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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?

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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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National & States Affairs

551. On December 21, Kerala's first smart mobile composting unit was jointly launched by Suchitwa Mission and the Kerala Mission at Pallithottam. The smart mobile composting unit is an innovative concept that scientifically treats waste from auditoriums and large catering centres and turns it into manure. The unit can process up to 500 kg of waste per hour and convert it into manure. Moreover, Kerala announced to eliminate waste management by 2026 making the State completely garbage free. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Kerala's first smart mobile composting unit – jointly launched by 'Suchitwa Mission + Kerala Mission' at Pallithottam
- Kerala – announced to eliminate waste management by 2026 making the State completely garbage free
- Kerala: Capital – Thiruvananthapuram | CM – Pinarayi Vijayan | Governor – Arif Mohammad Khan

552. On December 22, two of the premiere institutes under the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) of the Ministry of AYUSH namely, Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI), New Delhi, and Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI), Jhansi, have been accredited with NABH and NABL accreditations, respectively. National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) is a constituent board of the Quality Council of India (QCI). Apart from these two CCRAS institutes, National Ayurveda Research Institute for Panchakarma (NARIP) in Thrissur, Kerala, has also received NABL M(EL)T accreditation for its clinical laboratory services. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- CARI, New Delhi + CARI, Jhansi = accredited with NABH & NABL accreditations, respectively
- NABH – National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (a constituent board of the QCI)
- NABL – National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories
- NARIP (Thrissur, Kerala) – received NABL M(EL)T accreditation

553. On December 21, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the 24-hour Drink from Tap project in 19 cities and towns of the state virtually under the 5T initiative. Puri was the first town where the Drink from Tap facility was launched. In Gopalpur was the second city in the state in which 100% of people have access to the Drink from Tap system. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Naveen Patnaik – launched the '24-hour Drink from Tap' project in 19 cities & towns under the 5T initiative
- Puri – first town in the state to launch "Drink from Tap" Facility
- Odisha: Capital – Bhubaneswar | CM – Naveen Patnaik | Governor – Ganeshi Lal

554. On December 22, Jio received Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) order for providing SD-WAN (Software Defined Wide Area Network) solution that will power IOCL's retail automation and critical business processes. JioBusiness, the Enterprise arm of Reliance Jio Infocomm, will be deploying and managing SD-WAN for IOCL across its 7,200 retail outlets for a period of 5 years. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Reliance Jio – received IOCL's order for providing 'SD-WAN' solution to power IOCL's retail outlets
- HQs of Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd – Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Akash Ambani



555. On December 21, the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX), promoted by the Indian Energy Exchange (IEX), launched “GIXI” - the first ever nationwide price index to reflect benchmark natural gas price for India. The IGX Price Index has been developed with the purpose of deriving a single price for the country in line with international benchmarks such as JKM, HH, WIM, TTF, which are currently representative of the prices in their respective coverage regions. At IGX, over 447 lakh MMBtus (1.1 Billion Cubic Meters) of gas has been traded since inception. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Indian Gas Exchange – launched “GIXI” - the first ever nationwide price index for Natural Gas price
- HQs of IGX – Ahmedabad, Gujarat | MD & CEO – Rajesh Kumar Mediratta | Chairman – R. Vaidyanathan

556. On December 22, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has won the prestigious “GRIHA Exemplary Performance Award 2022”, a top national level Green Building Award. GRIHA (Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment) is a national rating system for green buildings in India, and it is developed by Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI). UIDAI promotes the idea of recycle and reuse to reduce carbon footprint. Moreover, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) satellite centre at Sangrur, Punjab is declared winner in the “GRIHA Exemplary Performance Competition” in the category of ‘Energy Management’. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- UIDAI – won the “GRIHA Exemplary Performance Award 2022”
- PGIMER – won the “GRIHA Exemplary Performance Competition” in ‘Energy Management’ category
- GRIHA – **Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment** | It is a national rating system developed by – TERI
- HQs of UIDAI – New Delhi | CEO – Saurabh Garg | Founded on – January 28, 2009
- HQs of TERI – New Delhi | DG – Dr. Vibha Dhawan | Established in – 1974

557. On December 23, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) organized one-day event called ‘Dance to Decarbonise’, where renewable energy generated through dance will be used to charge electric vehicles. This unique event was held at National Stadium, India Gate, in New Delhi as a run up to the India Energy Week that will be held in Bangalore in February 2023. The event will be highly significant as it aims to showcase India’s target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- MoPNG – organized one-day event called “Dance to Decarbonise” in New Delhi
- Renewable Energy generated through dance will be used to charge electric vehicles
- Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas: Hardeep Singh Puri | Constituency – Uttar Pradesh
- MoS in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas: Rameswar Teli

558. Flipkart and PhonePe have completed their separation and both entities will continue to operate under US-based retail giant Walmart. PhonePe was acquired by Flipkart Group in 2016. As part of this transaction, existing Flipkart Singapore and PhonePe Singapore shareholders, led by Walmart, have purchased shares directly in PhonePe India. This completes the move to make PhonePe a fully India domiciled company. Walmart will remain the majority shareholder of both business groups. This year, PhonePe changed its domicile from Singapore to India. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Flipkart + PhonePe = completed their separation and both entities will continue to operate under Walmart
- PhonePe was acquired by Flipkart Group in 2016
- In 2022, PhonePe changed its domicile from Singapore to India
- HQs of Flipkart – Bangalore, Karnataka | Chairperson – Binny Bansal | CEO – Kalyan Krishnamurthy
- HQs of PhonePe – Bangalore, Karnataka | MD & CEO – Sameer Nigam | Founded in – 2015



International Affairs

559. On December 21, the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (the Coalition) announced the formation of a new Permanent Secretariat to be co-hosted by World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Officially launched at the One Planet Summit in Paris in 2021, the Coalition is an intergovernmental group of 116 countries co-chaired by Costa Rica & France and by the UK as Ocean co-chair. Under the new Secretariat, the Coalition will lead an historic effort to protect and conserve at least 30% of the world's land and ocean by the year 2030. Currently, protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) cover about 17% of all land and a bit more than 8% of the ocean. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- High Ambition Coalition for Nature & People – announced the formation of a new Permanent Secretariat
- The Secretariat will be co-hosted by = WRI + GEF
- The coalition is co-chaired by Costa Rica & France | Ocean co-chair – UK
- Currently, protected areas & OECMs cover about 17% of all land & almost 8% of the ocean
- Coalition will lead an historic effort to protect and conserve at least 30% of the world's land and ocean by 2030

Banking, Finance, Insurance & Economic Affairs

560. On December 21, Worldline ePayments India (WEIPL), a leader in digital payments, received in-principle authorisation from the Reserve Bank Of India (RBI) to act as a payment aggregator (PA). RBI has been proactive in introducing regulations and frameworks to help the entire digital ecosystem. Payment Aggregator are service providers through which e-commerce merchants can process their Payment transactions. Payment Gateways, on the other hand, act as a medium through which the transaction occurs. Aggregators allow merchants to accept credit card and bank transfers online without having a set of merchant account with the bank or card association. They are also called as Merchant Aggregator. Payment Aggregators were incorporated in India in the year 2013 under the Companies Act, 1956. Payment Aggregators can be a bank or Non-Banking Entity and it requires license from the RBI. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Worldline ePayments India – received in-principle authorisation from RBI to act as a Payment Aggregator
- Payment Aggregator are service providers through which e-commerce merchants can process their Payment transactions
- Payment Gateways act as a medium through which the transaction occurs
- Payment Aggregators were incorporated in India in 2013 under the 'Companies Act, 1956'
- Payment Aggregators can be a Bank or Non-Banking Entity & it requires license from the RBI

561. In December 2022, Textiles Minister Piyush Goyal announced that India has set a target to achieve \$100 billion annual exports for textiles by 2030 as there are huge opportunities in the sector. India has already signed free trade agreements (FTAs) with the United Arab Emirates and Australia, in which the textile industry believes will benefit them. India's textile exports were \$44.44 billion in FY 2021-22 and \$21.15 billion in H1 FY 2022-23. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India has set a target to achieve \$100 billion annual exports for textiles by 2030
- India's textile exports: \$44.44 billion in FY 2021-22 & \$21.15 billion in H1 FY 2022-23



562. On December 22, Karnataka Bank gone live on the Indian Customs Electronic Gateway (ICEGATE), the national portal of Indian Customs of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), enabling its customers to pay customs duty online. The integration of Karnataka Bank on ICEGATE portal will enable all its individual and corporate customers pay customs duty at their convenience, enabling smooth conduct of their business. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Karnataka Bank – has gone live on the ICEGATE (Indian Customs Electronic Gateway), a national portal of CBIC
- HQs of Karnataka Bank – Mangalore, Karnataka | CEO – Mahabaleshwara M. S. | Chairman – Pradeep Kumar Panja
- HQs of CBIC – New Delhi | Chairman – Vivek Johri | Founded in – 1964

563. On December 22, Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) signed a loan agreement with KfW for financing 'Access to Clean Energy Projects' meant for decentralized solar applications. The total sanctioned amount of the agreement is EUR 20 million. Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) has signed loan agreements from multilateral agency ADB and bilateral agency KfW, for Decentralized Solar and Electric Mobility. The total sanctioned amount of ADB's loan for 'Decentralized Solar, Electric Mobility and Smart Meters' is USD 296 million. While the total sanctioned amount for KfW's loan of 'Decentralized Solar and lighting' is Euro 200 million. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- IREDA + KfW = a EUR 20 million loan agreement for financing 'Access to Clean Energy Projects'
- EESL + ADB + KfW = a loan agreement for 'Decentralized Solar and Electric Mobility'
- HQs of IREDA – New Delhi | CMD – Pradip Kumar Das
- HQs of EESL – New Delhi | CEO – Vishal Kapoor | Chairman – K. Sreekant
- HQs of KfW – Frankfurt, Germany | CEO – Gunther Braunig
- HQs of ADB – Mandaluyong, Philippines | President – Masatsugu Asakawa | Members – 68 | Established in – 1966

564. In December 2022, HDFC Bank signed a fresh MoU with Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) to engage more deeply with the start-up community and to promote entrepreneurship in the state. The Bank will extend its full-suite of specialized services and facilities tailored for start-ups, known as Smart-Up, to all the firms associated with KSUM. With this MoU, HDFC Bank and KSUM will work together in mutually beneficial areas. Through this collaboration, the bank plans to support innovation and entrepreneurship in the Startup ecosystem. It will evaluate start-ups referred to it by KSUM for extending loans and investments subject to the banks' policies and processes. HDFC Bank and KSUM have been collaborating since 2019, when an MoU was signed for a year. Since then, the bank has organized various Master Classes, Corporate Connect, Workshops for KSUM supported startups. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- HDFC Bank + KSUM = an MoU to engage more deeply with the start-up community & to promote entrepreneurship
- Kerala: Capital – Thiruvananthapuram | CM – Pinarayi Vijayan | Governor – Arif Mohammad Khan
- HQs of HDFC Bank – Mumbai, MH | MD & CEO – Sashidhar Jagdishan | Tagline – "We understand your World"

565. Since 2014, the Narendra Modi-led government has raised over Rs 4.04 lakh Crore through disinvestment and strategic sale of public sector enterprises, as per the data provided by the Finance Ministry. Of the Rs 4 lakh crore, the largest amount totalling over Rs 1.07 lakh crore through Offer for Sale (OFS) in 59 cases. This was followed by a stake sale through Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) in 10 tranches, aggregating to Rs 98,949 crore. Strategic sales in 10 companies, including Air India, yielded Rs 69,412 crore to the exchequer in the last 8 years. Share buyback in 45 cases fetched Rs 45,104 crore. [{Read more}](#)



Key Points:

- Narendra Modi-led Govt has raised over Rs 4.04 lakh Crore through disinvestment & strategic sale PSUs since 2014
- Largest amount totalling over Rs 1.07 lakh Cr – raised through Offer for Sale (OFS) in 59 cases

566. On December 22, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) announced to introduce “Bima Vahaks” in each gram panchayat, enhance the insurance force in India. Each Gram Panchayat will have a “Bima Vahak” who would be tasked to sell and service simple parametric bundled insurance products, ‘Bima Vistar’, covering health, property, life and personal accident. 50% of our vehicles are uninsured, and the coverage of property insurance is minuscule. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- IRDAI – to introduce “Bima Vahaks” in each gram panchayat to sell ‘Bima Vistar’
- HQs of IRDAI – Hyderabad, Telangana | Chairman – Debasish Panda

Sports & Games

567. Morocco will host the next FIFA World Cup in February 2023. Morocco also hosted Club World Cups in 2013 and 2014. The 2023 FIFA Club World Cup will be one of the last seven-team editions for continental champions with an expanded 32-team tournament planned to start in 2025. Moreover, The United States, Canada, and Mexico will jointly host the “FIFA World Cup 2026”. Canada will be hosting the World Cup for the very first time. 48 teams/nations will participate in FIFA World Cup 2026 as per new format. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Morocco – selected by FIFA to host the next “Club World Cup” in February 2023
- US + Canada + Mexico = to jointly host the prestigious “FIFA World Cup 2026”
- HQs of FIFA – Zurich, Switzerland | President – Gianni Infantino

568. Brazil maintained top spot in the “FIFA World Ranking”, released in December 2022, despite Argentina winning their first FIFA World Cup title since 1986 in Qatar 2022. Brazil have held the number one position since February 2022, when they dethroned Belgium. Morocco and Australia both climbed 11 places. Morocco is ranked 11th and is the top-ranked African team, while Australia is ranked 27th. Third place was occupied by France. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- “FIFA World Ranking” – released in December 2022 | 1st – Brazil, 2nd – Argentina, 3rd – France

569. On December 21, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced that Viacom18 Media Private Limited (Viacom18) has secured the exclusive media rights to broadcast the Olympic Games Paris 2024, plus non-exclusive rights to the Winter Youth Olympic Games Gangwon 2024, in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. 2024 Olympics will be hosted in Paris, France. The ‘Phrygian cap’ is its mascot. Viacom18 is owned by Network18 which is a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Viacom18 – secured the exclusive media rights to broadcast ‘2024 Summer Olympics’ to be held in Paris, France
- Viacom18 – also secured non-exclusive rights to broadcast ‘2024 Winter Youth Olympics’ in Gangwon, South Korea
- They will be broadcast by Viacom18 in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan & Sri Lanka
- Viacom18 is owned by Network18 (a subsidiary of Reliance Industries)



570. On December 18, Jaipur Pink Panthers defeated Puneri Paltan 33-29 to emerge as the Champions of the “Pro Kabaddi League Season 9”. Sunil Kumar is the Captain and Sanjeev Baliyan is the coach of Jaipur Pink Panthers and the team is owned by Abhishek Bachchan. Pink Panthers’ Arjun Deshwal emerged as Most Valuable Player of the Season. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Jaipur Pink Panthers – emerged as the Champions of the “Pro Kabaddi League Season 9” (defeating - Puneri Paltan)
- Jaipur Pink Panthers Team: Owner – Abhishek Bachchan | Coach – Sanjeev Baliyan | Captain – Sunil Kumar

571. Argentina’s World Cup-winning captain Lionel Messi has been named BBC Sports Personality’s “World Sport Star of the Year 2022”. Messi led Argentina to their first World Cup (2022) triumph in 36 years in Qatar. In addition, he has scored a staggering 793 goals in his career. Moreover, English football player Beth Mead has been awarded the “BBC Sports Personality of the Year for 2022”. She was the player of the tournament and top scorer at Euro 2022. Besides, British gymnast Jessica Gadirova won the “BBC Young Sports Personality of the Year 2022”. Jamaica’s eight-time Olympic gold medallist Usain Bolt has been honoured with the “Lifetime Achievement Award” at BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2022. England’s Lionesses and Sarina Wiegman won the “BBC Team of the Year & Coach of the Year Award 2022”. English rugby league player Rob Burrow won the “BBC Helen Rollason Award 2022”. Football volunteer Mike Alden has been honoured with the “BBC Unsung Hero Award 2022”. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 2022 BBC Sports Personality Awards:
 - World Sport Star of the Year – Lionel Messi (Argentina - Football)
 - Sports Personality of the Year – Beth Mead (UK - Football)
 - Young Sports Personality of the Year – Jessica Gadirova (Ireland - Gymnastics)
 - Lifetime Achievement Award – Usain Bolt (Jamaica - Runner)
 - Team of the Year & Coach of the Year Award – Lionesses Team (England) & Sarina Wiegman (Netherlands)
 - Helen Rollason Award – Rob Burrow (UK - Rugby)
 - Unsung Hero Award – Mike Alden (Football Volunteer)

572. Ace Indian doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty jumped two places to attain the career-best World No. 5 spot in the Men’s Doubles with 75,806 rating points in the latest “BWF World Rankings” issued on December 20. Satwik and Chirag had a great run in the 2022 calendar year as the duo won two world tour titles at Indian Open Super 500 and French Open Super 750 and also claimed a maiden gold at the Commonwealth Games and a bronze at the World Championships. HS Prannoy also made noticeable gains in the latest ranking as he once again broke into the top 10, grabbing the World No. 9 spot after starting the year at world number 26. P. V. Sindhu continued to hold on to the World No. 6 position in Women’s Singles, while in Men’s Singles, Lakshya Sen continued to be the best-placed Indian at World No. 7 spot. In the Women’s Doubles, combination of Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly climbed two places to World No. 18 position. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Latest “BWF World Rankings” – issued on December 20, 2022
- India’s Best Men’s Doubles pair: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty – attained World No. 5 spot (their career-best)
- India’s Best Women’s Doubles pair: Gayatri Gopichand & Treasa Jolly – attained World No. 18 spot
- India’s Best Men’s Singles: Lakshya Sen – attained World No. 7 spot
- India’s Best Women’s Singles: P. V. Sindhu – attained World No. 6 spot

573. The '2022 FIFA World Cup Awards' were announced on December 19, 2022. Argentina's Lionel Messi, with 7 goals & 3 assists, won the "Golden Ball Award". While France's Kylian Mbappe, with 8 goals, won the "Golden Boot Award". "Golden Glove Award" was given to Argentina's Emiliano Martinez. Moreover, Argentina's Enzo Fernandez won the "FIFA Young Player Award". [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 2022 FIFA World Cup Awards:
 - Golden Ball Award – Lionel Messi (Argentina)
 - Golden Boot Award – Kylian Mbappe (France)
 - Golden Glove Award – Emiliano Martinez (Argentina)
 - FIFA Young Player Award – Enzo Fernandez (Argentina)

Persons in News

574. On December 23, Sania Mirza, daughter of a TV mechanic from Mirzapur, has been selected to become a fighter pilot in the Indian Air Force and would be India's first Muslim girl to become fighter pilot and the state's first female IAF pilot. She secured this position by passing the NDA exam. Sania is the second girl in the country who has been selected as a fighter pilot. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Sania Mirza (UP) – became India's 2nd & UP's 1st female IAF pilot (India's first Muslim girl to become IAF pilot)
- HQs of IAF – New Delhi | Chief – Air Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari | Vice Chief – Air Marshal Sandeep Singh

Arts & Cultural Affairs

575. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 26th edition of "National Youth Festival" in the twin cities of Hubballi and Dharwad on January 12, which will mark National Youth Day 2023. The youth festival will mark the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. Around 7,500 representatives from all states will participate in the youth festival. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Narendra Modi – to inaugurate the 26th edition of "National Youth Festival" in Hubballi & Dharwad, Karnataka
- The youth festival will mark the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda





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Science & Technology

576. On December 21, NASA awarded SpaceX a contract worth approximately \$94 million to provide launch services for the Sentinel-6B mission which is an international partnership between the U.S. and Europe to continue global sea level observations for at least the next decade. The Sentinel-6B mission is targeted to launch in November 2025, on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Space Launch Complex 4E at Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. The ocean-monitoring satellite will join its twin Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich which was launched in November 2020. The satellite is being jointly developed by NASA, ESA (European Space Agency), the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- NASA – awarded a contract to SpaceX to provide launch services for the ‘Sentinel-6B’ mission
- The satellite is jointly developed by = NASA + ESA + EUMETSAT + NOAA
- Sentinel-6B mission – an international partnership between US & Europe to continue global sea level observations
- HQs of SpaceX – California, U.S. | Founder & CEO – Elon Musk | Founded in – 2002

577. On December 23, Bharti Airtel and Apollo Hospitals conducted India’s first 5G-driven, artificial intelligence (AI)-guided Colonoscopy trials in collaboration with technology companies HealthNet Global, Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Avesha. As per current protocol, colon cancer is detected through a colonoscopy procedure which is manual, requires great attention for accuracy and is time-consuming, taking 30-40 minutes per case. The AI-guided colonoscopy procedure helped in image processing in real-time. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Bharti Airtel + Apollo Hospitals + AWS + Avesha = conducted India’s first 5G-driven & AI-guided Colonoscopy trials
- HQs of Bharti Airtel – New Delhi | MD & CEO – Gopal Vittal | Chairman – Sunil Bharti Mittal

578. NASA has formally retired its ‘Mars InSight’ lander four years after it arrived on the surface of the Mars. It was the first robotic probe specially designed to study the deep interior of a distant world. It last communicated with Earth on December 15. InSight landed on Mars in late November 2018 with instruments designed to detect planetary seismic rumblings never before measured anywhere but Earth, and its original two-year mission was later extended to four. One of InSight’s chief accomplishments was establishing that the red planet is, indeed, seismically active, recording more than 1,300 marsquakes. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- NASA – formally retired its ‘Mars InSight’ lander which landed on Mars in November 2018
- It was the first robotic probe specially designed to study the deep interior of a distant world
- HQs of NASA – Washington D.C., US | Administrator – Bill Nelson | Founded in – 1958

579. On December 20, Scientists working on Australia’s Great Barrier Reef have successfully trialled a new method for freezing and storing coral larvae. In a December lab trial, the world’s first with Great Barrier Reef coral, scientists used the “Cryomesh” technology to freeze coral larvae at the Australian Institute of Marine Sciences (AIMS). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Scientists successfully trialled a new method/technology called “Cryomesh” for Coral Reef Conservation
- Great Barrier Reef – Australia



580. On December 22, the Government announced that India's maiden human space flight mission, 'Gaganyaan', is targeted to be launched in the fourth quarter of 2024. This was stated by Union Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. Two uncrewed flights - 'G1 mission' & 'G2 mission', are scheduled, before the final human space flight - 'H1 mission', to demonstrate the performance of the crew escape system and parachute-based deceleration system for different flight conditions. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India's maiden human space flight mission, 'Gaganyaan', is targeted to be launched in the fourth quarter of 2024
- Two uncrewed flights - 'G1 mission' & 'G2 mission' will be launched before the final human space flight - 'H1 mission'

Appointments & Resignations

581. On December 19, Centre has appointed Justice Hemant Gupta as Chairperson of the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (NDIAC) two months after his retirement as a judge of the Supreme Court. The Centre also appointed Ganesh Chandru and Advocate Anant Vijay Palli as its part-time members. Set up in 2019, the NDIAC has been declared to be an institution of national importance and is mandated to be a seven-member body that is headed by a former Judge of the Supreme Court or a High Court or an eminent person. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Hemant Gupta – appointed as Chairperson of NDIAC
- Ganesh Chandru + Anant Vijay Palli = appointed as its Part-time Members
- HQs of NDIAC – New Delhi | Chairperson – Justice Hemant Gupta | Founded in – 2019

Awards, Rewards, Recognition & Prizes

582. 'Naatu Naatu' song of S. S. Rajamouli's film "Rise Roar Revolt (RRR)" was shortlisted for the Oscars 2023 under the 'Best Original Song' category. Naatu Naatu has created history as it became the first Indian song to be shortlisted for the Academy Award. The song was composed by M. M. Keeravani, while Chandrabose penned the lyrics. Rahul Sipligunj and Kaala Bhairava sang the vocals for the song. The music video for the song was shot at the Mariinsky Palace in Kyiv, Ukraine, in August 2021. The Academy announced the shortlisted candidates for 10 categories. India's official entry for Oscars 2023 in the 'International Feature Film' category is the Gujarati language film "Chhello Show" (Last Film Show), directed by Pan Nalin. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "Naatu Naatu" song of 'RRR' film – shortlisted for the Oscars 2023 under the 'Best Original Song' category
- Composed by – M. M. Keeravani | Lyrics – Chandrabose | Singers – Rahul Sipligunj and Kaala Bhairava
- "Chhello Show" (Last Film Show) – shortlisted for the Oscars 2023 under the 'International Feature Film' category

583. On December 20, Guru Nanak Dev University, in its fourth cycle of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), has been accredited with a CGPA of 3.85 out of 4 at A++ grade which will be valid for the next 7 years. GNDU authorities claim that it is the only state/central/private university in India to get this score. This assessment is based on a set of 7 criteria under different key aspects based on the functioning and organisational focus. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Guru Nanak Dev University (Amritsar) – accredited with a CGPA of 3.85 out of 4 at A++ grade by NAAC
- It is the only state/central/private university in India to get this score



584. 24 litterateurs were awarded the “Sahitya Akademi Awards for 2022” by the Sahitya Akademi. The ‘Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman 2022’ was awarded to Udaya Nath Jha for his valuable contribution to the field of classical and medieval literature in the eastern region. The awards in 24 languages included 7 books of poetry, 7 of novel, 2 of short stories, 3 dramas, 2 literary criticism and 1 each of autobiographical essays, collection of articles and literary history. The award recognizes total 24 Indian languages, including English. 17 books were selected for the translation awards. In Assamese language, Manoj Kumar Goswami won the award for his collection of short stories ‘Bhool Satya’; Anuradha Roy won in English language for her novel ‘All the Lives we never lived’; Gulam Mohammad Shaikh won in Gujarati for ‘Gher Jatan’, a collection of autobiographical essays, Mr. Rajendran won in Tamil for his novel ‘Kala Pani’, while Tapan Bandopadhyay won in Bengali for his novel ‘Birbal’. The ‘Sahitya Akademi Yuva Praskar’ for those under 35 years was awarded to 23 winners, including English. The ‘Bal Sahitya Puraskar’ was given to 22 winners, including English. The awards relate to books first published during the five years immediately preceding the year of Award (between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020). [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- ‘Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman 2022’ – awarded to Udaya Nath
- ‘Sahitya Akademi Prize for Translation 2022’ – awarded to 17 books
- ‘Sahitya Akademi Awards 2022’ – given in 24 Indian languages
- Some important awardees:
 - Anuradha Roy (English)
 - Badri Narayan (Hindi)
 - Gulam Mohammad Shaikh (Gujarati)
 - Mr. Rajendran (Tamil)
 - Tapan Bandopadhyay (Bengali)
 - Praveen Dashrath Bandekar (Marathi)
 - Manoj Kumar Goswami (Assamese)
 - Anis Asnfa (Urdu)
 - M. Thomas Mathew (Malayalam)
 - Madhuranthakam Narendra (Telugu)
 - Mudnakudu Chinnaswamy (Kannada)
 - Rashmi Choudhury (Bodo)
 - Veena Gupta (Dogri)
- ‘Sahitya Akademi Yuva Praskar 2022’ – given in 23 Indian languages
- Some important awardees:
 - Mihir Vatsa (English)
 - Bhagwant Anmol (Hindi)
 - Bharat Kheni (Gujarati)
 - Suman Parari (Bengali)
 - Anagha J Kolath (Malayalam)
 - Pawan Nalat (Marathi)
 - Pradyumna Kumar Gogoi (Assamese)
 - Shruti Kanitkar (Sanskrit)
 - P Kali Muthu (Tamil)
 - Pallipattu Nagaraju (Telugu)
 - Maqsood Aafaque (Urdu)
 - Alangbar Muchahary (Bodo)
 - Ashu Sharma (Dogri)
 - Dadapeer Jyman (Kannada)



- 'Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2022' – given in 22 Indian languages
- Some important awardees:
 - Arshia Sattar (English)
 - Kshama Sharma (Hindi)
 - Kirit Goswami (Gujarati)
 - Kuldeep Sharma (Sanskrit)
 - Pattipaka Mohan (Telugu)
 - Zafar Kamali (Urdu)
 - Joya Mitra (Bengali)
 - Diganta Oza (Assamese)
 - G Meenakshi (Tamil)
 - Tammanna Beegara (Kannada)
 - A Sethumadhavan (Malayalam)
 - Sangeeta Barve (Marathi)
 - Rajeshwar Singh 'Raju' (Dogri)
 - Dewbar Ramchiary (Bodo)
- HQs of Sahitya Akademi – Delhi | President – Chandrashekhara Kambara

Schemes & Initiatives

585. On December 21, Minister of State for Textiles, Darshana Jardosh, in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha shared that Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) provides skill development and training programmes for the benefit of artisans and craftsmen in the handicrafts sector under the component 'Skill Development in Handicrafts Sector' of National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP). Further, Office of DC (Handicrafts), under the Ministry of Textiles, is implementing the "SAMARTH" scheme for capacity building in textile sector to provide skill training to handicraft artisans. Under SAMARTH scheme, more than 13,235 artisans have been trained in the last 3 years. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Ministry of Textiles – is implementing "SAMARTH" scheme for capacity building of handicraft artisans in Textile sector
- Under SAMARTH scheme, more than 13,235 artisans have been trained in the last 3 years
- Ministry of Textiles: Piyush Goyal | Constituency – Maharashtra
- MoS in Ministry of Textiles: Darshana Vikram Jardosh

Important Days & Dates

586. International Pheran Day was celebrated in Jammu and Kashmir on December 21. On this occasion, locals and tourists gathered at the historic 'Lal Chowk' in Jammu and Kashmir to celebrate the heritage of 'Pheran'. People wore pheran and also carried the traditional kangri with them. 40 days of harsh winter period known as 'Chillai Kalan' in the local language began in the Kashmir valley. Pheran or Phyan is a traditional knee-length robe (woollen gown) that is part of the unique identity of Kashmiri culture. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- December 21 – International Pheran Day – in J & K
- Pheran or Phyan – a traditional knee-length robe (woollen gown)



Books & Authors

587. Commodore Ranjit B. Rai (Retd) and defence journalist Aritra Banerjee's authored a new book titled "The Indian Navy@75 Reminiscing the Voyage". The book tells you how the exploits and sacrifices of the British-era Royal Indian Navy (RIN) during World War 2 were omitted by British historians who could not digest the RIN's mutiny in 1946. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "The Indian Navy@75 Reminiscing the Voyage" book – authored by Ranjit B. Rai (Retd) & Aritra Banerjee

588. Former head of the Research & Analysis Wing, A. S. Dulat, penned his new memoir, "A Life in the Shadows". The book covers Dulat's interactions with multiple senior leaders and important members of India's security establishment, including current NSA Ajit Doval. Dulat is also a former special director of the Indian Intelligence Bureau. His other books include "Kashmir: The Vajpayee Years" & "The Spy Chronicles: R&AW, ISI and the Illusion of Peace". [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- "A Life in the Shadows" a memoir – authored by A. S. Dulat (Former Head of RAW)

Obituaries

589. On December 21, Gamaka exponent and Padma Shri awardee H R Keshava Murthy passed away. He was 89. He hailed from Karnataka. He is remembered for his inspiring mentorship to many students. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- H. R. Keshava Murthy (Karnataka) – Gamaka exponent & Padma Shri awardee – passed away
- Karnataka: Capital – Bangalore | CM – Basavaraj Bommai | Governor – Thaawarchand Gehlot

590. On December 23, Veteran Telugu actor Kaikala Satyanarayana, fondly known as Navarasa Natana Sarvabhouma, passed away at the age of 87. He was born in Krishna, Andhra Pradesh. He starred in more than 770 films and has worked with over 200 directors. He was the recipient of Andhra Pradesh government's Nandi Award, Raghupathi Venkaiah National Award 2011, and Lifetime Achievement Award for Telugu Cinema at 2017 Filmfare Awards. He served as a Member of Parliament from Machilipatnam in 1996. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Kaikala Satyanarayana (Navarasa Natana Sarvabhouma) – a Telugu Actor & a Politician – passed away
- Awards: Nandi Award, Raghupathi Venkaiah National Award, Lifetime Achievement Award at 2017 Filmfare Awards

Meetings, Conferences & Summits

591. On December 21, the 19th meeting of the Experts and Coordinators of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's Interbank consortium (SCO-IBC), and the first under India's Presidency, was held in New Delhi. During the meeting, it was decided to create a data bank of the various initiatives which have been taken so far, work towards sustainable development goals, and climate finance initiatives. India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL) is presiding over the Presidency of the SCO Interbank Consortium (SCO IBC) during the period of October 26, 2022 to October 25, 2023. The SCO IBC was established on October 26, 2005, under the decision made by the Council of Heads of SCO Member States. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- 19th meeting of the Experts and Coordinators of the SCO-IBC – held in New Delhi
- IIFCL is presiding over the Presidency of the SCO-IBC during the period of October 26, 2022 to October 25, 2023
- SCO IBC was established on October 26, 2005 by the Council of Heads of SCO Member States
- HQs of IIFCL – New Delhi | MD – Padmanabhan Raja Jaishankar

592. On December 20, the first 'Joint Finance and Health Task Force Meeting' under the Indian G20 Presidency was held in virtual mode. The meeting was attended by finance and health representatives from G20 and invited countries as well as international organizations. The meeting was co-chaired by Italy and Indonesia. The 'Bali Leaders' Declaration 2022' extended the mandate of the Task Force to continue the collaborations between finance and health ministries for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- India – hosted the first 'Joint Finance & Health Task Force Meeting' in a virtual mode – co-chaired by Italy & Indonesia
- Presidency of G20 Summit: 2023 – India (Dec 1, 2022 to Nov 30, 2023) | 2024 – Brazil
- India's G20 motto – 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' | Theme – 'One Earth One Family One Future' | Sherpa – Amitabh Kant

593. The UAE has been selected to host the 13th edition of "World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference" in February 2024. The WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The Ministerial Conference is the topmost decision-making body of the WTO and usually meets every two years. The inaugural Ministerial Conference was held in Singapore in 1996. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- UAE – will host the 13th edition of "World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference" in February 2024
- The Ministerial Conference usually meets every 2 years
- HQs of WTO – Geneva, Switzerland | 7th DG – Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (Nigeria) | Members – 164 | Founded – 1995

Amount & Agreements

594. On December 23, Japan's MUFG Bank has executed a Rs 450 Crore sustainable trade finance facility for Tata Power. This credit facility was extended for two solar projects under TP Kirnali Limited (TPKL). It is the first sustainable trade finance facility offered by MUFG in India and TPKL will utilise the funds towards generating renewable energy capacity. TPKL's two solar power projects include a 100 MW project in Parthur, Maharashtra and a 120 MW project in Mesanka, Gujarat. Tata Power plans to be carbon net zero before 2045. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- MUFG Bank (Japan) – executed a Rs 450 Cr sustainable trade finance facility for Tata Power
- The credit facility was extended for TPKL's 2 solar projects each in Maharashtra & Gujarat
- HQs of Tata Power Solar Systems – Mumbai, Maharashtra | MD & CEO – Ashish Khanna



Ordinance, Bills & Acts

595. On December 21, the Rajya Sabha passed the “Maritime Anti-Piracy Bill, 2022”, two days after the Lok Sabha passed it. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said the Bill would fulfil all the expectations of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which India is a signatory to, for cooperation and repression of piracy in high seas. The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) or High Seas is an area that is adjacent to and beyond the territorial sea. It can extend to a maximum of 200 nautical miles from the baseline (India’s coastline). Between 2014 and 2022, there were 19 piracy cases in which 155 Indian crew members were involved and the numbers show why the country needs this Bill so badly. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Rajya Sabha – passed the “Maritime Anti-Piracy Bill, 2022”
- High Seas (EEZ) is an area beyond 200 nautical miles from the baseline (India’s coastline)
- Between 2014 and 2022, there were 19 piracy cases in which 155 Indian crew members were involved

596. On December 23, Union minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal introduced the “Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2022” in Lok Sabha. The bill seeks to decriminalise minor offences to promote ease of business. A unique feature of the proposal is an increase of 10% of the minimum amount of fine and penalty levied, after the expiry of every three years, once the bill becomes a law. The Bill will seek to amend acts such as the Press and Registration of Books Act 1867, the Boilers Act 1923, the Public Debt Act 1944, and the Indian Forest Act 1927. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Minister of Commerce & Industry – introduced the “Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2022” in Lok Sabha
- The bill proposes an increase of 10% of the minimum amount of fine & penalty levied once the bill becomes a law
- Ministry of Commerce & Industry: Piyush Goyal | Constituency – Maharashtra
- MoS in Ministry of Commerce & Industry: Anupriya Singh Patel & Som Parkash

Acquisitions & Mergers

597. On December 23, Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL) signed an agreement to acquire 100% equity stake in METRO Cash & Carry India Pvt Ltd. (METRO India) for ₹2,850 Cr. METRO India started operations in India in 2003 as the first company to introduce cash-and-carry business format in the country and currently operates 31 large format stores across 21 cities. The transaction is subject to certain regulatory and other customary closing conditions and is expected to complete by March 2023. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- RRVL – signed an agreement to acquire 100% equity stake in METRO India
- METRO India – first company to introduce cash-and-carry business format in the country
- HQs of RRVL – Mumbai, MH | CEO – V. Subramaniam



MoUs, Collaborations & Partnerships

598. On December 22, Cognizant signed an MoU with Garuda Aerospace to power its drones with advanced digital capabilities and bring innovative solutions for enterprises aiming to achieve greater agility, productivity, and overall outcomes. In warehouse management, the drones can be used for inventory audit, tracking of products, video surveillance, and even help move lightweight objects. These drone-based solutions will also enable businesses achieve their sustainability goals by helping drive efficient use of resources. The collaboration will provide Cognizant associates across its service lines, including, analytics, IoT, among others, the opportunity to work on such purpose-driven drone projects and real-life use cases. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Cognizant + Garuda Aerospace = an MoU to power its drones with advanced digital capabilities
- HQs of Cognizant – New Jersey, US | CEO – Brian Humphries
- HQs of Garuda Aerospace – Chennai, TN | CEO – Agnishwar Jayaprakash

599. On December 23, Packaged drinking water brand Bisleri announced its partnership with Gujrat Titans as its official hydration partner, for a 3-year association, starting with the 2023 cricketing season. The collaboration of Bisleri with Gujarat Titans is a strategic approach towards being a part of our consumers' health and fitness mission. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Bisleri – partnered with Gujrat Titans as its official hydration partner for a 3-year association
- HQs of Bisleri International – Mumbai, Maharashtra | CEO – Angelo George

600. On December 22, Tata Projects Limited signed an MoU with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Indian Institute of Petroleum (CSIR IIP) to jointly work towards clean energy solutions. Tata Project will use clean energy solutions such as room temperature bio-diesel produced from CSIR-IIP for some of its ongoing sites. Further, the partnership will actively explore the utilisation of by-product green diesel from the existing DILSAAF (Drop-In Liquid Sustainable Aviation Fuel and Automotive fuel) pilot plant at CSIR-IIP's campus in Dehradun. [{Read more}](#)

Key Points:

- Tata Projects + CSIR-IIP = an MoU to jointly work towards Clean Energy Solutions
- HQs of Tata Projects – Mumbai, Maharashtra | Chairman – Banmali Agrawala | MD – Vinayak Pai
- HQs of CSIR – New Delhi | President – Narendra Modi | DG – Nallathamby Kalaiselvi | Established in – 1942





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