

## Current Affairs Today –17 and 18.12.2020

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### **CURRENT AFFAIRS: DAYS**

#### **International Migrants Day 2020: Observed on Dec 18**



- The **International Migrants Day** is observed on **18 December** every year.
- On 4 December 2000, the **UN General Assembly (UNGA)**, taking into account the large and increasing number of migrants in the world, proclaimed 18 December as International Migrants Day
- The day was selected to mark the anniversary of the 1990 adoption by UNGA of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- The **theme** of International Migrants Day 2020 : **‘Reimagining Human Mobility’**.
- To mark International Migrants Day this year, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has called for the world community to come together and remember the refugees and migrants who have lost their lives.

#### **Minorities Day 2020: Celebrates on Dec 17**



- The **Minorities Rights Day** is observed in India every year on **December 18**.

#### **AIM:**

- The aim of the day is to advance and protect the privileges of the individuals to have a place with linguistic, religion, castes and color minorities.

#### **History:**

- The Minorities Rights Day is celebrated by the **National Commission for Minorities (NCM)**.
- On 18 December 1992, the United Nations adopted the Statement on the individual's Rights belonging to religious or Linguistic National or Ethnic Minorities.
- It highlighted religious linguistic, cultural, and national identity of the minorities that shall be respected, preserved, and protected by the states and within individual territories.

#### **About Ministry of Minority Affairs:**

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- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Established : 29 January 2006.
- Minister of Minority Affairs : Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi.

#### About National Commission for Minorities:

- The Union Government established the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) under the **National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992**.
- Five religious communities have been notified as minority communities namely Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis).
- Further, according to the notification detail of 27 January 2014, Jains have also been notified as a minority community.

#### UN Arabic Language Day 2020: Dec 18



- **World Arabic Language Day** is celebrated every year on **18 December since 2012**.
- December 18 was chosen as the date for the Arabic language as it is "the day in 1973 when the General Assembly approved Arabic as an official UN language"
- The event was established by the **UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** in 2010 seeking to celebrate multilingualism and cultural diversity as well as to promote equal use of all six of its official working languages throughout the organization.
- World Arabic Language Day 2020 will provide an opportunity to reflect on and discuss how Language Academies can help revive and enhance the use of classical Arabic.
- The Day will also give an opportunity to showcase and celebrate the richness and global importance of the Arabic language worldwide.

#### CURRENT AFFAIRS: NATIONAL NEWS

#### PM Modi Inaugurates World's Largest Renewable Energy Park Opens in Kutch



- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of the **world's largest renewable solar and wind energy 30,000 megawatts (MW)** Ultra Mega Hybrid Park in **Gujarat's Kutch**.
- It will be the largest renewable energy park of its kind in the world.

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- The vast project in western Gujarat's Kutch region spread over **1,80,000 acres**
- The energy project in PM Modi's home state will account for a large chunk of India's ambitious target of generating 175 GW in renewable energy by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030.
- The desalination plant will be able to process 100 million litres of water a day for 8 lakh people living in the arid region.
- PM Modi also laid the foundation stone for the Rs 129-crore fully automated dairy plant under the Centre's Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. As the then CM, Modi had set up the district's first dairy plant with 2 lakh litre processing capacity in 2013-14.

#### Key features of the renewable energy park

- The park is being constructed between Khawda and Vighakhhot villages near India-Pakistan border.
- The renewable park will have two dedicated zones, one each for wind energy and solar energy.
- It will be spread over 72,600 hectares of waste land, including 49,600 hectares for solar project and 23,000 hectares of land for wind power.

#### ISRO sets up dedicated control centre for Space Situational Awareness



- The **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** has set up a dedicated Space **Situational Awareness (SSA)** Control Centre, at its ISTRAC campus at **Peenya, Bangalore**.
- The control centre was formally inaugurated by Chairman, ISRO and Secretary, Department of Space **K Sivan on December 14**.
- According to ISRO, the **Network for space object Tracking and Analysis (NETRA)** project is initiated as a first step towards meeting this goal, its main elements being a radar, an optical telescope facility, and a control centre.

#### About SSA :

- It is Science of tracking objects (man made and natural) in orbit.
- Only the **US, Russia, and Europe** have similar facilities in place to track space objects and share collision warnings.

#### About NETRA :

- NETRA is to protect Indian Space Assets from space debris close approaches and collisions.
- Network for space object Tracking and Analysis (NETRA) project is initiated as a first step towards meeting this goal, its main elements being a radar, an optical telescope facility, and a control centre.

#### About ISRO

- Chairman : K.Shivan
- Headquarters : Bangalore, Karnataka

#### Cabinet approves assistance of Rs 3,500 crore for sugarcane farmers



- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister **Mr. Narendra Modi** has approved assistance of about **Rs. 3,500 crore** (US\$ 476.10 million) for sugarcane farmers (Ganna Kisan).
- This subsidy aims at covering expenses on marketing costs including handling, upgrading and other processing costs and costs of international and internal transport and freight charges on export of up to 60 LMT of sugar limited to Maximum Admissible Export Quota (MAEQ) allocated to sugar mills for sugar season 2020-21.

## QCI Launches Recognition Scheme for Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies



- **Quality Council of India (QCI)** at the behest of the FSSAI has come out with a Scheme for approval of **Hygiene Rating** Audit Agencies to scale up Hygiene Rating by increasing the number of recognised Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies in the country.
- This rating will be in the form of smileys (1 up to 5) and the certificate should be displayed prominently in the consumer facing area.
- **Aim :** To help consumers take informed decisions regarding food outlets where they prefer to eat by encouraging businesses to improve hygiene and safety standards, the Commerce and Industry Ministry. The recognised agency will verify compliance with food hygiene and safety procedures laid down by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- FSSAI's initiative of '**Food Hygiene Rating Scheme**' is a certification system for food businesses supplying food directly to consumers, either on or off premise, the ministry said in a statement.

### About Quality Council of India:

- Purpose: To establish and promote quality standards across all social and economic sectors.
- Headquarters : New Delhi

### About FSSAI

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.
- The FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Chairperson : Rita Teatonia

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- CEO : Arun Singhal

## India and Bangladesh to reopen Chilahati-Haldibari rail link after nearly 55 years



- **India and Bangladesh** reopened the **55 years old Chilahati-Haldibari rail** link between the two nations. The inauguration took place during a virtual bilateral summit between **PM Modi** and **PM Sheikh Hasina** on December 17, 2020.

### Significance:

- The inauguration of the railway link will help in enhancing connectivity to West Bengal and Assam from Bangladesh.
- It will enhance the railway network accessibility and will also give a boost to the economic development and bilateral trade in the region.

### About Bangladesh:

- Bangladesh Prime Minister - Sheikh Hasina
- 1971 - the birth of Bangladesh,
- Sheikh Hasina - Longest Prime Minister For 10 years

## CCEA approves revised cost of Rs 6.7k cr for power transmission project



- **CCEA (Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs)**, chaired by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, has approved the Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) of North Eastern Region Power System Improvement Project (NERPSIP) at an estimated cost of **Rs 6,700 crore**
- The central government approved the revised cost estimate of Rs 6,700 crore for North Eastern Region Power System Improvement Project for **six states** to strengthen intra-state transmission and distribution systems.
- six beneficiary the north-eastern states – **Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura**, and are targeted to be commissioned by December 2021.
- The main objective of the project is the government commitment for the total economic development of the North Eastern Region and to strengthen the intra-state transmission and distribution infrastructure in the region.
- The scheme will also increase the per capita power consumption of these states, and contribute to the total economic development of the region.

- The scheme was initially approved in December 2014 as a Central Sector Plan Scheme of Ministry of Power and is being funded with the assistance of World Bank fund and by the government through the Budget support of the ministry on 50:50 basis (World Bank: Govt) except for the capacity building component for Rs 89 crore, which will be entirely funded by the Centre.

### British PM invites Prime Minister Modi to attend UK hosted G-7 summit next year



- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has invited India to attend the **G7 Summit next year**.
- Mr Johnson has sent a letter inviting Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the summit. UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab called on Mr Modi and handed over the letter in New Delhi.
- Mr Johnson's ambition to work with a group of like-minded democracies to advance shared interests and tackle common challenges.
- This year, the G7 grouping will also reportedly witness an expansion and will include ten democracies, naming it **D10**.

#### About G7 Summit:

- The G7 (or Group of Seven) is an organisation made up of the world's seven largest so-called advanced economies: **Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States**.
- The group regards itself as a community of values with freedom and human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and prosperity and sustainable development as its key principles.
- The initial group of six first met in 1975 to exchange ideas on possible solutions to a global economic crisis. Canada joined the following year.

#### About Britain :

- Britain Prime Minister - Boris Johnson
- Foreign secretary - Dominic Raab
- G7 Countries - US, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Italy and Japan.

### India and Bangladesh sign 7 MoUs, agreements



- **India and Bangladesh** signed **seven MoUs** and agreements during the virtual summit between Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** and Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina**.

- The agreements and MoUs were signed in Dhaka by the High Commissioner of India Vikram Doraiswami on behalf of India and officials of Bangladesh.
- The agreements include a framework of understanding in Hydrocarbon sector, framework agreement on High Impact Community Development Project (HICDP), protocol on transborder elephant conservation, an MoU on the supply of equipment and improvement of Garbage and solid waste disposal, MoU in the field of agriculture, an MoU between National Museum Delhi and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial museum, Dhaka and terms of reference for India Bangladesh CEO forum.

#### About Bangladesh:

- Prime Minister : Sheikh Hasina
- Capital : Dhaka
- Currency : Bangladeshi taka

#### EAM S Jaishankar launches economic diplomacy website



- External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** launched a dedicated **economic diplomacy website**.
- Aim : To provide critical and relevant information on major economic indicators, central and state government policy updates as well as the latest business news and trade data.
- The website [www.indbiz.gov.in](http://www.indbiz.gov.in) will act as a two-way funnel connecting Indian nationals' businesses and states globally for enhancing exports, exploring employment opportunities.
- The website also includes information on global mineral resource endowments, opportunities for agricultural exports, and employment abroad for Indian nationals and businesses, he said at the virtual launch event.
- It has been launched to showcase India's economic, sectoral and state-wise trends that make for an attractive economic partnership.

#### India signs one billion dollar loan agreement with NDB for Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan



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- **The Government of India** and **New Development Bank** signed a loan agreement for **one thousand million dollars** to provide support to Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan through **MGNREGA Scheme**.

#### Significance of the Scheme:

- It will support the Government in mitigating the adverse economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic and enable economic recovery in the rural areas through Natural Resource Management (NRM) works.

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- This will facilitate economic activity and employment generation to stimulate rural demand, to combat the decline in economic activity due to outbreak of COVID-19.
- The programme proposes creation of durable rural infrastructure assets relating to NRM and generation of employment opportunities for rural poor, especially migrant workers who have returned from urban areas and have lost their livelihoods due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### About NDB:

- The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)
- Headquarters : Shanghai, China
- President : Marcos Prado Troyjo
- First President : K. V. Kamath
- Founded : 15 July 2014

#### Defence Acquisition Council approves proposals worth Rs 27,000 crore to procure equipment from domestic industry



- **Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)** meeting, headed by Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh**, approved proposals to procure equipment worth **Rs 27,000 crore** from the domestic industry.
- DAC approved Capital Acquisition proposals of various weapons, platforms, equipment and systems required by the Indian Army, the Navy and Air Force at an approximate overall cost of Rs 28,000 crore.
- AIR Correspondent reports, this was the first meeting of the Council under the new regime of Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 and this will give a boost to the Make in India and Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiatives of the Government.

### CURRENT AFFAIRS: BUSINESS NEWS

#### National Infrastructure Pipeline: Projects Worth ₹ 44 Lakh Crore Under Implementation



- **Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari** stated the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), infrastructure projects worth ₹ **44 lakh crore** are under implementation.
- It involves **39 %** investment by the **central government**, **40 %** investment by the **states**, and **21 %** by the **private sector**.
- While addressing the CII Partnership Summit 2020, the minister said that the national infrastructure pipeline encapsulates an investment of ₹ 111 lakh crore on infrastructure projects by the year 2024-2025.
- Currently, projects worth ₹ 44 lakh crore out of the ₹ 111 lakh crore, accounting for 40 per cent are under implementation, while projects worth ₹ 22 lakh crore account for 20 per cent are under development stages

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: SCHEMES

### AICTE to Release Rs 20,000 Maintenance Allowance For Jammu And Kashmir, Ladakh Students



- **AICTE** has decided to release the instalment of **Rs 20,000** as maintenance allowance under **Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS)** for the students of **Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh**.
- Aim: To Support & Empower Students for Completing their online studies.

#### About PMSSS:

- Under the PMSSS Scheme, the youths of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are supported by way of scholarship in two parts namely the academic fee and maintenance allowance.
- It is Implemented by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)

#### About All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) :

- Founded : November 1945
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Chairperson : Anil Sahasrabudhe

### AP rolls out free crop insurance scheme



- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** has launched **YSR Free Crop Insurance** scheme.
- In this Scheme ₹ **1,252 crore** credited into the bank accounts of 9.48 lakh farmers in insurance claims for the agricultural season 2019.
- The previous government spent an average Rs 393 crore per annum for three years towards payment of insurance premium.
- The number of beneficiaries now has gone up to 49.80 lakhs
- The compensation for the crop losses during 2020 will be paid in April next.

#### About AP:

- Chief Minister : Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy
- Governor : Biswabhusan Harichandan

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: APPOINTMENTS

#### Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati named VP of Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union



- Prasar Bharati CEO **Shashi Shekhar Vempati** has been elected as the Vice President of **Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)**, one of the largest broadcasting associations in the world.

#### About Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) :

- Founded : 1964
- The Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union is a professional association of broadcasting organisations with over 286 members in 57 countries and regions, reaching the potential population of about three billion people.
- Headquarters : Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- President : İbrahim Eren

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## CURRENT AFFAIRS: DEFENSE NEWS

### Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Sujeet' to be commissioned



- **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** ship **Sujeet**, the second in the series of five **Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV)** built by **Goa Shipyard Limited**, will be commissioned at **Goa on December 15**.
- This vessel has been made in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Make in India'. will be commissioned by Secretary of Defence Production **Raj Kumar**.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: BANKING & ECONOMY NEWS

### FY21 GDP to contract at 7.4% on better recovery: SBI report



- India's GDP growth is expected to be at **(-) 7.4 per cent** in **FY21** on better than projected recovery, stated a SBI research report, upgrading its earlier forecast of **(-) 10.9 per cent**.
- The SBI research report has also forecast India's GDP growth in FY22 at 11 percent.
- The report also believes that it would take seven quarters from the fourth quarter of FY21 for GDP to reach the pre-pandemic level in nominal terms.

#### About SBI:

- Chairman : Dinesh Kumar Khara
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Founded : 1st July 1955

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: AGREEMENTS

### GOI, World Bank sign 400 million dollar project to protect India's poor from COVID-19



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- The **Government of India** and the **World Bank** have signed a **400 million dollar** project to protect India's **poor and vulnerable from the impact of COVID-19**.
- The programme will strengthen the capability of state and central governments to provide coordinated and adequate social protection to the poor and vulnerable from the shocks triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The agreement was signed by Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs CS Mohapatra and Sumila Gulyani, Acting Country Director, India, on behalf of the World Bank.
- This is the second such assistance in the series of two 'Accelerating India's COVID-19 Social Protection Response Programme'
- The first operation of 750 million dollar was approved in May 2020.

#### About World Bank :

- President : David malpass
- Headquarters: Washington, D.C.
- Founded : July 1944

#### About Ministry of Finance

- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Founded : 29 October 1946

### CURRENT AFFAIRS: RANKING

#### India Ranks 131 in UN's Human Development Index



- **India** has been ranked 131 among 189 countries in the 2020 human development index, according to a report released by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**.
- Human Development Index is the measure of a nation's health, education, and standards of living.
- **Norway topped** the index, with a score of 0.957 and followed by Ireland, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Iceland. **Niger** is the **lowest ranked** country at 189, placed among Low human development category, with a score of 0.394.

#### Top 10 Countries in HDI Index 2019 :

1. Norway (HDI value – 0.957)

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2. Ireland (HDI value – 0.955)
3. Switzerland (HDI value – 0.955)
4. Hong Kong, China (SAR) – (HDI value – 0.949)
4. Iceland – (HDI value – 0.949)
6. Germany – (HDI value – 0.947)
7. Sweden – (HDI value – 0.945)
8. Australia – (HDI value – 0.944)
8. Netherlands – (HDI value – 0.944)
10. Denmark (HDI value – 0.940)

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: SPORTS NEWS

### Doha to host 2030 Asian Games, Saudi Arabia in 2034



- **Doha** will host the **2030 Asian Games** and **rival Riyadh** will stage the event in 2034 following a vote by the **Olympic Council of Asia (OCA)** General Assembly in **Muscat**.
- The second hosting city, for 2034, is Riyadh.
- The double award comes after OCA President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah arranged a "win win" situation which saw the city with the most votes awarded the 2030 Games and the runner-up given 2034.
- 2030 Asian Games will be the **21st edition** of the multi-sports event, held after every **four years**. It is also known as **Asiad**.
- It means back-to-back Games will be held in West Asia with an intriguing race between two fierce political opponents ending with both Qatar and Saudi Arabia having something to show for it.
- Qatar will also host the 2022 World Cup.

#### About 2030 Asian Games :

- The 2030 Asian Games, officially known as the XXI Asiad, will be a multi-sport event which will be celebrated in Doha, Qatar in 2030. Doha previously organized the Asian Games in 2006.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS: OBITUARIES

### Senior BJP leader and former Gonda MP Satyadev Singh passes away at 75

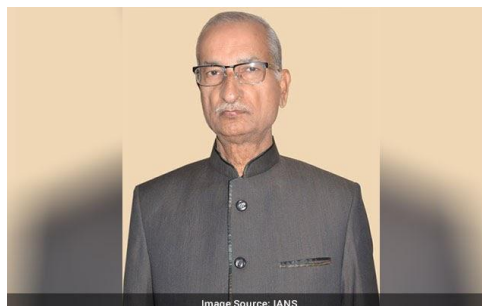


Image Source: IANS



- Former BJP MP, **Satya Dev Singh**, one of the senior-most leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party, has passed away. He was 75.
- Satyadev Singh had held several important posts, including the **national president** of the Yuva Morcha, as well as the state vice-president.
- Singh was also a part of the core committee of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He also served as the chairman of BJP's disciplinary committee.
- He contested from **Gonda Lok Sabha** constituency on the ticket of Bhartiya Lok Dal for the first time in 1977 and won.
- Later, he was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Balrampur parliamentary seat as a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party in 1991 and 1996. He also played an important role in the Ram Mandir movement.

## Daily CA on Dec 16th

- Vijay Diwas **also called** Victory Day **is celebrated in India every year on** December 16.
- The **United Kingdom** has confirmed that **Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson** will be the chief guest **at Republic Day Parade in January 2021**.
- **Himgiri**, which is the first of the **three Project 17A** ships being built at **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE), Kolkata** was launched on **December 14**.
- The government of Maharashtra's Unified Development Control and Promotion Regulations (UDCPR) are expected to bolster real estate development.
- **The State of the Education Report for India 2020: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), was launched virtually by UNESCO New Delhi.**
- **Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research** has signed an MoU with cGanga, a think-tank of National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) for development of **sludge management** framework in India.
- The **UN Environment Program (UNEP)** on announced six winners of the 2020 Champions of the Earth Award range of categories including **Lifetime Achievement, Inspiration and Action, Policy Leadership, Entrepreneur Vision, Science and Innovation.**
- **IUCN Asia Regional Office** congratulates **Paul Sein Twa**, recipient of the **Goldman Environmental Prize 2020 for Asia**
- **Amish Tripathi**, has announced his second non-fiction book titled **Dharma: Decoding the Epics for A Meaningful Life**. The book will be released on **December 28, 2020**.
- An **indigenously-built interceptor boat** joined the **Indian Coast Guard** on December 15 at a function in **Hazira in Surat** district in Gujarat.
- **Indian-American US Air Force Colonel Raja Chari** has been selected as the **Commander of the SpaceX Crew-3 mission** to the **International Space Station (ISS)** by **NASA** and the **European Space Agency**.
- **S&P Global Ratings** has raised India's growth projection for the current fiscal to **(-) 7.7 %** from **(-) 9 %** estimated earlier.
- **Department of Posts and India Post Payments Bank** unveiled a new digital payment app **DakPay** on **December 15, 2020**.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has approved the re-appointments of **Uday Kotak** as MD & CEO of **Kotak Mahindra Bank** for further three years, with effect from **January 1, 2021**.

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- **Veteran wrestler and first Hind Kesari Shripati Khanchanale** passed away on December 14. He was 86.
- **Vice Admiral Srikant**, the senior most submariner of the Indian Navy, died due to COVID-19 related complications. He was the **Director General of Project Seabird**.
- **Former Australia Test all-rounder Eric Freeman has passed away at the age of 76.**

## Daily CA on Dec 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>

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- The **Government of India** and the **World Bank** have signed a **400 million dollar** project to protect India's **poor and vulnerable from the impact of COVID-19**.
- **India** has been ranked 131 among 189 countries in the 2020 human development index, according to a report released by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**.
- **Doha** will host the **2030 Asian Games** and **rival Riyadh** will stage the event in 2034 following a vote by the **Olympic Council of Asia (OCA)** General Assembly in **Muscat**.
- Former BJP MP, **Satya Dev Singh**, one of the senior-most leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party, has passed away. He was 75.