards against different types of exploitation such as defective goods, unsatisfactory services, and unfair trade practices.

##### **Significance:**

- This day provides an opportunity for individuals to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and the need to make every consumer more aware of their rights and responsibilities.

#### **CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL NEWS**

##### **NITI Aayog launches india's first indigenous digital storage platform DigiBoxx**



- **NITI Aayog's CEO Amitabh Kant** has virtually launched **India's first digital asset management and storage platform DigiBoxx**.
- Kant also signed up for an account, making him the first user of an Indian digital file storage, sharing and management SaaS product that provides storage options for business as well as individual users.
- The platform provides an easy and secure way to store all the files in one centralised location.
- DigiBoxx has free 2GB storage space and the file shared stays for 45 days.

##### **Cabinet gives nod to merger of 4 Film Media Units with NFDC**



- The **Cabinet approved the merger of Films Division, Directorate of Film Festivals, National Film Archives of India, and Children's Film Society, India with National Film Development Corporation.**
- The Cabinet also approved revision in guidelines for providing **DTH services** in India.
- Under the DTH licence will be issued for 20 years in place of present 10 years.
- Guidelines have been amended to allow **100 percent FDI** in DTH services.
- And also the Cabinet approved an ordinance for extending National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Act for another 3 years, giving protection to unauthorised colonies from punitive action in Delhi.
- The Cabinet also gave its nod for signing the revised Air Services Agreement between India and Philippines. It also gave its approval for signing the revised Air Services Agreement between India and Afghanistan.

### Ministry of Environment rolls out Firefly bird diverter initiative



Great Indian Bustards near power lines fitted with firefly detectors.

- The **Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** along with the **Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)** India has come up with a unique initiative of a **firefly bird diverter** for overhead power lines in areas where **Great Indian Bustard (GIB)** populations are found in the wild.
- Firefly bird diverters are flaps installed on power lines. They work as reflectors for bird species like the GIB. Birds can spot them from a distance of about 50 meters and change their path of flight to avoid collision with power lines.

#### About GIB:

- GIB is one of the most critically threatened species in India, with less than 150 birds in the wild.

### Adityanath Das Appointed as the next new chief Secretary of AP



- Senior IAS officer **Aditya Nath Das** has been appointed **Chief Secretary to the Government of Andhra Pradesh..**

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- Incumbent Nilam Sawhney, who is due to retire from service on December 31, has been appointed Principal Advisor to the Chief Minister in the rank of a Cabinet Minister.
- Das, a 1987 batch IAS officer, currently the Special Chief Secretary, Water Resources and Environment, Forest, Science and Technology departments, will take charge as the Chief Secretary after the incumbent Sawhney retires from service.
- The order of the appointment was issued by **Praveen Prakash**, on **22nd December 2020**.

#### About Adityanath Das:

- Das worked as Collector of Warangal in 1999 in the erstwhile undivided AP.
- He worked as the Additional Commissioner of AP Bhavan in Delhi and also as the Director of North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS) on deputation to the Centre.
- He also worked as Commissioner and Director Municipal Administration Department.
- He also worked as Special Chief Secretary of the School Education and Higher Education departments.

### PM Narendra Modi Releases Postal Stamp To Mark Centenary Celebrations Of AMU



- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** released a special **postal stamp** to mark the **centenary celebrations** of the **Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)**.
- This is the **first time** in five decades that a prime minister has attended an AMU event as the chief guest. Prime Minister Modi attended the event via video conferencing.
- Union Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank** also Participated in the event.
- Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank recalled the achievements of the AMU over the century and contributions of its alumni.
- The last time a prime minister attended an event at AMU was Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964.
- Before him, prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru had visited the AMU four times.

#### About AMU :

- Located : Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh
- Founded : Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

### PM Modi to release Rs. 18,000 crore under PM-Kisan scheme to more than 9 crore farmers



- Prime Minister **Modi** will release **Rs. 18,000 crore** for the next instalment of financial benefit under the **PM-Kisan scheme** to more than **9 crore farmers** through video conference.
- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar will also be present during the programme.
- Under the PM-KISAN Scheme, a financial benefit of **Rs. 6,000 per year** is provided to small and marginal farmers, payable in three equal 4-monthly installments of Rs. 2,000 each.
- The fund is transferred directly to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

#### **Cabinet approves post matric scholarship scheme for more than four crore SC students**



- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** has also approved **Rs. 59,048 Crore** post matric scholarship scheme for more than **4 Crore Scheduled Castes** students in 5 years.
- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawarchand Gehlot stated, the Central Government will spend Rs. 35,534 Crore for it which is 60 percent and the balance 40 per cent will be spent by the State Governments.
- It is estimated that 1.36 Crore such poorest students, who are currently not continuing their education beyond 10th standard would be brought into the higher education system in the next 5 years.

### **CURRENT AFFAIRS: INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

#### **UNICEF launches the COVID-19 vaccine market dashboard**



- On December 21, The **Unicef** announced the launch of a **Covid-19 vaccine market dashboard**.
- It is an interactive tool to follow the developments of the rapidly evolving coronavirus vaccine market and the efforts of the COVAX Facility to ensure fair and equitable access for every country in the world.

#### **About Dashboard:**

- The dashboard provides a regularly updated overview of the global research and development pipeline, the projected production capacity, publicly announced bilateral and multilateral supply agreements.

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- In 2021, the dashboard will provide an update on the status of procurement by the Unicef and other buyers participating in the COVAX Facility.
- It will also track the status of deliveries by the Unicef and other participating national and institutional buyers.

#### About COVAX:

- COVAX is the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-Accelerator), a global collaboration to accelerate the development, production and equitable access to new Covid-19 diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines.

#### About UNICEF:

- Headquarters : New York
- Head : Henrietta H. Fore
- Founded: 11th December 1946.

### Jaishankar holds virtual meet with Spanish counterpart Arancha Gonzalez Laya



- On December 23, External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** and his Spanish counterpart **Arancha Gonzalez Laya** held a virtual meeting, during which they agreed to maintain the momentum of cooperation in a range of areas like defence and energy.
- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated the ministers also deliberated on relations between India and the European Union and agreed to work closely in the context of the forthcoming India-EU summit, proposed to be held in Portugal in May next year.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: STATE NEWS

### Government of Karnataka Inaugurated 1st Fruits Portal



- On 22 December 2022, the **FRUITS (Farmer Registration and Unified Beneficiary Information System) Portal**, a project of e-Governance, Government of Karnataka was inaugurated with BHOOMI Package of **Karnataka** state to fetch and validate land details.
- Canara Bank also will take the project on a pilot basis.
- It is the first kind of technology adopted by the government of Karnataka, to combine 70 lakh farmers with land and other details under a single platform.

#### About Canara Bank

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- Founded : July 1906
- Founder : Shri Ammembal Subba Rao Pai
- Headquarters : Bangalore
- MD & CEO : L.V Prabhakar

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING & FINANCE

### Indian Army, Bank of Baroda sign MoU for 'Baroda Military Salary Package'



- **Indian Army and Bank of Baroda** have entered into a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** for **Baroda Military Salary Package**.
- The MoU was signed by Lt Gen Ravin Khosla, DG(MP&PS) and Vikramaditya Singh Khichi, Executive Director, Bank of Baroda in the presence of Lt Gen Harsha Gupta, Adjutant General, Indian Army who also chaired the meeting.

#### Benefits :

- Free Personal Accidental Insurance cover,
- Permanent Total Disability cover,
- Partial disability Cover and Air Accident Insurance Cover of sizeable amounts,
- Higher Education Cover and Girl Child Marriage Cover on death in case of serving personnel.
- Unlimited free ATM transactions at all bank ATMs
- Waivers or concessions on various service charges in retail loans, free remittance facility through RTGS/NEFT, free Demand Draft/Banker's Cheque.

#### About Bank of Baroda

- Headquarters : Alkapuri, Vadodara
- Founder : Sayajirao Gaekwad
- Founded : 20 July 1908

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: HONOURS & AWARDS

### HelpAge India Gets 2020 UN Population Award



- **NGO HelpAge India** has been awarded the **UN Population Award for 2020** in the institutional category.
- This award for its contribution towards serving disadvantaged elderly people and raising awareness on their cause
- The UN Population Award, established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1981, recognises contributions in the fields of population and reproductive health.

#### About UNGA :

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- President : Volkan Bozkir
- Headquarters : New York
- Founded : 1945, New York

### Srinagar Amar Singh College gets UNESCO award



- **Amar Singh College**, in Srinagar has been awarded for cultural heritage protection by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Asia-Pacific in 2020**.
- The College Building is 80 years old and INTACH chapter in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has carried out the conservation work at the Amar Singh College.

#### About INTACH

- INTACH : Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage
- Founded : 27 January, 1984
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Motto : Dedicated to Conservation

### CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### China's new space carrier rocket successfully launches five satellites



- On December 22, China's new medium-lift carrier **rocket Long March-8** made its maiden flight on, sending **five satellites** successfully into planned orbit.
- The rocket was launched from the **Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site** in **Hainan**.
- The new rocket, which was developed by the **China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT)**
- The five experimental satellites will carry out the in-orbit verification of microwave imaging and other technologies.

#### About Long March-8 rocket:

- The Long March-8 rocket which has a total length of 50.3 meters, and a take-off mass of 356 tonnes can carry a payload of at least 4.5 tonnes to a sun-synchronous orbit at an altitude of 700 km, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) stated.
- The rocket fills the gap in China's launch capability to the sun-synchronous orbit from 3 tonnes to 4.5 tonnes, and is of great significance for accelerating the upgrading of launch vehicles.

#### About CALT:

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- Headquarters : Beijing , China
- Founded : 16 November, 1957

#### About CNSA:

- Founded : 22 April 1993
- Administrator : Zhang Kejian
- Headquarters : Beijing, China

### CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENT NEWS

#### Vineet Agarwal takes over as new Assocham President



- Managing Director of logistics major Transport Corporation of India Limited **Vineet Agarwal** has taken over as the new President of The **Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham)**.
- He replaces Niranjana Hiranandani, Co-Founder and MD, Hiranandani Group of Companies.
- Sumant Sinha, Chairman and Managing Director of ReNew Power, is the new Senior Vice-President of Assocham.

#### About ASSOCHAM:

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Founder : Dr. Niranjana Hiranandani
- Founded : 1920

#### Senior IPS officer Satyendra Garg assumes Andaman and Nicobar DGP charge



- Senior IPS officer **Satyendra Garg** assumed **Andaman and Nicobar DGP charge**.
- Garg, a 1987-batch IPS officer was posted as joint secretary in the Union home ministry.
- He was heading the North East division in the home ministry as joint secretary before being repatriated to his cadre.

### CURRENT AFFAIRS: BOOKS & AUTHORS

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## Devendra Fadnavis releases book 'Ayodhya' written by Madhav Bhandari



- On December 22, Former Maharashtra Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly **Devendra Fadnavis** released the book 'Ayodhya' written by BJP's State Vice President **Madhav Bhandari** in **Mumbai**.
- He stated that the fight to build a Ram temple is a fight to awaken the Hindu community and the book will be used as a reference book.

### About Ram Mandir Ayodhya

- Architect of the temple : Chandrakant Sompura

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: SPORTS NEWS

### Indian men to finish 2020 in 4th position, women in 9th in FIH rankings



- The **Indian men and women hockey** teams will finish 2020 in **fourth and ninth** positions, respectively.
- The International Hockey Federation (FIH) confirmed that the Belgium men's team and the Netherlands' women will finish the year at the top of the world rankings.
- In the men's FIH world rankings, reigning world and European champions Belgium (2496.88 points) sit at the top ahead of 2019 FIH Hockey Pro League winners Australia (2nd place - 2385.70), Netherlands (3rd place 2257.96) and India (4th place 2063.78).
- Among women, the Netherlands (2631.99 points) are at the top followed by Argentina (2174.61). Germany (2054.28) occupy the third position and India (9th place 1543.00).

### About FIH:

- President : Dr Narinder Dhruv Batra
- Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARIES

### Renowned Malayalam poet Sugathakumari passes away



- Renowned Malayalam poet and activist **Sugathakumari**, who devoted her life to the green cause, rights of women and the deprived, passed away at **Thiruvananthapuram**. She was 86.
- She was one of the most active campaigners of the Save Silent Valley Movement when it took shape in the 1970s.
- She wrote a poem Marathinu Sthuti (Hymn to a tree), which was received at every other protest to save the silent valley.

#### **Achievements:**

- Suganthakumari was awarded India's fourth highest civilian award, Padma Shri in 2006.
- She was a recipient of the Kerala Sahitya Akademi award, Kendra Sahitya Akademi award, Odakkuzhal award, Ezhuthachan award among others.
- She published her first poem in 1957. Some of her notable works were 'Rathrimazha', 'Ambalamani', Paavam Manavahridayam, Swapnabhoomi and 'Pathira Pookal'.

#### **Daily CA on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>**

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## Daily CA on Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>

- Kisan Diwas or **National Farmers Day** is observed on **December 23** across the country to praise the farmers as they are the spine of India.
- Union Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister**, dedicated **West Bengal's first oil and gas reserve, Bengal Basin**, to the nation.
- The **Centre and the World Bank** signed a **USD 500 million project to build safe and green national highway corridors in Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh**.
- Government has decided to **constitute a High Level Committee to commemorate the 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose**.
- National Weather Forecasting Centre of the **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)**, has released the **End of the Season Southwest Monsoon 2020 report**.
- On December 21, 2020 **UN Women**, the United Nations entity working for the empowerment of women, entered into an agreement with the Kerala government's **Gender Park** that has been **initiating gender equality activities**.
- The **Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA)**, headquartered in Kochi, has launched a **multilingual call centre for aquafarmers at Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh**.
- Department of Information Technology, Electronics and Communication and Government of Haryana** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **India Accelerator (IA)** to build a **strong startup ecosystem in Haryana**.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will launch the **PMJAY - SEHAT scheme** on December 26 for Jammu and Kashmir.
- The **National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)** has revised upward its **gross domestic product (GDP)** projection for **FY21 to 7.3% contraction from the 12.6% dip estimated in September 2020**.

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- **ICICI Bank** has launched an online platform **Infinite India** to support foreign companies to establish or expand business in India.
- The **Asian Development Bank** has announced to provide **Rs 2,100 crore** loan to the **Tripura government for the development of urban areas and tourism** in the northeastern state that borders Bangladesh.
- The **12th Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment Summit** was held virtually from **December 15-16, 2020**, and the theme is **Rejuvenating Resilient Habitats**
- US President **Donald Trump** presented the prestigious **Legion of Merit** to Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** for his leadership in elevating strategic partnership of the two countries and emergence of India as a global power.