

## **Weekly Current Affairs PDF 31 Dec 2023 to 06 Jan 2024**

### **Current Affairs PDF- January 06, 2024**

#### **NATIONAL**

##### **Attaining international recognition, the Ayodhya Airport undergoes a name change to 'Maharishi Valmiki International Airport.'**

- The Union Cabinet has greenlit the declaration of Ayodhya Airport as an international airport, with the proposed name "Maharishi Valmiki International Airport, Ayodhyadham." This decision, emphasizing the historical and cultural significance of the region, signifies a notable step forward in the airport's recognition and status.
- According to the government's press release, elevating Ayodhya Airport to international status is crucial for realizing the city's economic potential. Furthermore, it acknowledges Ayodhya's significance as a global pilgrimage site, with the international status expected to attract foreign pilgrims and tourists.
- The airport's development will occur in phases. In its initial phase, the airport will have the capacity to handle 10 lakh (1 million) passengers annually. After the second phase of development, Maharishi Valmiki International Airport is expected to cater to a staggering 60 lakh (6 million) commuters annually.

##### **Commencing a new phase, the Assam Government launches 'Gunotsav 2024.'**

- The Assam government is gearing up for the fifth edition of 'Gunotsav 2024,' a comprehensive state-wide assessment aimed at evaluating the performance of approximately 40 lakh students across government schools.
- The initiative, slated to run from January 3 to February 8, 2024, is poised to play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of education and improving learning outcomes in the state.
- 'Gunotsav' emphasizes active participation from all stakeholders, including teachers, students, administrators, and local communities. This holistic engagement is expected to foster accountability and contribute to an overall enhancement of the quality of education in Assam.

#### **SPORTS**

##### **Yuki Bhambri and Robin Haase face defeat in the semifinals of the Brisbane International, signaling an end to their campaign in the tournament.**

- Yuki Bhambri-Robin Haase lost in their semi-final match, at the Brisbane International.
- Yuki Bhambri and his partner Robin Haase faced a setback in the Brisbane International ATP Tour tournament semifinals on Saturday. The Indo-Dutch pair, seeded eighth, experienced a close match against the second-seeded duo of Lloyd Glasspool (England) and Jean-Julien Rojer (Netherlands), ultimately losing 3-6, 7-6, 9-11. The fiercely contested match lasted for one hour and 40 minutes.
- The Bhambri-Haase duo had beaten the American pair of Nathaniel Lammons and Jackson Withrow in straight sets -- 7-6 (5), 7-6 (6) -- in the quarterfinals.
- Last year, the 31-year-old Bhambri from New Delhi won his maiden ATP title at the Mallorca Championships doubles competition, partnering with South African Lloyd Harris.

### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

**Taking the helm, Sanjiv Aggarwal assumes the role of CEO and MD of NIIFL (National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited).**

- The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIFL) has welcomed Sanjiv Aggarwal as its new Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director.
- Aggarwal, formerly a partner at the UK-based private equity firm Actis, brings a wealth of experience in energy investments, particularly in the Asian market, including India.
- Sanjiv Aggarwal's impressive track record includes successful stints at renowned financial institutions such as Citigroup and ANZ Investment Bank. Notably, his tenure at Actis saw remarkable accomplishments, including the sale of the Indian renewable energy platform Sprng Energy to Shell Plc for an enterprise value of \$1.55 billion in April 2022.

**Assuming a significant role, Senior IAS Officer Vikas Sheel is appointed as the Executive Director of the Asian Development Bank.**

- Demonstrating India's active participation on the global stage, seven proficient civil servants have been appointed to key positions overseas. Among them, Mr. Vikas Sheel, an adept bureaucrat, now assumes the role of Executive Director at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila. This appointment underscores India's dedication to contributing to international development initiatives.
- Vikas Sheel, a 1994-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, is now the Executive Director at ADB. He brings valuable experience from his current role as Additional Secretary and Mission Director of Jal Jeevan Mission, contributing to India's representation at this prestigious institution.
- Smita Sarangi has been appointed as Adviser to the Executive Director at ADB in Manila, Philippines. Her expertise will play a vital role in India's collaboration with ADB on important development initiatives.

### IMPORTANT DAYS

**Observing the World Day of War Orphans in 2024**

- Marking January 6, 2024, the global community will come together to observe the World Day of War Orphans. This day remains dedicated to shedding light on the challenges and requirements of the most vulnerable victims of conflict—the children.
- This day comes amidst ongoing global conflicts, serving as a poignant reminder of the deep and lasting impact war has on the lives of innocent children.
- This year, World Day of War Orphans is marked with two powerful themes: "Orphan Lives Matter" and "Standing Up for War-Affected Children." These themes are a clarion call for global attention and action to support and protect war-affected children.

### AWARDS & RECOGNITION

**Securing recognition, the SVAMITVA Scheme clinches the Best Innovation Award**

- SVAMITVA Scheme wins Best Innovation Award for Innovation Sandbox presentation during Public Policy Dialogues-2024 at Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.

- SVAMITVA Scheme has been saturated with the generation of property cards of all inhabited villages of Haryana, Uttarakhand, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Goa.

### **BANKING AND ECONOMY**

#### **Propelling forward with a strategic vision, India outlines its proposal for a 'Bharat Park' Trade Zone in the UAE**

- The Indian government is strategically laying the groundwork for 'Bharat Park,' a specialized trade zone within the UAE. This envisioned zone will incorporate showrooms and warehouses, providing a prominent platform to exhibit and store Indian-manufactured goods, catering to a global audience.
- Addressing the future of the textile industry, Goyal underscores the prominence of Man Made Fibre Textiles due to challenges in meeting the increasing demand for cotton.
- He encourages industry players to leverage free trade agreements with Japan, Australia, UAE, and South Korea, expressing concern over underutilization.

#### **The National Statistical Office (NSO) data reveals that India's GDP growth projection for the fiscal year 2023-24 stands at 7.3%**

- The inaugural advance estimates from the National Statistical Office (NSO) foresee a sturdy growth of 7.3% for India's GDP in the fiscal year 2023-24. This initial projection reflects a promising outlook for the country's economic trajectory in the upcoming financial year.
- This surpasses the 7.2% growth recorded in the previous financial year. Notably, the construction sector is expected to lead with double-digit growth at 10.7%.
- Real GDP at Constant Prices in FY24 is projected to reach ₹171.79 lakh crore, compared to the provisional estimate of ₹160.06 lakh crore for FY23.

## **Current Affairs PDF- January 05, 2024**

### **INTERNATIONAL**

#### **8 former Indian Navy personnel in Qatar given 60 days to appeal against prison terms**

- The Ministry of External Affairs has disclosed that the eight incarcerated former Indian Navy personnel in Qatar have been granted a 60-day window to file appeals against the diverse prison terms imposed by a Qatari court last week. This decision follows the commutation of their earlier death sentences.
- The Court of Appeal in Qatar on December 28 commuted the death sentence handed down to the Indians in October and sentenced them to prison for varying durations, weeks after their family members filed an appeal against the earlier order by another court.
- External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the legal team of the Indian nationals received a copy of the court order that he described as a "confidential document".
- "On December 28, the Court of Appeal had given a judgement. Thereafter, we issued a press release giving details (and) telling that the death penalty has been reduced. Now, we have the judgement order, which is a confidential document," he said.

### NATIONAL

**2024 will witness the retirement of 68 Rajya Sabha members, a list that includes prominent figures such as Manmohan Singh and Jaya Bachchan.**

- Anticipating a transformative year ahead, the political scenario in India is set for a notable transformation with the retirement of 68 Rajya Sabha members, including nine Union ministers. This development adds fervor to the competition for sought-after six-year terms in the Upper House of Parliament.
- In April, a total of 57 leaders, a prominent among them being former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and several incumbent ministers, will complete their tenures.
- Uttar Pradesh will witness the highest number of vacancies, with 10 seats up for grabs, followed by Maharashtra and Bihar with six each.
- Other states in the fray include Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Gujarat, Odisha, Telangana, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, and Chhattisgarh.

**Emerging as a trailblazer, Punjab has become the inaugural state to comprehensively map all sites prone to accidents.**

- Paving the way for safety measures, Punjab emerges as the pioneer in India by intricately mapping all 784 accident-prone areas through the innovative Mappls App, an advanced navigation system crafted by MapMyIndia.
- In a strategic move, the Punjab Police has teamed up with MapMyIndia to integrate real-time traffic updates and alerts into the Mappls App. This collaboration aims to provide citizens with crucial information about black and blind spots, ensuring a safer driving experience.
- This initiative aligns with the preparations for the launch of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann's flagship project, the 'Sadak Suraksha Force.' The comprehensive mapping of accident black spots is a crucial component of this visionary project, aiming to create a robust system for ensuring road safety across the state.

### SPORTS

**Rohit Sharma rates Cape Town win as 'one of India's best Test match victories'**

- Bestowing high praise, India's captain Rohit Sharma has acclaimed the nation's historic Test triumph at Newlands in Cape Town, labeling it as "one of the most exceptional victories" in the annals of India's cricketing history.
- With their backs against the wall after experiencing a crushing defeat in the opening Test of the series at the SuperSport Park in Centurion, Rohit and his men scripted a praiseworthy comeback and turned the tables to defeat South Africa by seven wickets on a pacer-friendly surface in the New Year's Test at the Newlands.
- "It'll be one of our best Test match victories," Rohit told the reporters after India's triumph in the shortest Test ever played (in terms of balls bowled).
- "Having not won here in Cape Town [before], obviously this puts it right up there with all the victories that we've had. It's very hard to compare the Test matches that you play because every Test match has its own importance and own relevance. The Test match that we won at The Gabba as well. The last test match that was lost by Australia in Brisbane was in 1988, I think.



Nearly after 23, 24 years (32 years), we won the Test match there. It kind of became like their fortress. They never lose a test match there," Rohit said.

- "And the way we won that Test match as well was quite important. From where we came, we were 1-nil down, we won in Melbourne and then we drew the Test match in Sydney and then won in Brisbane. So you can't really rank the Test matches, but this has to be right up there because we had not won here. That shows how important a venue this is for us to come here and perform. I give a lot of credit to our team to put up a performance like that and win the game," the India captain said.

### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

**Stepping into a pivotal role, Shashi Singh has been named the newly appointed President of AIRIA (All India Rubber Industries Association).**

- Undergoing a noteworthy shift in leadership dynamics, the All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA), the premier representative body for India's rubber industry, has recently declared a substantial change in its leadership.
- Shashi Singh has been elected as the new President, succeeding Ramesh Kejriwal. This transition marks a new era for AIRIA, with Singh set to advance the association's mission and goals.
- Alongside Singh, Zafar Ahmed, the Managing Director of New India Rubber Works Pvt Ltd, has been elected as the senior vice-president for 2023-24. In addition, Indra Parekh takes on the role of vice president. This new leadership team is expected to bring a blend of experience, insight, and fresh perspectives to AIRIA.

### IMPORTANT DAYS

**Marking National Birds Day 2024, we rejoice in the splendor of avian beauty while emphasizing the importance of conservation efforts**

- Explore the world's most beautiful and unique birds, each possessing its own charm, on National Birds Day celebrated annually on January 5.
- The day aims to raise awareness about bird conservation and the critical need to protect their habitats, given the challenges they face from illegal pet trade, diseases, and habitat loss.
- Founded in 2002 by the Avian Welfare Coalition, National Bird Day recognizes birds as vital components of ecosystems, acting as living links to the past and indicators of environmental health.
- Many bird species are endangered or protected due to habitat loss and illegal pet trade, emphasizing the urgency of creating a sustainable relationship with these essential animals.

### AWARDS & RECOGNITION

**Garnering acclaim, Hero MotoCorp's facility secures the prestigious CII National Award for its exemplary water management practices**

- Creating ripples in water conservation, Hero MotoCorp, the global leader in two-wheeler manufacturing, clinches the CII National Award for Excellence in Water Management and aims to achieve an ambitious target of becoming 500% water positive by 2025.
- Hero MotoCorp's Gurugram facility emerged victorious in the 'Within the Fence' category of the CII award, highlighting its exceptional water management practices within its manufacturing

operations. This recognition underscores the company's commitment to reducing water consumption and wastage within its own premises.

**Acknowledging stellar achievements in space science leadership, Prof. Adrian Cruise is honored with the 'Order of the British Empire' for his outstanding contributions.**

- In the New Year Honours list of 2024, Professor Adrian Michael Cruise, a distinguished figure in space science research, is recognized for his exceptional contributions, notably for his leadership in the Gravitational Wave Research Group at the University of Birmingham.
- Professor Cruise, as Professor Emeritus at the University of Birmingham, led the Gravitational Wave Research Group to affirm the university's leadership in space science. His groundbreaking 2015 detection of gravitational waves validated Einstein's prediction, propelling the institution into the forefront of unraveling space-time mysteries.

**BANKING AND ECONOMY**

**Propelled by record Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) acquisitions, Indian equities surge to unprecedented heights in the month of December**

- Setting a historic milestone, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI) recorded monumental monthly acquisitions of Indian equities, surging to 661.35 billion rupees (\$8 billion) in December, as per data from the National Securities Depository.
- This surge catapulted India's Nifty 50 and Sensex benchmarks to fresh record highs. The first half of December alone witnessed a record fortnightly purchase of shares worth 427.33 billion rupees, attributed to lower U.S. bond yields and expectations of Federal Reserve interest rate cuts.
- Faster-than-expected quarterly GDP growth prompted the Reserve Bank of India to revise upwards its fiscal 2024 growth forecast. State election results signaled policy continuity in 2024, adding to the positive sentiment.

**Committing substantial resources, REC (Rural Electrification Corporation) invests Rs. 35,000 crore in multi-modal projects, collaborating with Rail Vikas Nigam for a comprehensive five-year initiative.**

- In a strategic move, REC Limited, a distinguished Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise founded in 1969 under the Ministry of Power, has inked a recent Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL).
- This collaboration aims to provide financial support of up to Rs. 35,000 Crores for a range of Infrastructure Projects over the next 5 years, showcasing the commitment of both entities to drive essential developments in the sector.
- The infrastructure projects set to benefit from this collaboration span various domains, including multi-modal logistics hubs, rail infrastructure, roads, ports, and metro projects.

**Current Affairs PDF- January 04, 2024**

**INTERNATIONAL**

**After 52 years on the throne, Queen Margrethe II of Denmark is set to abdicate**

- On the 14th of January, during her New Year's speech, Queen Margrethe II of Denmark disclosed her choice to step down from the throne after a remarkable 52 years of reign. This significant

announcement coincides with the anniversary of her accession to the throne at the age of 31, succeeding her father, King Frederik IX, who passed away.

- Queen Margrethe II's legacy is one of resilience, adventure, and unwavering dedication to her role as a monarch. Her decision to abdicate the throne adds a new chapter to Denmark's royal history, making way for her son, Crown Prince Frederik, to assume the responsibilities of the monarchy.

#### **FIH Hockey5s World Cup Qualifiers scheduled to be hosted by Oman**

- Oman is set to unveil its latest sports marvel—a cutting-edge complex designed to host the FIH Hockey5s World Cup qualifiers, scheduled just ahead of the Summer 2024 Olympic Games in Paris.
- Promising to deliver an exhilarating spectacle, the FIH Hockey5s World Cup qualifiers will draw in eight international teams competing for the opportunity to clinch three coveted tickets to the forthcoming Olympics.
- The newly constructed stadium boasts a remarkable capacity, accommodating over 5,000 spectators during the tournament. Built in adherence to the latest standards and designs approved by the International Hockey Federation, the stadium promises an unparalleled viewing experience for fans and players alike.

#### **NATIONAL**

#### **Tamil Nadu Fast Reactor Plant Inaugurated by Prime Minister with an investment of Rs 400 crore**

- Dedicating it to the nation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the Demonstration Fast Reactor Fuel Reprocessing Plant (DFRP) at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam, with a cost of Rs 400 crore.
- The DFRP boasts a unique design, crafted entirely by Indian scientists. This facility is capable of reprocessing both carbide and oxide fuels discharged from fast reactors, setting it apart as the only one of its kind globally.
- This facility is a significant step towards advancing India's nuclear capabilities, designed to reprocess fuel from Prototype Fast Breeder Reactors (PFBR).

#### **Ahead of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, agreements worth \$86 billion are signed by the Gujarat government**

- In preparation for the upcoming biennial Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, the Indian state of Gujarat has sealed preliminary investment deals totaling 7.17 trillion Indian rupees (\$86.07 billion) with 58 companies spanning sectors like energy, oil and gas, and chemicals.
- With NTPC and Torrent Power leading the charge, these strategic investments signal a robust push by Gujarat to attract both foreign and domestic investors.

#### **SPORTS**

#### **In the Barcelona event, a new 5 km world record is established by Beatrice Chebet**

- Concluding her remarkable year with a spectacular showcase of athletic prowess, Kenya's Beatrice Chebet shattered the world record for the women's 5 km marathon at the Cursa dels Nassos in Barcelona.

- Clocking an astounding 14:13, Chebet outpaced her competitors and bettered the previous record by six seconds, setting the stage for a memorable achievement.
- The final showdown was between Beatrice Chebet and Ejegayehu Taye, the former record holder. In a thrilling sprint, Chebet surged ahead in the last 500m, securing her victory with a clear lead.

### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

#### The European Investment Bank welcomes Nadia Calvino as its newly appointed President

- Embarking on a historic journey, Nadia Calvino assumed the role of the new president of the European Investment Bank, officially commencing her term on January 1.
- She succeeds Werner Hoyer to become the eighth president of the EU bank. Notably, Calvino is the first woman and the first Spaniard to lead this prestigious institution, marking a significant milestone in the bank's history.
- Before ascending to this prominent role, President Calviño had a noteworthy tenure as the first vice-president of the government of Spain and minister of economy, trade and enterprise. Her extensive experience extends to various influential positions within the European Commission.

#### The Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH) announces Puneet Chhatwal as its newly appointed Chairman

- Puneet Chhatwal, the Managing Director and CEO of Indian Hotels Company Limited, has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH). This move comes as he succeeds Nakul Anand, the retired Executive Director at ITC Hotels.
- Chhatwal, a prominent figure in the hospitality sector, will also continue in his capacity as the President of the Hotel Association of India (HAI), a position he was re-elected to in 2022. This dual role positions him strategically in guiding and representing the industry on both national and broader association levels.

### IMPORTANT DAYS

#### 2024 Marks the Celebration of World Braille Day

- World Braille Day, annually observed on January 4, is a profound tribute to Louis Braille, the visionary mind behind the transformative braille system.
- Born in 1809 in France, Louis faced the adversity of losing his sight in childhood. However, his resilience and determination led to the creation of one of history's most revolutionary systems.
- World Braille Day aims to raise awareness about the challenges faced by individuals with visual impairments, advocating for their rights and societal integration.
- It serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of empathy and compassion towards those navigating a world without sight.

### AWARDS & RECOGNITION

#### Awards Season Guide 2024: Every Date You Need for the Golden Globes, Oscars, GRAMMYS and More!

- With the advent of the new year, we are on the brink of a whole new awards season, characterized by chic red carpet ensembles, moving (and sometimes heartbreaking) speeches,



and endeavors at comedic sketches by hosts and presenters that will span from uproarious and unforgettable to remarkably cringe-worthy.

- The awards season landscape has finally gotten back on track following several years of pandemic-related delays and changes, and then the now-settled WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes, which many worried would shake up the awards show calendar once again.
- Music awards shows -- including the GRAMMY Awards and the Billboard Music Awards -- were less impacted by the strikes, and are scheduled to go on as planned. Meanwhile, some film and TV-based awards that were postponed have been rescheduled, including the Oscars and Golden Globes.
- Below, ET has your handy calendar that will be continuously updated with all the key dates and details as we learn more about what's to come from the Golden Globes, SAG Awards, GRAMMYS, BAFTA Awards and more.

### **BANKING AND ECONOMY**

#### **India Ratings Upgrades PNB Housing Finance's NCD Ratings to IND AA+ with a Stable Outlook**

- Upgrading PNB Housing Finance Limited's non-convertible debentures (NCDs), India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has revised the rating to 'IND AA+' from 'IND AA' while maintaining a stable outlook.
- PNBHF is a major housing finance player with an AUM of INR 674 billion, focusing on retail loans and boasting over three decades of operational experience.
- PNBHF has diverse funding sources, including deposits, banking lines, and external commercial borrowings, ensuring flexibility and stability in its resource profile. The company's focus on a low-ticket, granular mortgage portfolio has contributed to improved profitability, with a return on assets of 2.2% in 1HFY24.

#### **December Witnesses Festival Demand Slowdown as PMI Manufacturing Records an 18-Month Low at 54.9**

- The HSBC India Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for manufacturing dropped to an 18-month low of 54.9 in December, down from 56 in November, signaling a slowdown.
- Despite this, the sector remains in expansion mode, marking 30 consecutive months with the index above 50, indicative of growth. The decline was attributed to a weaker rise in new orders and output.
- The manufacturing sector continued to expand in December, albeit at a softer pace, maintaining growth momentum despite a decline. New business gains, favorable market conditions, fairs, and expositions contributed to a sharp increase in manufacturing during December.

## **Current Affairs PDF- January 03, 2024**

### **INTERNATIONAL**

#### **In January, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is set to disburse a \$700 million bailout installment to Pakistan.**

- Cash-strapped Pakistan is poised to receive a crucial \$700 million bailout tranche from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the Executive Board meeting on January 11.

- The disbursement, under the existing \$3 billion Stand-By Arrangement (SBA), is expected to provide much-needed financial support to Pakistan's struggling economy.
- The IMF Executive Board is scheduled to discuss Pakistan's case on January 11, potentially granting final approval for the release of the \$700 million tranche. The current SBA, initiated in 2019, is set to conclude in April 2024, with approximately \$1.8 billion remaining undisbursed.
- Despite earlier expectations for the Executive Board's approval in December, the decision has been deferred to January 11, as a Staff-Level Agreement between the IMF staff and Pakistani authorities awaits the Board's approval. The potential approval holds significance for Pakistan's economy, providing crucial financial support.
- Discussions between the IMF staff and Pakistani authorities continue regarding policies aimed at bolstering macroeconomic stability in the upcoming year. The IMF noted progress over the FY23 budget, but the latest economic projections for Pakistan reveal a challenging outlook for 2024. The report added that the IMF predicts a contraction of 0.5% in the real GDP for the year and a significant increase in the Consumer Price Index, suggesting heightened inflationary pressures.

#### NATIONAL

##### **Prime Minister Modi inaugurates initiatives valued at Rs 20,000 crore in Tamil Nadu.**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for a slew of development projects worth over Rs 20,000 crore in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu.
- These projects includes a new terminal building at Tiruchirappalli International Airport, developed at a cost of over Rs 1100 crore. The state-of-the-art terminal aims to serve more than 4.4 million passengers annually, significantly enhancing the region's air connectivity.
- The projects encompass various sectors, including rail connectivity, roads, oil and gas, and shipping, and are poised to contribute significantly to the state's progress. These projects are instrumental in fostering progress, creating employment opportunities for thousands, and enhancing travel facilities.
- The Prime Minister highlighted that these projects are not only integral to strengthening Tamil Nadu's infrastructure but also instrumental in fostering progress, creating employment opportunities for thousands, and enhancing travel facilities. He extended his congratulations to the people of the state for their dedication and perseverance in the pursuit of development.

##### **Household Financial Savings And Liabilities In India: RBI's Assessment.**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its latest Financial Stability Report (FSR), revealing insights into the state of household financial savings and liabilities in the fiscal year 2022-23 (FY23).
- Despite a decline in gross household financial savings to 10.9% of GDP, the report emphasizes a limited risk of defaults by households, attributing it to the manageable exposure to higher mortgage payments and floating interest rates.
- The FSR notes a significant increase in household financial liabilities, rising from 3.8% of GDP in FY22 to 5.8% in FY23.
- This surge, driven by increased borrowings for physical asset creation, primarily in mortgages and vehicles, contrasts with a marginal moderation in financial assets to 10.9% in FY23 from 11.1% in FY22.

### **Rajasthan Seeks Integration Of Chiranjeevi Scheme With Ayushman Bharat.**

- The newly elected BJP government in Rajasthan is making strides to merge its state health insurance scheme, Chiranjeevi, with the central Ayushman Bharat programme.
- This move, pending approval from the union health ministry, aims to create a unified initiative called the Ayushman Bharat Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme.
- Officials reveal that the integrated scheme will maintain Chiranjeevi's existing benefits, providing a substantial ₹25 lakh insurance cover applicable to both private and government hospitals.
- The Chiranjeevi scheme, initially introduced by former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot of the Congress party, currently offers significantly higher coverage compared to Ayushman Bharat's ₹5 lakh.

### **SPORTS**

### **Hyderabad and Bengaluru airports achieve commendable positions in the global on-time performance rankings.**

- In a recent on-time performance review conducted by aviation analytics firm Cirium, Hyderabad and Bengaluru airports have emerged as global leaders in punctuality, securing the second and third ranks, respectively.
- With over 84 per cent on-time departures, these airports have showcased their commitment to efficiency and reliability in air travel.
- IndiGo, which stood fourth among Asia Pacific airlines with over 82 per cent on-time arrivals, plays a crucial role in contributing to the punctuality at these airports. Approximately half of all flights at Bengaluru and 65 per cent in Hyderabad are operated by IndiGo.
- The Circum report stated that a flight is considered punctual if it departs or arrives with a difference of 15 minutes from the scheduled time. The Kempegowda International Airport has achieved 84.08 % punctuality rate in the year 2023, making it one of the most punctual airports in the world.
- Meanwhile, America's Minneapolis' St Paul International Airport topped the list of most airports across the globe with a punctuality rate of 84.44%

### **OBITURY**

### **Renowned academician and Padma Bhushan awardee, Professor Ved Prakash Nanda, has passed away.**

- Professor Ved Prakash Nanda, a luminary in the Indian diaspora, recently passed away, leaving behind a legacy of profound contributions to literature, education, and international law.
- Born in 1934 in Gujranwala, British India, his journey transcended borders as his family migrated to India after the partition in 1947.
- Prof. Nanda's remarkable career, including being awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2018, reflects his dedication to academia, international law, and fostering global understanding.

### **APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS**

### **Geetika Mehta assumes the role of the new Managing Director at NIVEA India.**

- Nivea India, a leading personal care products company, has appointed Geetika Mehta as its new managing director. This significant announcement marked a strategic move for the renowned brand.

- Mehta's career boasts a proven track record of developing small businesses and successfully managing large-scale corporations.
- Her journey includes a recent role as the managing director at Hershey India, a confectionery giant, where she took charge in July 2021.
- Before her tenure at Hershey, Mehta dedicated nearly two decades to Hindustan Unilever Ltd, a major player in the consumer goods industry, holding various positions across different divisions.

#### **Government of India constitutes Sixteenth Finance Commission with Dr. Arvind Panagariya as its Chairman**

- The Government of India, with the approval of the President of India, has constituted the Sixteenth Finance Commission, in pursuance to Article 280(1) of the Constitution.
- Dr Arvind Panagariya, former Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, and Professor, Columbia University will be the Chairman. Members of the Sixteenth Finance Commission would be notified separately. Shri Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey has been appointed as Secretary to the Commission.

#### **IMPORTANT DAYS**

##### **International Mind-Body Wellness Day 2024**

- International Mind-Body Wellness Day, observed annually on January 3, is a global celebration dedicated to fostering the harmonious coexistence of physical and mental health.
- This occasion serves as a reminder of the interconnectedness of our mind, body, and spirit, emphasizing the importance of holistic well-being.
- International Mind-Body Wellness Day urges people worldwide to prioritize self-care, mindfulness practices, and healthy lifestyle choices. In the midst of our fast-paced modern lives, this observance serves as a call to pause and actively engage in behaviors that promote holistic well-being.

#### **AWARDS & RECOGNITION**

##### **Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University's Vice Chancellor Prof B R Kamboj honoured with M S Swaminathan Award**

- Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University's Vice Chancellor Prof. B.R. Kamboj has been honoured with the prestigious M.S. Swaminathan Award in recognition of his contributions as a scientist and extension specialist in the field of agronomy. Thawar Chand Gehlot, the Governor of Karnataka, presented him this award. The award ceremony took place at the International Conference on 'One Health One World,' held at Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Agricultural University at Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh.
- A special committee, constituted for the M.S. Swaminathan Award, selected Prof. B.R. Kamboj for his excellent achievements in the field of education, research, technology development and extension in agricultural science.
- Vice Chancellor, Prof. B.R. Kamboj is well aware of the common problems, needs and socio-economical conditions of the farmers. The agricultural recommendations put forth by Prof. Kamboj, stemming from his research work and collaborative extension activities with university scientists, have consistently proven to be highly advantageous for farmers.
- Prof Kamboj has published about 300 research papers and articles in national and international journals, books and technical magazines.



### **BANKING AND ECONOMY**

**Despite a year-on-year increase, India's gross GST revenue experiences a three-month low in December.**

- India GST revenue: India's Goods and Services tax revenue continued to rise on an annual basis, but it dropped to a three month low in December.
- India's GST collections rose 10.28 percent to reach Rs 1.65 lakh crore in December, the Finance Ministry announced today. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) mop-up was nearly Rs 1.50 lakh crore in December 2022. The December 2023 collections are, however, lower than Rs1.68 lakh crore collected in November and even down from Rs 1.72 lakh crore mopped up in October, which was the second-highest collection ever since the GST rollout.
- "During the month, the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) are 13% higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year," the finance ministry said in a statement.
- The average gross monthly GST collection in the FY 2023-24 now stands at Rs. 1.66 lakh crore and is 11% per cent more than that in the same period in the previous financial year," the finance ministry said in a statement.
- "The growing emphasis on audits led by specific information available on various databases, not only on the GST portal, has led to a significant increase in compliance across sectors and states," Mani added.

## **Current Affairs PDF- January 02, 2024**

### **INTERNATIONAL**

**Felix Tshisekedi Named President of the Democratic Republic of Congo**

- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is once again in the spotlight as President Felix Tshisekedi secures victory in the highly contested December 20 election.

**BRICS group to double in 2024 after Saudi, Iran, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia join ranks**

- BRICS, the group of emerging-market nations comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, is poised to undergo a significant expansion on January 1.
- Representatives from the new invitees participated in a recent BRICS sherpa meeting in Durban, South Africa, indicating their acceptance of the invitation.
- The five countries are set to send officials to the next sherpa meeting in Moscow on January 30.
- The term "BRIC" was coined in 2001 to highlight robust economic growth in Brazil, Russia, India, and China.

### **NATIONAL**

**Surat Hosts 12th Divya Kala Mela 2023**

- The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, organised a distinctive event.
- The event, titled 'Divya Kala Mela,' took place in Surat, Gujarat, spanning from December 29, 2023, to January 7, 2024.

### India-UAE Joint Exercise 'Desert Cyclone 2024' Kicks Off In Rajasthan

- Military exercise 'Desert Cyclone 2024' is set to mark a significant milestone in the partnership between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Scheduled to take place in Rajasthan from January 2 to January 15.
- The inaugural India-UAE Joint Air Forces exercise held in September 2008 at the Al-Dhafra base in Abu Dhabi.

### SPORTS

### Indian Teenager Anahat Singh Bags Girls' U-19 2023 Scottish Junior Open Title at Edinburgh

- Anahat Singh, a rising star in Indian squash, secured victory in the girls' under-19 category at the 2023 Scottish Junior Open squash held in Edinburgh.

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### ISRO Launches XPoSat: India's First X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) marked the beginning of 2024 with a significant milestone, launching its first mission of the year. On January 1, ISRO successfully lifted off the XPoSat (X-ray Polarimeter Satellite) along with 10 other satellites from the Sriharikota spaceport, using the reliable PSLV-C58 rocket.
- The agency underscores the significance of XPoSat as its first dedicated scientific satellite designed to undertake research in this specialized domain.

### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

### Arvind Panagariya Appointed Head of Sixteenth Finance Commission by Government

- The GOI appointed Arvind Panagariya, former Niti Aayog vice chairman and Columbia University professor, as the chairman of the Sixteenth Finance Commission.
- Arvind Panagariya, a distinguished trade economist, had previously served as the first vice chairman of the Niti Aayog from 2015 to 2017.

### IMPORTANT DAYS

### DRDO Celebrates Its 66th Foundation Day

- India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) commemorated its 66th Foundation Day on January 1, 2024.
- The celebrations commenced with paying floral tributes to former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the "Missile Man of India," and Dr. VS Arunachalam, the former DRDO chief.
- DRDO Chairman Dr. Samir V Kamat addressed the DRDO fraternity.

### Global Family Day 2024: 1 January

- Global Family Day, celebrated annually on January 1, marks a universal commitment to peace, unity, and the shared values of humanity.
- The theme for 2024, "Embracing Diversity, Strengthening Families".
- By 1999, Global Family Day was established as a day dedicated to peace-building strategies.

### BANKING AND ECONOMY

#### FinMin allows 30th tranche of electoral bonds

- The Indian government has granted approval for the release of the 30th tranche of electoral bonds, set to go on sale from January 2 to January 11, 2024.
- The inaugural sale of electoral bonds took place in March 2018.

## Current Affairs PDF- January 01, 2024

### INTERNATIONAL

#### China's Groundbreaking Voyage: Mengxiang Sets Sail for Earth's Mantle Exploration

- China has introduced its groundbreaking ocean drilling vessel, Mengxiang, signifying a pivotal moment in scientific exploration.
- Weighing an impressive 33,000 tonnes and stretching 179 meters (590 feet), Mengxiang is a colossal ship with exceptional capabilities.

##### About China:

Capital: Beijing

President: Xi Jinping

### NATIONAL

#### Paramilitary Forces Embrace 'Sandes App' for Secure Official Commute

- 'Sandes App' stems from the prevalent use of WhatsApp for internal communication within paramilitary forces.
- To enhance functionality and efficiency, the 'Sandes App' has been seamlessly integrated with NIC email, DigiLocker, and e-office.

#### Government to Market FCI Rice as Bharat Brand

- India is contemplating a strategic move—selling rice under the 'Bharat' brand, a proposal that is currently under consideration.

##### About Food Corporation of India (FCI):

Founded: 14 January 1965

Headquarters: New Delhi

Founder: Government of India

#### Women Make Up About 49% of Ayushman Cards: Health Ministry

- Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri — Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) has emerged as a beacon of hope in India's healthcare landscape, particularly for women.
- Data released by the Health Ministry reveals a significant contribution by women to the scheme's success, with approximately 49% of the total Ayushman cards.

#### Uttar Pradesh to Implement Green Hydrogen Policy to Promote Clean Energy

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to implement the state's Green Hydrogen Policy-2023.

### SUMMIT'S & MOU's

#### Wardwizard Foods Inks MoU with Gujarat govt to Expand Operations

- Wardwizard Foods and Beverages Limited recently witnessed a significant surge in its shares, rising by 9.98 per cent, following the company's collaboration with the government of Gujarat.

**About Gujarat:**

Capital: Gandhinagar

Chief Minister: Bhupendrabhai Patel

Governor: Acharya Devvrat

### BANKING AND ECONOMY

#### Core Sector Output Growth Hits Six-Month Low at 7.8% in November

- In November, the production growth of eight crucial infrastructure sectors hit a six-month low at 7.8%, primarily attributed to declines in the crude oil and cement sectors.

#### Tata Power Secures Rajasthan Transmission Project

- Tata Power has emerged victorious in the bid for the Bikaner-III Neemrana-II Transmission project, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) established by PFC Consulting, a subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation.

**About Rajasthan:**

Capital: Jaipur (Executive Branch)

Chief Minister: Bhajan Lal Sharma

Governor: Kalraj Mishra

#### AIIB Takes Lead in Rs 2.5k Crore Funding for Mahindra-OTPP's Green InvIT

- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is set to spearhead a fundraising round worth Rs 2,500 crore for the Sustainable Energy Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) supported by the Mahindra Group.

**About Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank:**

Headquarters: Beijing, China

Formation: 16 January 2016

Membership: 109 member states

## Current Affairs PDF- December 31, 2023

### NATIONAL

#### PM Modi Inaugurated 2 New Amrit Bharat, 6 Vande Bharat Trains in Ayodhya

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked a significant event on Saturday by flagging off two Amrit Bharat and six Vande Bharat Express trains from the redeveloped Ayodhya Dham Railway Station.

#### PM Modi Unveils Airport, Station Ahead Of Ram Temple Consecration in Ayodhya

- One of the noteworthy inaugurations was that of Maharishi Valmiki International Airport Ayodhya Dham.



- A key highlight of the visit was the inauguration of the redeveloped Ayodhya Dham Railway Station. Accompanied by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Adityanath, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### NASA to Study Asteroid 'Apophis', Approaching Earth on April 13, 2029

- This asteroid, named after the Egyptian god of Chaos, is anticipated to pass within a remarkably close distance of 32,000 kilometers from Earth's surface on April 13, 2029.
- Apophis is classified as an "S-type" asteroid, composed of silicate and nickel-iron materials.

##### **About National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):**

Founded: 29 July 1958, United States

Founder: Dwight D. Eisenhower

Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States

#### ISRO to launch 50 Geo-Intelligence satellites in next 5 years

- India's space agency is planning to develop a new fleet of 50 surveillance satellites in five years that are based on artificial intelligence technology that can "interact with each other in space to gather geointelligence" and will be able to beef up the country's border surveillance from the sky manifold, Isro chairman S Somanath has said.

##### **About ISRO:**

Headquarters: Bengaluru

Founder: Vikram Sarabhai

Founded: 15 August 1969

### OBITUARY

#### Former EU Commission President Jacques Delors dies at 98

- Jacques Delors, a former head of the EU Commission and key figure in the creation of the euro currency, has died.

### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

#### Rashmi Govil tapped as next director HR of Indian oil

- Rashmi Govil, a senior HR executive at Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), is set to be next Director (Human Resources) of the state-owned firm.
- Govil will replace Ranjan Kumar Mohapatra, who was in May denied an 8-month extension of service till his superannuation age.

##### **About Indian Oil Corporation:**

Headquarters: New Delhi

Founded: 30 June 1959

Chairman: Shrikant Madhav Vaidya

#### Vivek srivastava assumed charge as DG of fire service & civil defence

- Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Vivek Srivastava (IPS) as Director General of Fire Service, Civil Defence & Home Guards under the Ministry of Home Affairs on Friday.

### AWARDS & RECOGNITION

#### P Indira Devi ICAR emeritus professor got ISAE fellowship

- Dr P. Indira Devi, ICAR Emeritus Professor at Kerala Agricultural University, is conferred with title of ISAE Fellow 2023, by the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics during its 83rd Annual Conference held at Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology recently.
- The title is in recognition of the outstanding achievements in the field of agricultural economics and rural development.
- It is awarded by a distinguished panel of agricultural economists.
- Indian Society of Agricultural Economics is one of the oldest professional societies in India established in 1939.

### BANKING AND ECONOMY

#### CBDT issued guidelines under section 194-O of the income tax act

- Section 194-O of the Income-tax Act, 1961 ('the Act') provides that an e-commerce operator shall deduct income-tax at the rate of one per cent of the gross amount of sale of goods or provision of service, or both, facilitated through its digital or electronic facility or platform.

#### NPCI introduced ASBA like facility for secondary market

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has announced the launch of an ASBA-like facility in the secondary market.
- ASBA-like facility of 'Trading supported by blocked amount in secondary market' through block mechanism was approved by the market regulator Sebi, based on the Reserve Bank of India.

##### **About NPCI:**

Headquarters: Mumbai

Founded: 2008

Founders: Reserve Bank of India, Indian Banks' Association

##### **About Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI):**

Founded: 12 April 1988

Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra

Founder: Government of India

Agency executive: Madhabi Puri Buch, Chairperson