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# A Crucial Piece of Advice!

We find several students discussing the issue of lack of time and digging out content regarding how to use every second of your time efficiently. Some of you must be thinking, we have 86400 seconds each day, so why should we worry about just a single one? **Does a single second hold that much importance? YES!** When it comes to competition, each & every second is very crucial.

The first question that might come to your mind is “Is that even possible to use each second of your time effectively?” or “Do I even have that much spare time?” Let's help you by looking over the top time drainers of your daily routine:

- On an average, a person spends 67 minutes per day eating and drinking beverages while watching their favorite TV series.
- Travelling is one of the most overlooked time drainers. CNBC claims that the average commute is a little over 50 minutes per day.
- 44% of people waste tons of time just sitting in the traffic, while others keep scrolling through their feeds.
- Digital Information World suggests that people spend 2 hours and 22 minutes on social media.
- More often unproductive chats on WhatsApp are the major time drainers where you waste your time on without even knowing how much time is spent.

Adding up all these, you spend nearly **4 hours** daily or 1/6th of your day doing a whole lot of **NOTHING!** Over the course of a week that amounts to over **28 hours** of wasted time, and more than **1460 hours** or **52,560,000 seconds** annually!! Scary! Isn't it?

But what if you could effectively utilize this time to validate the knowledge you just gained during your study sessions? How about competing with your friend in a live Current Affairs battle instead of just sitting and listening to the traffic horns? How about dominating the English language leaderboard instead of searching for a filter on Snapchat?

Time and tide wait for none! Team Smartkeeda perceived the importance of time and practice in your test preparation journey. We understood how each second can make a huge difference to your career. Therefore, we were determined to build an application that has the competence to save each second of your preparation time making you 100% productive. We worked diligently for 3-4 years to build an application with the single aim of making each second of your test preparation time, efficient.

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# **INDEX**

National & States Affairs .....	6
International Affairs .....	7
Banking, Finance, Insurance & Economic Affairs .....	8
Sports & Games .....	11
Persons in News .....	13
Arts & Cultural Affairs .....	13
Science & Technology .....	13
Appointments & Resignations .....	14
Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes .....	15
Schemes & Initiatives .....	16
Important Days & Dates .....	17
Meetings, Conferences and Summits .....	18
Ranks, Reports & Serveys .....	19
Amount & Agreements .....	19
MoUs, Collaborations & Partnership .....	19



# National & States Affairs

**451.** On December 15, Petronet LNG Ltd, India's largest LNG importer, announced to set up a floating LNG receipt facility at Gopalpur port in Odisha at ₹2,306 Cr. Gopalpur will be the third LNG terminal on the east coast. The company has signed an agreement with Gopalpur Ports Ltd for the facility that will have a capacity of about 4 million tonnes per annum. LNG is a natural gas that has been supercooled, changing it from a gas into a liquid that is 1/600<sup>th</sup> of its original volume. This helps in easy transportation through ships. The project, which is expected to be operational before the end of 2025, will be financed by a combination of debt and equity. IOC, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), GAIL (India) Ltd and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) each hold a 12.5% stake in Petronet. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Petronet LNG Ltd (India's largest LNG importer) – will set up a floating LNG receipt facility at Gopalpur Port, Odisha
- The facility will have a capacity of 4 million tonnes per annum
- IOC, ONGC, GAIL & BPCL each hold a 12.5% stake in Petronet
- Odisha: Capital – Bhubaneswar | CM – Naveen Patnaik | Governor – Ganeshi Lal

**452.** On December 15, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar declared India's candidature as Non-permanent Member of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) for the 2028-29 term. Mr. Jaishankar arrived in United Nations to preside over two signature events on counter-terrorism and reformed multilateralism held under India's current Presidency of the UNSC. On December 1, India assumed the monthly rotating Presidency of the UNSC. India's 2021-2022 term on the Council ends December 31, 2022. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- S. Jaishankar declared India's candidature as Non-permanent Member of the UNSC for 2028-29 term
- HQs of UNSC – New York, US | Presidency in December – India (November - Ghana | January - Japan)

**453.** On December 15, The Indian Railways completed a 12.8 km tunnel, which is the longest escape tunnel of India, on the 111 km under-construction Banihal-Katra railway line in Jammu and Kashmir. The tunnel is part of the prestigious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Line (USBRL) project. The horseshoe-shaped escape tunnel connects the Sumber station yard on the south side. This is the fourth tunnel on the Banihal-Katra route. It has been constructed by the New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM), a modern technique of drill and blast processes. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Indian Railways – completed the longest escape tunnel of India (12.8 Km) on Banihal-Katra railway line in J & K
- The tunnel is horseshoe-shaped & part of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Line project
- HQs of Indian Railways – New Delhi | Chairman & CEO – Vinay Kumar Tripathi
- J & K: Capital – Srinagar | Lt. Governor – Manoj Sinha

**454.** On December 14, Tamil Nadu government banned six hazardous insecticides for 60 days to prevent suicides. The order came from the agriculture department in the wake of a research report submitted by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore, and a high-level committee constituted to examine the possibility of banning hazardous insecticides. Monocrotophos, Profenophos, Acephate, Profenophos + Cypermethrin, Chlorpyrifos + Cypermethrin and Chlorpyrifos are the six insecticides to be banned as per Section 27 of the Insecticides Act, 1968. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Tamil Nadu – banned 6 hazardous insecticides for 60 days to prevent suicides
- Tamil Nadu: Capital – Chennai | CM – Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin | Governor – Ravindra Narayan Ravi



# International Affairs

**455.** On December 17, Romania, Hungary, Azerbaijan and Georgia signed an agreement on the Black Sea submarine cable for the transport of electricity from the Caspian area to Romania. The quadrilateral intergovernmental agreement will provide the financial and technical framework for the implementation of the project according to which Azerbaijan will supply its green electricity through power lines to Georgia, and then by the planned submarine cable to Romania, and from there to Hungary and the rest of Europe, through the European transport system. The 500 kV submarine cable between Georgia and Romania would be 1,100 km long and have a capacity of 1 GW. The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2023 and the cable could be built in late 2029. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Romania + Hungary + Azerbaijan + Georgia = signed an agreement on the 'Black Sea submarine cable'
- The cable between Georgia & Romania would be 1,100 km long and have a capacity of 1 GW

**456.** On December 16, Nigeria and Rwanda became the first African signatories of the NASA-led "Artemis Accords" on space collaboration. A total of 23 nations have signed on to the Artemis Accords which were announced by NASA and the US Department of State in 2020. They are officially described as 'a set of principles to guide the next phase in space exploration, and promote the beneficial use of space for all of humanity'. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Nigeria & Rwanda – became the first African signatories of the NASA-led "Artemis Accords"
- Artemis Accords were announced by NASA & the US Department of State in 2020 | Total nations – 23
- Nigeria – Abuja – Naira | President – Muhammadu Buhari
- Rwanda – Kigali – Rwandan Franc | President – Paul Kagame

**457.** On December 15, Japan released a new mandate, a first of its kind, saying all new houses in Tokyo built by large-scale homebuilders after April 2025 must install solar power panels to cut household carbon emissions. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government aims to halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared with 2000 levels. Moreover, Japan has committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Japan is the world's fifth-largest carbon emitter. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Japan (Tokyo) – makes solar panels mandatory for new homes built in Tokyo after 2025
- Japan – committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 (Japan is the world's fifth-largest carbon emitter)
- Japan – Tokyo – Yen | PM – Fumio Kishida

**458.** On December 16, Japan unveiled a historic \$320 billion military build-up plan amid rising regional tensions. Japan's new defence outlay will increase Japan's defence ministry budget to around a tenth of all public spending at current levels, and will make Japan the world's third-biggest military spender after the United States and China. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government worries that Russia has set a precedent that will encourage China to attack Taiwan, threatening nearby Japanese islands. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Japan – unveiled a historic \$320 billion military build-up plan amid rising regional tensions
- Japan's new defence outlay will make Japan the world's third-biggest military spender, after the US & China
- Japan – Tokyo – Yen | PM – Fumio Kishida



**459.** On December 19, the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Montreal, Canada, adopted the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)”. The framework has 23 targets that the world needs to achieve by 2030. The countries will monitor and report every 5 years or less on a large set of indicators related to progress. The Global Environment Facility has been requested to establish a ‘Special Trust Fund’ to support the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF Fund). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- COP15 to the UN CBD – adopted the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)”
- The framework has 23 targets that the world needs to achieve by 2030

## **Banking, Finance, Insurance & Economic Affairs**

**460.** On December 19, Members of the European Union (EU) agreed in principle to implement a minimum tax of 15% on big businesses. It is in accordance with Pillar 2 of the global tax agreement framed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2021. It is estimated that the minimum tax rate would boost global tax revenues by \$150 billion annually. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Members of the EU – agreed in principle to implement a minimum tax of 15% on big businesses
- Minimum tax rate would boost global tax revenues by \$150 billion annually (estimation)
- HQs of EU – Brussels, Belgium | Member Countries – 27
- President of European Parliament – Roberta Metsola
- President of European Council – Charles Michel
- President of European Commission – Ursula von der Leyen

**461.** On December 19, Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport & Highways, launched India’s first ever ‘Surety Bond Insurance’ product developed by Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, a private general insurer. Surety Bond Insurance, which will help replace bank guarantees, is expected to optimise capital for contractors while giving a fillip to the country’s infrastructure sector. This product launch is in line with the Government’s vision to up-scale the infrastructure development in India. The product will also help in reducing the contractors’ debts to a large extent. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Nitin Gadkari (MoRTH) – launched India’s first ever ‘Surety Bond Insurance’ product developed by Bajaj Allianz Gen Ins
- HQs of Bajaj Allianz Gen Ins – Pune, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Tapan Singhel

**462.** On December 15, the RBI announced to issue two tranches of Sovereign Gold Bonds for public subscription in December and March. Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs) 2022-23-Series III were opened for subscription during the December 19-December 23 period and will open for the 2022-23-Series IV during March 06-10, 2023. These bonds are issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on behalf of the government. The SGBs will be sold through Scheduled Commercial banks (except Small Finance Banks, Payment Banks and Regional Rural Banks), Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), Clearing Corporation of India Limited (CCIL), designated post offices, and stock exchanges NSE and BSE. The tenor of the SGB will be for a period of eight years with an option of premature redemption after the fifth year. The maximum limit of subscription is 4 kg for individual, 4 kg for HUF and 20 kg for trusts and similar entities per fiscal year. The bonds can be used as collateral for loans. The sovereign gold bond scheme was launched in November 2015 with an objective to reduce the demand for physical gold and shift a part of the domestic savings. [{Read more}](#)





### Key Points:

- RBI – to issue two tranches of ‘SGBs 2022-23-Series III’ for public subscription in Dec 2022 & Series IV in March 2023
- These bonds are issued by the RBI on behalf of the government
- Information about Sovereign Gold Bonds:
  - First launched in November 2015
  - Minimum Purchase limit – 1 gram of gold | Maximum Purchase limit – 4 Kg of gold for individual
  - Tenor of the bond – 8 years
  - To be sold through: Scheduled Commercial Banks, SHCIL, CCIL, Post Offices & Stock Exchanges (except SFBs & PBs)
- HQs of RBI – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Governor – Shaktikanta Das (25th) | Established on – 1st April, 1935
- Total Deputy Governors (4) – Mahesh Kumar Jain | T. Rabi Sankar | Michael D. Patra | M. Rajeshwar Rao

**463.** State Bank of India (SBI), remains at the top position in the Debit Cards segment, holding a whopping 30% share, as per the data released by Bengaluru-based 1Lattice (previously PGA Labs) in December 2022. SBI was followed by Bank of Baroda & Bank of India. HDFC Bank registered the highest growth, of approximately 20% in this segment. In the Credit Cards segment, HDFC bank continued to lead the segment with 21% share, registering a growth of 9%. Following the list, SBI Cards recorded 19% growth with 19% share, and ICICI Bank recorded 13% growth with 17% share. Maximum growth in this segment was seen by Kotak Mahindra Bank, a 78% YoY growth, with a 6% market share. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- As per the data released by 1Lattice (previously PGA Labs) in December 2022:
  - Highest share in Debit Cards segment: 1<sup>st</sup> – SBI, 2<sup>nd</sup> – BoB, 3<sup>rd</sup> – BoI | Highest growth – HDFC Bank
  - Highest share in Credit Cards segment: 1<sup>st</sup> – HDFC Bank, 2<sup>nd</sup> – SBI Cards, 3<sup>rd</sup> – ICICI Bank | Highest growth – KMB

**464.** On December 16, Wipro signed a multi-year partnership with fintech firm Finastra for the digital transformation of corporate banks in the Middle East. The agreement will make Wipro the exclusive implementation and go-to-market partner to deploy Finastra’s trade finance solutions in the region. Wipro also bagged a five-year multi-million-dollar contract with Mazda Motor Logistics Europe. Wipro has received an order to provide next-generation managed services for its entire application landscape. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Wipro + Finastra = partnership for the digital transformation of corporate banks in the Middle East
- HQs of Wipro – Bangalore, Karnataka | MD & CEO – Thierry Delaporte | Founder Chairman – Azim Premji

**465.** On December 19, One97 Communications Limited (OCL), the parent company of Paytm, in association with HDFC ERGO General Insurance, launched ‘Paytm Payment Protect’, a group of insurance plan to insure transactions made through UPI across all apps and wallets. This latest offering comes at a cost of a meagre ₹30 per annum where users can secure themselves against mobile fraudulent transactions up to ₹10,000. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Paytm + HDFC ERGO = launched ‘Paytm Payment Protect’, a group of insurance plan to insure UPI transactions
- HQs of Paytm – Noida, Uttar Pradesh | MD & CEO – Vijay Sekhar Sharma | Founded in – 2010
- HQs of HDFC ERGO General Insurance – Mumbai, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Ritesh Kumar

**466.** On December 19, Indian Bank launched a new special retail term deposit dubbed as “Ind Shakti 555 days”. It offers a higher rate of interest for investment starting from Rs. 5000 to less than 2 Cr for 555 days in the form of FD/MMD with callable options. For Domestic Term Deposit for Senior Citizens, additional rate of interest payable would be 0.50% p.a. for amount up to Rs. 10 Cr. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Indian Bank – launched a new special retail term deposit dubbed as “Ind Shakti 555 days”
- The scheme offers a higher rate of interest for investment made for 555 days in the form of FD/MMD
- HQs of Indian Bank – Chennai, Tamil Nadu | MD & CEO – Shanti Lal Jain | Tagline – “Your Own Bank”

**467.** On December 19, Bandhan Bank signed an MoU with Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA), Ministry of Defence, for extending banking services to the defence pensioners and their families through 557 branches. The bank is aligned with the vision of the government in being a one-stop solution to all pension related activities of defence pensioners under the Outreach Programme for Defence Pensioners on System for Pension Administration Raksha (SPARSH). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Bandhan Bank + CGDA = an MoU for extending banking services to the defence pensioners & their families
- HQs of Bandhan Bank – Kolkata, WB | MD & CEO – Chandra Shekhar Ghosh | Tagline – “Aapka Bhala, Sabki Bhalai”

**468.** On December 17, DBS bank India partnered with GoFrugal Technologies to adopt Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC). GoFrugal Technologies offers omnichannel ERP solutions and claims to empower micro, small and medium enterprises and retail merchants. Through this partnership, DBS Bank India will integrate its digital solutions with GoFrugal Technologies to help small businesses to catalogue their products quickly and expand their sales channels via ONDC. Earlier, DBS Bank India joined hands with start-up venture capital fund Anthill Ventures and evangelist network Headstart Network Foundation to launch DBS Business Class founded in April 2022 to support promising start-ups in India. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- DBS bank India + GoFrugal Technologies = partnered to adopt ONDC
- HQs of DBS Bank India – Mumbai, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Surojit Shome

**469.** On December 19, the SEBI clarified on the allocation of new ‘ISINs’ (International Securities Identification Numbers) by depositories. ISINs, which has 12 characters, is used for uniquely identifying securities like stocks, bonds, warrants and commercial papers. The regulator said that depositories will not assign new ISIN following a change in underlying security and creation of additional security in case of listed debt securities. Also, the new ISIN would not be allocated pursuant to creation of security in case of unsecured debt securities. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- SEBI – clarified on the allocation of new ‘ISINs’ by depositories
- ISIN – International Securities Identification Number (ISIN has 12 characters)
- HQs of SEBI – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Madhabi Puri Buch | Established in – 1992



# Sports & Games

**470.** On December 14, R. Praggnanandhaa won the Julius Baer Challenger Championship. He defeated Pranav Venkatesh. The Julius Baer Challenger Championship took place December 11-14, 2022, on chess24. It is the final stage of the Magnus Chess Academy Challenge Challengers Chess Tour. The format includes four, three-game mini-matches between Praggnanandhaa and Pranav, the 2021 Challengers champion against the 2022 Challengers champion. The prize fund is \$10,000. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- R. Praggnanandhaa – won the “Julius Baer Challenger Championship 2022” (defeating - Pranav Venkatesh)
- Julius Baer Challenger Championship – final stage of the ‘Magnus Chess Academy Challenge Challengers Chess Tour’
- HQs of FIDE – Lausanne, Switzerland | President – Arkady Dvorkovich | Founded on – July 20, 1924

**471.** On December 15, India topped the 19<sup>th</sup> International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO) 2022 held in Bogota, Colombia. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year and 4<sup>th</sup> overall that India has put up an all gold performance at IJSO. Six students represented the Indian team in the finals of IJSO 2022 and they all won Gold medals, of which 5 were from ALLEN Career Institute Pvt Ltd, based in Kota, Rajasthan. The winning students of ALLEN include Vasu Vijay, Devesh Pankaj Bhaiya, Banibrata Majee, Rajdeep Mishra, and Avaneesh Bansal. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- India (with 6 Gold) – topped the 19<sup>th</sup> International Junior Science Olympiad (IJSO) 2022 held in Bogota, Colombia
- This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year & 4<sup>th</sup> overall that India has put up an all gold performance at IJSO
- 5 Gold medalists were from – ALLEN Career Institute Pvt Ltd (Kota, Rajasthan)

**472.** On December 18, Argentina has defeated two-time champions France in the “FIFA World Cup 2022” held at Lusail Stadium, Qatar. Argentina defeated France 4-2 on penalties after a 3-3 tie to win their third World Cup in 36 years. Lionel Messi created history by becoming the first man to win the adidas Golden Ball twice at FIFA World Cup. Lionel Messi was also named ‘Best Player of the Tournament’. Kylian Mbappe of France also performed very well. ‘Now is All’ was the Slogan/Motto of FIFA 2022 and ‘La’eeb’ was the Official Mascot. La’eeb is an Arabic word meaning super-skilled player. ‘Al Rihla’ was the match ball until the quarterfinals. While ‘Al Hilm’ ball was used in the Semi-finals & Final of the FIFA World Cup 2022. [{Read more}](#)

## **Key Points:**

- Argentina – won the “FIFA World Cup 2022” at Lusail Stadium, Qatar (defeating - France)
- Lionel Messi – created history by becoming the first man to win the adidas Golden Ball twice at FIFA World Cup
- ‘Best Player of the Tournament’ – Lionel Messi
- FIFA 2022: Slogan/Motto – ‘Now is All’ | Official Mascot – ‘La’eeb’ | Balls used – ‘Al Rihla’ & ‘Al Hilm’



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## Persons in News

**473.** In December 2022, the 'Dream Crew' for the first civilian mission to the moon has been announced and it includes Indian actor Dev Joshi. Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa recently announced that Indian actor Dev Joshi, K-Pop star T.O.P. will be among the 8 people who will join him on a flyby around the moon on a SpaceX spaceship in 2023 as part of his "dearMoon project". The rocket that has been developed by Elon Musk's SpaceX will make a week-long journey to the moon and back. Other six members of the dream crew are - American DJ Steve Aoki, British photographer Karim Illiya, Czech artist Yemi AD, filmmaker Brendan Hall, YouTuber Tim Dodd, and Irish photographer Rhiannon Adam. This will be Maezawa's second space journey after his 12-day trip to the International Space Station on the Soyuz Russian spaceship in 2021. Actor Dev Joshi is an Indian television actor known for portraying the role of Baal Veer in Sony Sab's Baal Veer and Baalveer Returns. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Yusaku Maezawa (Japanese billionaire) – announced 8 names for his "dearMoon project", first civilian mission to Moon
- This 'Dream Crew' includes – Indian actor Dev Joshi (known for portraying the role of 'Baal Veer' in India)
- The rocket that has been developed by SpaceX
- HQs of SpaceX – California, U.S. | Founder & CEO – Elon Musk | Founded in – 2002

## Arts & Cultural Affairs

**474.** On December 16, Ministry of Culture in collaboration with Prasiddha Foundation inaugurated the "Delhi International Arts Festival" at Kartavya Path with the tagline - 'Where Bharat Meets India'. The festival was organised from December 16 to 30, 2022. The festival aims to celebrate the great Epics, the Warriors Who Fought for Our Freedom, and the many policy decisions and schemes instituted by our Government towards 'Women Empowerment', towards 'Cleaning Our Holy Rivers', towards keeping our Country 'Clean and Free from Dirt and Disease'. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- Ministry of Culture + Prasiddha Foundation = organised the "Delhi International Arts Festival" at Kartavya Path
- Tagline of the fest – 'Where Bharat Meets India'
- Minister of Culture: G. Kishan Reddy | Constituency – Secunderabad, Telangana
- MoS in Minister of Culture: Arjun Ram Meghwal & Meenakshi Lekhi

## Science & Technology

**475.** On December 17, Union Health Minister, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated "ICMR-NARFBR" (National Animal Resource Facility for Biomedical Research) at Genome Valley, Hyderabad. NARFBR is an apex facility which will provide ethical care and use and welfare of laboratory animals during research. It will help in capacity building of new researchers and will create processes for pre-clinical testing of new drugs, vaccines and diagnostics within the country along with quality assurance checks. [{Read more}](#)

### **Key Points:**

- 'ICMR-NARFBR (National Animal Resource Facility for Biomedical Research)' – inaugurated in Hyderabad
- Telangana: Capital – Hyderabad | CM – K. Chandrashekar Rao | Governor – Tamilisai Soundararajan



**476.** On December 19, Dharti Agro Chemicals Pvt. Ltd introduced world's first GMS-based Cowpea Hybrids. It released three hybrids in Cowpea - Bubbly, Sherly and Poorvaja. Hybrids of Cowpea are highly suitable for off-season cultivation and are not photoperiod sensitive. Heterosis Breeding uplifts the whole physiology of the crop by utilizing benefits from sum total of all good genes and interactions thereof. This results in higher yields, better disease tolerance, wider adaptability, better fruit quality and enhanced response to fertigation. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Pradhan Dharti Agro Chemicals Pvt Ltd – introduced world's first GMS-based Cowpea Hybrids
- There are three hybrids in Cowpea – Bubbly, Sherly & Poorvaja

## **Appointments & Resignations**

**477.** In December 2022, The Centre nominated Manoj Govil to the Board of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in the place of erstwhile MCA Secretary Rajesh Verma. Manoj Govil is the Secretary in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. The SEBI Board comprises nine members, including the Chairperson Madhabhi Puri Buch. There are two Government nominees, one RBI nominee, a public interest member and four Wholetime Members. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Manoj Govil (MCA Secretary) – appointed to the Board of SEBI
- The SEBI Board comprises total 9 members
- Ministry of Corporate Affairs: [Nirmala Sitharaman](#) | Constituency – Karnataka
- MoS in Ministry of Corporate Affairs: [Rao Inderjit Singh](#)
- HQs of SEBI – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – [Madhabi Puri Buch](#) | Established in – 1992

**478.** On December 20, Senior nuclear scientist Dinesh Kumar Shukla has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) for a period of three years. Mr. Shukla succeeds G. Nageswara Rao for this post. A graduate in mechanical engineering from the Jabalpur University, Shukla joined the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) in 1981. Shukla has been associated with several committees of the AERB and the BARC Safety Council (BSC). [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Dinesh Kumar Shukla – appointed as the Chairperson of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) for 3 years
- HQs of AERB – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairperson – [Dinesh Kumar Shukla](#)

**479.** On December 16, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has been appointed as the first Chancellor of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara, by President Draupadi Murmu. As per the Central University Act, 2009, Dr Manoj Chaudhary has been appointed as the first Vice Chancellor of Gati Shakti University for five years. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Ashwini Vaishnaw – appointed as the first Chancellor of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara
- Manoj Chaudhary – appointed as the first Vice Chancellor of Gati Shakti University

**480.** On December 15, Harvard University appointed Claudine Gay as its new President. Claudine is the dean of Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences. She will be the first Black (African American) leader of Harvard, and the second woman to hold the position, succeeding Lawrence S. Bacow. Dr. Gay will take office in July 2023. Harvard University is a private Ivy League research university in Cambridge, Massachusetts, US. [{Read more}](#)



**Key Points:**

- Claudine Gay – appointed as new President of Harvard University (succeeding - Lawrence S. Bacow)
- She will be the first Black (African American) leader of Harvard & the second woman to hold the position

**481.** On December 17, Indian origin Leo Varadkar was re-elected for second term as Ireland's Prime Minister. He replaced Micheal Martin. Varadkar served as PM between 2017 and 2020 as the country's youngest-ever leader and first openly gay prime minister. Varadkar's mother is Irish and father is Indian. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Leo Varadkar (Indian origin) – re-elected for second term as Prime Minister of Ireland (replacing - Micheal Martin)
- [Ireland – Dublin – Euro | PM – Leo Varadkar](#)

## **Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes**

**482.** On December 16, National Mineral Development Corporation Ltd (NMDC) won the IEI (Institution of Engineers, India) Industry Excellence Award 2022 in Chennai. NMDC was felicitated at the 37th Indian Engineering Congress for its outstanding performance and high level of business excellence. NMDC is the largest producer of the iron ore in the country. With an eco-friendly, economic and efficient approach, NMDC is taking up transformational projects to retain its domestic leadership and foray towards becoming a global mining company. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- 37<sup>th</sup> Indian Engineering Congress – held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- NMDC (largest producer of the iron ore in India) – won the 'IEI Industry Excellence Award 2022'
- [HQs of NMDC – Hyderabad, Telangana | CMD – Sumit Deb | Founded on – November 15, 1958](#)

**483.** Malayalam filmmaker Basil Joseph has won the Best Director award at the "Asian Academy Creative Awards 2022" for his 2021's hit Netflix superhero film 'Minnal Murali'. The Asia-Pacific's Most Prestigious Awards for Creative Excellence were presented in December 2022 at Chijmes Hall, Singapore. Cinematographer Shreya Dev Dube won the Best Cinematography award for the Netflix film 'Thar'. The Best Feature Film award went to Netflix film 'Asakusa Kid' of Japan. Singapore, with 8 awards, received the most awards, followed by India (7 awards). In platforms, Netflix was the biggest winner with 5 awards. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- "Asian Academy Creative Awards 2022" – held at Chijmes Hall, Singapore
- Best Director – Basil Joseph (for his Malayalam film 'Minnal Murali')
- Best Cinematography – Shreya Dev Dube (for the film 'Thar')
- Best Feature Film – 'Asakusa Kid' (Japan)
- Maximum awards won by any country – Singapore | Maximum awards won by any platform – Netflix

**484.** On December 17, Sargam Koushal was named Mrs World 2022, beating contestants from 63 countries to bring the title back to India after 21 years. Mrs World 2021 Shaylyn Ford of the U.S. presented the crown to Mumbai-based Mrs. Koushal at a ceremony held in Las Vegas. Mrs Polynesia was named the first runner-up, followed by Mrs Canada as the second runner-up. Aditi Govitrikar, the actor-model brought the Mrs India crown to India in 2001. Mrs World is the first beauty pageant for married women, launched in 1984. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- Sargam Koushal – named “Mrs World 2022”
- Runner up – Mrs Polynesia | 2<sup>nd</sup> Runner up – Mrs Canada
- She brought the title back to India after 21 years | Aditi Govitrikar won the title in 2001

## Schemes & Initiatives

**485.** On December 16, Central Government has approved the continuation of Central Sector Scheme ‘Indian Footwear and Leather Development Programme (IFLDP)’ till March 31, 2026 or till further review, whichever is earlier. IFLDP has been approved for implementation with 6 sub-schemes - Sustainable Technology and Environmental Promotion (STEP), Integrated Development of Leather Sector (IDLS), Mega Leather Footwear and Accessories Cluster Development (MLFACD), Establishment of Institutional Facilities (EIF), Brand Promotion of Indian Brands in Footwear and Leather Sector, and Development of Design Studios in Footwear and Leather Sector. All sub-schemes have been on-boarded on National Single Window System (NSWS). The financial outlay of IFLDP is Rs 1700 Cr. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Central Govt approved the continuation of Central Sector Scheme ‘Indian Footwear and Leather Development Programme (IFLDP)’ till March 31, 2026
- Financial outlay of IFLDP – Rs 1700 Cr

**486.** On December 18, Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao directed State Finance Minister T. Harish Rao to start releasing the crop investment, ‘Rythu Bandhu funds’, for the Yasangi harvest (Rabi) season from December 28. The State government would deposit Rs 7,600 Crore in the bank accounts of all farmers. Through the scheme, the government provides crop investment to the farmers at the rate of Rs 10,000 per acre for both Vanakalam (Kharif) and Yasangi (Rabi) seasons. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Telangana CM – directed to start releasing the ‘Rythu Bandhu funds’ for the Yasangi harvest (Rabi) season
- State Govt provides crop investment to the farmers at the rate of Rs 10,000 per acre for both Kharif & Rabi season
- [Telangana: Capital – Hyderabad](#) | [CM – K. Chandrashekar Rao](#) | [Governor – Tamilisai Soundararajan](#)

**487.** On December 18, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of several development projects worth over 6,800 crore rupees in Tripura and Meghalaya. In Tripura, the Prime Minister launched projects worth 4,350 Cr rupees. The projects include ‘Grih Pravesh’ programme for beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Rural. In Meghalaya, the Prime Minister unveiled projects worth over 2,450 Cr rupees. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- Narendra Modi – launched projects worth Rs 4,350 Cr in Tripura & worth over Rs 2,450 Cr in Meghalaya
- ‘Grih Pravesh’ programme – launched in Tripura under ‘PM Awas Yojana’
- [Tripura: Capital – Agartala](#) | [CM – Manik Saha](#) | [Governor – Satyadev Narayan Arya](#)
- [Meghalaya: Capital – Shillong](#) | [CM – Conrad Kongkal Sangma](#) | [Governor – B. D. Mishra \(addi. charge\)](#)





**488.** On December 15, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Ko Kaam Karyakram (PMKKK) of Ministry of Minority Affairs has renamed as Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) Scheme. The integrated scheme converges 5 erstwhile schemes of the Ministry viz. Seekho aur Kamao, USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni and Nai Manzil. The scheme was approved by the Cabinet for the period of 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission. PM VIKAS aims to improve livelihoods of the minorities, particularly the artisan communities, using the components of skill development, education, women leadership & entrepreneurship. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Ko Kaam Karyakram scheme – renamed as ‘Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS)’
- The scheme belongs to Ministry of Minority Affairs
- The integrated scheme converges 5 schemes: Seekho aur Kamao, USTTAD, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni & Nai Manzil
- [Ministry of Minority Affairs: Smriti Irani](#) | [Constituency – Amethi, UP](#)
- [MoS in Ministry of Minority Affairs: John Barla](#)

## **Important Days & Dates**

**489.** On December 19, Union Minister Jitendra Singh inaugurated “Good Governance Week 2022” (December 19 to 25) and ‘Prashasan Gaon ki Ore Campaign’. 3,120 new services identified by district collectors across the country were added for online service delivery during the 5-day campaign. The minister also launched the Good Governance Week portal. The Annual Report on CPGRAMS for this year was released on this occasion to reflect the progress the country has made in Redressal Public Grievances in 2022. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 19 to 25 – Good Governance Week 2022 (Sushasan Saptah)
- Jitendra Singh inaugurated – ‘Prashasan Gaon ki Ore Campaign’ on this occasion

**490.** International Human Solidarity Day is observed on 20 December, every year. The day was introduced by the UN General Assembly. The day commemorates the establishment of the World Solidarity Fund on the same date in 2002. The main aim of solidarity is to develop our movement and to show care and concern for justice. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 20 – International Human Solidarity Day

**491.** Minorities Rights Day is observed every year on December 18 in India. The day aims at promoting the rights of the minority community across the country. Minorities Rights Day was first observed in India on December 18, 2013. Ministry of Minority Affairs was set up in India in 2006. The ministry was formed out of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The United Nations on December 18, 1992 adopted and broadcast the Statement on the individual’s Rights belonging to Religious or Linguistic National or Ethnic Minorities. Minority Rights Day upholds the right to freedom and equal opportunities for the minorities in India and creates awareness about their rights. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 18 – Minorities Rights Day (since 2013)
- Ministry of Minority Affairs – set up in India in 2006 out of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
- [Ministry of Minority Affairs: Smriti Irani](#) | [Constituency – Amethi, UP](#)
- [MoS in Ministry of Minority Affairs: John Barla](#)



**492.** Goa Liberation Day is celebrated on 19 December every year as a reminder that the state of Goa got its freedom from the Portuguese after a long time and it remained under the control for 450 years. It was on 19 December 1961 that Goa was liberated from Portuguese rule. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 19 – Goa Liberation Day

**493.** World Arabic Language Day is observed on December 18 to honour the Arabic language, which is spoken by over 400 million people globally. The day has been celebrated since 2012 to mark the adoption of Arabic as the sixth official language of the United Nations by the UN General Assembly on 18 December, 1973. In 2022, the theme was “The Contribution of the Arabic Language to Human Civilization and Culture”. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 18 – World Arabic Language Day
- 2022’s Theme – “The Contribution of the Arabic Language to Human Civilization and Culture”
- UN language days:
  - Arabic (18 December)
  - Chinese (20 April)
  - English (23 April)
  - French (20 March)
  - Russian (6 June)
  - Spanish (23 April)

**494.** International Migrants Day is celebrated annually on 18 December to draw focus towards the social and economic conditions of migrants all across the globe. The day aims to educate the public on the issues concerning migrants, mobilise political will and resources to address the global issue of migration, and to draw focus towards the rights of the migrants. As per the World Migration Report 2022, 281 million people are international migrants living in a country other than their place of birth. There is no official announcement regarding the theme of the International Migrants Day 2022. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- December 18 – International Migrants Day

## Meetings, Conferences & Summits

**495.** Data obtained from trade sources showed that for the first time Russia has emerged as top oil supplier to India replacing Iraq in November because India snapped up oil from Moscow fearing a price cap from Dec. 5. India’s oil imports from Russia rose for the fifth straight month, totaling 908,000 barrels per day (bpd) in November, up 4% from October. Russian oil accounted for about 23% of India’s overall import of about 4 million bpd oil in November. Higher purchases of Russian oil dragged down Indian imports from the Middle East and member nations of Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) declined to the lowest ever in November. During April-November, the first eight months of this fiscal year, Iraq continued to be the largest oil supplier to India followed by Saudi Arabia and Russia, which has knocked down UAE to the fourth position. [{Read more}](#)



### Key Points:

- Russia – emerged as top oil supplier to India replacing Iraq in November 2022
- India's oil imports from Russia – rose 4% in November compared to October
- Russian oil – accounted for about 23% of India's overall import in November
- Earlier, largest oil supplier to India were – Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Russia & UAE
- Russia – Moscow – Russian Ruble | PM – Mikhail Mishustin | President – Vladimir Putin

## Ranks, Reports & Surveys

**496.** India, with overall score of 58.9, ranked 68<sup>th</sup> in the “Global Food Security Index 2022” report, released in December 2022. The 11<sup>th</sup> Global Food Security Index shows a deterioration in the global food environment for the third year, threatening food security. There four pillars of GFSI - Affordability, Availability, Quality & Safety, and Sustainability & Adaption. The index is topped by Finland (83.7), followed by Ireland (81.7) & Norway (80.5). In 2022 the GFSI was dragged down by falls in two of its strongest pillars - Affordability and Food Quality & Safety. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- “Global Food Security Index 2022” report – released by The Economist
- India (58.9) – ranked 68<sup>th</sup> | 1<sup>st</sup> – Finland (83.7), 2<sup>nd</sup> – Ireland (81.7), 3<sup>rd</sup> – Norway (80.5)

## Amount & Agreements

**497.** On December 18, The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a deal known as an Extended Fund Facility Arrangement that will provide a \$3 billion support package for Egypt to cover a period of 46 months. The agreement is expected to draw in an additional \$14 billion in financing for the country. The Egyptian pound has lost 36% of its value against the dollar since March. Egypt is the world's largest wheat importer, most of which came from Russia and Ukraine. [{Read more}](#)

### Key Points:

- IMF – approved a \$3 billion support package for Egypt
- Egypt – the world's largest wheat importer (most of which came from Russia & Ukraine)
- Egypt – Cairo – Egyptian Pound | President – Abdel Fattah el-Sisi
- HQs of IMF – Washington, D.C., USA | MD & Chairperson – Kristalina Georgieva | Member countries – 190

## MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships

**498.** On December 19, Google announced a partnership with DigiLocker to bring local storage of government issued IDs on Android devices. The partnership is part of Google's artificial intelligence (AI) offerings that include on-device processing of text and images to identify important documents, and organise them in a locally stored 'Files' folder. DigiLocker app developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) is authorised to act as the equivalent of an official document, and soon DigiLocker would be available on Android devices by default, as a pre-installed service. [{Read more}](#)



**Key Points:**

- Google + DigiLocker = partnership to bring local storage of government issued IDs on Android devices
- Digilocker app is developed by – Meity
- Director of DigiLocker & UMANG – Debabrata Nayak
- HQs of Google – California, US | CEO – Sundar Pichai | Founded in – 1998

**499.** On December 18, Uttar Pradesh government signed an MoU with Austin University to set up Austin Smart City of Knowledge in the state for US\$ 42 billion. UP minister Suresh Khanna said that the project would create up to 16 lakh jobs in UP. [{Read more}](#)

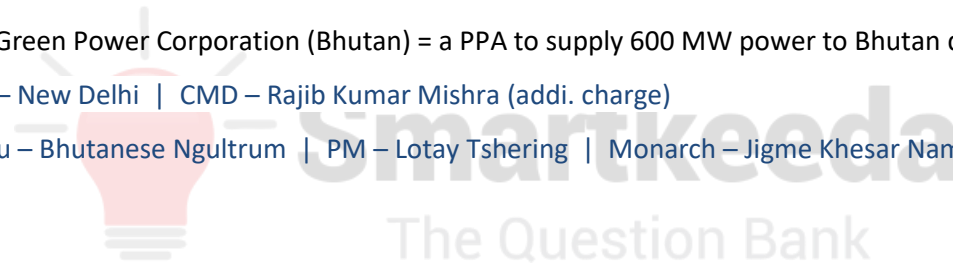
**Key Points:**

- UP + Austin University (US) = an MoU to set up 'Austin Smart City of Knowledge' in the state for \$42 billion
- UP: Capital – Lucknow | CM – Yogi Adityanath | Governor – Anandiben Patel

**500.** On December 19, PTC India entered into an agreement with Bhutan's electricity utility firm, Druk Green Power Corporation Limited, to supply 600 MW power to Bhutan during the winter season. This PPA (Power Purchase Agreement) will help address such energy requirements. This agreement is a step forward towards PTC's endeavour to strengthen the regional power markets for energy security and sustainability in South Asia. [{Read more}](#)

**Key Points:**

- PTC India + Druk Green Power Corporation (Bhutan) = a PPA to supply 600 MW power to Bhutan during winter season
- HQs of PTC India – New Delhi | CMD – Rajib Kumar Mishra (addi. charge)
- Bhutan – Thimphu – Bhutanese Ngultrum | PM – Lotay Tshering | Monarch – Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck





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